

NEWS RELEASE
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North Star Caviar to Offer Cleaning Services During Paddlefish Season

The 2018 North Dakota's paddlefish season will open Tuesday, May 1. The season is scheduled to continue through May 21 but may close early dependent on the overall season harvest, at ND Game and Fish discretion. North Star Caviar will be operating a courtesy cleaning station again this year.

North Star Caviar (NSC) a non-profit organization currently operated as a joint venture between the Williston Convention & Visitors Bureau the Friends of Fort Union/Fort Buford.

Under an agreement between North Star Caviar and the North Dakota Game and Fish Department, paddlefish eggs are donated to the project by successful sport fishermen in exchange for having their fish cleaned free of charge. The roe is then processed into premium caviar and sold on the world market. A portion of each year's caviar sales is directed to the Game and Fish Department for paddlefish research, information and enforcement. The remaining proceeds are granted back to non-profit groups in the region for historical, cultural, and recreational projects and efforts which improve conditions of habitat and land and water access for outdoor activities. North Star Caviar only handles legally tagged fish from licensed fishermen, and request that fish are delivered to the cleaning station immediately after being harvested in order to best preserve the meat and roe. Fishermen are required to collect their fillets from the cleaning station the same day the fish was caught, or be subject to a fine.

Legal snagging hours this year are from 7a-7p daily. The North Star Caviar cleaning station will accept fish until 8p. Per North Dakota Game & Fish, snagging is legal "in all areas of the Yellowstone River in North Dakota, and in the area of the Missouri River lying west of the U.S. Highway 85 bridge to the Montana border, excluding that portion from the pipeline crossing (river mile 1,577) downstream to the upper end of the Lewis and Clark Wildlife Management Area (river mile 1,565)."

Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays are designated catch and keep days. Snag-and-release of all paddlefish is required on Sundays, Mondays and Thursdays.

All paddlefish snaggers must possess a paddlefish tag in addition to a valid fishing license. These can be purchased locally at Scenic Sports, Sportsman's Warehouse and Wal-Mart. More information on season participation and requirements may be found at <https://gf.nd.gov/news>. Inquiries regarding North Star Caviar may be directed to the Williston Convention & Visitors Bureau at 701-774-9041 or cvb@ci.williston.nd.us.

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