

OUTDOORS

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Trapshooting league to be offered to Falls students

BY EMILY GEDDE
Staff Writer

A sport rising in popularity across Minnesota has made its way to International Falls.

The Falls School Board Monday agreed to endorse offering a clay target league to students in the spring.

“It is the fastest growing league (among Minnesota schools),” Falls Athletic Director Kevin Grover said.

The activity has been exploding in popularity with about 215 schools across the state signing up. The sport hasn’t been picked up as an official state school sport, but Grover said the possibility exists.

“It’s proposed to be a Minnesota State High School League sport one year from now,” he said. “Whether that will happen, I don’t know, but that is the way it looks.”

The trapshooting program is open to any student in grades 6-12 who has a firearms safety certificate from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.

Grover said at least five students are needed to make a team and teams can consist of males and females.

“It would be in line with Title IX because it would be co-curricular,” he said of offering an equal number of sports opportunities to

boys and girls.

The sport requires shooters to stand 16 yards behind the thrower and shoot five rounds at five different stations on the line. An official scorer marks down each hit target. Each individual attempts 50 shots before scores are tabulated and submitted to mnclytarget.com. Teams are placed in conferences based on the number of individuals participating on each squad.

Grover told board members Monday endorsement of the league doesn’t carry a cost to the district – yet. If trapshooting is picked up as an official MSHSL sport, board members will have

to decide how to proceed in the future.

“Right now there are no costs,” Grover said. “Participants will pay a registration fee...I don’t know how districts would deal with this down the road (if it becomes an official sport).”

Some board members raised question on whether endorsing the league would be the right option if things could change in a year.

“If we endorse this... We’re going to be faced with having to have that part of our program,” board member Gordy Dault said.

Board member Michelle Hebner, however, suggested the league — like the

clay targets — be given a chance to get off the ground before being shot down.

“I think we need to proceed and see where it goes... Given the community we live in, this is one of those things that gets kids excited for school,” she said.

Board member Will Kostiuik agreed and reminded his colleagues that they have the final decision to adopt it as a sport when and if the time comes.

“I think this is a good thing,” he said.

Grover addressed a concern he anticipates to be brought up with news of the league forming.

“There have not been issues with firearms on

(school) property because nothing takes place on school grounds,” he said. “It hasn’t been an issue anywhere else.”

He added that there will be an adviser for every 10 participants to ensure added safety.

Grover continued that practice would be held at a local shooting range one night per week after practices of other spring sports have concluded to allow those students the chance to participate.

“We don’t want to initiate this and have it compete with other sports,” he said. “This could be a great way to get kids active...I see it as a good thing.”

CONSERVATION OFFICER REPORT

08-19-2013
District 5 — Eveleth area

CO Darrin Kittelson (International Falls) reports checking fishing and boating activity on Rainy River and Rainy Lake, along with monitoring activity at the North American Sturgeon Fishing Contest on the Rainy River. Bear baiting activity was also monitored as hunters and guides began the process of establishing their bait sites.

CO Troy Fondie (Orr) reports an uneventful slow week locally. Fishing remains poor. Hunters voiced concerns over the reduced number of bear licenses and the reduction of the intended wolf harvest. Trappers voiced concerns over the fisher and marten limit reduction.

CO Brad Schultz (Cook) reports lots of fall hunting related questions were received. Bear baiting has begun and it appears the number of people baiting bears is down considerably, likely due to the low number of tags compared to previous years. Angling activity was monitored and success was quite slow.

CO Dan Starr (Tower) worked some early bear baiting activity and checked fisherman. Weather patterns have made fishing slow. ATV activity is really picking up. Numerous calls for information. A great

blue heron juvenile that was starving and weak. CO Starr transported the bird to a marsh area, went to the bait store to get minnows, and left the bird actively eating the dead minnows.

CO Don Bozovsky (Hibbing) worked anglers, ATVs, the state park and bear baiting enforcement. An aquatic plant violation complaint was investigated with cutting and spraying of aquatic plants without permits discovered. Two Resource Protection Notifications were subsequently issued. Enforcement action also will be taken. The officer assisted the Hibbing Police Dept. with several calls. A 26-year-old male and his friend were observed breaking the male’s I-phone with large rocks on a railroad track rail. When asked why he was doing this, he stated he didn’t want his mom calling him anymore. Enforcement action was taken on recreational vehicle trespass and a number of ATV violations.

CO Matt Frericks (Virginia) followed up on numerous trespass violations reported by area mining companies. Most people who were found on mining property report seeing the “No Trespassing” signs but just choose to ignore them. CO Frericks received a TIP call concerning an illegal length sturgeon.

LOON AND CHICK



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Mike Thiele shot this photo of an adult loon and its maturing chick near Dahlberg’s Island on Rainy Lake. Note the water dripping from the slick feathers on the adult’s head.

Wildfire danger intensifies as fuels dry

Northern third of the state at moderate fire danger

DNR STAFF REPORT

As precipitation over the last 30 days has been at 50 percent of normal over most of Minnesota, fire managers from the Department of Natural Resources are seeing an increase in fire danger and are urging people to use caution when working and recreating in dry areas.

So far this summer, fire occurrence has been low, but a predicted dry spell could change that quickly. DNR forestry areas with the high-

est fire potential are Bemidji, Park Rapids, Backus, Little Falls, Sandstone, and lands north of Cambridge and south of Cloquet. Continuing warm dry weather could expand the area of concern to the Arrowhead region in northeastern Minnesota where lightning ignitions could become more likely if thunderstorms develop with light rain, fire managers said.

The National Weather Service predicts Minnesota is entering a warm and dry spell for the next week or so. This is the time of year the state sees scattered rainfall where the amounts can vary widely even a few miles apart. Most

of the state is still green, but it can change with the hot weather, especially if it stays rain free.

Once the weather cools off, the possibility of a killing frost increases. A killing frost pulls moisture out of fine fuels such as grasses and brush. A combination of dry weather and dry, dead fuels could lead to another active fall fire season.

Fire starts are more probable in areas exposed to the sun and in areas of light, sandy soil. Open stands of jack pine, especially where there is a higher ratio of dead fuels to live vegetation will have the higher probability of ignition.

This week, the southern third of Minnesota is at low fire danger. The northern third of the state and the metro area at moderate fire danger, meaning fires start easily and spread at a moderate rate. The central part of the state from Pine County in the east to the North Dakota border and from Marshall County to Lac qui Parle County has a

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