

# Dakota's Winter Is Time to Be Outdoors



**By DAVE JAMESON**  
Tribune Staff Writer

"Ski North Dakota!" proclaimed a poster making the rounds in the Denver area a year or so ago.

The poster depicted a nearly straight horizon line, a barbed wire fence descending a gentle slope and a lone, leafless tree far in the background.

It's a putdown poster, of course, but many private and governmental sources in the state don't think the idea of North Dakota skiing (and other forms of winter recreation) is all that funny.

Whether the outdoor enthusiast wants to take to the slopes or prefers a slower pace of walking in the winter wonderland, he'll find plenty to do in North Dakota.

And the recent proliferation of snowmobiles for easy transportation to out-of-the-way areas, and snug but unincumbering snow suits for maximum comfort should make the wintertime outdoors all the more inviting.

Since 1966 nearly \$15 million in federal, state, county and local monies have gone into the development of recreation sites in the state, and a good deal of this has been for wintertime fun, according to John Greenhill, state outdoor recreation director.

Greenhill said the state has been authorized to receive \$2.3 million in federal funds during fiscal 1972, which is a \$1 million increase over the previous year.

Besides overseeing use of federal funds for recreation development, Outdoor Recreation officials also help find financial resources and other assistance for civic and private groups striving to develop recreation programs.

In the area of skiing in North Dakota, public and private groups have made significant gains in recent years. The Outdoor Recreation Department has initiated weekly reports on snow conditions at the various ski facilities.

At least one major airline took North Dakota skiing seriously enough to feature some of the state's skiing areas in a recent issue of its trade magazine.

The state's newest and probably most highly developed ski area is in the Turtle Mountains, stretching from Bottineous on the west to Rolla on the east. Numerous slopes in the Bottineous Winter Park compare favorably with those in Michigan and Wisconsin, Greenhill said.

Other privately developed skiing equipment. Several of the slopes also have toboggan runs and also have set up areas for snowmobilers.

Wintertime camping is a sport that has been enjoyed in neighboring northern states for the past several years, and the State Parks Service is encouraging its development here, according to Dave O'Brien, director of the service.

Firewood will be provided at all state parks camping areas, but it may be a good plan to call in advance to make sure it is available, O'Brien said.

He said the service encourages deer hunting parties to make their base camps at official camping areas rather than at random places throughout the hunting area. This will provide for better control of fires, he said.

O'Brien said that if groups such as Girl Scouts or Boy Scouts wish to try winter camping or hiking, the parks service can have a man available to get the groups started by showing them how to set up their camps and how to cope with winter conditions.

Concessions at most state parks close for the winter, O'Brien said, but 20 miles is about the farthest any winter campers would have to go for supplies.

Nonetheless, it's a good idea to come adequately prepared

with plenty of both food and clothing when trying winter camping or hiking, he said.

Skiing has long been a favorite North Dakota winter sport and one which has become safer each year as trails and supervised areas have been established.

Almost all cities and towns in the state provide skating rinks and the larger cities provide supervised skating at least at some of their rinks.

The State Parks Service has skating areas at two parks and is trying to increase this to five areas for this season, according to O'Brien. Fort Lincoln will have a rink and skaters may use the Heart River when the ice becomes thick enough, he said.

Tobogganing, sledging and sliding down slopes on various types of manufactured or home-fashioned vehicles also can be great sport, but basic rules of safety always should be observed.

Safe areas for tobogganing

The backwaters of Lake Sakakawea will continue to provide good fishing into the winter months, and the trout areas also should provide good ice fishing, Fish and Game officials say.

Wintertime hunting has proven popular with many North Dakota sportsmen, with fox hunting using a fox call quite common over the state. The procedure here is for hunters to go out singly or in groups of two or three, find cover under some trees or brush, and attempt to call in a fox using a predator call.

Trapping is a sport still thought highly of by some devotees in the state. Mink and muskrat was the most popular animals sought. However, depressed prices have made trapping an activity pursued almost exclusively for the sport and not for the economic gain, game officials say.



**Greenhill O'Brien**



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