



Our Outdoors

By Nick Simonson

Pretend Predators

Before heading up to Minnesota's Iron Range to see family over the Fourth of July holiday weekend, I had the amazing experience to watch a loon at close range track down and take a relatively large panfish from the school of sunnies I was casting to just off the dock on the south shore of Big Detroit Lake. Under the water the bird moved swiftly and adeptly, unlike how loons usually are, flapping and struggling to get airborne and then skittering to an ungraceful stop upon landing after flights that seem all too fast for the lazy warm days of summer they spend in the region.

Twisting and taking after its prey like a fighter jet making impossible moves in some 1980s military movie, the bird pursued its target in amazing fashion, attempting to secure it in its pointy black beak. My fly line lay dormant at my feet as I watched the battle play out from my vantage point next to the pontoon lift. While the chase only covered a few yards, it felt like the black-and-white bird spent many minutes underwater and likely covered three times the distance than the confines of the small area that the game of cat-and-mouse was held in.

While my efforts to connect with the panfish out in front of the shoreline structure and those used on the bass I'd pursue with my wife's cousin's kids on the waters up north exploited those fishes' instinct to feed, the loon's challenge was to overcome their instinct to flee. Certainly, any fish is capable of an extreme burst of speed, hard cornering turns, and other developed and inherited means of evasion when their survival depends on it. However, one larger sunfish was unable to escape, and became not only the loon's breakfast, but also the sacrificial lamb of the school below sparing the rest from any further early morning harassment by the bird now attempting to down its meal.

I was glad that my work to connect with my quarry over the weekend, and that of my fishing buddies, wasn't nearly as challenging. While the loon used its masterful underwater maneuvers to fill its belly and stave off hunger or even mortality for another stretch, our efforts were ones of recreation, flipping flies and pitch-



(Photo provided by Simonson)

The Real Deal. Radlee Cooper of Cherry Township, Minn., with a nice largemouth bass caught and released during a morning of recreational fishing on Ely Lake in northeastern Minnesota.

ing tubes at fish we'd turn back to the water instead of eating. While both pursuits were purposeful, ours had little to do with ensuring survival, save for eliminating some stress and finding some fun outdoors which in my mind is part and parcel with a life well lived. That aside, we were pretend predators at best in comparison to the hard hunting loon.

And that juxtaposition of predators – be it the loon, or us good natured fishermen out looking for a fun morning of catching up while catching a few fish – presented a moment of thought and perhaps showed how far we as humans have come as a species in just a few thousand years: from barely staying alive, to thriving to the point where we could throw our food back

into the water. It also reminded me how wild predators truly exert effort to subdue their prey, be it wolves in pursuit of a deer, hawks hovering over the homes of wary prairie rodents, or even the loon dipping its head below the surface on lookout for a school of fish. The brief morning interaction, and my angling activities with family, gave me a new appreciation for the bird which via its haunting calls just before dawn had always been a hallmark of the lake I grew up on each summer, and respect for the work that goes into surviving on both ends of the food chain, no matter the predator in pursuit...in our outdoors.

Simonson is the lead writer and editor of Dakota Edge Outdoors.

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Moscow mule at a restaurant. Truthfully, I could just as easily enjoy a fruit smoothie or a glass of ginger ale.

We recently created a handout ("3 Steps to Making Mocktails") featuring several "mocktails," including a non-alcoholic aloe spritz, a non-alcoholic Bloody Mary and this refreshing drink featuring fresh mint.

Nonalcoholic Peach Mint Julep

2 limes, rinsed, halved and cut into wedges
 1 cup fresh or canned peaches (in water), muddled
 24 mint leaves
 4 teaspoons granulated sugar
 Ice as desired
 1 ½ cups unflavored or flavored sparkling water

In a small bowl, add the lime, and muddle using a muddler or the back of the spoon. Muddle (stir) until the pulp

and juice are extracted from the lime. Remove the lime wedges and add peaches, mint and granulated sugar to the bowl. Muddle again until a puree consistency. The mint leaves won't break down completely. Add 1 cup of sparkling water and the rest of the contents into a shaker (or other covered container) with ice and shake for 30 seconds. Pour contents into glasses and top with remaining sparkling water.

Makes four servings. Each serving has 41 calories, 0.1 g fat, 0.5 g protein, 12 g carbohydrate, 2 g fiber and 22 mg sodium.

(Julie Garden-Robinson, Ph.D., R.D., L.R.D., is a North Dakota State University Extension food and nutrition specialist and professor in the Department of Health, Nutrition and Exercise Sciences.)

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Section 00 11 16 INVITATION TO BID

Date: July 2, 2026

Sealed Bids will be received by Garrison Diversion Conservancy District (Owner) at its Headquarters, 401 Hwy 281 NE, mailing address PO Box 140, Carrington, ND 58421 until 2:00 p.m., local time, on July 30, 2026, for the Eastern North Dakota Alternate Water Supply Project, ENDAWS Biota Water Treatment Plant Site and Access Development & Wet Well Excavation, Task Order 2550, Contract 1.

At said place and time, and promptly thereafter, all Bids that have been duly received will be publicly opened and read aloud.

The proposed Work is generally described as follows:

Construction of approximately 2.4 miles of gravel roadways, mass grading operations resulting in excavating and stockpiling around 576,000 cubic yards of earthen material, and delegated design and construction of an approximately 44-foot diameter by 100-foot-deep secant pile structure. The Work also includes site clearing, site restoration, roadway signage, erosion control, and all other Work specified or shown on the Drawings.

All Bids must be in accordance with the Bidding Documents on file with Garrison Diversion Conservancy District, 401 Hwy 281 NE, mailing address PO Box 140, Carrington, ND 58421.

The contact person for administrative questions with Garrison Diversion is Ms. Stacey Gussiaas at 701-652-3194 or email at staceyg@gdcd.org. For technical bidding document interpretations and clarifications, the contact person is Mr. Kip Kovar, District Engineer, at 701-652-3194 or kipk@gdcd.org.

Prospective Bidders may examine the Bidding Documents at Owner's office, Monday through Friday between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. local time.

Complete digital Bidding Documents are available for download at www.questcdn.com. You may download the digital documents for \$50 by inputting Quest Project No. 10263681 on the website's project search page. Contact QuestCDN.com at 952-233-1632 or info@questcdn.com for assistance in free registration, downloading, and working with this digital project information.

Digital documents may also be obtained directly from the Owner at a cost of \$75.

Charges for digital Bidding Documents are not refundable.

Direct all questions regarding distribution of Bidding Documents or the Project's design to the Owner. Only responses issued via Addenda are binding.

Neither Owner nor Engineer has any responsibility for the accuracy, completeness or sufficiency of any bid documents obtained from any source other than the sources indicated in these documents. Obtaining these documents from any other source(s) may result in obtaining incomplete and inaccurate information. Obtaining these documents from any source other than directly from the sources listed herein may also result in failure to receive any addenda, corrections, or other revisions to these documents that may be issued.

The bidder shall be licensed for the full amount of the bid as required by section

43-07-12 of the North Dakota Century Code (NDCC). Bids that do not fully comply with requirements of NDCC 48-01.2-05 are considered deficient and will be resealed and returned to the bidder immediately.

The Owner reserves the right to reject any and all bids and rebid the project until a satisfactory bid is received.

Bids will be received on a unit price basis; bid security must accompany Bid.

All Bids will be made based on cash payment for such work and materials. All Bidders are invited to be present at the public opening of the Bids. The Owner reserves the right to hold the three lowest Bids for a period of 60 days after the date of the Bid opening to complete financial arrangements.

The Successful Bidder will be required to furnish a construction performance bond and a construction payment bond as security for the faithful performance and the payment of all bills and obligations arising from the performance of the Contract.

If the Contract is to be awarded, Owner will give the Successful Bidder a Notice of Award within the number of days set forth in the Bid Form for acceptance of the Bid.

Garrison Diversion Conservancy District
 Duane DeKrey, General Manager

(July 2, 9 & 16, 2026)

Business Directory

Funeral Home

Hertz Funeral Homes, Inc.

McClusky, N.D.
 Phone 363-2250

Harvey, N.D.
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