

Michael J Bollweg 09/25/1973

United States Air Force Academy – Cadet: 1991-1992 Honorable Discharge

North Dakota State University – 1992-1994

South Dakota State University - Bachelor of Science in Agriculture

Graduated: December 1996

34 years farming experience

Former Grain grader-Grain quality manager – Harrold Grain Company

SD Dept of Agriculture Commercial Applicator License holder for 30 years: #AP1607

SD Dept of Agriculture Private Pesticide Applicator License: #9077349

SD Dept of Agriculture Pesticide Dealer License: #DL1801

Member: South Dakota Aviation Association SDAA

Member: South Dakota Upland Outfitters Association

Former Board Member: South Dakota Game Bird Association

Former Board Member: City of Harrold – approximately 6 years.

Former School Board Member: Highmore-Harrold School District – 11 years.

Community service: Volunteer JH and High School football coach, Youth Wrestling board member/volunteer coach

Vice President - Bollweg Spraying Service Inc. Ground Crew Manager – Sales Agronomist: Made recommendations for crop protection product application by ground and air. Lead applicator for ground applications. Trained new employees how to operate liquid application equipment. (Corporation is now dissolved) Mentored under my father, Don Bollweg who amassed more than 20,000 hours of time in aircraft prior to his retirement with an extensive background in land management and agronomy. Continue at this capacity present day (minus aerial application) with Bollweg Farms – sole proprietor.

I have more than 6000 hours in multiple ground row sprayer applicators; having applied crop protection products on 600,000-800,000 acres. Blumhardt, Loral, Wilmar, Apache, and Case IH Patriot.

Manager/Executive Director of Tumbleweed Lodge – overseeing all aspects from Marketing, employee management/hiring, marketing, habitat development. Incorporating value added agriculture utilizing crop and grass lands by harvesting commodities while maintaining essential habitat to operate a successful hunting lodge establishment.

Judi Bollweg – owner (sole proprietor) of Tumbleweed Lodge.

Tumbleweed Lodge has held a South Dakota Hunting Preserve permit since 1988. I began as a bird cleaner/guide/raised birds. 1996-present Developed overgrazed, eroded livestock pastures with old barb wire fencing buried in 3' of dirt into a rich habitat region for upland birds and game on the preserve lands we are currently operating. Supporting pheasants, Hungarian partridge, sharp-tail grouse, prairie chickens, waterfowl, deer and antelope. Planted and established nearly 140 acres of tree belts essential for wildlife habitat, erosion prevention on 2800 acres of land enrolled in preserve lands. (We own/operate a total of nearly 4000 acres and lease an additional 8400 acres for hunting.) In 2014 received the prestigious Brent Wilbur Habitat Award – “Presented by Governor Dennis Daugaard and the family of Brent Wilbur to a landowner who has reached the highest standards of conservation stewardship in managing their lands for the benefit of South Dakota’s diverse wildlife resources.” Was honored to be selected as one of the Host Operations for the South Dakota Governor’s Hunt spanning from 2000-2014. In 2011 – Named one of the Top 10 Best Hunting Lodges in the World – Outdoor Channels “Outdoors 10 Best”. Top 20 Greatest Wingshooting Destinations in the World – Steve Smith “A Wingshooters World”

The most unique niche with Tumbleweed Lodge is the variety of upland bird species we support which brings guests in from all over the country- throughout the world. You can hunt pheasants throughout most if not all of South Dakota, but only a few smaller regions of the state support the four species we target, pheasants, Hungarian partridge, sharp-tail grouse, prairie chickens as well as waterfowl.

In 2019 we purchased a 100kW Generac generator to support the lodge in the event of rolling brown outs, compromised electric grid system; as we noticed in February 2021.

PARTNERS, RETAIL

Hunters make big impression for S.D. retailers

Submitted



Oct. 25, 2019

This paid piece is sponsored by the South Dakota Retailers Association.

Retail businesses across South Dakota are welcoming hunters from near and far in celebration of the pheasant hunting season.

“Communities around the state are welcoming hunters, with many shops and stores working together to create special events,” said Nathan Sanderson, executive director of the South Dakota Retailers Association. “Hunting season is a great opportunity to showcase our world-renowned hospitality and beautiful landscapes while supporting rural communities and local businesses.”

Many South Dakota businesses actively serve the hunting and shooting community. Pheasant lodges, hunting outfitters and hundreds of stores that sell guns, ammunition, licenses, hunting gear and food look forward to our state’s fall hunting tradition. Businesses promoted our unofficial state holiday with displays and banners declaring “Rooster Rush” is here in South Dakota.

“We love meeting and talking with the new people that come in, whether it is their first time in the state or just their first time in the store,” said Mike Fairchild, general manager of Trav’s Outfitter in Watertown. “Of course, we love seeing returning folks when they walk through the door – this year, next year and the one after that – we know they’ll keep coming back to hunt.”



Local mom-and-pop businesses understand the significant economic impact resident and non-resident hunters have in South Dakota. Hunting alone contributes \$700 million each year to the state's economy, supporting 18,000 jobs – many of them in retail and hospitality businesses.

Michael Bollweg of Tumbleweed Lodge in Harrold diversified the farm by adding a hunting resort and guiding business. He hosts repeat guests who describe driving up the mile-long, cottonwood-framed driveway to his family's lodge as a "coming home" experience.



From tumbleweedlodge.com

"While an upland bird hunting adventure initially draws them here, sunrises and sunsets of purple and red hues igniting the sky coupled with star-filled nights keep them coming back," Bollweg said. "Our guests continually remind us just how special of a place we live in to be able to raise our families while managing our abundant natural resources."

Retailers and citizens across South Dakota recognize the value private landowners, particularly our farmers and ranchers, provide in support of wildlife populations and habitat in a state where more than 80 percent of the land is owned by private citizens.



“Operations within the hunter service industry are much more than the brick and mortar of the lodge,” Bollweg said. “We must remember the generational value of the ring-necked pheasant and the splendor of our uninterrupted landscape make South Dakota one of the last wild destinations.”

Pheasant season in South Dakota runs Oct. 19 through Jan. 5. As you travel around South Dakota this fall, thank the men and women in blaze orange who make a significant contribution to small communities and local businesses around the state.

TAGS: [hunting](#) [South Dakota Retailers Association](#) [Trav's Outfitter](#) [Tumbleweed Lodge](#)

Want to stay in the know?

Get our free business news delivered to your inbox.



Lon Tonneson

Top South Dakota game lodge shares pheasant farming tips

Slideshow: Intense crop management has helped Michael Bollweg successfully raise both grain and game birds.

Lon Tonneson | Jul 14, 2020

It would be a stretch to say Michael Bollweg of Harrold, S.D., has a livestock operation. Pheasants, Hungarian partridges, sharp-tailed grouse and prairie chickens aren't the usual suite of animals on South Dakota farms, and Bollweg doesn't exactly raise them.

But it's absolutely true that Bollweg, 46, who graduated from South Dakota State University with degrees in agronomy and ag business, manages his farm with those upland game birds in mind. All four species can be found on land Bollweg owns south of Harrold and some additional acres that he leases for grouse and prairie chickens.

Additionally, Bollweg releases some pheasants and Hungarian partridges early in the year to supplement the wild populations on two hunting preserves he's licensed to operate through the state.

Bollweg operates Bollweg Farms and also Tumbleweed Lodge . It has been named one of the 10 greatest hunting lodges in the world by The Outdoor Channel, and as one of the top 20 wing shooting destinations in the world by outdoor author Steve Smith. The lodge, started by Michael's parents, has been operating for more than 30 years.

The ag management that makes the lodge so successful is intense.

"We're still learning," Bollweg says. "I'll be the first to admit we're picking up new ideas all the time."

Here's a look at what works well for Bollweg Farms and the Tumbleweed Lodge:

No-till. Bollweg Farms has been using no-till farming practices for 30 years to conserve soil. It's a natural fit for a hunting operation, too, since it leaves more cover on the ground compared to tillage practices.

Diverse rotations. Spring wheat, winter wheat, corn, soybeans and grain sorghum are the main crops in the farm's rotations, often seeded in 90- and 180-foot-wide strips.

"We have found that winter wheat, in particular, is a better nesting cover than cold-season grasses that you tend to find in CRP," Bollweg says. Bollweg Farms also plants canola, turnip, radish, vetch and forage peas as cover crops.

Predator control. The operation traps and disposes of egg robbers, such as skunks, raccoons, feral cats, coyotes, badgers and opossums. However, eagles and other protected birds of prey abound in the area, and the Tumbleweed Lodge accepts that the birds will dine on pheasant.

“That’s just nature,” Bollweg says. “We appreciate the beauty of America’s bird.”

Insects. Bollweg plans for them just as other producers do — but not always for the same reasons.

“We have a good mix of cold- and warm-season grasses, along with legumes like alfalfa and clover that attract insects. So those birds, in the spring and early summer as they’re getting of age, they’re eating bugs.”

Winter habitat. Shelterbelts are designed with a minimum of five rows of trees, primarily eastern red cedar, but also chokecherry, plum and apricot.

Water. There are natural ponds throughout the property, and the lodge also has a geothermal well. The heat is pulled off to help heat the lodge and dog kennel and the water then flows into two of the ponds.

Drones. The lodge not only uses them to film hunters on their hunts at Tumbleweed, but also to scout some of the hard-to-reach places on the farm for weeds or other issues.

Farm roads. Roads through the property are graveled, and that’s not solely for the ease of getting hunters around. Upland game birds need grit.

Bollweg emphasizes his operation is a working farm that, if anything, requires a little more intense management.

“It’s value-added agriculture. You’re developing your resources,” Bollweg says. “You’re developing a great bird population simply by being a good steward of the land.”

Nixon is a writer from Pierre, S.D.



1.

IN FLIGHT: An iron pheasant in flight welcome hunters to Tumbleweed Lodge at Bollweg Farms near Harrold, S.D.



2.

HUNTERS' LODGE: The Tumbleweed Lodge is where hunters stay.



3.

BIRD'S VIEW: A pheasant's view of the grass cover and cedar trees at Bollweg Farms.



4.

WATER SOURCE: Wetlands provide an important source of water for wildlife.



5.

CLEAR AREA: Mowed strips in food plots to give pheasants a way to move around.



6.

DENSE COVER: Pheasant cover fits in well with cropland.

Source URL: <https://www.farmprogress.com/land-management/top-south-dakota-game-lodge-shares-pheasant-farming-tips>