



The Voice of Outdoor Kansas

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Wichita, KS 67277-1282

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Go to our Web site,
www.kswildlife.org,
for additional KWF information

Reversing decades of decline, the number of hunters and anglers is on the rise

Highlighting the reversal of decades of declining numbers, Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar has announced the preliminary results of a comprehensive national survey of outdoor recreation showing a significant increase in hunters and a double-digit increase in anglers over the past five years.

“Seeing more people fishing, hunting, and getting outdoors is great news for America’s economy and conservation heritage,” said Salazar. “Outdoor recreation and tourism are huge economic engines for local communities and the country, so it is vital that we continue to support policies and investments that help Americans get outside, learn to fish, or go hunting. That is why, through President Obama’s America’s Great Outdoors initiative, we have been focused on helping Americans rediscover the joys of casting a line, passing along family hunting traditions, and protecting the places they love.”

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s 2011 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation found that hunters nationwide increased by 9 percent while anglers grew by 11 percent. Nearly 38 percent of all Americans participated in wildlife-related recreation in 2011, an increase of 2.6 million participants from the previous survey in 2006. They spent \$145 billion on related gear, trips and other purchases, such as licenses, tags and land leasing and ownership, representing 1 percent of the nation’s gross domestic product.

“The Fish and Wildlife Service is dedicated to connecting people and families with nature,” said Fish and Wildlife Service Director Dan Ashe.

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**Protecting the Land...
Passing on Our Traditions**

**KANSAS WILDLIFE
FEDERATION**
The voice of outdoor Kansas



KANSAS WILDLIFE FEDERATION

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President's Message

This is my first newsletter comment since being elected president of the Kansas Wildlife Federation. I am excited about this new duty and the possibilities that lie before us. We have a full slate of motivated, concerned and energetic directors and expect to become more active in education, advocacy and wildlife conservation than ever before. As a start, our website has been redesigned with a new look that is more informative and interactive. Check it out at www.kswildlife.org.

We have set an ambitious agenda, driven by our members and their concerns for the natural resources of Kansas. To accomplish these goals, we need your support again. We are starting our 2013 membership renewal campaign. Our memberships run on the calendar year and expire December 31st. Please remember to renew and ask a friend or neighbor to join as well.

We are offering an incentive for new members joining KWF. Those that join now will become a member

for the remainder of 2012 and all of 2013.

Unlike most other groups, you will not get a funding request from us every month. We conduct our membership drives annually. Only on rare occasions we may have a specific project that requires an additional request for funding.

There are a lot of conservation/wildlife related organizations out there these days. Most do good things and are worthy of your support. If you can afford to contribute to several of these, that is great. If you need to pare your list to one or two, I am asking that you keep the Kansas Wildlife Federation at the top of your list. We are an affiliate of the National Wildlife Federation but concentrate our efforts in Kansas.

We would like to hear what's on your mind. Please feel free to contact us with suggestions, ideas or questions at info@kswildlife.org. Go to our new website regularly to keep up with what we are doing.

2012 Kansas Hunting Atlas available

Atlas locates all Walk-In Hunting Access areas
and public wildlife areas

Want hunting access to one million acres of private land? The Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism (KDWPT) provides just that and more in the *2012 Kansas Hunting Atlas*. This essential hunting tool includes maps showing locations of Walk-In Hunting Access (WIHA) areas and public wildlife areas and is available online at the KDWPT website, ksoutdoors.com. Click "Hunting/Where to Hunt in Kansas" to find a link to the document. Printed copies of the atlas are at KDWPT offices and hunting license vendors around the state.

The atlas provides dozens of full-page maps covering the entire state.

Online visitors can view and print the complete atlas or select specific maps. Hunters can also download maps to GPS units for easy navigation. Each map includes an index listing the game species most likely to occur on properties listed.

For information on hunting seasons and regulations, copies of the *2012 Kansas Hunting & Furharvesting Regulations Summary* will be available at KDWPT offices and license vendors, but hunters can view or download the complete publication from the KDWPT website. Type "Hunting Regulations" in the search box at the department's homepage or click "Hunting/Hunting Regulations."

Governor appoints Marshall to Wildlife, Parks and Tourism Commission

Great Bend doctor an active outdoorsman

Kansas Governor Sam Brownback announced Monday the appointment of Roger Marshall, M.D., Great Bend, to the Kansas Wildlife, Parks and Tourism Commission. Marshall replaces Frank Meyer, Herington, whose second term on the commission expired in at the end of June.

Marshall lives in Great Bend and was born and raised in Butler County. He received a bachelor's degree in biochemistry from Kansas State University and graduated from the University of Kansas Medical School. He is an avid outdoorsman who enjoys hunting upland birds, waterfowl, and turkeys, as well as bowhunting deer, fishing, and boating.

Marshall and his wife of 29 years have four children. He operates an ob-

stetrics and gynecology private practice in Great Bend and serves as the chairman of the Great Bend Regional Hospital Maternal and Child Health Service. He also served in the U.S. Army reserves from 1984 to 1991.

The seven-member KWPT Commission is made up of no more than four members of any one political party. Members are appointed by the Governor and serve staggered four-year terms. The commission advises the agency's Secretary on planning and policy issues. Regulations approved by the commission are adopted and administrated by the Secretary.

Dr. Marshall can be reached through his e-mail address of roger.marshall@ksoutdoors.com.

Crossbow survey ID numbers now online

Number required for crossbow hunters who have deer permits valid during archery season in units 1, 12, 15 and 19

On May 25, Governor Sam Brownback signed into law a bill that included provisions for a crossbow pilot project in as many as four deer management units during an archery big game season by anyone issued a big game permit valid during the archery season. The two-year pilot project will sunset on Jan. 31, 2014, at which time the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism (KDWP) Secretary must report to the Kansas Legislature about the project.

For this pilot project, any person with a deer permit valid during the archery season for deer management units 1, 12, 15, and 19 may use a crossbow during the archery season, regardless of age or disability. Each

person age 16 through 54 shall obtain a free crossbow hunter survey number from KDWP before hunting with a crossbow during archery season.

Hunters may obtain a crossbow survey ID number by going online at the KDWP website, ksoutdoors.com, and clicking on the Crossbow Survey ID display ad, or by typing the following URL into their web browsers: <https://programs.ksoutdoors.com/Crossbow-Survey-ID-Number>. Here, they must enter their KDWP number, first name, last name, and email address (if available). An email address is not required, but if one is given, a confirmation email will be sent to them. Those who

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Officers and Board of Directors

The Kansas Wildlife Federation promotes hunting and fishing opportunities and associated recreation for the benefit of all hunters and anglers. KWF supports the sustainable use and management of fish and wildlife and their habitats through education, partnerships, outreach and policy oversight.

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Kansan nets Bassmaster Angler of the Year Award

Lake Quivira native at the top of this sport

Kansan Brent Chapman has had a phenomenal year as a professional bass fisherman. The Lake Quivira resident started the 2012 season of the Bassmaster Elite Series ranked 58th in the world of bass fishing, according to the BassFan.com World Rankings. He finished the season by winning the final event on New York's Oneida Lake on Aug. 23-26. That win also landed him the 2012 Bassmaster Angler of the Year award (AOY), professional bass fishing's most prestigious honor.

As the series of eight tournaments unfolded in March, Chapman started strong with a fourth-place finish at the St. John's River in Florida. A fifth at Lake Okeechobee, Fla., moved him up to second in the AOY race. After another fifth-place finish, this time at Missouri's Table Rock Lake, he found himself at the top of the AOY list. Unfortunately, Douglas Lake in Tennessee proved to be a challenging venue, and he finished well down the list at 68th place, out of

the money cut (top 50). This finish dropped him to third in the AOY standings, 40 points behind the new leader.

Apparently determined to erase the sour taste of a poor finish after three consecutive top fives, he rebounded to dominate the next contest on Louisiana's Toledo Bend, taking the lead on the second day and never relinquishing it. It was his first Elite Series win and fourth win of his 17-year career.

Chapman continued with a string of high finishes, logging a 22nd at the Upper Mississippi River, then a 27th at Lake Michigan's Green Bay. This put him back atop the AOY points race going into Lake Oneida.

The AOY award not only netted Chapman \$100,000 but ensures him of a string of future endorsements. And he has already qualified for the 2013 Bassmaster Classic Tournament, the Super Bowl of bass fishing. That event will be held much closer to home next year, at Grand Lake, Okla.

KWF continues to update its website

The Kansas Wildlife Federation has recently updated its website www.kswildlife.org. Designed and maintained by One Tree Hill Designs, the website offers a variety of items for the hunter, angler, avid conservationists and kids young and old.

A new section includes an opportunity for KWF members to post photos of Kansas natural resources and recreation activities that would interest our members. Just send them in jpeg format to info@kswildlife.org. We'll use good photos in our photo gallery with appropriate ac-

knowledge.

Check out the Education tab. Cynthia Rhodes, our Education Committee chair, has provided a list of outdoor education opportunities for kids from 2-92. New opportunities are routinely added.

If you want to alert the KWF audience to information and articles they should know about, all you need to do is to send a link or an email to info@kswildlife.org and from there we can get it on the site and out to the world. Your participation will make the site even more useful and fun!

CALENDAR of EVENTS

- Sept 1** NWTF-Flint Hills Gobbler's youth dove hunt at Flint Hills National Refuge Area, Hartford. Contact Gib Rhodes 620-437-2012
- Sept 7-8** Bluestem Farm and Ranch Conservation and Wildlife Appreciation, Emporia
- Sept 10** Geary County Fish & Game Assoc. Membership mtg
- Sept. 15-16** NWTF Kansas State JAKES Camp, Camp Alexander, Emporia 620-437-2012
- Sept 16** KC Catfish Midwest Open Championship, Atchison
- Sept 19** Financial Re-LEAF for Forests and Grassland" workshop, wjbeck@k-state.edu
- Sept 22** 9th annual Outdoor Youth Event, Council Grove WA Brent Konen 620-767-5900
- Sept 23** Tour Slate Creek WA www.kansasnativeplantsociety.org/event_detail
- Sept 29** 4th Beau Arndt Outdoor Appreciation Day, Camp Alexander, Emporia 620-794-7475
- Oct. 4** Kansas Forest Service'125th Anniversary Open House, Manhattan
- Oct 6** NWTF Women in the Outdoors event Camp Alexander fhwito@yahoo.com
- Oct. 8** Geary County Fish & Game Assoc. Membership mtg
- Oct. 13** Hunter Education Certification Course – Flint Hills Technical College 620-341-1392
- Oct. 18** Kansas Wildlife, Parks and Tourism Commission mtg. – Fall River
- Oct. 20** KDWP Quail Initiative landowner workshop - Melvern Wildlife Area 620-699-3372
- Oct. 20** NWTF Flint Hills Gobbler's youth waterfowl hunt FHNR, Hartford. Gib Rhodes 620-437-2012
- Oct. 30-31** Governor's Water Conference - Manhattan
- Nov. 3-4** KWF Board of Directors mtg. Salina
- 2013**
- Jan. 19** KWF Board of Directors mtg. Location TBD
- Feb. 22-23** KWF Annual Meeting and CAP Banquet
- Mar 2-3** Southeast Kansas Hunting and Fishing Expo. Flint Hills Mall, Emporia Contact Tonya Carson 785-366-3565
- Mar 18-24** National Wildlife Week
- Mar 31** NWTF turkey hunting clinic, Camp Alexander Gib Rhodes 620-437-2012

Kingman State Fishing Lake to be drained for rehab

Shoreline and fishery improvements scheduled; no fish salvage allowed

In an effort to improve fishing and eliminate an expanding white perch population — an aquatic nuisance species (ANS) — Kingman State Fishing Lake (SFL) is scheduled to be drained and renovated this fall. Periodic renovations are standard practice in small lakes when fish populations became unbalanced due to expansion of undesirable fish species. Kingman SFL has been drained and rehabilitated six times since 1947. Currently, the majority of the fish biomass in the lake is composed of common carp, gizzard shad, and white perch. The quality and quantity of sport fish has decreased in the lake, and the fishery is not currently meeting the needs of anglers. Angler use in 2011 was approximately one-third of that seen during the last

angler survey at Kingman in 1999.

Biologists believe hot, dry weather has created the best conditions for renovating this fish population because the drought has dried up many upstream pools that may have harbored undesirable fish species. After the lake is drained, the existing water in the lake basin will be treated with rotenone, a fish toxicant. Because Kingman is an ANS-designated water due to white perch, fish salvage will not be allowed, reducing the risk of white perch transfer into non-infested waters.

Dewatering of the lake will begin in mid-August. During renovation, a number of lake improvement projects will take place, including fish habitat placement, boat ramp extension, and

chemical treatment of problematic shoreline vegetation. Upon refilling of the lake, largemouth bass, northern pike, bluegill, and channel catfish will be restocked.

“Hopefully, fall rains and increased spring flow will fill the lake by spring of 2013,” says Sean T. Lynott, Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism’s regional fisheries supervisor for southern Kansas. “After the renovation, the lake will not be closed to fishing because some adult fish will be stocked immediately to prey on any undesirable fish not eliminated by the chemical treatment. Additionally, the newly-stocked fish should grow quickly without competition from rough fish, so fishing should quickly improve in the years to come.”

Dove banding program provides valuable information

Hunters urged to watch for bands on harvested doves

September 1 marks the start of the 2012 hunting seasons with dove season opening day. Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism (KDWPT) officials remind dove hunters to check harvested doves for leg bands. For the last 10 years, biologists in Kansas, as well as those in most other states, have banded mourning doves each summer in an effort to gain information about population size, harvest, and migration patterns.

Dove bands, small aluminum rings with unique nine-digit codes attached around the lower leg, are smaller ver-

sions of the leg bands used on ducks and geese that hunters may be more familiar with. KDWPT staff and volunteers banded more than 3,000 doves in 2012, and more than 20,000 in the last 10 years all across the state. The majority of banded doves recovered in Kansas were banded in Kansas, with birds banded in Missouri, Iowa and Nebraska also commonly harvested. Birds banded in Kansas are also frequently recovered in Texas, Missouri, and Oklahoma, and as far away as southern Mexico.

Banded doves should be reported

using the toll free phone number (800-327-BAND) or website printed on the band (www.reportband.gov). Banding data is an important component of bird research that benefits both bird populations as well as hunters. By reporting bands, hunters are helping KDWPT better manage dove populations. For more information on doves, dove hunting, and dove banding, visit the "Dove Banding Study" page on KDWPT's website (ks.outdoors.com), the U.S. Geological Survey's Bird Banding Laboratory webpage (www.reportband.gov) or flyways.us.

Prairie-chicken permit required this fall

\$2.50 permit required to hunt prairie-chickens; follow-up surveys can help better manage harvest and target conservation program

The Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism (KDWPT) has announced that a \$2.50 permit will be required to hunt prairie-chickens this fall. This applies to both lesser and greater prairie-chickens. Permits may be purchased wherever licenses are sold and online beginning the first full week in August. The \$2.50 fee is the minimum charge, with all proceeds going to vendors and automation costs.

The permit will give KDWPT biologists the ability to better identify prairie-chicken hunters. Using information gathered when the permit is sold, a random sampling of those individuals will be sent a post-season survey that will be used to develop more accurate estimates of harvest and species distribution.

The lesser prairie-chicken has been considered a candidate under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) since 1998, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) will release a proposed rule on the status of the bird under the ESA in September. KDWPT is opposed to a federal listing of the lesser prairie-chicken because it will likely hamper voluntary landowner

enrollment in conservation programs that have greatly benefited lesser prairie-chickens and other grassland wildlife across the state. Information from the new prairie-chicken survey will help KDWPT to further justify hunting of lesser prairie-chickens to the USFWS and the general public in the face of possible listing. Research has already shown that the current level of hunter harvest has negligible effects on population growth, which is much more sensitive to changes in the production of young.

"Collecting these data will provide us with the best chance to continue hunting lesser prairie-chickens in the face of a pending threatened or endangered listing by the Fish and Wildlife Service," explains Jim Pitman, KDWPT small game coordinator. "As an added bonus, we will also be able to better regulate harvest of both lesser and greater prairie-chickens and more accurately delineate their distributions. More accurate range delineations provide us with a greater ability to target conservation programs across the state to benefit both chicken species. The greater prairie-chicken is not currently

a candidate species for federal listing, but we included them in the permit requirement because in parts of Kansas, their populations are struggling much more than those of their smaller cousin. By including them, we are being proactive and are attempting to avert a situation similar to the one we are now facing with lesser chickens."

Population size and distribution of both prairie-chicken species have increased across western Kansas over the last 15 years, largely due to voluntary landowner enrollments in federal farm bill programs, especially the Conservation Reserve Program. Greater prairie-chicken populations in the eastern one-half of the state have been declining over that same time period due in large part to inadequate fire frequency on native rangelands.

Also new for 2012, the Northwest Prairie-Chicken Unit has been expanded to include all of Kansas west of U.S. Highway 281 and north of Highway 96. That unit will also now be open during the early season, Sept. 15-Oct. 15. A map of prairie-chicken units may be found online at kdwpt.state.ks.us/news/Hunting/Hunting-Regulations/Maps.

The Kansas River Water Trail is official!

Saturday, July 14 was a RED LETTER DAY for Friends of the Kaw and Kansas canoeists. Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar designated the Kansas River Water Trail as the newest addition to National Water Trails System. Secretary Salazar recognized the many individuals and organizations

who made this designation a reality but specifically complimented Friends of the Kaw for their vision and hard work.

This designation will result in financial assistance for signage directing folks to the access ramps, informational signage at ramps and for promotion of the water trail.

The Kansas River Water Trail is an exemplary example of cooperation and partnering to benefit all communities along the river and the State of Kansas.

Check out Secretary Salazar's comments on YouTube at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GUWcrrrQx10&feature=youtu>

Report: River recreation boosts economy and creates jobs

**By Jamie Mierau
Director, River Protection
American Rivers**

The Outdoor Industry Association recently released a groundbreaking report, "The Outdoor Recreation Economy: Take it Outside for American Jobs and a Strong Economy," detailing the economic impact of outdoor recreation in the U.S.

This report is a follow up and expansion of the 2006 economic impact report commissioned by the Outdoor Industry Association demonstrates that outdoor recreation is big business in this country

The report concludes that outdoor recreation is a larger and more critical sector of the American economy than most people realize, to the tune of:

- 6.1 million direct American jobs
- \$646 billion in direct consumer spending each year
- \$39.9 billion in federal tax revenue

• \$39.7 in state/local tax revenue
Outdoor recreation participants spend \$86 billion annually on watersports (kayaking, stand-up paddling, rafting, canoeing, and motorized boating), the second highest revenue stream, with camping in the lead at \$142 billion. Watersports directly

support more than 800,000 jobs annually.

The report affirms what American Rivers already knows – enjoyment and protection of the great outdoors is simply downright valuable. And that is why American Rivers is working with communities across the country to develop Blue Trails. As hiking trails connect people to the land, Blue Trails help people discover rivers, connecting urban and rural communities with the outdoors.

The facts are in – river recreation boosts the economy and creates jobs. Now, get out and enjoy our nation's rivers.

Fall is bike time

Fall is a great time to get out and enjoy nature. One way to do it is riding bicycles on trails throughout the state. To facilitate your experience, the Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT) has created the *Kansas Bicycle Map*. The map shows all the bicycle

trails throughout the state, including bike trails in the major cities. Also included are Rails to Trails locations. The map can be viewed at <http://www.ksdot.org/burRail/bike/pdf/2012-2013-Bike-Map-Final.pdf> (it's a slow loading pdf).

The map is published for free dis-

tribution by the Bureau of Transportation Planning at KDOT. Copies of the *Kansas Bicycle Map* can be requested at bikeped@ksdot.org or by calling 785-296-7469. For more information on bicycling in Kansas, visit the website www.ksdot.org/bikeped.

Low water requires increased diligence at boat ramps

As a result of the drought, more public boat ramps are becoming unsafe for launching trailered boats, especially on rivers. Shallow water has increased the risk that boat operators will drive their trailers over the ends of boat ramps, especially in muddy rivers where ramps can be difficult to see underwater. The trailers could

become stuck or damaged.

Use common sense and don't push it too far. If you decide to launch a trailered boat, go nice and slow. The Fisheries & Wildlife Division of the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism maintains hundreds of boat ramps across the state and does not monitor water levels at each one.

Some ramps are currently only suitable for launching canoes, kayaks and small, hand-carried boats. Once you safely launch your boat, use extra caution to avoid shallow water, rocks and other obstacles. Water levels are abnormally low at all Kansas reservoirs, and boaters are urged to use caution.

2012 NWTF Kansas State JAKES Camp

The National Wild Turkey Federation will hold their 2012 Kansas State JAKES Camp September 15th & 16th at Camp Alexander, near Emporia. The cost of the event is \$20 for JAKES members, \$30 for non-JAKES members, and \$20 for adults. Youth 17 years of age and younger get to select from 15 activities to participate which includes fishing, first aid in the field, air rifle, small game animals, arts & crafts, nature hikes & bird-

ing, firearms handling & safety, shotgun live fire, turkey calling, archery, "World of Sporting Dogs," GPS, JAKES Take Aim range, and "Calls of the Wild."

Ralph Duren, two-time Grand National turkey calling champion will present "Calls of the Wild" and will entertain campers later around the campfire Saturday night. Youth attending can participate in the 3rd Annual NWTF Kansas State youth turkey calling contest

Saturday evening. Attendees may choose to tent camp Saturday night or elect to commute both days. Top-notch meals will be provided both days. Last year's Kansas State JAKES Camp was awarded the NWTF "Best State JAKES Event" at this year's NWTF National Convention in Nashville, TN.

For more information or a registration form, contact Gib Rhodes at 620-437-2012 or gib@madtel.net.

Poacher sentenced for illegal killing of eagle

Golden Eagle killed in Trego County

The poacher of a golden eagle in Trego County was sentenced Aug. 21 after pleading guilty to killing the immature raptor in 2011. Chad Irvin, Lacrosse, pleaded guilty to one misdemeanor count of violating the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act. He killed the eagle with a 12-gauge shotgun from a vehicle while hunting with family members.

Irvin was ordered to pay a \$5,000 fine and restitution of \$3,000; placed on supervised probation for three years, during which time he may not hunt, fish or trap; required to complete 50 hours of community service; and ordered to forfeit the shotgun used to kill the eagle.

A U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service special agent investigated the crime in conjunction with Kansas Department

of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism natural resource officers.

Golden eagles are protected by the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act. The killing of any eagle constitutes a violation of those acts. For more information on golden eagles, go online to fws.gov/migratorybirds/baldeagle.htm.

Midwest drought brings fourth smallest Gulf of Mexico 'Dead Zone' since 1985

NOAA-supported scientists have found the size of this year's Gulf of Mexico oxygen-free 'dead zone' to be the fourth smallest since mapping of the annual hypoxic, or oxygen-free area began in 1985. Measuring approximately 2,889 square miles, the 2012 area is slightly larger than Delaware.

The survey also found a patchy distribution of hypoxia across the Gulf differing from any previously recorded. This is in stark contrast to last year, when flood conditions, carrying large amounts of nutrients, resulted in a dead zone measuring 6,770 square miles, an area of the state of New Jersey. The last time the dead zone was this small was in 2000 when it measured 1,696 square miles, an area slightly smaller than Delaware.

"The smaller area was expected because of drought conditions and the

fact that nutrient output into the Gulf this spring approached near the 80-year record low," said Nancy Rabalais, Ph.D., executive director of the Louisiana Universities Marine Consortium (LUMCON) who led the survey cruise. "What wasn't expected was how the scattered distribution of hypoxia areas differed from any others documented in the past. Confirmed, however, is the strong relationship between the size of the hypoxic zone and the amount of fresh water and nutrients carried to the Gulf by the Mississippi River."

The smallest recorded dead zone to date measured 15 square miles in 1988. The largest dead zone, also called a hypoxic zone, measured to date occurred in 2002 encompassing more than 8,400 square miles. The average size of the dead zone over the past five years has been 5,684 square

miles, more than twice the 1,900 square mile goal set by the Gulf of Mexico/Mississippi River Watershed Nutrient Task Force.

Hypoxia is fueled by nutrient runoff from agricultural and other human activities in the Mississippi River watershed, which stimulates an overgrowth of algae that sinks, decomposes and consumes most of the life-giving oxygen supply in bottom waters.

The hypoxic zone off the coast of Louisiana and Texas forms each summer and threatens valuable commercial and recreational Gulf fisheries. In 2010, the dockside value of commercial fisheries in the Gulf was \$639 million. More than 4.6 million recreational fishers took an estimated 22 million fishing trips in 2010, further contributing to the Gulf economy."

Autumn outdoor safety tips

Fall is a wonderful time to be outdoors with its dazzling colors, crisp air, and wildlife activity galore. Whether your passion is hiking, hunting, fishing, birding, or just taking in the scenery, a few common sense safety reminders will add to your enjoyment during a day in the field.

Know your limits. Don't take off on a long hike, hunt, or bike ride if you're not physically ready.

Always tell someone where you're going and when you expect to return.

Watch the weather. Kansas weather is notoriously changeable. Be ready with extra clothing.

Expect the unexpected. Carrying a

fanny pack with a few first aid items, matches, water, pocket knife, cell phone, map, compass, whistle, extra food, and flashlight can help prevent small problems from becoming big ones.

Wear blaze orange for visibility. Whether you're a hunter, hiker, birder or dog walker in rural areas, it's a good idea to wear a cap or vest of highly visible blaze orange clothing while you're enjoying the great outdoors.

Respect the water. All boaters are required to have life jackets available, but all water enthusiasts, especially duck hunters and anglers who wade in rivers and lakes, would be wise to wear floatation devices now that water and air

temperatures are cooling.

Respect other outdoor users. Mountain biking, horseback riding, wildlife watching, hunting, and hiking need not be and are not mutually exclusive activities. Know the hunting seasons and who is likely to be sharing the woods and waters with you. Keep dogs under direct control and respect other outdoor users' rights to enjoy our open spaces.

Finally, licensed hunters are reminded to take the basics of hunter safety to heart. Treat every firearm as if it were loaded, keeping the muzzle pointed in a safe direction at all times. Positively identify your target and what lies beyond it.

Eight deer test positive for Chronic Wasting Disease

All but two from northwest Kansas; numbers stable

The Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism (KDWPT) has announced that eight deer from Kansas tested positive for chronic wasting disease, seven confirmed and two presumptive, for the current test year. That total is down from 10 confirmed positive during last year's testing. The two presumptive positive samples will be sent to the National Veterinary Services Laboratory in Ames, Iowa for confirmation. All but two of the eight deer — one from Stafford County and one from Ford County — were animals from northwestern Kansas. The Stafford and Ford county cases were firsts for each county. Eight of the deer were taken by hunters during the 2011 hunting seasons, and one was euthanized by a KDWPT natural resource officer after it was reported as acting sick.

Two cases were from Norton County and one each from Decatur, Ford, Rawlins, Stafford, Trego, and Wallace counties.

All cases were white-tailed deer. In total, 2,447 animals were tested for CWD for the 2011 deer seasons. Although most testing is finished for the year, KDWPT will continue testing

some vehicle-killed and sick or suspect-looking deer, as well as deer taken with depredation permits, through July 31. This season's testing results bring the total number of confirmed CWD cases in Kansas to 48 (46 white-tailed deer, 1 mule deer and 1 captive-bred elk) since testing began in 1996 out of 23,385 animals tested.

Annual testing is part of an ongoing effort by KDWPT to monitor the prevalence and spread of CWD. The fatal disease was first detected in a Kansas wild deer taken in Cheyenne County in 2005.

CWD is a member of the group of diseases called transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (TSEs). Other diseases in this group include scrapie in sheep and goats, bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE or mad cow disease) in cattle, and Cruetzfeldt-Jacob disease in people. CWD is a progressive, fatal disease that results in small holes developing in the brain, giving it a sponge-like appearance under the microscope. An animal may carry the disease without outward indication, but in the later stages, signs may include behavioral changes such as decreased

interactions with other animals, listlessness, lowering of the head, weight loss, repetitive walking in set patterns, and a lack of response to humans. Anyone who discovers a sick or suspect deer should contact the nearest KDWPT office.

"It must be noted that many symptoms of CWD are indicative of other diseases," says KDWPT wildlife disease coordinator Shane Hesting. "A sick deer may or may not be infected with CWD. CWD is a serious deer disease but is still a rare disease in Kansas. There is no vaccine or other biological method that prevents the spread of CWD. However, there is no evidence that CWD poses a risk to humans or livestock in the natural environment."

Still, precautions should be taken. Hunters are advised not to eat meat from animals known to be infected, and common-sense precautions are advised when field dressing and processing meat from animals taken in areas where CWD is found. More information on CWD can be found on KDWPT's website, ksoutdoors.com or at the Chronic Wasting Disease Alliance website, www.cwd-info.org.

Women on Target:

Saturday, July 7th the Geary County Fish and Game Association, under the direction of Shirley Allen, hosted the 13th annual "Women on Target" event. Thirty-two ladies from across Kansas experienced a day of outdoor activities. These included shooting shotgun, pistol, archery, rifle and muzzleloaders, as well as a

30 minute program on "Refuse to be a victim".

Twenty-one volunteers, along with a "Friends of NRA" grant, support from "Pheasants Forever" and local sponsors of Jim Nixon, Dan Hammond, Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Allen, Jim Clark, Crown Distributors, Ed Augustine, Ft. Riley Outdoors Group

and Glenn's Plumbing and Heating made this event possible.

At the conclusion, a registration fee to "Becoming an Outdoor Women," to be held at Rock Springs 4-H center September 21-23, 2012, was awarded in a chance drawing. Numerous door prizes also were awarded to end the event.

Daily hunting permits required at Melvern Wildlife Area

Free permits will help with game management

In an attempt to gather better information regarding how game populations respond to management activities and hunter harvest, Melvern Wildlife Area and Lyon State Fishing Lake will require daily hunting permits beginning Sept. 1. Melvern Wildlife Area is a popular destination for many hunters and provides more than 10,000 acres of public hunting for a variety of game, including white-tailed deer, wild turkey, bobwhite quail, and waterfowl. Providing high-quality habitat for each of these game species and a superior experience for the hunters pursuing them requires the best tools and information available, and data gleaned from these permits will help area biologists with their habitat management plans.

The hunting permit will be free and required for anyone hunting on these wildlife areas for any species of game. A new permit must be filled out and returned each day. Permits can be obtained at 10 locations on Melvern Wildlife Area and two locations on Lyon State Fishing Lake. At these locations, permits will be stored in metal boxes called "iron rangers," which are similar to mailboxes.

Prior to hunting, hunters will fill out the top portion of the card and deposit it in the iron ranger. The bottom portion must be kept on their person while hunting. When the hunter is finished for the day, the bottom portion should be filled out and returned to an iron ranger. The information collected will be used

to help direct management in the future. Additionally, these permits will provide much-needed information regarding game population trends on the area as well as hunter preferences, participation, success, and satisfaction with their hunting experience.

When the fall hunting season finally arrives, remember to stop by an iron ranger prior to hunting Melvern Wildlife Area or Lyon State Fishing Lake and fill out a permit. Cooperation and participation in this new program will help the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism collect valuable information to ensure a high-quality hunting experience for future generations. For more information, phone the Melvern Wildlife Area Office at 620-699-3372.

Grasslands conference proceedings released

In July of last year, we drew your attention to what was then to be an upcoming event: "America's Grasslands Conference: Status, Threats, and Opportunities."

Since America's grasslands and the grassland birds that depend on them are declining at alarming rates, far exceeding any other group of birds, we thought this event was worthy of your attention.

The conference was held in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, last August. This landmark event brought together more than 250 biologists, policy experts, ranchers, federal and state agency staff, representatives of elected officials, and conservationists to discuss the status, threats and opportunities related to

North American grasslands. It was intended to raise the national profile of this endangered ecosystem and inform those interested in developing a roadmap for grassland conservation.

"Grasslands are immensely important, not just because of the diversity of wildlife they support, but also because of the multiple benefits that they produce – from nutrient cycling, water retention, aquifer recharge and storage of substantial amounts of atmospheric carbon to improving water filtration and the quality of runoff water," said Julie Sibbing, director of Agriculture and Forestry at the National Wildlife Federation and Co-Chair of the event. "Significant opportunities exist to protect

and restore our remaining grasslands," Sibbing added.

You can now download the proceedings of this first Biennial Conference on the Conservation of America's Grasslands. Birds and bird conservation run throughout the proceedings, including studies as varied as the fate of wintering grassland birds, to cattle impacts on grasslands, and energy development relationships to bison-and-bird connections. The full conference proceedings can be found online at: <http://tinyurl.com/c5078vq>

You can also find out more about America's Grasslands Conference at: www.sdstate.edu/nrm/grasslandconference/index.cfm

More habitat for cranes in Texas

The Blackjacket Peninsula of Aransas National Wildlife Refuge is an Important Bird Area (IBA) and serves as the core wintering ground for the only naturally migrating and breeding population of Whooping Crane in the world.

Last winter, some of the cranes moved outside their traditional wintering areas, beyond Aransas NWR. The ongoing drought only exacerbated the situation, with both fresh water and blue crabs – a favorite Whooping Crane delicacy – at a premium. Fortunately, for the past number of months there have been some positive developments that begin to address this situation.

These efforts aim to increase the amount of secure habitat and related buffer zone for these significant crane wintering grounds, especially since the

carrying capacity of the habitat for the cranes is in question. A recent study by Texas A&M and The Crane Trust suggested that the goal of reaching 1,000 cranes on the Texas Coast by 2035 may hit a proverbial brick wall at 700 birds unless some serious measures are taken.

A number of partnerships involving the Coastal Bend Bays and Estuaries Program, the Texas Parks and Wildlife, The Nature Conservancy, the Whooping Crane Conservation Association, the USFWS, and others have recently secured multiple fee-title and easement properties near the refuge. These include all or parts of Falcon Point Ranch, Big Tree Ranch, areas near Holiday Beach, and several other parcels.

Lorne Scott of the Whooping Crane

Conservation Association said that the wintering habitat is more confined and threatened than the Canadian breeding grounds, and added, “The wintering habitat is so scarce and so unavailable, anything that does come up and has potential, we try to secure it.”

You can find more details here: www.caller.com/news/2012/jun/03/texas-parks-wildlife-to-take-over-big-tree-ranch

In April, they wrote about Whooping Cranes in Texas, their status and the challenges that they face: <http://refugeassociation.org/?p=5322#cranes>.

The above article came from the August issue of Birding Community E-bulletins. Archived articles can be found at: <http://refugeassociation.org/news/birding-bulletin/>.

CRP lands come to rescue of drought-stricken farmers and ranchers; solar will be wildlife-friendly

**By Bob Marshall
Field and Stream**

The headline above should be read out loud to all those congressmen and agricultural interests who oppose the Conservation Reserve Program.

Here’s why: In August the U.S. Department of Agriculture released millions of acres of CRP lands to grazing and haying in the nation’s drought-stricken heartland, coming to the rescue of farm and ranch operations that are facing disaster. But that’s exactly what the law creating CRP says should happen in these circumstances.

Conservation programs like CRP aren’t just about helping critters and sportsmen. They are an asset to farmers and ranchers as well.

Yes, landowners receive payments from federal taxpayers not to plow these acres, instead allowing them to grow natural grasses primarily to benefit wildlife. And, yes, that effort is generally recognized as the nation’s most effective wildlife conser-

vation program ever. It’s provided as many as 32 million acres of upland cover for birds and mammals, and it’s been a big help in cleaning up the water supply for humans as well as critters.

But CRP was originally also conceived as a way to protect the basic currency in farming success: topsoil. It did this by identifying “highly erodible acres” that should not be plowed. That effort received growing support from sportsmen and other green advocates who saw the advantage of fish, wildlife and ecosystems.

Yet the law always made provisions to use this huge bank of untouched land as saving grace when weather turned against farmers. They can be opened when there is a “40 percent or greater loss of normal precipitation for the 4 most recent months plus the days in the current month before the date of request.” Or, during times when the rain won’t stop, they can be opened if there is a “140 percent or greater increase

in normal precipitation during the 4 most recent consecutive months plus the days in the current month before the date of request.

Even then, safeguards for wildlife are supposed to be followed. Permission to hay and graze typically is withheld until the end of nesting season, and land within 120 feet of a stream or other permanent water body cannot be included in the emergency opening.

And the farmers must pay a price: Usually they forfeit 25 percent of their CRP payments. This year that amount has been set at 10 percent.

Not a bad deal when the alternative might be watching livestock starve.

Is this good for wildlife? In the short term, no. But long-term, it gives sportsmen more ammunition in their fight to protect conservation programs because now they can ask farmers and ranchers this question: Where would you have been in 2012 without CRP?

Take Me Fishing announces Top 8 state parks in America

El Dorado State Park in Kansas in Top 8

Fans of the Recreational Boating & Fishing Foundation's (RBFF) Take Me Fishing™ campaign took to Facebook this summer to participate in Nature's Waterpark Showdown. Each fan was invited to help determine the top eight natural "waterparks," or state parks, for boating and fishing in America. Twenty-four pre-determined parks were put to the test and after eight weeks of voting, the fans have spoken.

The Top State Parks include:

- Lake Murray State Park, Oklahoma
- Itasca State Park, Minnesota
- Blue Spring State Park, Florida
- El Dorado State Park, Kansas
- Presque Isle State Park, Pennsylvania
- Cave Lake State Park, Nevada
- Fall Creek Falls State Park, Tennessee
- Wellington State Park, New Hampshire

Many families look for places that are both fun and affordable when planning

vacations. Luckily for them, there are 7,804 state parks in the U.S. Additionally, 90 percent of Americans live within one hour of navigable water. As for the cost, on average the cost of fishing licenses for a family of four (\$115) is under half the cost for a family season pass to the average commercial waterpark (\$500).

"Families are looking for unique, affordable trips," said Frank Peterson, RBFF President and CEO. "The Nature's Waterpark Showdown winners are just a few examples of enjoyable fishing and boating hotspots right in your own backyard that you can visit with your family."

Spending time with family and enjoying nature are not the only joys and benefits that fishing and boating bring. Many may not realize that the purchase of a fishing license or boat registration helps to preserve natural places, like state parks, and is vital to aquatic conservation efforts.

"A portion of all fishing tackle and license sales, as well as boat supply and registration sales, fund the conservation and preservation of our nation's waterways helping to ensure that future generations can enjoy all that nature has to offer," said Peterson.

Since 2007, the Take Me Fishing campaign has generated nearly \$30 million for state conservation efforts. The campaign increases awareness of the need to protect, conserve and restore the nation's aquatic resources by encouraging participation in recreational boating and fishing.

For more information on the Nature's Waterpark Showdown winners visit the Take Me Fishing Facebook page or the Take Me Fishing Blog. The parks showcased in the campaign are just a fraction of the many outdoor recreation spots available throughout the nation. For more information on boating and fishing and a full list of places to participate in the sports, visit TakeMeFishing.org.

Take two hikes and call me in the morning

Can a dose of nature cure what ails you?

By National Wildlife Federation Staff

Philosophers and poets have long praised the rejuvenating benefits of nature, but only in the past two decades has nature's healing potential been examined through the lens of modern science. Scientific research suggests that activities such as gardening, walking by a stream or even gazing out a window at your backyard may have therapeutic benefits.

Among the findings:

- A group of breast cancer patients who spent half an hour watching birds or strolling in a park three times a week had increased attention span and significant gains in quality of life ratings, compared patients who stayed inside.

- In a recent nationwide study of more than 400 children with attention deficit hyperactive disorder (ADHD),

scientists observed a significant reduction of symptoms among kids who were "treated" to some time outside enjoying nature compared with those who were not.

- A study of 100 people in a diversity of work settings found that employees with window views of nature had lower levels of job stress and higher reports of general well-being than those without such views.

- Patients who underwent bronchoscopy experienced less pain after first viewing a nature scene, then listening to sounds of a bubbling brook during the procedure, compared to a group that did not use these interventions.

- A study of 337 rural children, by Cornell University environmental psychologist Nancy Wells, shows that children with more exposure to nature

have reduced stress levels and longer attention spans.

These studies are leading to changes in the health-care industry: Hospitals, for example, are incorporating "healing gardens" into their designs. Nursing homes are installing aquariums and aviaries. Workplaces are adding rooftop gardens and interior plants. And "wilderness therapy" is being offered to cancer patients, emotionally disturbed children and rape survivors, among many others.

Check out NWF's Wildlife Gardening section (<http://www.nwf.org/News-and-Magazines/National-Wildlife/Gardening.aspx>) and get tips for making a natural oasis outside your home. Then, tweet us (<http://www.twitter.com/greenhour>) your experiences of how nature has rejuvenated you and helped your mental and physical health!

Young birders get a boost

In late July, a group of enthusiastic young birders gathered at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology in Ithaca, New York, to participate in the Lab's special Young Birder Event. This year, the event was sponsored by Carl Zeiss Sports Optics.

This series of events began in the summer of 2009, and it has since become an ideal way to connect and inspire promising teenage birders. Ten high-school-aged young people are chosen to participate, and for a week-

end packed with activities they are exposed to a variety of creative and diverse ways to hone their birding skills. They learn from professional ornithologists as well as Cornell University graduate and undergraduate students about careers that center on birds. They try making sound and video recordings of birds, along with learning something about Neotropical birds, taxonomy, nocturnal flight calls of migrants, field sketching, taking field notes, and much more.

"These young birders will be the next generation of leaders in ornithology and conservation," says the Cornell Lab's Jessie Barry, one of the hosts of the event.

Already, plans are underway for the 2013 session, including a search for promising young birders in grades 9 through 12. For more on this year's Young Birder Event at Cornell go to:

www.birds.cornell.edu/roundrobin/2012/07/17this-weekend-young-birders-flock-to-cornell-lab/

Wild game royal table fare

Shot selection, quick cool-down, clean conditions essential

Have you ever heard someone say that deer meat isn't worth eating, that it's "gamey" or "wild tasting"? Many people who have tried improperly-cared for venison, and many who have never eaten deer, labor under this misconception. But avid deer hunters realize that these folks just don't know what they're missing. Many believe that whitetail deer is the best red meat on the planet. But ensuring that the meat they take lives up to this standard requires care, and when care is taken, the ultimate satisfaction of the hunt comes when the meat is served to family and friends.

Follow these simple rules, and your venison will be fit for a king.

The first step is a quick, clean kill through the lungs or heart, and this

requires knowing one's range and equipment, combined with careful shot selection.

Next is cooling the meat. No matter the weather, cooling a deer soon after the kill is critical. When weather is mild, hunters must take special care to ensure their hard-earned deer cools quickly. As soon as the deer is recovered, it's important to field dress the animal so that the carcass can cool down.

Be careful to keep dirt, hair, and debris away from exposed meat while dressing and when moving the deer to the vehicle. Those who plan to process their own deer should hang the deer in a clean, cool building. It's often best to remove the hide so that meat can con-

tinue to cool, particularly if the weather is warmer than usual. Hunters who plan to have the deer processed by commercial butchers should contact them as soon as possible to arrange for delivery.

A cool, clean place is essential for butchering. Although not necessary, many hunters like to age their deer, but a cooler is often needed for this. For those who prefer this method, venison should be aged at 35-39 degrees. Cooler than this, and the meat may freeze; warmer, and the meat may spoil.

With a little extra effort and time, successful deer hunters will enjoy months of rewarding venison meals. Remember: make a clean shot, field dress the deer quickly, cool the meat, and keep it clean.

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Solar plans revised to protect wildlife

This is why sportsmen should never think fighting conservation battles--even against great odds--is a waste of time:

The plan for utility-scale development on solar energy across Western states released this week by the Department of Interior contains many of the revisions to protect fish, wildlife and recreation urged by sportsmen last December.

“These changes--which include addressing habitat fragmentation and connectivity issues, refining solar zone acres and ultimately excluding valuable fish and wildlife habitat from what was proposed in the original draft--should help facilitate domestic renewable energy development and minimize conflicts over public lands management, all while ensuring the responsible cultivation of our shared natural resources,” Ed Arnett, director of the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership Center for Responsible Energy De-

velopment said in a press release the group released on the news.

The coalition was specific in its praise for the Bureau of Land Management, an agency that more often is a target of its criticism.

Kate Zimmerman of the National Wildlife Federation said, “This is a huge step forward for the Bureau of Land Management, which has tended to address energy development on a project-by-project basis in response to the wants of individual companies rather than the values of the American public or the needs of fish and wildlife. By designating solar energy zones and driving development to those zones, BLM is charting a future for America’s public lands that includes both plenty of renewable energy and abundant wildlife.”

Trout Unlimited Brad Powell added, “The BLM engaged the public effectively and developed a well-thought-out decision. To capitalize on this success it is imperative that

this new policy include direction for successful implementation. It must provide greater certainty for the energy industry as well as for sportsmen, identifying places that will not be developed in the near future--as well as areas that will require mitigation measures to reduce impacts to fish and wildlife, hunting and angling, and our valuable recreation-based economy.”

This is all worth repeating because it shows federal agencies will listen to sportsmen’s voices--even in an era when many in Congress are urging less accountability from industry, fewer safeguards for fish, wildlife and public lands--and less cooperation with the majority owners of that public property, average citizens like sportsmen.

So the next time elected officials try to tell you “adjustments for the environment are too expensive,” show them this news. And keep writing those letters and emails.

HUNTERS

Continued from Page 1

“We look forward to continuing to work with the States, non-governmental organizations, and additional partners to help keep recreational fishing, hunting, and wildlife watching going strong for people across America’s great outdoors.”

Other key findings include:

□ In 2011, 13.7 million people, 6 percent of the U.S. population 16 years old and older, went hunting. They spent \$34.0 billion on trips, equipment, licenses, and other items in 2011, an average of \$2,484 per hunter.

□ More than 33 million people 16 and older fished in 2011, spending \$41.8 billion on trips, equipment, licenses, and other items, an average of \$1,262 per angler.

□ More than 71 million people engaged in wildlife watching in

2011, spending \$55.0 billion on their activities.

At the request of state fish and wildlife agencies, the Fish and Wildlife Service has been conducting the national survey every five years since 1955. It is viewed as one of the nation’s most important wildlife-related recreation databases and the definitive source of information concerning participation and purchases associated with hunting, fishing and other forms of wildlife-related recreation nationwide.

“State agencies, hunters and anglers are the key funders of fish and wildlife conservation through their license and gear purchases,” said Dr. Jonathan Gasset, Commissioner of the Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Resources Commission and President of the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies. “An increase in participation and expenditure rates means that agencies can continue to restore and improve habitat and fish and wildlife species, bring more youth into the

outdoors and provide even greater access to recreational activities.”

The U.S. Census Bureau interviewed 48,627 households across the country to obtain samples of sportspersons and wildlife watchers for detailed interviews. Information was collected through computer-assisted telephone and in-person interviews.

The Survey is funded through a Multi-State Conservation Grant from the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program, which celebrates 75 years of conservation success in 2012.

The preliminary report is the first in a series that the Service will release. The next report of preliminary findings will contain State data and will be available in the coming months. In late November, the National Report with more detail participation and expenditure estimates will be available online. From December 2012 to May 2013, the 50 State reports will be released on a rolling basis.

Zebra mussel control being tested on Minnesota lake

A research project, using a natural product called Zequanox, is underway at Lake Carlos State Park in an effort to discover an effective and environmentally safe means to control zebra mussels and protect aquatic ecosystems, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources announced.

The DNR's invasive species program is working with the U. S. Geological Survey (USGS) and New York State Museum's Field Research Laboratory on the project.

Zequanox is a natural product that was approved by the Environmental Protection Agency for use in controlling zebra and quagga mussels that attach, colonize and clog closed industrial water systems such as power plant pipes. Most of the early and recent research on Zequanox has been on treatments to control mussels in these closed systems, but little research has been conducted to evaluate its potential for controlling mussels and their veligers in open waters. The

research at Lake Carlos is part of a research grant funded by the Environmental Protection Agency's Great Lakes Restoration Initiative to assess the safety and efficacy of this product for open water use.

"The main objective of this research is to evaluate the potential of Zequanox to reduce the impacts of zebra mussels on native mussels," said Nathan Olson, DNR aquatic invasive species specialist. "In addition, this research is the first step to determine the potential of Zequanox to treat isolated, localized areas such as those around docks and boatlifts in waters where zebra mussels are newly discovered."

Last fall, the USGS and DNR placed zebra mussels collected from Lake Carlos into holding cages that were then submerged in different locations in the lake. Over the winter, the zebra mussels attached to aluminum mesh trays within the cages.

Beginning Aug. 15, the mesh trays

are being removed from the lake and placed inside a 34-foot research trailer parked on the shores of Lake Carlos within the park. Inside the trailer, the cages are being exposed to Zequanox and then placed back into the lake. After four weeks, a post-treatment evaluation will be conducted to determine the effectiveness of the treatments.

Several species of native mussels are threatened or endangered, and zebra mussels do not help with efforts to recover their populations. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service commonly uses cages to propagate native mussels, but zebra mussels attach to the cages and stop water from flowing to the native mussels. The USGS would like to determine if Zequanox can be used as an aid in freshwater mussel propagation.

For more information on Zequanox and the research project, visit http://cida.usgs.gov/glri/projects/invasive_species/zm_control.html



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The face of fishing and boating is changing

A new study by the Recreational Boating & Fishing Foundation (RBFF) and The Outdoor Foundation reveals fishing and boating are among the most important 'gateway' activities that often lead people, especially youth, to pursue other recreation experiences. And for the first time in several years - fishing gained more participants than it lost - largely due to women taking up the sport.

The study found that fishing remains one of the most popular recreational activities in the country with more and more people trying out the sport every day. According to the 2012 Special Report on Fishing and Boating, fishing added a net total of 800,000 new participants, bringing the total of Americans who fished to 46 million, or 16.2 percent of the population. Females and young children added the most new participants, showing unprecedented interest in this typically male-dominated sport.

"Families are searching to squeeze in quality time with each other whenever and wherever they can. Getting outdoors to fish and boat is a great way to do this," said Leslie Nagao, RBFF Vice President of Marketing and Communications. "That's one reason we believe women and younger parents are taking up the sport in growing numbers."

The fourth annual report provides detailed information on boating and fishing participation by gender, age, ethnicity, income, education and geographic region. A summary of the findings were highlighted this past weekend in Salt Lake City at the Outdoor Retailer Summer Market, a trade show focusing on the latest innovative outdoor gear and trends in outdoor recreation. Nagao ap-

peared as a an Outdoor Engagement session panelist at the event where she shared RBFF's vision to attract new consumer segments - specifically multi-generational families and multi-cultural audiences - in boating and fishing.

"Increased participation leads to increased fishing license sales and boat registration renewals, both key sources for funding state fish and wildlife conservation, and boating infrastructure programs," added Nagao. "We hope to keep the momentum going so the joys of fishing and boating can be experienced by everyone for generations to come."

KEY STUDY FINDINGS

The methodology and full study is available online at RBFF.org.

Fishing Participation

In 2011, 46.2 million Americans participated in fishing (an increase from 45.4 million in 2010).

While eight million participants stopped fishing, 8.8 million former or new participants joined the sport, netting an increase in overall participation.

Although the number of fishing participants increased, the number of fishing outings decreased (average of 18.2 days fishing in 2011 compared to average of 20.4 days fishing in 2010).

Females and youths ages six to 12 added the most new fishing participants.

Adults 18 and older with children in their households participate in fishing at higher levels than adults without children.

Findings also indicate that fly fishing has the greatest amount of interest among newcomers, while saltwater fishing holds the interest of participants from youth through

adolescence.

Hispanic American Fishing Participation

3.1 million Hispanic Americans participated in fishing in 2011 - a slight decrease from 3.4 million in 2010.

Freshwater fishing is, by far, the most popular type of fishing among Hispanic Americans.

Hispanic Americans fish the most often out of any fishing category or demographic group, averaging 20 fishing days per year.

Youth Fishing Participation

Typical of outdoor activities, fishing participation rates peak between the ages of six and 12 and then decrease during the adolescent years from 13 to 17.

81.8 percent of fishing participants ages six to 12 are introduced to outdoor activities by their parents.

Almost 44 percent of youth fishing participants ages six to 17 also participate in boating.

Boating Participation

Although boating participation decreased slightly (from 18.1 percent of population in 2010 to 17.8 percent in 2011), the average number of outings per boater increased from 13.2 annual outings in 2010, to 14 annual outings in 2011.

Fishing from a boat is the most popular activity among males over the age of 16 with 64 percent participation.

Multispecies boats surpassed bass boat as the most popular boat type at 26 percent for multispecies, followed by bass boat at 16.3 percent.

The social aspect of boating is notable with 63% of boating participants reporting they get on the water with friends.

New report shows U.S. wetlands losses accelerating

Ducks Unlimited scientists have completed an analysis of a recent federal report on the status of America's wetlands. The report, issued periodically by the U.S. Department of the Interior, indicates gains in some wetland types and disturbing declines in others that provide important habitat for waterfowl and other wildlife. Overall, the study shows a negative trend with the rate of wetland loss accelerating in recent years.

Status and Trends of Wetlands in the Conterminous United States 2004 to 2009 (<http://www.fws.gov/wetlands/StatusAndTrends2009/index.html>) compares wetland losses and gains during this period to those documented during the previous study period (1998-2004). In recent decades, wetland loss had slowed, largely because of beneficial wetland conservation policies and programs, but the new report reveals wetland loss has now accelerated, increasing by 140 percent since 2004. The 1998-2004 report showed a net gain of 32,000 wetland acres per year while the latest research shows a net loss of 13,800 wetland acres each year. The new report covers the first complete study period since a 2001 U.S. Supreme Court decision weakened Clean Water Act protection of certain wetlands.

Some wetland types showed alarming declines:

- Marine and estuarine intertidal wetlands in America's coastal regions were lost three times faster than during the previous study period. About 25,000 acres of salt marsh disappeared each year between 2004 and 2009. Eighty-three percent of these acres were lost to open water, predominantly through subsidence and sea-level rise.

- More than 140,000 acres of bottom-

land hardwood forests were lost each year in the United States between 2004 and 2009. These seasonally flooded wetlands in the South and Southeast provide vital wintering habitat for ducks.

Since the 1950s, the United States has lost more than 26 million acres of coastal wetlands, bottomland hardwood forests and freshwater marshes—an amount equivalent to the surface area of Lakes Superior and Erie combined.

Wetlands are among nature's most productive ecosystems, providing habitat for waterfowl, fish and many other species of wildlife. Freshwater wetlands alone cover only 1 percent of the earth's surface but provide habitat for more than 40 percent of the world's species. Coastal wetlands are similarly productive and diverse. For example, 66 percent of marine fish rely on coastal wetlands at some stage in their life cycle. Wetlands also provide a host of important societal benefits, including recreational opportunities, floodwater storage, groundwater recharge and water purification.

"The Department of Interior's *Status and Trends of Wetlands* serves as a report card on our nation's wetlands," said Paul Schmidt, chief conservation officer for DU, "and with wetland losses now outstripping wetland gains, the findings in the 2004-2009 report are discouraging."

The accelerating losses documented in the report are especially troubling in light of current federal budget discussions centered on future funding for wetland conservation programs. "Significant cuts to federal funding for wetland conservation programs would result in further dramatic increases in the rate of wetland loss in the United

States," Schmidt said. "Funding for programs such as the North American Wetlands Conservation Act (<http://www.ducks.org/conservation/public-policy/nawca>), the Wetlands Reserve Program, and the Land and Water Conservation Fund is essential to protect our wetlands and wildlife, safeguard the quality and quantity of our nation's fresh water, and preserve our hunting and fishing heritage."

The report's findings highlight the significance of the habitat restoration and conservation efforts of DU and its partners, while underscoring the need for strong federal wetland policies and programs. "Everyone who cares about wetlands, wildlife, and the health of our nation's environment and economy should contact their members of Congress and urge them to support funding for the North American Wetlands Conservation Act, Wetlands Reserve Program, and Land and Water Conservation Fund," said Dale Hall, Ducks Unlimited CEO. "We agree that the deficit must be controlled and our nation's debt must be reduced, but Congress should avoid slashing funding for conservation programs that produce a positive return on investment for our nation's economy."

Overall, hunting and fishing support more than 1.6 million jobs and generate more than \$25 billion a year in federal, state and local taxes. Hunters and anglers in the United States spend about \$76 billion each year on their outdoor pursuits.

For assistance in contacting members of Congress to urge them to maintain funding for federal programs crucial to wetlands conservation, please visit www.ducks.org/conservation/public-policy.

CROSSBOW

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do not have access to the Internet may obtain a crossbow survey ID number at

any KDWPT office. Those who sign up at a KDWPT office will also receive a printed receipt.

There can only be one survey ID per KDWPT number. For more information, phone 620-672-5911 and ask for the IT Help Desk.

Also new this year, hunters who have a youth big game permit valid during the archery season and those 55 and older who have a big game permit valid during the archery season may hunt with a crossbow. Those hunters do not need a crossbow survey ID number.

Outdoor recreation participation study shows increase

Participation in outdoor recreation reached a five-year high in 2011 with nearly 50 percent of all Americans ages six and older enjoying the outdoors. That equates to 141.1 million American outdoor participants. The findings are part of The Outdoor Foundation's 2012 Outdoor Recreation Participation Report, the leading report tracking American participation trends in outdoor recreation with a focus on youth, diversity and the future of the outdoors.

The Outdoor Foundation's sixth annual Outdoor Recreation Participation Report helps the outdoor industry, public agencies and community organizations better understand the trends in outdoor recreation participation, enabling groups to address America's inactivity crisis and the disconnect between children and the outdoors. The report is based on an

online survey of more than 40,000 Americans ages six and older and covers 114 different outdoor activities, making it the largest survey of its kind.

The study, which provides an in-depth look at youth, identifies an upward trend in outdoor participation among America's youngest generations. Youth participation overall grew by one-percentage point in each age group, from 6 to 24.

Among young boys, outdoor participation grew by two-percentage points - reversing a downward trend that began in 2007. Although participation rates for girls the same age remained stagnant, participation among female teenagers grew by two-percentage points to reach the highest participation rate for female teenagers recorded in this report.

"The Outdoor Participation Report

shows that, thanks to national efforts to connect Americans with the outdoors, people are increasingly more inspired to get up and get outside," said Chris Fanning, executive director of The Outdoor Foundation. "We are especially encouraged by the report's findings that more youth are enjoying outdoor activities, as this will ensure healthier children, healthier communities and healthier businesses."

The insights detailed in the 2012 Outdoor Recreation Participation Report are critical to national efforts seeking to understand outdoor participation and continuing to reverse America's inactivity crisis. Some of the additional findings include:

* In 2011, outdoor participants made 11.5 billion outings - that is 1.4

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NRCS' Ogallala Aquifer initiative helps landowners conserve water and playas

Water—or the lack of it—is of primary concern for many people living in the western Great Plains, especially as drought conditions continue. The effects of the drought can be seen across the landscape, but what isn't visible is the steep decline in the Ogallala Aquifer—which underlies about 225,000 square miles throughout parts of Colorado, Kansas, Nebraska, New Mexico, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Texas, and Wyoming—and the efforts to counteract it through irrigation system improvements as well as playa conservation.

"The water decline in the aquifer is extreme in some portions, especially down south in Texas and New Mexico," says Craig Derickson, State Conservationist for the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Nebraska.

Last year, with little or no precipitation, coupled with increased pump-

ing of the aquifer to sustain crops, water levels in the Texas Panhandle were reduced by an average of two and a half feet. That may not seem like much, but the problem is that water is being withdrawn from the aquifer at a much greater rate than the recharge. A 2007 study by the Environmental Protection Agency found that the recharge rate is approximately one inch per year, with a net overdraft of two and a half inches per year. When compared against a two and a half foot decline, the loss of water is enormous. In large areas of Texas, Oklahoma and Kansas, the water level in the aquifer has declined by 50 to 175 feet since pumping began in the late 40s.

To counter these issues, in 2010, the Natural Resources Conservation Service instituted the Ogallala Aquifer Initiative, which offers more than \$49 million annually in financial

assistance to landowners through 2015. The primary objectives of the initiative are to reduce the quantity of water removed from the aquifer by increasing delivery efficiency, enhance water quality by mitigating water quality impacts from agricultural production practices, and promote recharge to the Ogallala Aquifer through playa wetland conservation.

"Since the Ogallala Aquifer Initiative was announced, we've saved more than 17 billion gallons of water, that's over 53,000 acre-feet, in those eight states," said Derickson in a recent interview for Playa Country radio. "In the last year, NRCS wrote about 450 individual contracts with producers and utilized about \$15 million to fund practices mostly directed at reducing the consumption of water

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Geary County F&GA adds pistol range

The Geary County Fish and Game Association at Milford Reservoir has ordered a new type target system for their pistol range. This will be for .22

caliber rim fire only system. It should be up and running very shortly. The Range Committee believes the system will add a little pizzazz to the range. Call Sports-

man's Acres, 785-238-TRAP (8727), for availability or go to www.gearycofishandgame.org for more information. Check it out you pistol shooters.

STUDY

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billion more outings than 2010.

* Of all age groups, teenagers ages 13 to 17 have the most core outdoor participants (or regular participants) at 39 percent.

* Almost half of all outdoor enthusiasts participate in outdoor activities at least once a week.

* Participants in gateway activities are more likely to enjoy multiple outdoor activities, rather than just one. In fact, 87 percent of hikers participate in one or more other outdoor

activities.

* Although participation rates among youth ages six to 17 are up, average annual outings are down from 98 outings per participant in 2010 to 81 outings in 2011.

* Youth who do not participate in outdoor activities say they are simply not interested in the outdoors. For young adults, lack of time is a bigger barrier than lack of interest.

* Introducing outdoor recreation and physical activities early in life has a lasting effect. Among adults who are current outdoor participants, 82 percent report having a physical education class between the ages of six and 12. Forty-five percent of

adult outdoor participants took part in outdoor activities from ages six to 12.

* As seen in previous reports, participation in outdoor activities was significantly higher among Caucasians than any other ethnicity and lowest among African Americans.

* Although Hispanics have among the lowest overall outdoor participation rate, those that do participate go outside the most often.

To download a complete copy of the 2012 Outdoor Recreation Participation Report, visit The Outdoor Foundation website at <http://www.outdoorfoundation.org/research.participation.2012.html>.

AQUIFER

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from the aquifer and improving water quality—specifically irrigation system improvements and new subsurface drip irrigation, as well as nutrient and pest management.”

“The water conservation measures that are encouraged and supported by the NRCS Ogallala Aquifer Initiative are necessary if we want this water source to be available for future generations,” says PLJV Coordinator Mike Carter. “When coupled with playa restoration and protection, which allows more recharge to the aquifer, both sides of the equation are addressed.”

The NRCS initiative includes funds to restore a minimum of 250,000 acres of playa wetlands and associated upland watersheds. Playas, temporary wetlands formed from

rainwater and runoff, are the primary source of recharge for the Ogallala, contributing up to 95 percent of the overall return of water to the aquifer. Because they lack any outlets, the water either seeps into the underlying aquifer or evaporates. During dry periods, a playa develops deep cracks and fissures in the clay bottom, which are channels for recharge. But many of the approximately 80,000 playas throughout the region are not able to recharge the aquifer at all. To function properly, playas need excess sediment removed, a filtering grass buffer around the edges, and a watershed that allows water to reach the playa.

Currently, there are only a few practices for playa conservation allowed under the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, the funding source for the Ogallala Aquifer Initiative, but they are not attracting landowner interest

or enrollments. NRCS is now considering how other US Department of Agriculture (USDA) conservation programs could help reach the initiative's playa restoration goals. In addition, Playa Lakes Joint Venture is talking with various USDA staff—from NRCS Chief Dave White on down through state and local personnel—about how to involve conservation programs that are jointly administered by the Farm Service Agency and Natural Resources Conservation Service, such as the Conservation Reserve Program and Wetlands Reserve Program.

“With all parties involved and working to find a way to attract landowners to playa conservation, I believe we can meet the goals of this initiative,” says PLJV Conservation Policy Director Barth Crouch. “We must succeed if we want to keep the Ogallala from going the way of the American bison.”

Kansas Wildlife Federation
P.O. Box 771282
Wichita, KS 67277-1282

The Kansas Wildlife Federation is Working to Preserve a Way of Life for Kansas!

Conservation of the state's natural resources means . . .

- Public awareness of our state's wonderfully diverse advantages and a determination to keep and improve them for wise use now and in future years.
- Proper safeguards—within the bounds of wise use—for the state's soil, water, forests and wildlife, to assure proper balance, use and advancement of our state's entire economy!

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- * **Kansan:** For an annual fee of \$150, you receive all the benefits listed above plus a copy of the book *Kansas Wildlife*.

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