



March 2012

LOVEWELL SPRING NEWSLETTER

Our Biggest Change, Just Above!!

One of the biggest changes for 2012 appears to the left of our newsletter title! In July of 2011, by order of Governor Brownback, the Division of Travel and Tourism (formerly a part of the Department

of Commerce) was merged with our agency to form the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism. We may occasionally abbreviate our new agency name as KDWP. As you can see, our department logo has also changed. We are extremely excited about this new collaboration and what it will bring for our customers.

WHAT'S NEW!!

The distribution of this newsletter was adapted this year to an electronic version. The postcard that you received directing you to the online version of the newsletter was less expensive to print and mail than the entire newsletter, as was done in the past. This is also more user-friendly, since it can be saved to your computer for future reference. Some changes to permits have occurred for 2012. The discounted Second Annual vehicle permit has been eliminated. All vehicle permits will either be Annual or Daily. Also, we will NO LONGER REQUIRE VEHICLE REGISTRATIONS to purchase the annual park permit, only your license plate number and customer information (it helps to bring your 2011 receipt which has your Customer ID#). **There is an exception:** if you are purchasing a KS Senior/Disabled permit you must still prove the vehicle is registered to you. The Annual Camp permit fee has been REDUCED \$50.00 from its 2011 price. Daily Utility fees have increased slightly; Electric is \$8; Electric & Water \$10; and Electric/Water/Sewer is \$11 per day. You will also notice a slight change in transaction fees when the new ORMS system is implemented later this year (See Page 3). Peak and Off-Peak pricing will continue to save you money on vehicle and camping permits if purchased before April 1st. **Due to the intense sales at Lovewell near the end of March: MAIL REQUESTS FOR PERMITS REQUIRE A SELF-ADDRESSED, STAMPED ENVELOPE, AND THEY WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED AFTER MARCH 20TH. WE CANNOT ACCEPT FAX AND EMAIL REQUESTS.** Annual Vehicle and Annual Camp permits can be purchased online at www.ksoutdoors.com (License/Permits). Print the temporary permit at home and bring it to the park office to exchange for a permit sticker. Online sales are not available for 14-Day Camp permits.

**Wish You Could Camp At The Lake All Summer Long?
Contact Lovewell State Park About Becoming A Camp Host!!!**

STATE PARK FEES FOR 2012

	Jan. 1-Mar 31	April 1-Sep 30	Oct. 1-Dec 31
★ Annual Vehicle	\$19.70	\$24.70	\$19.70
★ KS SR/Disabled Annual	\$11.10	\$13.60	\$11.10
★ Daily Vehicle	\$ 3.70	\$ 4.20	\$ 3.70
★ KS SR/Disabled Daily	\$ 2.60	\$ 2.85	\$ 2.60
★ Annual Camp	\$152.50	\$202.50	\$152.50
★ 14 Day Camp	\$87.50	\$101.50	\$87.50
★ Daily Camp	\$ 7.50	\$ 8.50	\$ 7.50
★ Prime Site	NA	\$ 2.50	NA
★ Electricity	\$ 8.00	\$ 8.00	\$ 8.00
★ Elect/Water	\$10.00	\$10.00	\$10.00
★ Elect/Water/Sewer	\$11.00	\$11.00	\$11.00
★ Long Term Campsite Elect	\$241.50	\$241.50	\$241.50
★ Long Term Campsite EW	\$301.50	\$301.50	\$301.50
★ Long Term Campsite EWS	\$361.50	\$361.50	\$361.50

* Transaction Fees will change with implementation of the new Outdoor Recreation Management System (ORMS) later this year. The current \$0.50 transaction fee will be dropped from each **permit** and a \$3.00 transaction fee will be added to each **total transaction**.

OFFICE HOURS THRU MARCH 30 ARE 8AM TO 4:30PM MONDAY-FRIDAY

Inside this issue:

Open House Kicks Off Special Events	2
Lovewell Marina Adds Pizza to the Menu	2
Outdoor Recreation Mgmt System (ORMS)	3
New Frisbee Golf Course Installed	3
Regulation Reminders	4
Southwinds Cabins Ready To Go	4
Park Manager Cleveland Retires	5
FEMA Assists with More Storm Damage	5
Jamestown Wildlife Area Update	6
Lovewell Wildlife Area Flooding 2011	7
New Wildlife Area Taking Shape @ Talmo	7
2012 Fishing Forecast	8
2011 Lovewell Creel Survey Results	9
New Regs Prevent Aquatic Nuisances	9
Tips for a Successful Boat Safety Check	10



OPEN HOUSE ENHANCED TO KICK OFF 2012 SPECIAL EVENTS!!

Lovewell State Park's Special Events continue to be a highlight for the year with many of our constituents. This year's events will be no exception! Lovewell State Park will host its 3rd Annual Open House on Saturday, March 31st. This has been such a popular event at Lovewell, that this year open houses are occurring at all Kansas State Parks on that day. It will also be the first of two Free Park Entrance Days. A vehicle permit will not be required to enter the state park on March 31st. The park office will be open 10 am to 6:30 pm on that day to give you one last opportunity to purchase your state park vehicle permits at the off-peak price. (Prices increase to the peak rate on April 1st). Park and Fisheries staff will be hosting informational programs at 10am and 2 pm to showcase new facilities and changes, review the online Outdoor Recreation Management System(ORMS), and to present the latest information for fishing this year at Lovewell and Glen Elder reservoirs. You will also have the opportunity to give us feedback about your State Park, and what improvements or changes that you

would like to see! Free Fishing Weekend will be June 2/3, with the Kids Fishing Derby set for Sunday June 3rd. For the Independence Day Weekend, individual fireworks will be allowed in the Pioneer playground area, weather permitting. Exact dates allowed will be announced. The Sand Castle/Sculpture Contest will be held on Sunday, July 15th, and Lovewell Fun Day on August 4th. Events for Fun Day will likely include a Frisbee Golf Tournament, Minnow Races, Co-Ed Mud Volleyball, Log Races, Water Balloon Toss, Waterslide Contest, and Frisbee Throw contest. The Campfire Cookoff may be discontinued as part of Fun Day, due to lack of participation. If you have ideas for new Fun Day games/activities, please let us know!

The Campground Christmas event will be held the weekend of August 18th, with lots of campsite decorations and holiday fun. The final event for the season will be held Sunday, September 9th, with a 3-D Archery Shoot and the Annual Chili Cookoff. This will also be Lovewell State Park's second Free Park Entrance Day.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!!

Free Park Entrance and Open House	March 31
Free Fishing Weekend	June 2/3
Kids Fishing Derby	June 3
Individual Fireworks	Dates TBA
Sand Castle Contest	July 15
Lovewell Fun Day	Aug 4
Campground Christmas	Aug 18/19
Chili Cookoff/3D Archery	Sept 9
Free Park Entrance	Sept 9



A Fun Day Participant Takes a Turn at the Waterslide Contest

Lovewell State Park is a popular location for family and school reunions, weddings and company picnics. Contact us to schedule your own special event today!

With forecast record high gas prices again this summer, why not make Lovewell State Park the destination for your family vacation this year?! Close to home, family-oriented activities, and beautiful scenery – What are you waiting for?!

Hey!! Are you all about going digital? Would you be interested in receiving your spring newsletter each year by email?? We are exploring this option and would like to have your input! Send us an email at lovewellsp@ksoutdoors.com and we'll start a mailing list, depending on the response. Thanks!!

Lovewell Marina and Grill Adds Pizza to the Menu!

allow us to offer pizzas, but we may be able to offer more healthy choices to our menu. For instance, it prepares French fries as good as deep-fried! Last year, because of the storms, we weren't able to repair our courtesy dock. But it should be in service by mid-April this year. We also refurbished the gas dock in October. We hope to have a credit card terminal there by April as well. With the telephone on the south side of the gas dock, this could eliminate trips to the marina completely!

Starting the last week in March, join us for breakfast and lunch everyday through the season. Monday thru Wednesday we will not serve the evening meal, but Thursday through Sunday the kitchen will be open for all meals. Of course, Gary and Rusty's smoked meats will be the staple, but watch for new additions! It is always so fun to see you all back. Please come in to say hello!

Check out our website, www.lovewellmarina.com, for weekly food specials and events, and enjoy the photo gallery – you might see yourself there!



Pizza and Your Favorite BBQ – Can't be Beat!



OUTDOOR RECREATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (ORMS) LAUNCHES IN 2012

Have you ever wondered what campsites are still available on a busy weekend or wished you could make a campsite reservation in advance from home when offices are closed? If so, you'll appreciate an upcoming online service from Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism that will make it easy and convenient for visitors to buy park permits or reserve their favorite campsites or camping cabins at state parks, fishing lakes and wildlife areas. The new service, called the Outdoor Recreation Management System (ORMS) will launch on April 17, 2012. All of Walleye Point Utility Campground, all of Cottonwood Utility Campground, the six primitive camping cabins currently available and the four deluxe cabins that will be available in the Spring of 2012 will be reservable online. All other campsites will continue to be first-come, first-served sites. There will be a two-week period in early April in which no reservations will be taken either online or by phone, in order to switch over to the new system. ORMS will be hosted by Reserve America, a national online campground reservation service. **Their web address is www.reserveamerica.com** Feel free to log on and check out their website and familiarize yourself with how to use it ahead of the launch date! Watch for more information including the exact launch date on the Lovell State Park webpage at www.ksoutdoors.com/State-Parks/Locations/Lovell/Park-News

Among many other benefits of ORMS, you will be able to make a reservation online from home, you'll be assured to have a site during a busy weekend, and you won't arrive to find your site is double-booked. While guests can use ORMS to make reservations before their trip, they will still be able to visit or call a park or regional office to make a reservation or buy a permit. Park staff will use ORMS to manage walk-in and phone sales, as well. For those sites that can be reserved, you will be able to search for specific locations, sites, dates, and lengths of stay; and can narrow your search by amenities such as site size; utility hookups; equestrian facilities; hiking and biking trails; boating facilities; swimming areas, and more. What's more, visitors without a park permit can purchase one online before leaving home. Reservations that were made before ORMS is launched will be moved into the new reservation system, so you will not need to renew existing reservations. A cancellation/reschedule policy will be implemented, similar to the policy for camping cabins.

State park camping cabins already can be reserved online at reserve.ksoutdoors.com or by calling or visiting the state park office. Constituents should continue to use this website until ORMS takes its place. Lovell State Park cabin rental fees are \$45 per night for primitive cabins (Frontier, Pioneer, Pine Ridge, Sunrise, Southwinds East and West), and will be \$75 per night for the new deluxe cabins (Lookout, Settler, Scout, and Pilgrim), plus a \$14.00 reservation fee. All fees must be paid in advance. If a reservation is canceled or rescheduled more than 30 days ahead of the arrival date, all fees are refunded except for the \$14.00 reservation fee. If canceled or rescheduled less than 30 days but at least 5 days ahead of the arrival date, all fees are refunded except for one night plus the \$14.00 reservation fee. If cancelled or rescheduled 5 days or less ahead of the arrival date, the renter will not be refunded any of the rental fees paid. **Group Shelter and Group Camp Area** reservations will continue to be available through the state park office by special event permit. **Long Term (30 Day) Campsites** will continue to be available through the state park office by Long Term Contract.

Behind the scenes, ORMS is much more than a camping and cabin reservation system. It will help our staff provide better customer service, enable the department to better manage its facilities, prevent double-booking, assist in emergency response, improve accounting accuracy, help staff better understand our constituents' needs, improve internal reporting, and provide more accurate visitor information. You can direct any questions about the new system to the staff at Lovell State Park (785) 753-4971 or to the Parks Division at the Pratt Operations Office, (620) 672-5911.



Camping Cabins and SELECT Utility Campsites will soon be available online at <http://www.reserveamerica.com>

New Frisbee Golf Course Installed

A new recreational facility was installed as an added activity for Lovell State Park visitors to enjoy. A 9-station disc (Frisbee) golf course was installed in 2011 at the Pioneer Day Use Area near the playground. Equipment includes metal/chain target baskets that have been mapped out with differing degrees of difficulty for each station. Just like regular golf, a "par" is set for each section of the course, which is the average number of throws it should take to reach the basket. A map of the course and score sheets can be picked up at the State Park Office. Discs will not be provided, so participants will need to bring their own. To promote the new disc golf course, a disc golf tournament has again been included in the scheduled events for Lovell Fun Day on August 4th. Disc Golf is an activity gaining in popularity across the United States, and disc golf courses can be found in state, county and city parks all across the country. This disc golf course is an excellent complement to Lovell's recreation facilities in the Pioneer Day Use area including basketball goals, sand volleyball pit, horseshoe pits, playground area, and a 14-station archery range located north of the Cottonwood area of the park. There should be no sign of boredom for kids of all ages at Lovell State Park!! **GRAB YOUR GOLF DISCS AND TRY IT OUT!!**



Constituents have already begun using and enjoying the new disc golf course.



REGULATION REMINDERS

Most of our state park regulations are not new, but warrant a reminder to all of our visitors as we begin looking forward to the new park season. **24 HOUR VISITATION** — is required for all campsites in Kansas State Parks, with the exception of designated Long-Term (30) campsites. **GREY WATER DUMPING** — all waste water from camping units (GREY and BLACK tanks) must be disposed of at dump stations only. **SPEED LIMIT** — there is a **25 mph speed limit** throughout the entire park. Speed should be reduced even further when entering and driving the individual campground roads. Please take extra care to watch for pedestrians! **ALCOHOL** — only cereal malt beverages of no more than 3.2% alcohol content are allowed on Kansas Public Lands. **PETS** — are allowed at Lovewell State Park, however must be kept on a 10-ft. or shorter leash or chain **AT ALL TIMES**. Pets are **not allowed** in any of the state park buildings, unless for assistance purposes. This includes all shower and restroom facilities, office, and group shelters. This also includes the **state park camping cabins**. Pets belonging to cabin renters must be kept outside on a chain/leash, or in a kennel. A new change to the Pets Regulation this year is the addition of a “**Pet Friendly Cabin**.” Pioneer Camping Cabin has been designated as “pet friendly,” with payment of the Pet Friendly Fee of \$50 per stay. **With everyone abiding by park regulations, we can continue to provide a safe and family-oriented park and enjoyable visits for all!! Thank You!**

SOUTHWINDS CAMPING CABINS READY TO GO!!



The four new deluxe camping cabins located in the Southwinds Area are nearly ready for reservation and use by our constituents. Hard-surfacing of the access roads and parking areas for the cabins should be completed this spring. These cabins will rent for \$75 per night, with a three-night minimum. These deluxe cabins are furnished with beds/mattresses, furniture, kitchen appliances with limited dinnerware/



utensils, and bath/shower facilities. Renters will need to provide their own bedding, towels, etc. They will be rentable only during the standard park season from April 15 to October 15. Three of the cabins also have an electric/water campsite next to them. This campsite is only available to the cabin renter for family and friends to utilize, with additional camping and utility fees. All four camping cabins have excellent lake views and access to the beach and day-use areas. Persons interested in reserving the camping cabins should continue to monitor the Online Reservations website — **http://reserve.ksoutdoors.com** for the Lookout, Scout, Settler and Pilgrim Camping Cabins to become available. If you do not have access to the Internet, please contact the state park office. Advanced reservations for these cabins will most likely begin April 17th, with the ORMS implementation, with cabin stays beginning the first part of May.



Six Long-Term (30 day) campsites (electric/water/sewer) have also been completed in the Southwinds area, near the new cabins. These sites join the four sites in Walleye Point (electric) and seven sites in North Willow (electric/water) which are reservable as Long-Term Campsites. These sites require an annual camping permit, and are exempt from the 24-hour visitation regulation.

Following the algae issues in 2010, we discovered that many folks didn't come back this year because they heard it had happened again! The truth is 2011 had not so much as an elevated algae test and the reservoir and park were open to all activities for the whole season! Don't let unsubstantiated rumors ruin your plans at Lovewell!! Please call our office or check the "Park News" on the KDWPT website if you hear such rumors. In addition, all major announcements are always sent to local newspapers, radio stations, and posted on the website.



FEMA ASSISTS WITH STORM DAMAGE CLEANUP AND REPAIRS



Flooding impacted primitive camping from Memorial Weekend through most of June

Several major storms and heavy rain events passed through the Lovewell State Park area in May of 2011, causing more damage to the park's large cottonwood trees and shorelines and creating flooded water levels for the second straight year. Park staff spent many hours cleaning up tree limbs and debris to make the camping areas usable again. Many more of the large shoreline cottonwood trees, whose root systems were already weakened by flooding in 2010, were downed by the storms. Heavy rains



Park Staff work to clear downed trees

over several weeks brought the reservoir level up to 6 feet above conservation pool just before the Memorial Day holiday weekend. This significantly affected the primitive camping space available for the holiday crowds. The reservoir remained at this level for several weeks, again causing loss of shoreline rip rap rock, some of which had just been replaced last year from flooding damage. The rip rap rock stabilizes the shoreline to prevent erosion. KDWPT again requested FEMA funds to help clear downed trees and replace the critical rip rap rock. The funds were made available in late January 2012, and work will proceed as weather permits throughout the year.

Park Manager Rick Cleveland Retires, Thane Loring is Promoted



Rick Cleveland

1974 might seem like a long time ago to most of us but when you talk to Rick Cleveland, Park Manager at Lovewell State Park, the years flew by. Rick has spent his whole life in the Lovewell Reservoir area. In 1957, Rick's father became the first Bureau of Reclamation Reservoir Superintendent and Rick grew up watching and helping his father perform his job. In 1971, Rick got a job as a seasonal maintenance worker at Lovewell State Park for the Kansas Park and Resource Authority. In 1974, he landed a full-time maintenance position and four years later was promoted to Park Ranger. Rick served as the park ranger until 1987 when he was promoted to Park Manager. He compares his time at Lovewell to someone who grew up on the family farm. After a long and rewarding career, Rick retired as Park Manager in June of 2011. On behalf of its employees and many long-time constituents, we sincerely thank Rick for his 37 years of dedication to Lovewell State Park. Enjoy your retirement Rick!

In September 2011, Thane Loring was promoted to Park Manager at Lovewell State Park. Thane also grew up in the Lovewell area and spent a lot of time camping, boating, fishing, and hunting at Lovewell. He earned a Bachelors Degree in Agriculture with a Park and Recreation Management major from Kansas State University. He worked as a seasonal maintenance employee, park naturalist, and spent a year as an AmeriCorps member, all at Lovewell State Park. Thane was the Recreation Director for the City of Hoisington for two years prior to returning to Lovewell in 2006 as the Park Ranger, where he has been employed since. Thane's vision for the park is to promote

Thane Loring,
New Park Manager



George Burgess

teamwork, develop programming and expand the park's special event offerings, and bring more families to the park by offering diverse activities. It is not known at this time when a new Park Ranger will be hired. Our Congratulations to Thane! On a more somber note, we were all deeply saddened in July 2011 with the untimely death of long-time camp host George Burgess from complications following heart surgery. A fitting tribute and memorial at the funeral read "I'd rather be lost at the lake than found sitting at home." How very true!! George will be dearly missed!!



Jamestown Wildlife Area News



A year in review — While the majority of the state was in a mild to severe drought, Jamestown Wildlife Area had six flood events from mid-May through mid-August. Managers spent the summer playing catch up — trying to get water off of the marshes, agricultural fields and grasslands so some vegetation could survive. The Buffalo Creek Marsh was completed in 2010 to provide feed and resting pools for migrating waterfowl and shorebirds. The wetland has had water the last two springs, but has yet to fill in the fall including 2011. Flood waters filled the marshes several times; however they were at the wrong time of year for the permitted water right, and managers were required to let the water go. Managers contracted with a local seed company to plant Japanese millet in Buffalo Creek and Pintail Marshes. This crop was under water many times and still the contractor harvested the seed, leaving a percentage for wildlife similar to the agricultural crops on the area.

With a dry fall, these marshes did not fill, but created some excellent upland hunting throughout the season. A contractor was hired in late July to aerial seed almost 300 acres of Japanese millet as a final effort to provide food for migrating waterfowl and plant some quick establishing grain crops for upland wildlife. Those last efforts were either covered in yet another flood in August or were planted too late to make grain. Waterfowl hunters across the area saw a fragmented migration in 2011 with warm, dry conditions throughout the upper Central Flyway and into the Dakotas. Upland hunters experienced fewer bird flushes due to the poor hatching and brood-rearing conditions. There were small windows to take advantage of the larger migrations during cold snaps throughout the season, and those upland areas spared from flooding had some pockets of older birds. Water is important to provide resting areas for migrating waterfowl, to grow grain crops for food, and grasses and forbs for cover — but the timing and amount of water is critical. In 2011, the area received more than enough water to flood every marsh; however it was received all at once and at the wrong times of the year.

Tough hunts — In spite of the weather conditions hunters had a decent year at Jamestown Wildlife Area in 2011. Almost 1,700 hunters harvested 900 ducks, 27 geese, 110 pheasants, 98 quail and 14 deer (7 bucks, 7 does). Teal season was slower than normal with warm weather, high water levels, and little food. Hunter success increased a little during the middle of the season after a cold front improved bird numbers. The opener of the Low Plains Early Zone, much like 2010, saw fewer hunters, fewer birds and warm weather. Opening day was one of the highlights of the season as a thunderstorm moved through mid-morning, putting the birds on the move. Hunters benefited greatly with an opening day harvest average of almost six birds per hunter. Upland hunters had a slow season on the Wildlife Area. However, most hunters were having more success than on private ground. Quail hunters enjoyed numerous coveys of healthy quail for the second year in a row, with most hunters harvesting and even seeing more quail than pheasants. Deer had about the same pressure from hunters as in 2010, with the majority of bucks being harvested during the archery season. Dove season was once again phenomenal in 2011 because of the effort spent on Buffalo Creek North Marsh during spring and summer 2011. A mowed sunflower field next to a mowed field of standing winter wheat led to some of the best dove hunting opportunities in the area. Dove hunters averaged 7.3 birds per hunter during the season. Areas of these dove fields were set aside for the first five days of the season for youth hunters with their mentors. These days proved to be some of the best memories these young hunters had from 2011, which is very important for the recruitment of future hunters. Please take advantage of this hunt and the other Special Hunts by exploring the Special Hunt link listed below.

Looking forward to 2012 — Managers will concentrate their efforts on improving wetlands for waterfowl and shorebirds and continue to manage upland grassland and cropland for pheasants, quail, and doves in 2012. Several small wetlands will be established to promote a diverse mosaic of wetland sites. Burning, strip disking and brush control will promote early successional plants favored by upland wildlife. We plan to construct a pump station to manage water in the Buffalo Creek Marshes, which will create some excellent, shallow-water habitat. Managers will have new equipment to improve and maintain the quality of habitat with the purchase of a new track tractor and receipt of an aquatic backhoe from Cheyenne Bottoms Wildlife Area. The tractor will be used in the marsh and on the upland areas to disk and spray cattails, opening up areas to increase hunter access; and disking dense grassland stands will benefit nesting, brood rearing and winter cover for upland wildlife on the area. The aquatic backhoe will help the managers keep drainage canals, waterways and boat ramps open by removing sediment, improving the ability to manage water levels and control unwanted vegetation in the marshes.

The goals of marsh management will continue to promote native, moist soil vegetation while increasing hunter access, providing a combination of flooded vegetation and open water for ducks to congregate and to allow hunters to spread out and utilize the entire marsh. Draw-downs during a part of the growing season are necessary to achieve these goals.

Visit the Jamestown Wildlife Area News Page

Visit www.ksoutdoors.com/news/KDWPT-Info/Locations/Wildlife-Areas/Region-1/Jamestown/ throughout the spring and summer for updates on management progress on the area, upcoming events, the pre-migration open house and special projects.

Remember to sign up for 2012 special youth/novice hunts at Jamestown Wildlife area by visiting the KDWPT special hunt page: www.ksoutdoors.com/news/Hunting/Special-Hunts.



Lovewell Wildlife Area Flooding Repeats in 2011

Déjà vu! Another extended flood event lasting from mid-May through mid-August had severe effects on wildlife habitats and populations on Lovewell Wildlife Area. Since a good portion of the agricultural fields managed for wildlife are found in the lower portions of the area, flooding can be expected — but two years in a row? Normally, flood water can be released in a matter of days following the event but due to the extensive and prolonged flooding on the Missouri River, this did not happen. The U.S Army Corps of Engineers controls water in Lovewell Reservoir anytime water levels rise above the conservation pool into the flood pool. Due to flooding on the Missouri River, Lovewell was not allowed significant releases until July. The floods damaged some infrastructure and roads, which will be repaired with a combination of FEMA and local project funds. Cropland fields and shorelines were the habitats most affected by the high water. Wheat fields were flooded and not harvested, and corn was unable to be planted. Soybeans and milo were planted late and as a result little food was left for the fall and winter. Managers planted some green cover crops to supplement the planting of winter wheat, but a dry fall and wet fields delayed planting and only fair amounts of forage were produced. High water also eliminated the usual summer irrigation drawdown that exposes shorelines and mudflats which creates favorable conditions to grow moist soil plants favored by waterfowl. Water levels were higher much earlier this fall, improving cover for waterfowl hunters closer to the shoreline. Usually a wetter summer means better habitat conditions and better wildlife populations but the timing and amount of rainfall had negative effects on the area. The lack of shoreline foods for waterfowl coupled with the warm, dry conditions in the north resulted in poor waterfowl use at best. A few days around Halloween and Thanksgiving had good numbers of birds and 82 hunters averaged 2.3 ducks each before freezing conditions ended the season.

With all the rain during the nesting season, turkeys and upland birds had a poor nesting season and few broods were observed as reflected in only two turkeys, seven quail and three pheasants being harvested all season. The 2011 spring turkey season saw 221 hunter days and a 6 percent success rate, however only six hunters took advantage of the fall season. Total deer hunter numbers were down 25 percent from last year with 615 in 2010 and 465 in 2011. Success for archery and firearms hunters was the same at 6 percent. The first week in November and December received the highest use with over 22 archers and 27 firearms hunters each day. This equals about one hunter per 80 acres each day during these peak times.

The blue-green algae problem of 2010 and the fear of it reappearing with the flooding of 2011 reduced the number of shoreline anglers this year. White bass and channel catfish fishing from the shoreline at the inlet and outlet remained popular. Litter at those areas continues to be unacceptable. A no trash policy is in effect. Enforcement efforts and prosecutions will be improved.

Grants from the Kansas Forest Service and Lovewell's operating budget will be used to reduce the invasion of eastern red cedar and locust trees into grasslands. Most of the tree clearing is being used to establish permanent firebreaks in preparation for regular controlled burning to improve the health of the native grasslands and benefit upland game. Some cedars are being removed beneath large cottonwood and bur oak trees to improve roosting habitat for wild turkeys.

Visit the Lovewell Wildlife Area News Page

www.ksoutdoors.com/news/KDWP-Info/Locations/Wildlife-Areas/Region-1/Lovewell/Area-News throughout the spring and summer for updates about management progress on the area, upcoming events and special projects. Remember to sign up for 2012 special youth/novice hunts at Lovewell Wildlife Area by visiting the KDWP special hunt page: www.ksoutdoors.com/news/Hunting/Special-Hunts.

New Wildlife Area Taking Shape Near Talmo

Approximately 10 miles south and 5 miles east of Belleville, Kansas just east of the Republic County town of Talmo, lies a 1,400-acre historic wetland known as Talmo or Seapo (a Native American word meaning 'great salt basin'), and sometimes known as the "Tuthill Marsh" (named for the first white settler in this area, J.G. Tuthill). Parcels of this rather large, alkaline wetland have been purchased by Ducks Unlimited and KDWP to create over 700 acres of new lands open to outdoor recreation.

Soon after Kansas statehood, the marsh at Talmo was also one of the original salt marshes deeded to the State by the 36th Congress during Abraham Lincoln's term in office. These lands were to be used for salt mining, or sold to establish the Kansas Normal School which is now Emporia State University. The other salt marshes in Kansas are at Jamestown, Cheyenne Bottoms, Slate Creek and McPherson Valley Wetlands, Quivira National Wildlife Refuge (including Big and Little Salt marshes), and privately-owned marshes in Lincoln and Dickinson counties.

Before Kansas was settled by Europeans, salt marshes and salt springs were used by wildlife, Native Americans, and early travelers. Plains animals, especially bison, deer, antelope, and elk obtained salt from places known as licks or salt flats, where saline ground water reaches the surface and then evaporates during dry times, leaving salt on top of the ground. Native Americans, explorers, and early ranchers obtained salt by evaporating water collected from salt springs. Early hunters visited the salt marshes to jerk buffalo meat. They would either evaporate brine or dip the meat in pools of strong brine and then dry it in the sunshine or by a fire. During the wetter times of the year, waterfowl and shorebirds in large numbers used these areas for migration stopovers.

While management of these properties is still in the planning stages, areas will be posted and parking lots developed in time for the 2012 fall hunting season. The department's goal is to restore much of the wetland function.



2012 FISHING FORECAST!!

LOVEWELL RESERVOIR - approx. 1 ft. below conservation pool as of February 2012.

Be on the lookout for blue catfish we stocked in October 2010 and October 2011.

CATFISH - Good. The catfish population will remain good again in 2012 with all sizes of channel cats and flatheads available to anglers. The fall 2011 channel catfish sample was down 44 percent from the previous year, while the number of fish over 24 inches was down 56 percent. Near equal numbers of fish between 12 and 28 inches were collected, and the fish were in good condition. Flathead catfish sampled using summertime electrofishing varied from 3 to 42 inches with the biggest fish collected weighing 38 pounds. Most of the fish were between 12 and 25 inches and exhibited fair to good body condition. Channels and flatheads will be vulnerable in all arms of the reservoir, including Montana, Windmill, and Prairie Dog Creek, as well as up White Rock Creek near the Highway 14 bridge. During peak irrigation releases, catfish can be readily caught close to the inlet and outlet structures, and are susceptible along the dam and other rocky areas during the spawn. Nine blue catfish were collected near Walleye Point and Cabin Point during our summertime flathead catfish sample. They were 12 to 14 inches long and appear to be growing well. Please release any blue catfish you catch as we will stock annually until a naturally reproducing population is established.



Love Those Lovewell Flatheads!!!

CRAPPIE - Good. The crappie population showed a very nice increase in the number of adult fish collected, and Lovewell looks like it will be offering some fine crappie angling over the next few years. The total number of fish collected increased 87 percent from the fall 2010 sample while the number of crappie 8 inches and longer increased 368 percent. There is a large year-class of fish in the 7 to 10 inch range that should reach desirable size by fall 2012. In addition, a good number of 3-5 inch crappie were collected, and could provide a nice year-class with good survival. Compared with the other reservoirs in the state, Lovewell ranks #1 for white crappie density and #8 for black crappie. Several brush piles are maintained to help concentrate fish for anglers, and decent success can be found fishing around the flooded vegetation in Montana Creek and other coves during late April and May when the fish are spawning. We added another 280 trees to the fish attractors in 2011 and will likely add more in 2013.

WALLEYE - Good. Due to a nice 2011 year class, walleye numbers showed a 54 percent increase compared with the 2010 sample, and the number of fish greater than the 18 inch minimum length limit was up 77 percent. Because of two poor year classes in 2009 and 2010 there are very few fish between 11 and 17 inches, and anglers will notice most of their catch in 2012 will be 18-25 inch walleye or the 2011 fish between 8 and 11 inches. Fish up to 27 inches and 7 pounds were collected in the trap nets, indicating the presence of some nice trophies. Lovewell ranks #7 in the state for walleye density, #3 for preferred, and #5 for lunker size fish. Fishing continues to be best from late April through early June with anglers drifting jig/crawler combos having the best success, especially along 2-Mile Road. Anglers are urged to carefully measure any questionable fish and handle sublegal fish with care. **18" minimum length limit in effect.**

WHITE BASS – Good. White bass numbers were much higher during fall 2011 sampling compared with the previous sample. Total numbers were 164 percent higher and the number of fish 12 inches and greater was up 79 percent. Anglers should see improved catch rates in 2012. Following poor white bass production in 2010, a strong year class was produced in 2011 as evidenced by good numbers of 5-8 inch fish. The biggest fish sampled weighed 1.8 pounds and the fish were in excellent body condition. Overall, 42 percent of the sample was between 12 and 16 inches, 32 percent was 9-11 inches, and 26 percent were 5-8 inches. Lovewell ranks as the #4 white bass reservoir in the state based on density, and also ranks #4 for preferred size fish. As in the past, the best time to fish for Lovewell whites will be in the summer, during peak irrigation releases. The inlet and outlet areas historically produce the vast majority of whites harvested while summer topwater activity can also be productive. Night fishing using floating lights was fair to good in 2011, and drifting or slabbing over submerged roadbeds and humps throughout the year is also an effective method for hooking into a nice stringer of whites.

WIPERS - Fair. Wiper numbers were down again in 2011 fall sampling with only three age-0 fish collected. Wipers were not stocked in 2007 and 2009 due to the high density at that time, but harvest and poor recruitment appear to have driven numbers down. The 2008 fish (19-21 inches) accounted for 30 percent of the catch, the 2010 fish (14 inches) comprised 57 percent, and the 2011 stocked fish (8-10 inches) comprised 13 percent. Biggest fish collected came from the 2008 stocking and weighed 4.1 pounds. Anglers may have limited success this year targeting wipers, but should be able to find a few while fishing for white bass and walleye. Lovewell ranks #14 in the state for density, #15 for preferred fish, and #13 for lunkers. Fingerling and intermediate wipers will be stocked annually in the near future in an attempt to boost the numbers. Similar to white bass, decent numbers of wipers can be caught during the irrigation season as the fish migrate to the inlet and outlet areas. Other anglers report good success for bigger wipers trolling crankbaits and deep-diving Rapalas along the north shore and the dam. **Identify your catch carefully as those 10-14 inch wipers look very similar to white bass. The daily creel limit on wipers is 2 fish!**

2011 Creel Survey Results

By Scott Waters, District Fisheries Biologist



Many of you fishing at Lovewell last year may have been approached by a creel clerk who asked you a few simple questions about your fishing trip. This information is very valuable to fisheries biologists who base many of their management decisions, in

part, on creel survey information. We try to do a creel survey at each of our reservoirs at least once every five years, but more often if we have special projects or new regulations in effect.

An estimated 13,316 anglers fished at Lovewell between March and October 2011 for an estimated 50,384 hours. Anglers were asked to rate their fishing trip on a scale of 1(worst) to 5 (best) and the average rating was 3.13. In general, the angler number was down from previous surveys with 15,469 in 1995; 23,539 in 1996; and 18,290 in 2005; but much higher than the estimated 7,507 in 2006. With the exception of 2006, the anglers fishing at Lovewell are spending more time per trip based on the average number of hours/angler in 2011. Last year, anglers averaged 3.8 hours/trip compared with 3.5 in 1995; 2.3 in 1996; 3.5 in 2005; and 5.9 in 2006. Males between 16 and 64 accounted for 60 percent of the anglers, males >64 were 15 percent, males <16 were 11 percent, and females 16-64 were 11 percent. Nebraskans comprised 76 percent of anglers in 2011, Kansans accounted for 22 percent and anglers from Colorado, Iowa, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Missouri, and Texas also creeled.

The total number of fish harvested in 2011 was much higher than any other creel survey conducted at Lovewell. A total of 33,866 fish were harvested last year compared with 12,739 in 1995, 11,261 in 1996, 19,440 in 2005, and 13,549 in 2006. This higher total along with fewer anglers indicated the catch rates were much improved in 2011.

A record number of white bass (13,993) and channel catfish (10,942) were harvested in 2011 indicating these populations are in very good shape at this time. Drum were the third most harvested (5,506) followed by walleye (1,863), and wipers (530). The walleye total was lower than 1995 (4,344) and 1996 (2,441), but higher than 2005 (1,126) and 2006 (627). Anglers also harvested 618 crappie, 206 flathead catfish, 116 carp, and 42 longnose gar. White bass averaged 1.1 pounds, channel catfish 3.2 pounds, and walleye 2.8 pounds.

22,789 fish were released totaling 19,878 pounds. White bass were again the highest with 9,086 released followed by drum (4,656), channel catfish (4,554), walleye (3,208), and wipers (407). The recently-stocked blue catfish showed up, as well, with an estimated 298 12-15 inch fish released last year. Thirty-seven percent of the walleye caught in 2011 were legal size.

Channel catfish were the most sought after species throughout the year (32.6%) followed by walleye (22.6%), any fish (21.9%), white bass (18.5%), crappie (1.2%), and flathead catfish (1.1%).

**GET THE LATEST WEEKLY FISHING REPORTS FOR ALL AREA RESERVOIRS AT
www.ksoutdoors.com/news/Fishing/Fishing-Reports**

Kansas Resident Fishing \$20.50

Non-Resident Fishing \$42.50

24 Hour Fishing \$5.50

New Regulations Help Prevent Spread of Nuisance Species

To help prevent the spread of aquatic nuisance species, the Kansas Wildlife, Parks and Tourism Commission enacted the following regulations which are enforceable by fines and court costs:

Transporting Fish/Bilges and Livewells

- Livewells and bilges must be drained and drain plugs removed from all vessels prior to transport from any Kansas water onto a public highway.
- No person may possess any live fish upon departure from any designated aquatic nuisance body of water.
- Stocking or releasing of wildlife on navigable publicly-owned rivers, federal reservoirs, department lands and waters is prohibited.

Bait Fish

- Wild-caught bait fish shall only be used on the body of water where taken. If taken on a flowing stream or river, wild-caught bait fish shall not be transported upstream across any dam or natural barrier.
- New regulations cover what bait dealers may legally sell, including stipulations that certain fish, crayfish and amphibians may not be sold for bait.

Aquatic Nuisance Species continue to be a problem for some waters in Kansas. White perch, Asian carp, and zebra mussels continue to pose the greatest current threat to Kansas waters. Zebra mussels are already found in 15 Kansas waters, including Kanopolis, Melvern, Council Grove, John Redmond, Milford, Wilson, Marion, Perry, Cheney, and El Dorado Reservoirs; and Jefferson Energy Lakes, Winfield City Lake, Lake Afton, and the rivers that flow from these impoundments. They can also be found in waters of neighboring states such as Lake of the Ozarks and Taneycomo in Missouri; Offutt AFB Lake and Zorinsky Lake in Nebraska; and Kaw and Keystone Reservoirs; Oologah, Skiatook, Grand, and Texoma Lakes in Oklahoma. Boaters using these waters **MUST** drain and clean their equipment before launching in a new water body. Do not take lake water with you -- young zebra mussels are nearly invisible and free-float in the water.

Simple steps to follow; CLEAN, DRAIN, DRY every time, every lake!

Before leaving the drain lane:

CLEAN: Inspect the boat and other equipment for attached zebra mussels and remove any that are found.
DRAIN all water (livewells, bilge, bait buckets, etc.) before leaving the area.
Dry equipment for 5 days or wash equipment with hot water (140-degree recommended).



Tips for a Successful Boat Safety Check

By Natural Resource Officer Michael Peterson



Spring is just around the corner. Soon the walleye will be spawning, morels will be popping and Rio's will be strutting. As the water at Lovewell starts to warm, boats will be pulled from winter storage. Prior to firing up the boat for the first time it's important to check your safety equipment and make sure it's in good condition. If you find bad or remotely questionable equipment I would encourage replacing it.

As always, department personnel will be performing vessel safety checks both on and off the water. Most boaters regularly visiting Lovewell are familiar with the safety checks. However, new visitors are often surprised by the process. I am going to highlight a few things to help prepare you for a vessel safety inspection. However, I cannot cover everything here and I encourage anyone who is going to operate a boat in Kansas to review the current Kansas boating regulations prior to setting out. Regulations are available online or at any KDWP office.

Probably the most important piece of equipment on your boat is your life jacket or personal flotation device (PFD). Kansas has a zero tolerance policy on life jacket violations! There are several types of PFD's and several rules so read the regulations carefully. Often I find people who will spend thousands of dollars on a boat, yet they will have the cheapest life jackets they can find. How much is a life worth? Companies are now offering top of the line life jackets that match boats or ski gear if you are worried about being fashionable. Probably the newest designs are self-inflating jackets. They are less bulky and help keep you cool on a hot summer day. Just make sure whatever PFD you purchase fits properly and is approved for the activity you will use it for. Anyone 12 and under is required to wear an appropriately sized life jacket at all times while on the water. For all other occupants 13 and over, there must be an appropriately sized PFD readily accessible for each person on board. You may ask what readily accessible means? This means the PFDs are plainly visible to the passengers, in an area that can be reached in an emergency without opening a compartment, wrapping material or reaching under part of the boat's hull to get to them. If your boat is 16 feet or longer, except canoes and kayaks, a Type IV throwable device is also required to be readily accessible. Everyone on a personal watercraft must wear an appropriate PFD at all times.

Make sure that your boat number decals are displayed correctly on each side of the vessel along with the current expiration sticker. Also, make sure the registration is current and on board the vessel. Next, if required on your vessel, check your fire extinguisher. I routinely find fire extinguishers that are bad and the operator isn't even aware of it. Make sure it is good and try to store it in an easily accessible location away from sources of ignition or combustion (i.e. the engine and fuel tanks). Every vessel is required to have a sound producing device on board, including jet skis. Most boats have electric horns, however a simple pea whistle or air horn will do. For jet-skiers a whistle attached to the operator's PFD near their shoulder works great. This will allow you to keep your hands on the controls in the event of an emergency. If your boat has an in-board engine, make sure the backfire flame control is installed/operable and that the blower/ventilation works. If you are unsure about these devices, have them inspected by a certified mechanic. Also, if you boat before sun up or after sun down make sure that you have the appropriate navigation lights and they work properly.

If you are reading this article then you probably enjoy boating in Kansas. You may also realize that by no means have I covered everything you need to know here. There are several more laws regulating boats, their operation and who can operate them. For more information I encourage you to visit our website at www.ksoutdoors.com/news/Boating. If you can't find what you are looking for then call or stop by one of our offices. Be safe and I look forward to seeing you at Lovewell this year.

Contact Information:

Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism
Lovewell State Park and Wildlife Area
2446 250 Road
Webber, KS 66970

Phone: 785-753-4971

Fax: 785-753-4981

Email: lovewellsp@ksoutdoors.com

Lovewell Staff:

Thane Loring	Park Manager
Vacant	Park Ranger
Dennis Swanson	Maintenance Supervisor
Lisa Boyles	Administrative Specialist
Rob Unruh	Public Lands Manager
Michael Peterson	Conservation Officer
Scott Waters	Fisheries Biologist
Aaron Deters	Wildlife Biologist