

The Voice of Outdoor Kansas

**March-
April 2014**

P.O. Box 771282
Wichita, KS 67277-1282

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



KWF honors 2013 Conservation Achievement Program Winners

On Saturday, February 22, the Kansas Wildlife Federation honored 14 individuals and organizations for their conservation efforts in 2013 at the Conservation Achievement Program (CAP) Awards banquet in Salina. Pictured are (from left to right, front row):

Dave Bruton from Valley Falls, Forest Conservationist; Marlene Bosworth of Sabetha, Lands and Soil Conservationist; Senator Marci Francisco of Lawrence, Conservation Legislator; K. Rene Gloschen of Olathe, Conservation Educator; Donna Cooper of Hays, Outdoor Skills Instructor; and Brent Frazee of Parkville, MO, Conservation Communi-

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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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Kansas Wildlife Federation, Inc.

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President's Message

By Troy Schroeder

We are all eagerly waiting for some real spring weather so we can get out and start fishing, but it has been slow in coming. We also need some good spring and summer weather conditions so we can start the rebound of our pheasants and quail numbers. As you are probably aware, numbers are critically low so this year's production is crucial to maintaining a viable population. Good habitat helps but we need a little help from Mother Nature this time.

The KWF annual meeting was held on Feb 21 and 22 at the Quality Inn in Salina. It was an excellent meeting with a good crowd and lots of good speakers. The meeting started Friday evening when Chris Tymeson, attorney for the Kansas Department Wildlife, Parks and Tourism (KD-WPT), presented information on bills in the state legislature that may impact wildlife or sportsmen. Some bills have good intent but wording makes them undesirable while others aimed at preventing the State from taking ownership to good wildlife land what will not cost the state anything don't make much sense, especially since Kansas has fewer public lands than most other states. Another bill would take away a landowners right to put a conservation easement on their property to protect some significant natural habitat for posterity.

Jim Pitman with KDWP was the luncheon speaker. He talked about lesser prairie chickens and the process of them being listed as threatened by the USFWS. Five states have put together a cooperative project to address the bird's welfare without listing, by making habitat improvements on private land financed by voluntary contributions from energy companies posing the biggest threat to chicken habitat. This has grown into a controversial issue with some landowner groups opposing the listing and the state legislature is considering a bill that would take away the ability of the USFWS to list non-migratory species. Meanwhile the chicken numbers in Kansas have



dropped dramatically in the past three years mostly due to drought.

The afternoon was spent addressing programs to get kids outside and reconnected with nature. They are spending more and more time inside in front of electronic devices. This is a priority for KWF along with several other wildlife groups. Those talking about their programs included:

Brian Shaffer, PF/QF youth coordinator

Mike Christensen, Pass It On-Outdoor Mentors

Nick Prough, Quail and Upland Wildlife Federation

Kevin Reich, Fishing's Future
Ed Augustine, Geary County Fish and Game Association

Pat Silovsky and Pam Martin, KDWP

The evening started with a live auction conducted by our own board member auctioneer, Dave Hendricks. The dinner speaker was Mike Haddock, President of the Native Plant Society and author of the book "Wildflowers and Grasses of Kansas-A Field Guide". Mike showed many beautiful wildflower photos and provided information on wildlife benefits or historical medicinal values.

The evening concluded with awards presented to Kansans that made significant contributions to wildlife or conservation over the past year. This seemed to me like one of the best annual meetings we have had. If you missed this one, be looking for information on the 2015 meeting coming next February.

CALENDAR of EVENTS

- Mar 4** Emporia QUWF Banquet, 620-794-8425
Mar 8-9 5th Kansas Hunting & Fishing Expo, Emporia 620-342-4631
Mar 10 Geary County F&GA Mtg, 40 years of Hunter Education 785-238-8727
Mar 12-21 Spring Black-footed Ferret Survey, SE Logan County
Mar 17-23 Spring Break for Kansas Regents Schools
Mar 20 KWPTC Commission Meeting, Kansas History Museum, Topeka
Mar 29 Spring Turkey Hunting Clinic, Emporia 620-437-2012
Apr 5 Wildflowers & Ecosystems of Western Kansas, Scott County 816-289-9958
Apr 12 Hillsdale SP Spring Wildflower Walk, Paola 913-284-3360
Apr 16 Council Grove Regional Environthon
Apr 17 KWPTC Commission Meeting, Great Plains Nature Center, Wichita
Apr 19 KWF Board of Directors Meeting, Sportsman's Acres, Junction City
Apr 19 Chisholm Creek Park Honeysuckle Removal, GPNC, Wichita 316-683-5499x103
Apr 25-27 Kansas Birding Festival, Milford Lake, Wakefield
Apr 26 Ad Astra Archery and fishing tournament, Topeka contact Sec. of State Kobach
Apr 26 Webster SP Wildflower Walk. Stockton, 620-290—3918
Apr 28-May 2 Triple "E" Program, Geary County Fish & Game Association
May 2-4 Kansas Ornithological Society Spring Meeting, Junction City <http://ksbirds.org>
May 18-20 Outdoor Writers of Kansas spring conference, Parsons
June 1-6 KWF Outdoor Adventure Camp, Camp Wa Shun Ga, Rock Springs 4-H Ranch
June 7 Youth in the Outdoors Day, Ravenwood Lodge, Topeka www.ravenwoodlodge.com/
June 14 Symphony in the Flint Hills, Rosalea, Butler County
June 19 KWPTC Commission Meeting, Lamplighter Inn & Suites, Pittsburg
June 19-22 Hunt 4 Hunger Midwest Outdoor Expo, Topeka
Aug 21 KWPTC Commission Meeting,, wetland Ed Center, Great Bend
Sept 13 12th Annual Justin Corbet Memorial Shoot, www.justincorbetfoundation.com
Sept 20 Becoming an Outdoor Woman, Rock Springs 4-H Ranch, Junction City
Sept 27 Beau Arndt Outdoor Appreciation Day, Emporia
Oct 16 KWPTC Commission Meeting, Martinelli's Restaurant, Salina
Oct 23-24 Governor's Conference on the Future of Water in Kansas, Manhattan
Nov 7-9 Kansas Herpetological Society annual meeting, KSU, Manhattan

For a more up-to-date calendar go to <http://kswildlife.org/calendar.php>.

KANSAS WILDLIFE FEDERATION

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Angela Anderson

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Geary County Fish & Game Association

Junction City, KS

Kansas Wildlife Officers Association

Iola, KS

Quail & Upland Wildlife Federation

Buffalo, MO

KANSAS WILDLIFE FEDERATION

Officers and Board of Directors

The Kansas Wildlife Federation promotes hunting and fishing opportunities and associated recreation for the benefit of all hunters, anglers and conservationists. 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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CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Please send your mailing label and new address, clearly printed. Allow 2 to 6 weeks for the change to be made. Send to:

Kansas Wildlife Federation Newsletter

P.O. Box 771282

Wichita, KS 67277-1282

Can you help?

Outdoor Adventure Camp is an ongoing project of KWF, run strictly by volunteers who feel strongly that youngsters need to have an opportunity to learn more about the great outdoors! Volunteer counselors are needed to spend a week or even just a few days supervising youngsters. We prefer a counselor for every 8 to 10 youngsters. That means for 50 kids, usually about 40 boys and 10 girls, we need 4 to 5 male counselors and 1 to 2 females.

In the past, we've had parents attend with their youngsters, grandparents, college students wanting to get into the counseling or camp administration field, teachers and people interested in helping children. We prefer college students who have an interest in working with kids— an internship may be worked out with instructors. We also have a few openings for junior counselors as well. You must be at least 18 years of age.

Who wouldn't like to spend a week with 50, 10 to 12 year-olds—trying to get them to sleep, keeping them in line all day and nursing cuts, bruises, poison ivy—helping kids have a great

summer outdoor experience?! You'll be ready to go home and relax when it's over. Moreover, it won't cost you a dime, except for the gas to get to camp. Seriously, it is a rewarding experience. Please consider helping out. Call me to get your name on the list.

This camp is funded primarily through fees collected from those attending. Outdoor Writers of Kansas provides scholarships for participants from the Big Brothers/Big Sisters program each year. Sportsman's groups throughout Kansas often fund local youngsters to provide scholarships to help with the cost. KWF volunteers donate a tremendous amount of time and money. We welcome any donations or funding ideas to improve the program.

Anyone who wants to present a program at camp should call me. We're always looking for new ideas. Outdoor Adventure Camp is for youngsters, and they come first! It takes a lot of work by a number of volunteers to make it a positive learning experience. Can you help? Call Theresa Berger at 785-526-7466 or e-mail her at bergkwf@wtciweb.com.

Affiliate News

GCF&GA March membership meeting

Geary County Fish & Game Association could not hold its February membership meeting due to weather conditions. Their March meeting was Forty Years of Hunter Education, celebrated with a wild game dinner. A review of GCF&GA's input in Hunter Education was covered by Ed Augustine, GCF&GA's President and an update on current efforts was presented by Kent Barrett, KDWP's H.E. Coordinator from Pratt. Past and present hunter education volunteers were recognized. Students of GCF&GA's classes of the past 40 years shared their memories. The meeting concluded with a BB gun fun shoot.

GCF&GA Triple E Days needs your help

Chris Blodgett is still in need of volunteers to assist with the Environmental Education Enhancement (Triple E) program held each spring at the GCF&GA's Sportsman's Acres range and the KDWP's Milford Fish Hatchery. This is a week-long event that involves all of the 5th Grade students in USD 475 (Junction City). The club can use your help! The program is held April 28-May 2, 2014. Chris is the coordinator for the Triple E program this year. Volunteers can assist all week or partial periods of time. If you are interested and can assist, contact Chris Blodgett at 785-375-2714, or stop by the Sportsman's Acres during normal operating hours.

— **By Cynthia Ahlers**

Follow Geary County Fish & Game Association, Inc. on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/GearyCountyFishAndGameAssociation>

2014 Outdoor Adventure Camp: A summer treat for youngsters

Outdoor Adventure Camp (OAC) is a six-day summer camp for kids who either enjoy the outdoors or want to learn more about it. This conservation education program is co-sponsored by the Kansas Wildlife Federation and KSU Cooperative Extension Service. This will be the 26th anniversary for this popular camp and educational opportunity.

If you are a Kansas youngster who enjoys the outdoors, now is the time to make plans to attend Outdoor Adventure Camp from Sunday, June 1 through Friday, June 6 at the Camp WaShunGa area of Rock Springs Ranch, just south of Junction City. The camp is open to boys and girls ages 10 to 12 this summer.

Mornings will be spent traipsing the grounds at Camp WaShunGa with instructors, getting a hands-on feel for how various critters and plants live together in the ecosystem we call Kansas. Afternoons are spent learning about several areas of the outdoors, including mammals, insects, birds, fish and amphibians and reptiles. Ecology, wetlands, riparian areas and watersheds are some terms you will learn about at this unique camp.

Since the prairie does not go to sleep at sundown, neither will you. Depending on the evening, you may be out and about prowling for owls, stargazing, spotlighting spiders or watching bats gobble bugs.

Other activities include scavenger hunts, water sports including swimming and canoeing, fishing, shooting sports including rifle, shotgun, archery, and pellet gun. You'll pick your choices, or participate in all if you like.

The price of the camp includes all food, instruction and lodging. A swimsuit, sleeping gear and clothes you'll wear for a week are about all you need to bring. Sunscreen, insect repellent, a cap and water bottle also will come in handy. The price for the entire week is \$300, which includes arts and crafts. You may want to bring a little money for snacks and souvenirs at Milford Hatchery and Nature Center. Space

Name _____

Age _____ Sex _____

Address _____

County _____ Phone _____

Parents' Names & Day/night Phone Numbers:

Father _____

Mother _____

Group Picture Order \$10.00 Each _____

Please include payment with camp fee.

T-shirt: (Adult Sizes)

Size: ___SM ___Med. ___LG___ XL___ XL___

(T-shirts included in Craft Fee)

Full \$300 fee with application due May 27. Refund only upon written notice of cancellation prior to May 27.

No reductions or refunds for late arrivals or early departures.

Make check payable to the Kansas Wildlife Federation
(KWF)

Call 785-526-7466 for details or send application with
payment:

Outdoor Adventure Camp

C/o Theresa Berger

406 S. New York Ave.

Sylvan Grove, KS 67481

E-mail: bergkwf@wtciweb.com

is limited and registration deadline is May 27.

Send your application and full fee to Outdoor Adventure Camp, c/o Theresa Berger, 406 S. New York Ave., Sylvan Grove, KS 67481. Checks should be made payable to

the Kansas Wildlife Federation. If you need more information or an application, phone 785-526-7466. Evenings are best, or leave a message on the machine. You can also go to the KWF website www.kswildlife.org for an application form.

Conservationist of the Year

Ted Alexander

Ancora imparo (I am still learning) is the philosophy by which rancher Ted Alexander of Sun City lives and works. He reminds his fellow ranchers and others that he doesn't have it all figured out, but he has the passion to push onward to improve.

Ted's ranch covers 7,000 acres in the heart of the Red Hills in Barber County, located in the Comanche Pool area just a few miles north of the Oklahoma-Kansas line.

His ranch has flourished as a custom-grazing operation for nearly 30 years. However, this was not so when he began managing and operating the ranch in 1984. Alexander, who affectionately refers to his occupation as "a used sunlight salesman", will tell you that the ranch was an "Over-grazed, under-utilized, under-watered, cedar forest ranch".

Often stocking between 500-700 cow/calf pairs or 2500 yearlings, the operation runs on a rotational grazing method. Stocker cattle are custom grazed during the spring and early summer. When beneficial to the management of stockpiled forage, Alexander custom grazes cattle during the winter.

Ted cleared all the hilltops of cedar trees, resulting in water returning to the creeks. "The forage resource is in excellent shape on those hilltops, and now I'm concentrating on the riparian areas to improve the habitat for multiple species," Ted said.

Alexander installed practices recommended by NRCS, such as cross fencing, ponds, and other water developments. Environmental enhancements to the land include removal of invasive Eastern Red Cedar trees, development of livestock water sources, improvement of forage productivity, and increasing the native plant and wildlife diversity. All of these enhancements and more were completed while accomplishing one overarching goal: maintaining a profitable and viable ranch business.

The ranch is divided into three grazing cells, each consisting of smaller paddocks of acreage. The paddock system utilized by the Alexander Ranch has



Ted Alexander, from Sun City (center), was awarded the 2013 Conservationist of the Year award. Mr. Alexander accepted the award from Troy Schroeder (left), Kansas Wildlife Federation President. Also present is Ted's son, Brian Alexander. Photo by Angela Anderson.

allowed them to continually improve the pastures and to operate with the environment in mind. Cattle thrive because of the range improvements and stewardship practices. In addition, the ranch has enhanced and developed several innovative water systems.

In recent years out of necessity and for energy efficiency, Alexander has installed an extensive livestock-water system that uses solar energy. The solar powered pumps carry water from a pond to a storage tank. The water then flows to tanks as needed. Solar energy also powers energizers for electric fences that set the grazing cell boundaries needed for his Management Intensive Grazing System.

The culmination of Alexander Ranch's grazing lands management practices has continued to an increase of stocking rates of over 100% from the 1984 level, maintained individual animal performance, and increased the pounds of beef produced per acre while uphold-

ing the management goals to improve water quality, water quantity, soil health, and native rangelands.

"Drought-proof your ranch as thoroughly as possible before it quits raining", are the first words in Alexander's drought plan that he follows faithfully." Ted also suggests to "Hope for the best, and plan for the worst!"

Although Alexander is recognized for his stewardship and environmental practices on the ranch, he is certainly appreciated for his eagerness to share his knowledge and experience with others. With an art-educator's background and a love for the ranching business, Ted Alexander never misses an opportunity to lead, teach, and mentor, especially young ranchers.

In recognition of his extensive accomplishments and contributions, the Kansas Wildlife Federation is proud to award the Conservationist of the Year for 2013 to Ted Alexander.

Conservation Legislator

Marci Francisco

Senator Marci Francisco was first elected to the Kansas Senate in 2004 where she represents the state's 2nd District. She has become one of the state's leading advocates on women's issues, the environment, and education.

As ranking member of the Energy, Natural Resources and Environmental Interim Committee, Senator Francisco played a key role in crafting environmental legislation. "In the last several years, the legislature has had a real opportunity to make energy conservation improvements as we continue to work on deferred maintenance issues at Kansas University and other Regents schools," said Senator Francisco. "By studying the action plans of other states, I hope the legislature can continue to make solid recommendations to improve the energy efficiency of our state buildings."

In addition to serving as Caucus Chair for the Senate Democratic Caucus, Senator Francisco is Ranking Member of the Senate Agriculture Committee and the Senate Natural Resources Committee. She is also a member of the Ways and Means Committee, the Joint Committee on Arts and Cultural Resources, the Legislative Educational Planning Committee, the Joint Committee on Information and Technology, and the Joint Committee on State Building Conservation.

In 2008 she was appointed to the KEEP Advisory Group, an organization tasked with reducing pollution while fostering economic growth, and in the same year she was awarded the Helen Fluker Open and Accessible Government Award by the Lawrence-Douglas County League of Women Voters, an organization of which she is also a member.

Senator Francisco's political inter-



Senator Marci Francisco, right, from Lawrence, receives the 2013 Conservation Legislator award from Troy Schroeder, Kansas Wildlife Federation President.

ests include several conservation and environmental issues: She recognizes the economic impact of hunters and anglers, but she is especially appreciative of their interest in the environment. "I have suggested to people that one of the best things they can do to help conserve wildlife is buy a hunting license," Senator Francisco says.

Senator Francisco believes that riparian habitats be maintained to protect reservoirs from siltation and pollution, and she is concerned about the impact of aquatic nuisance species such as silver carp and zebra mussels. Senator Francisco wants to ensure that the state of Kansas maintains adequate public lands for recreation, and she hopes more people

will utilize the public park system. The Kansas Department of Transportation's Roadside Management program is also one of Senator Francisco's interests.

Senator Francisco was originally introduced to the outdoors through Girl Scouts campouts and summer camps, claiming with some pride that she did get her Marksman First Class in shooting. Today, Senator Francisco enjoys hiking, camping and biking. She has ridden on six-week long bike tours and participated in the Lawrence Octoginta.

Senator Marci Francisco is an excellent and fitting recipient of the 2013 Conservation Legislator of the Year award from the Kansas Wildlife Federation.

WINNERS

Continued from Page 1

cator.

Back row, l to r: Mike Watkins of Lawrence, Wildlife Conservationist;

Gib Rhodes of Emporia, representing the Flint Hills Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation, Conservation Organization; Logan Fuller of Emporia, Youth Conservationist; Ted Alexander of Sun City, Conservationist of the Year; and Jessica Mounts of Cheney, Water Conservationist.

Not pictured are: Bunnie Watkins of Lawrence, Wildlife Conservationist; Dr. Phillip Barnes of Wamego, Stream Monitor; Glen and Barbara Walker of Brookville, Farmer/Rancher Wildlife Conservationist; and Cynthia Rhodes of Whitewater, recipient of the President's Award.

Conservation Organization

Flint Hills Chapter of the NWTF

The 2013 Conservation Organization Award was presented to the Flint Hills Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTF), from Emporia. With Gib Rhodes as chairman, the Flint Hills Chapter of NWTF has a long and impressive list of accomplishments. Following are just a selected few of these, garnered in recent years:

- At the NWTF Kansas State Awards Banquet, the Flint Hills Chapter received 1st place in 2012 for most regular, Juniors Acquiring Knowledge, Ethics and Sportsmanship (JAKES), and Women in the Outdoors (WITO) memberships, along with Golden and Grand Gobbler awards.
- Continued being the largest NWTF Kansas JAKES event with the best Spring Turkey Hunting Clinic, which was increased to 7 learning stations.
- 12th year of their essay contest

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Gib Rhodes, right, from Emporia, receives the 2013 Organization of the Year award from Troy Schroeder, Kansas Wildlife Federation President. Gib is the Chairman of the Flint Hills Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation, the award recipient. Photo by Angela Anderson.

Conservation Communicator

Brent Frazee

For more than three decades, Brent Frazee of Parkville, Missouri, has chronicled all aspects of outdoor sports and conservation for the Kansas City Star. While Missouri and Kansas are his primary haunts, he has also covered fishing and hunting throughout North America, from Alaska to Florida and beyond.

The weekly fishing report on Thursday's that he gathers is reliable, accurate, and followed closely by readers, in print and online. Once a Star Layout Editor pulled the report because of space, and phone lines lit up at the ombudsman's desk in complaint.

He also writes Friday's "Outdoor Notes" column that includes short features or general newsy tips and tidbits.

But Brent's main forte is the Outdoor Page that appears in the Sunday Sports section. That page has a storied history after its founding and development by Outdoor Writers of America Association

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Brent Frazee, center, from Parkville, MO, receives the 2013 Conservation Communicator award from Troy Schroeder, Kansas Wildlife Federation President. Also present is Phil Taunton, right, representative of the Emporia Area Chapter of the Quail and Upland Wildlife Federation, which sponsored the Conservation Communicator award.

Conservation Educator

Rene Gloschen

Rene Gloschen of Olathe teaches a class at Olathe South High School called Student Naturalist. In the class students spend the year learning how to identify many Kansas arthropods, fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds, and mammals, along with the natural history of the species. Students research and write a paper on the natural history of an animal species they have selected; in the winter they participate in the Cornell Lab of Ornithology's Great Backyard Bird Count; and, they compete in the Northeast Kansas Regional EcoMeet (this year's team won the state's EcoMeet, posting record-breaking scores). Each year, Mrs. Gloschen takes a group of her students on the Kansas Herpetological Society field trip. Throughout the year, students learn to appreciate and understand the delicate balance in the Kansas ecosystem and leave the class much more aware of the importance of Kansas wildlife.

Mrs. Gloschen's students are also given hands-on learning about how to respect the needs and behaviors of animals by taking care of them and handling them when necessary. Students are also



Rene Gloschen, right, from Olathe, receives the 2013 Conservation Educator award from Troy Schroeder, Kansas Wildlife Federation President. Westar Energy, Inc., of Topeka, sponsored the Conservation Educator award. Photo by Ted Beringer.

involved in "Animal Talks", a program where her students share the knowledge they have accumulated in class with elementary school students, Cub Scouts,

and church groups. In 2013, approximately 2,500 children had the experience

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NWTF

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ended with the 12th youth in a row getting their turkey! Committee member Kohl Prose was the winner.

- Sponsored the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism (KD-WPT) Melvern Wildlife Area 1st Annual Youth Spring Turkey Hunt.

- Received extra scholarship money from the McJunkin family in the name of Fran Sattler for 10 years total! The Flint Hills Chapter gave two \$500 scholarships. (Dalton Meyer & Megan Hilbish)

- The chapter sponsored & assisted with the KDWPT Archery Day at Eisenhower State Park.

- Held the 18th Annual Hunting Heritage Banquet.

- Continued to sponsor the Lyon County 4-H Shotgun Shooting Sports team which finished 2nd place in the

state!

- Hosted our 1st & 2nd Trap Shooting JAKES events at the Madison Gun Club.

- Partnered for the first time with Big Brothers & Big Sisters and Pheasants Forever on a youth Fishing Day at Lyon State Fishing Lake.

- Partnered with the KDWPT Melvern WA to mentor around 35 youth dove shooters!

- Repeated as the only Five Star Program Award Local Chapter winners in Kansas and one of the few across the USA!

- Hosted for the 3rd year in a row the 2013 NWTF Kansas State JAKES Camp.

- For the second year in a row, the Kansas State JAKES Camp, which they host, won a NWTF National award presented at the NWTF National Convention in Nashville, TN.

- Sent Mark Osmundson to the 2014 NWTF National Convention.

- Partnered with the Flint Hills

National Wildlife Refuge on a youth waterfowl hunt.

- Participated with the KDWPT Melvern WA for a tree planting project funded with NWTF Kansas Super Fund money.

- Gave a Wild About Turkeys Education box to the Madison High School ECO team.

- Awards presented this year: Jessica Hess, Olpe High School, Teacher of the Year; Jim Pitman, Biologist of the Year award; Phil Tauton, National Wildlife Federation Volunteer of the Year award; JAKE of the Year award to Dakota Orender.

- They continue to be the state leader in JAKES memberships, 200 members signed up this year!

The Kansas Wildlife Federation is proud to present the 2013 Conservation Organization of the Year award to Flint Hills Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTF), from Emporia.

Water Conservationist

Jessica Mounts

Jessica Mounts of Cheney has shown unparalleled leadership in her time with the Kansas Department of Wildlife Parks and Tourism. She has excelled in a role that, until her hiring, had only been held by men. As the first female District Fisheries Biologist employed by KDWPT, she manages more than 40 lakes and reservoirs, provides angling education to over 1500 youth and adults each year, served as the president of the Kansas Chapter of the American Fisheries Society, and is a partner on projects such as the Lincoln Street dam reconstruction, the Arkansas River Access Plan, the WATER Center and the statewide Aquatic Education Initiative.

Each year, Jessica teaches women to fish and connect with our state's natural resources at Kansas' "Becoming An Outdoors Woman" program. To involve families in the outdoors, Jessica was/is one of the original developers of the g2g outside (Got To Go) program in Sedgwick County.

Jessica is bringing our state's angling



Jessica Mounts, right, from Cheney receives the 2013 Water Conservationist of the Year award from Troy Schroeder, Kansas Wildlife Federation President. The Kansas Chapter of the American Fisheries Society sponsored the Water Conservationist award.

and fisheries education programs into the modern age with her implementation of web and social media applica-

tions specific to Wichita's urban lakes.

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FRAZEE

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(OWAA) legend, the late Ray Heady. Brent took over a few years after Ray retired.

Over the decades Brent grew into an outstanding journalist at a newspaper with high editing standards, one that serves a broad rural region and a metro area. Brent has written hard-hitting, fact-driven conservation stories. For example, he's tracked declining bobwhite quail habitat. But he's also written stories with answers for property owners about how they can provide better fish and wildlife habitat. Most readers, though, are especially fond of his extensive fishing and hunting coverage that takes specific skills and how-to. At the same time, he's been a friend to the outdoor industry, such as highlighting dock operators challenges at lakes through floods and droughts.

When you read Brent Frazee regularly, you know what's going on in all of

the outdoors.

Brent has won numerous awards from OWAA through the decades. His talents as a writer and reporter come to mind. But he's also a highly skilled photographer whose interesting photos really bring the outdoor page to life. Brent has been to numerous OWAA conferences over the decades – always reporting stories and taking photos as he goes.

Besides OWAA, Brent is the main ramrod in the Outdoor Writers of Kansas, spending a lot of time working with that group to help send disadvantaged kids to an outdoor skills summer camp. Many children have touched a fishing rod or bow and arrow in Kansas for the first time thanks to his efforts.

Brent lives on the Missouri side of the state line at Riss Lake, a suburban lake with beautiful water and a protected shoreline. In his spare time, he fishes. But he's also a regular at taking people fishing on the lake for fundraisers that aid community causes. Brent has also authored a few books, done website

video broadcasts, and written freelance magazine articles for a variety of outdoor publications.

After all these years, and all the ups and downs that go with the newspaper business, what really stands out is Brent's unflinching dedication to serving the outdoor community with excellent journalism. He goes the extra mile to get the facts right and to find interesting stories and information that readers value. Brent simply loves the outdoors and outdoor people, and they love him.

Few people have devoted as much to outdoor communication as Brent. He's touched millions of people and made a big difference for the better in the Midwestern outdoors.

The Emporia Area Chapter of the Quail and Upland Wildlife Federation, which sponsored the Conservation Communicator award.

It was an honor for the Kansas Wildlife Federation to recognize Brent Frazee as the Conservation Communicator of the Year for 2013.

Wildlife Conservationist

Michael and Bunnie Watkins

The bald eagle is our nation's symbol, an almost universally accepted symbol indicating superior power and authority. In Kansas the mere presence and ultimate survival of the bald eagle is a symbol of the conservation efforts of many people. But Michael and Bunnie Watkins of Lawrence have played critical roles to monitor and manage the reintroduction of nesting bald eagles back into the state. This husband and wife team has helped establish the Kansas River and the areas around Clinton Lake and Lake Perry as bald eagle nesting hot spots. In fact, one of the fastest growing nesting populations in recent years has occurred on the Kansas River.

Eagles have been trapped and banded at Clinton Lake for the past 25 years when the first two eaglets were hatched and fledged at their Clinton Lake nesting site, the first ones to do so since the turn of the century. These two fledged eaglets eventually returned (one to Hillsdale Lake and the other to Perry Lake), and they have been responsible for producing 56 eaglets over the years.

An important component of this tale of success is that it can be told ...



Michael Watkins, right, from Lawrence, receives the 2013 Wildlife Conservationist of the Year award from Troy Schroeder, Kansas Wildlife Federation President. Bunnie was out of town and could not be present for the event. The Kansas Chapter of The Wildlife Society sponsored the Wildlife Conservationist award.

thanks to several important conservationist components, and Michael and Bunnie Watkins have had a hand in each of these components. An important component in the eagle success story is that a symbolic species was

chosen in the first place, a species that had an emotional impact on most people. Then, the eagle story had to be told – from the eagle's perspec-

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GLOSHEN

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of Animal Talks. Mrs. Gloschen is one of a group of teachers at Olathe South that leads a research project in which students track the movements of Ornate Box Turtles at a nearby wildlife area.

Gloschen and her students have been involved with conservation efforts within the city of Olathe. When a green space near the school was marked for construction, she contacted the city to see if it could be done in a way that would have a minimal impact on the ecosystem. Thanks to her collaboration with the city, the construction is now planned in a way that will stop an erosion problem, but preserve the natural habitat that serves

as a haven for species not found in more developed areas in the city. Students in Mrs. Gloschen's class were involved in the process, surveying the species in the area to determine how to minimize the damage. Mrs. Gloschen also used the situation as an opportunity to explain to her students how governments can carry out such programs in a way that solves the problem but is also compatible with the existing habitat.

Mrs. Gloschen has also collaborated with the Blue River Watershed Association to provide another learning opportunity for her students. With the help of an official from the association, the students perform water quality tests on Indian Creek, mainly by collecting, identifying, and analyzing organisms in the creek. In this activity, students learn about the effects of human activity on streams and

other bodies of water, as well as how local watersheds work.

Mrs. Gloschen teaches a truly unique program at Olathe South. Because of her dedication, hard work, and expertise, many students have benefited from her class and leave with a conservation-oriented mindset, aware of the problems and their solutions involving not just the Kansas ecosystem, but ecosystems across the world.

Westar Energy, Inc of Topeka sponsored the Conservation Educator of the Year award.

In conclusion, Mrs. Gloschen is the type of teacher everyone would want for their child. This recognition of Rene Gloschen as the 2013 Conservation Educator of the Year by the Kansas Wildlife Federation is well deserved.

Farmer/Rancher Wildlife Conservationist

Glen and Barbara Walker

Glenn and Barbara Walker, of Brookville, manage their ranch with the type of hard work, expertise and ethic that fosters both healthy prairie chicken populations and economically viable livestock production. Although Glenn, Barbara, their two sons, and both daughters-in-law have all had successful careers in education and research, they remain faithful to the ranching traditions of Glenn's late father, Ray Walker, a lifelong Smoky Hills rancher.

The Walkers have been progressive conservation leaders in the Smoky Hills region, serving on the Conservation District Board and applying sound long-term grazing practices that yield high-quality wildlife habitat and forage production. The Walkers were also among the first landowners in the region to grant conservation easements on their property. To date, the Walkers have provided permanent protection of the agricultural and ecological values on more than 4,500 grassland acres. The easements are held by the Ranchland Trust of Kansas (RTK) and were established in partnership with the U.S.D.A.

The Walker's easement program not only insured their native grass would not be developed and would be used for ranching and grazing, it also fulfilled the wishes of Glenn's dad, Ray, who wanted



Glen Walker, left, from Brookville, receives the 2013 Farmer/Rancher Wildlife Conservationist award from Troy Schroeder, Kansas Wildlife Federation President. The Kansas Farmers Union sponsored the Farmer/Rancher Wildlife Conservationist award.

the land protected for ranchland use in the foreseeable future.

The Walker's ranch easement is a conservative effort involving a private-public partnership with the Natural Resources Conservative Service Grassland Reserve Program (GRP). Horizon Wind Energy is involved in the conservation efforts by way of the Meridian Way Wind Farm in Cloud County. A study

commissioned by Horizon that assessed the likely risks Meridian Way might pose to native grassland birds and the prairie ecosystem concluded there would be possible negative impacts resulting from habitat fragmentation. These findings prompted Horizon to commit to a voluntary conservation program, includ-

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MOUNTS

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For example her "FishWichita!", a periodic publication from the fisheries division of Kansas Department of Wildlife Parks and Tourism has contained a wealth of information for both the experienced and the neophyte fisherman/woman. Typical editions might contain: local fishing conditions and important upcoming events, fish identification, family fishing tips and techniques, potential problems that might affect local waters and fisheries, fishing Q and A and general fishing how-to information.

Jessica writes blogs for: the Kansas Chapter of the American Fisheries So-

ciety and the Kansas Natural Resource Conference, and she is the newsletter editor for the Kansas Chapter of the American Fisheries Society. She is also writing and compiling the Great Plains Nature Center's upcoming Stream Fishes Pocket Guide, and has produced public-accessible Power Point Productions, including one titled "Fish Stocking and Population Management".

In addition to her writing skills, Jessica is an active member of the Kansas Chapter of the American Fisheries Society and the Natural Resource Council, having been a president of the Kansas Chapter of the American Fisheries Society and editing their web page.

Most recently Jessica has applied her talents to wildlife photography and

is quickly becoming utilized and recognized by both citizen and publications. Her photography business, Prairie Portraits, offers excellent examples of Kansas prairie wildlife, individuals and families participating in Kansas Outdoor activities, and family portraiture.

Ever busy after fishing writing and taking photos, Jessica is also interested in hobby farming, Boston terriers, and knitting.

The Kansas Chapter of the American Fisheries Society sponsored the Water Conservationist of the Year award.

For all she does for water conservation, Jessica Mounts is the Kansas Wildlife Federation Water Conservationist of the Year for 2013.

Land and Soil Wildlife Conservationist

Marlene Bosworth

Marlene Bosworth of Sabetha has worked as the Delaware River Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategy group (WRAPS) coordinator, focusing on improving water quality in the watershed above Perry Lake Federal Reservoir. Reduction of sediment and nutrient levels through streamside tree planting and conservation are top priorities. In addition to water quality, Bosworth also realizes that streamside trees provide critical wildlife habitat for a wide range of both terrestrial and aquatic species.

Marlene acts proactively, seeking means to establish, manage, and conserve streamside forests for both water quality and wildlife. Following are some of Marlene's proactive efforts to promote streamside trees and thus enhance water quality:

- Brought together KFS, Delaware WRAPS, Nemaha County Farm Service Agency (FSA), Nemaha County Conservation District, and the Kansas Department of Agriculture-Division of Conservation (KDA-DOC) in an effort to create the Delaware Water Quality Leveraging Cost Share Project, helping provide producers an additional incentive to plant forest buffers and to maintain these buffers for the neces-



Marlene Bosworth, from Sabetha (right), receives the 2013 Land and Soil Conservationist of the Year award from Troy Schroeder, Kansas Wildlife Federation President. Photo by Angela Anderson.

sary three year period.

- For the Delaware River Streambank Restoration Program, she worked to require landowners that receive cost share for large-scale, rock-work streambank stabilization practices install a 66' (minimum) streamside forest buffer above the project's top

bank. She then worked with KFS and KDA-DOC to see that enough funding was allocated to these buffers so that a skilled forestry contractor would be able to plant and maintain the buffer for 3 years (a time period critical for

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WATKINS

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tive. Several hundred birds have been banded by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service so they could be followed by identifying their bands. The Watkins' have been there to assist and help coordinate this effort since the beginning. In addition, Mike helps track the success of new and existing eagle nests throughout the state.

The area where Mike and Bunnie have been particularly effective has been in their ability to educate the public. Annual "Eagle Days" at Clinton and Perry Lakes have been a huge success, giving thousands of people a chance to actually view the

majestic birds up close and personal. For years now Bunnie has coordinated the Jayhawk Audubon Society's Eagles Day, an event where folks can not only view the eagles (a trip to the lake arranged and guided by Mike), but they are given access to many of the different conservation efforts important to Kansans (including a teaching table provided by KWF). Over the years, the couple has given programs and/or lead eagle viewing tours at 11 lake project Eagle Days Programs throughout the region.

Mike has authored and/or co-authored more than 25 scientific and popular articles on bald eagle nesting activities in Kansas. He has also written and updated several bald eagle brochures. Thousands of copies of

the brochures have been distributed to the general public and at educational events.

The hope here, as it is with all wildlife conservation efforts, is that the public is given the chance to love at least one species – that by engaging with the species they are given the chance to love that species enough to want to protect and preserve it. Mike and Bunnie's efforts have gone a long way toward accomplishing just that.

The Kansas Chapter of The Wildlife Society sponsored the Wildlife Conservationist award.

The Kansas Wildlife Federation is proud to present the Wildlife Conservationist of the Year award for 2013 to Michael and Bunnie Watkins.

Forest Conservationist

Dave Bruton

For the last 25 years Dave Bruton has worked as a district forester and utilization marketing specialist for the Kansas Forest Service (KFS), providing conservation, wildlife and forestry expertise to the people of northeast Kansas. Dave's major goals have been the protection, establishment, management and utilization of Kansas forestlands, woodlands and the wildlife habitat they provide. He has provided woodland and wildlife management education through the Kansas Environthon; given presentations to the Kansas Christmas Tree Growers Association; and coordinated delivery of the Governor's Christmas Tree and Wreath.

Dave's recent contributions and achievements include:

- Working with landowners to plan for the management and protection of forest and wildlife resources on their properties, Dave most recently prepared 51 long-term Forest Stewardship Management plans and 77 forestry practice project plans, improving the health and quality of hundreds of acres of woodlands and the wildlife habitat;

- Guiding these same landowners through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) application process for Forestland Health which provided thousands of dollars to these landowners to implement forestry and wildlife improvement projects on 614 acres;

- Helped establish the Kansas Forest Products Association which consisted of



Dave Bruton of Valley Falls (right), is congratulated by Bob Atchison, Kansas Forest Service, after receiving the 2013 Forest Conservationist award. Troy Schroeder, Kansas Wildlife Federation President (left) looks on. The Kansas State Chapters of the National Wild Turkey Federation sponsored the Forest Conservationist award. Photo by Angela Anderson.

landowners, loggers, sawmill operators and forestry industry members;

- Served as a Board Member for the Kansas Tree Farm Program, Kansas Chapter of the Walnut Council and the Kansas Forestry Association;

- Through the American Tree Farm System (ATFS), Dave has written plans for and certified 21 Kansas woodland owners;

- Assisted with and co-authored the USFS, Northeastern Research Station's Timber Products Output Survey to determine lumber production in Kansas;

- Assisted with coordinating, hosting and presenting 54 workshops to 7,225 participants at a variety of venues including Water Festivals, Kansas Arborists

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Youth Conservationist

Logan Fuller

Logan Fuller of Emporia has made a habit of sharing his love of the outdoors through numerous volunteer activities, and he works to make sure wildlife and activities related to the great outdoors are understood and preserved for generations to come.

Logan is a 10 year member of the Cloverleaf 4-H Club in Lyon County. Since the age of seven, he has immersed himself in becoming a leader by learning life skills via various project work and serving others. He has truly molded his life through learning and sharing his knowledge with others. Logan has pursued many traditional projects in 4-H such as pigs, goats, sheep, and foods and nutrition.

Not only did Logan excel in his project work, he subsequently took on the new challenge of the 4-H Wildlife Project. After expanding his knowledge



Logan Fuller, from Emporia (second from left), received the 2013 Youth Conservationist of the Year award from Troy Schroeder, Kansas Wildlife Federation President. Also present were Shirley and Jim Ruder of the Bundleflower Plant and Wildflower Preserve, who sponsored the Youth Conservationist award. Photo by Angela Anderson.

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Outdoor Skills Instructor

Donna Cooper

During most of her more than four decades of teaching biology at Hays High School, Donna Cooper of Hays taught Field Biology, a year-long class that taught students how to identify and appreciate Kansas plants and animals and field techniques for collecting plants and conducting plant and wildlife surveys.

Not all school administrators saw the need for a field biology class, but Donna persisted, and her persistence paid off: the class remained as a part of the school's curriculum and her classroom remained well stocked with binoculars, field guides, butterfly nets, water-collection supplies, etc. To acquire this equipment, she worked the concession stand at high school basketball games and applied for numerous grants. Three of these grant proposals led to her earning the Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching in 1987 and the Toyota and National Science Teachers



Donna Cooper, right, from Hays, receives the 2013 Outdoor Skills Instructor award from Troy Schroeder, Kansas Wildlife Federation President, left. Also present was Helen Hands, Hays, who nominated Mrs. Cooper. The Outdoor Skills Instructor award was sponsored by the Geary County Fish and Game Association of Junction City. Photo by Angela Anderson.

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New members elected to the board of directors



The membership of the Kansas Wildlife Federation elected Board members for 2014-15. Pictured is Steve Bender, NWF Regional Representative (left), administering the Conservation Pledge to Cindy Higgins, Director at Large, Eudora; Terry Sullivan, Southcentral District Director, Clearwater; Jim Strine, Director at Large, Hays; David Zumbaugh, Director at Large, Shawnee; Troy Schroeder, President, Albert; Angela Anderson, Administrative Vice President, Allen; Carl Conley, Director at Large, Clearwater; and Ted Beringer, Northeast District Director, Lenexa.

Grandpa Boone's Cabin donates to KWF

Brad Roether from Grandpa Boone's Cabin and Outfitters of Milford, KS presented the Kansas Wildlife Federation with a check for \$2,317 at the KWF annual banquet held in Salina on Feb. 22, 2014.

The money will be used to purchase 15 Genesis bows, 120 arrows and a 10 x 30 feet curtain to be used in archery instruction during KWF's Outdoor Adventure Camp and other outdoor events conducted by KWF. Last year more than 800 youths participated in these events.

Grandpa Boone's Cabin and Outfitters provides guided fishing and hunting experiences on Milford Lake as well as selling outdoor equipment. Money for youth activities is generated by the Big Buck contest held annually by the Brad and Daniel Roether at Grandpa Boone's Cabin.



Brad Roether (left) from Grandpa Boone's Cabin and Outfitters of Milford presents Elby Adamson, chair of the KWF Education Committee, with a donation for KWF's Outdoor Adventure Camp.

BRUTON

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association Training, Fall Forestry Field Days, Scout presentations, Kansas Forest Products Association Industry tours, Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategy (WRAPS) Field tours and conferences, Environthons, Society of American Foresters (SAF) Sponsored Walk in the Woods, Walnut Council Field Days and Agroforestry Field Days;

- In cooperation with the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Delaware WRAPS,

the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), and K-State Research and Extension, Dave worked with the Kickapoo Tribe to initiate a Windbreak and Timber Stand Improvement project; and

- Dave works with 26 Volunteer Fire Departments to provide, inspect and inventory the necessary fire fighting equipment donated through the Kansas Forest Service.

In summary, Dave Bruton has worked hard to teach others the important role trees play in our lives and the lives of wildlife species. Best of all,

however, is that his legacy will stand beyond his lifetime in the trees and shrubs he has helped to plant and manage, and the many people he has touched with his knowledge and friendly personality.

The Kansas State Chapters of the National Wild Turkey Federation sponsored the Forest Conservationists of the Year award.

For his dedication and interest in sustaining the quality and productivity of woodlands and the wildlife that benefit from them, Dave Bruton is the winner of the 2013 Kansas Wildlife Federation Forest Conservationists of the Year.

BOSWORTH

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buffer success).

- Marlene always works with KFS to see that wildlife-beneficial species dominate buffer plantings – species such as Oaks, Pecan, Hickories, Sycamore, and Black walnut for deer, turkey and small game, as well as American Plum and Chokecherry for quail habitat. This past year, KFS worked with Marlene and Pheasants

Forever to design nearly 3000 linear feet of buffer specifically designed for deer and quail, in addition to stream-bank stabilization and water quality.

- To enhance the Delaware River water quality she worked with NRCS to set up meetings where landowners could meet with technical service providers and NRCS to design projects, check eligibility, and initiate applications applicable to a program the Environmental Quality Incentives Program / National Water Quality Initiative was working on. She also facilitated the

2013 “Trees and Tributaries Tour”, an event aimed at promoting streamside forestry practices for water quality to top-priority watershed landowners.

In summary: Marlene has worked hard to enhance water quality within the Delaware River watershed, as well as for the end users of Perry Lake’s water, including Lawrence and Kansas City. Marlene Bosworth is very deserving of being recognized as the 2013 Land and Soil Wildlife Conservationists of the Year by the Kansas Wildlife Federation.

FULLER

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of the Wildlife Project, he applied this know-how by offering educational meetings to other youth in the county. He identified that there are many youth who are interested in hunting, wildlife, and the outdoors. However, because of where they live or limited access to property, these youth feel they can’t explore these interests. From teaching about trapping and fur harvesting to sharing about his coon dog, Logan has several ideas for county-wide project meetings that he is setting up for all youth to be able to participate in and have hands-on access. Getting youth involved, educated and participating in outdoor activities are all goals he is achieving through his efforts.

In addition to his 4-H activities, Logan volunteers in the community. He is a highlight of a sporting/coon dog presentation at various wildlife events such as the

state Jakes Camp and Beau Arndt Day. After initially being a participant, Logan gave countless hours to the Clint Bowyer Youth Hunt, working to coordinate hunters and guides. He has also volunteered at the Turkey Clinic and worked at the air rifle booth at the Bluestem Outdoors Day. Logan is also actively involved in organizations such as the National Wildlife Turkey Federation, serving on the Flint Hills Gobblers Committees. In short, Logan Fuller takes every opportunity to help promote hunting, wildlife, and the outdoors way of life.

Logan’s talents continue to be recognized by many individuals and organizations. He was selected as one of only six youth who had the opportunity to participate in the Kansas Governor’s One Shot Turkey Hunt in April. Logan has earned numerous awards in 4-H, including a three-time reigning swine record book award winner. He is currently working on his Key Award, the highest award given to youth in 4-H.

In addition to all this, Logan is busy with his family’s haying operation as well as being active in school activities including STUCO Vice President, participating in the school-sponsored Envirothon, and playing on the local baseball team. Logan is also active in St. Mark’s Lutheran Church.

Logan’s approach to volunteering by providing true labor as well as sharing his personal knowledge is impressive. He simply finds the time and understands his important role as a youth in promoting positive life skills.

The Bundleflower Plant and Wildflower Preserve (the Jim Ruder family of WaKeeney) sponsored the Youth Conservationist of the Year award.

For his love of wildlife and the outdoors and for his willingness to share his time and knowledge so that others can also appreciate the outdoors, the Kansas Wildlife Federation is pleased to present our Youth Conservationist of the Year award for 2013 to Logan Fuller.

Photo gallery from the 2014 Annual Meeting



The afternoon segment of the Annual Meeting was entitled "Getting Kansas Kids Outdoors." We had speakers from various Kansas conservation organizations and agencies give a summary of the efforts their organizations were utilizing to expose kids to the great Kansas outdoors. One of the presenters was Brian Shaffer, Pheasants Forever/Quail Forever Youth Coordinator.



Ed Augustine, President of Geary County Fish & Game Association, presents during the Annual Meeting.



Mike Christensen, Executive Director, Pass It On - Outdoor Mentors.

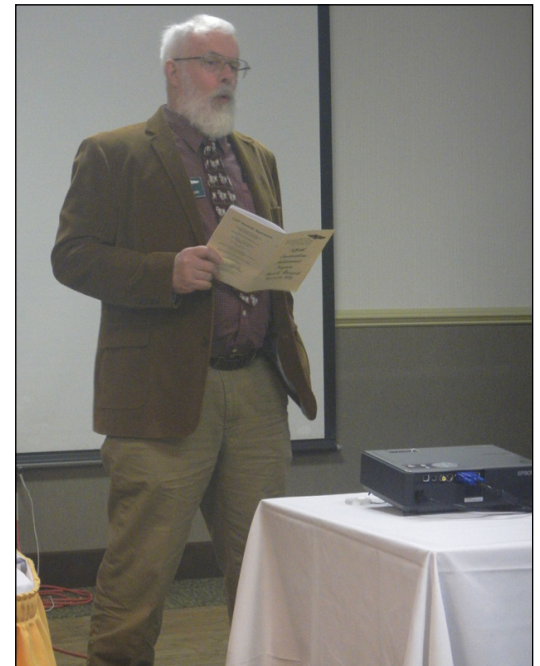


Nick Prough, Chief Wildlife Biologist and Conservation Programs Director for Quail and Upland Wildlife Federation.

Photo gallery from the 2014 Annual Meeting



Mike Haddock, President of the Kansas Native Plant Society, talks about the numerous plants in Kansas and their Native American medicinal values to the Conservation Achievement Program (CAP) Banquet audience.



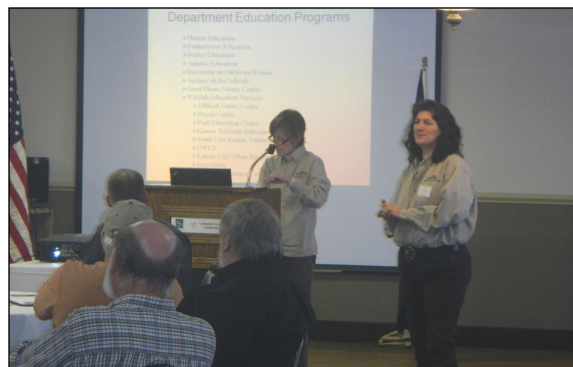
Randy Kidd, Conservation Achievement Program (CAP) Coordinator, introduces the CAP winners.



Attendees to the CAP banquet look over some of the auction items. Dave Hendricks, auctioneer and KWF Board member, generated over \$1,350 from the group.



Troy Schroeder, KWF President, addresses the CAP banquet audience.



Pam Martin (l) and Pat Silovsky, Kansas Department Wildlife, Parks and Tourism.

Trout season runs through mid-April

Kansas offers winter trout fishing at more than 30 public fishing lakes

Kansas might not be the first state that comes to your mind when you think of trout fishing, but don't be fooled – the Sunflower State has created spectacular winter fishing opportunities by stocking more than 30 different public fishing locations with this spotted fish.

Through April 15, anglers can try their luck at trout fishing in both Type 1 and Type 2 waters. Type 1 waters stocked with trout require all anglers

to possess a \$12.50 trout permit, while Type 2 waters require only those fishing for or possessing trout to purchase the permit. The \$12.50 permit is valid for the calendar year and can be purchased wherever licenses are sold and online at ksoutdoors.com.

Residents 16-74 years old, and all non-residents 16 and older must also have a valid fishing license. The daily creel limit is five trout unless otherwise posted. Anglers 15 and younger may

fish without a trout permit, but are limited to two trout per day, or they may purchase a permit and take five trout per day. Possession limit for trout is 15.

Trout fishing at Mined Land Wildlife Area No. 30 (Cherokee County), where trout survive through the summer, requires a trout permit year-round. For a complete list of waters stocked with trout, as well as rules and regulations, consult the 2014 Kansas Fishing Regulations Summary, or visit ksoutdoors.com.

WALKER

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ing ecological offsets for the wind farm which eventually led to a conservation agreement between Rangeland Trust of Kansas, Horizon, and The Nature Conservancy. The agreement provides a good example of various interests working together to help preserve habitat important to Kansas wildlife including prairie chicken, eastern meadowlark, and upland sandpiper.

Not only does the ranch provide an excellent rangeland resource for grazing and habitat for wildlife, it has historical significance. Native American petroglyphs depicting bison hunting can be seen on one of the tracts, and on another tract ruts still exist from the original Smoky Hill Trail and the Butterfield Overland Stage route. In their commitment to lasting conservation, Glenn and Barbara have allowed hunting on their land through several years of participation in the State's Walk-in Hunting Areas Program.

The Walkers have provided a model

for how to manage land using ecologically and economically sound ways methods, and how to preserve that land for rangeland and wildlife use in the future.

The Kansas Farmers Union of McPherson sponsored the Farmer/Rancher Wildlife Conservationist of the Year award.

Glenn and Barbara Walker are excellent stewards of prairie wildlife and their habitat and a fitting recipient of the Kansas Wildlife Federation Farmer/Rancher Wildlife Conservationist of the Year award for 2013.

COOPER

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Association Tapestry Award for Excellence in Science Education in 1991 and 1992. The Presidential Award was presented to her by President Ronald Reagan at the White House.

Of course, Field Biology is more than classroom learning. She took every opportunity to get her classes outside to explore the natural world. She formed a Science Club. She took her Field Biology class and Science Club to Cheyenne Bottoms, Salt Plains National Wildlife Refuge and Alabaster Caverns in Oklahoma, Dancing Leaf Lodge and the Platte River in Nebraska, Keystone Snow School in Colorado, and whale watching in the Pacific Northwest. These trips allowed her students to explore new lands, see all sorts of new creatures and allowed her students to learn about astronomy,

geology, the lives of Native Americans, and develop outdoor skills like camping and animal tracking.

With the help of the Ellis County Conservation District, Donna was able to establish a sixteen acre natural area on the school's grounds. The area was planted with a variety of grasses, trees, and shrubs so her classes have a nearby place to identify plants and animals and conduct surveys. Maintenance of the outdoor classroom gives her students a taste of what habitat management involves.

Donna coached an Eco-Meet team and worked with many students individually on science projects with many qualifying for state competitions, such as the Junior Academy of Science. She even led a co-ed Boy Scouts of America Explorer Post, which focused on appreciating and exploring the natural world.

Serving as a role model for her students, Donna has made long-term contributions of data to the Christmas Bird Count, water sampling on Big Creek and

the Saline River in Ellis County through the Globe Program, and the Kansas Herpetofauna Atlas, often incorporating the results of these surveys into her Field Biology class. Several of her students have been so inspired by her classes and extracurricular activities that they have become biologists themselves. According to a biology professor at Fort Hays University, he has 5-8 of her students per year in his Zoology class

Donna retired from teaching in May 2013. However, she doesn't plan to retire from sharing her passion for the natural world with others. We need more teachers like Donna Cooper to educate our future decision-makers if we are going to solve our conservation challenges.

The Geary County Fish and Game Association of Junction City sponsored the Outdoor Skills Instructor award.

The Kansas Wildlife Federation is proud to present to Donna Cooper the recognition of Outdoor Skills Instructor of the Year for 2013.

Council Grove Youth Turkey Hunt April 5

Hunters age 11-16 are invited to participate; registration deadline March 21

The Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism (KDWPT), in cooperation with area chapters of the National Wild Turkey Federation, Quail and Upland Wildlife Federation, Ducks Unlimited, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, will sponsor a youth turkey hunt April 5 near Council Grove. Participation is open to all youth age 11-16, and there is

no cost to attend. Limited slots are available and the deadline to apply is March 21.

Participants in this hunt will pattern shotguns and scout for turkeys the evening before the hunt on April 4. Early on April 5, they will be guided on public and private land to some of the best turkey hunt spots the area has to offer. The event will

also include door prizes, a turkey hunting presentation, and breakfast and lunch for the hunters.

Lodging is available in nearby Council Grove, and camping is available at Council Grove Reservoir.

For more information or to register for this event, contact KDWPT public land manager Brent Konen at (620) 767-5900.

Steve Harper Scholarship renewed, to help Kansas students

The Outdoors Writers of Kansas and Kansas Wildscape are renewing the scholarship

A scholarship for Kansas students is named after Steve Harper, a longtime photo editor and outdoors writer/photographer for the Wichita Eagle, who died in 2000 from cancer at the age of 55. A scholarship in his name was suggested by Gov. Bill Graves and others. The \$1,000 scholarship program was funded by donations. Funds expired after about 10 years. The Outdoors Writers of Kansas and Kansas Wildscape joined to renew the Scholarship last year.

Applications may be made by students graduating from a Kansas high

school planning on attending a Kansas four-year college, with a nature/wildlife-based major. The student must also have career goals of staying in Kansas. College students with a similar major and goals may also apply.

The program will issue one \$1,000 scholarship annually, directly to the student's college.

Harper was known for his deep love of Kansas and published hundreds of articles and photos about enjoying his native state. He also rated Kansans as some of the finest people in America, es-

pecially those that possessed great deals of commitment and motivation.

Scholarship applicants will be judged by members of the Outdoor Writers of Kansas and Kansas Wildscape. Selection criteria will include past and current involvement in nature/wildlife-related projects, scholastic achievement and projected potential.

The deadline to apply is late March. For information on applying, contact Debbie Brandt at Kansas Wildscape at 785-843-9453 or dbrandt@sunflower.com.

DSC auction raises \$350,000 for rhino conservation

A Dallas Safari Club (DSC) auction has raised \$350,000 for rhino conservation efforts in Namibia.

All proceeds - 100 percent - will go into a special fund used by the Namibian Ministry of Environment and Tourism for anti-poaching patrols, habitat protection, research and other measures crucial for protecting populations of endangered black rhinos.

The auctioned item is a hunting permit for a black rhino in Namibia's Mangetti National Park.

Science shows that selective hunting helps rhino populations grow. Removing old, post-breeding bulls, which are territorial, aggressive and often

kill younger, breeding bulls, cows and even calves, increases survival and productivity in a herd. With hunting as part of its conservation program, Namibia's rhino population is growing as much as five percent annually.

The auction and hunt are endorsed by three global wildlife authorities: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, IUCN (affiliated with the United Nations) and CITES (an international treaty to protect endangered species).

Namibia is authorized to issue a limited number of rhino-hunting permits each year, and has previously auctioned permits only within its own borders. The previous high was

\$223,000.

"Biologists in Namibia were hopeful that a U.S.-based auction would produce a record amount for rhino conservation, and that's exactly what happened. We were honored to be asked to help and we're pleased with the results," said Ben Carter, DSC executive director. "I'm proud of our organization for taking a stand to help ensure the future of an iconic species."

To ensure the correct type of animal is taken, Namibian wildlife officials will accompany the hunter. If the hunt is successful, meat from the animal will feed a nearby community.

Kansas legislation

The following is compilation of bills in the Kansas Legislature that will impact sportsmen and women and those interested in natural resource conservation. Additional information can be found on the KWF website www.kswildlife.org or the Kansas Legislature webpage at http://www.kslegislature.org/li/b2013_14/measures/bills/.

Senate Bills

SB 272 — This bill would eliminate the limit of the number of acres allowed to be enrolled in controlled shooting areas per county, which is currently 3 percent. This bill had a hearing on Jan. 23, 2014, and was amended by the committee to retain the cap but increase it to 5 percent. This bill passed the Senate 39-0 on Wednesday, Feb. 12. This bill was referred to the House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources. A hearing is scheduled for March 12.

SB 276 — This bill would enact the State Sovereignty Over Non-migratory Wildlife Act and was introduced in response to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's announcement that adding the lesser prairie chicken to the Threatened and Endangered Species List was warranted. This bill had a hearing on Jan. 23, and on Jan. 31 the committee recommended it favorably for passage. The bill passed the Senate 30-10 on Wednesday, Feb. 12. This bill was referred to the House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources. A hearing is scheduled for March 12.

SB 281 — This bill would remove the redbelly snake and smooth earth snake from the state Threatened and Endangered Species List established under the Nongame and Endangered Species Conservation Act. This bill was referred to the Senate Committee on Natural Resources. This bill had a hearing on Jan. 30. **KWF opposes this bill because there is currently an administrative method to establish or change the species list and should not be done legislatively.**

SB 323 — This bill would eliminate most Kansas conservation easements. Bill was introduced by Committee on Ways and Means and referred to Committee on Natural Resources. A hearing was held February 14. **KWF opposes this bill because it interferes with landowner**

rights to designate the future of land management. Proponents are only looking at short-term economic benefits and not long-term natural resource aspects.

SB 357 — This bill would allow a hunter who has not completed an approved hunter education course to purchase three separate deferrals (apprentice licenses), each valid for the license year during which it is purchased, before hunter education is required. Currently, a hunter may purchase a one-time deferral of hunter education completion. This bill was referred to the Senate Committee on Natural Resources. Hearing held Feb. 20. Passed the Senate 40-0. This bill was referred to the House Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee.

SB 366 — This bill would authorize the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism to purchase a parcel of land containing 397 acres in Cherokee County. This bill was referred to the Senate Committee on Ways and Means. Hearing held Feb. 25. **KWF supports this bill. Kansas has too little public land available for hunting access (KDWP owns 0.27% of Kansas).**

SB 370 — This bill would authorize the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism to purchase a parcel of land containing 484 acres in Pottawatomie County. This bill was referred to the Senate Committee on Ways and Means. Hearing scheduled for Feb. 25 at 10:30 am, Room 548-S. **KWF also supports this bill. Kansas has too little public land available for hunting access.**

House Bills

HB 2076 — This bill would exempt any honorably discharged veteran who resides in Kansas and has a service connected disability equal to or greater than 30 percent from all hunting and fishing license/permit requirements and fees. Hearing was held Jan. 29. **KWF opposes this bill because it puts the financial burden on the sportsmen and not the general public.**

HB 2362 — This bill would amend provisions of the nongame and endangered species conservation act, specifically redefining critical habitat as it relates to a threatened and endangered species, as well as significantly changing

how species are designated threatened or endangered in Kansas. The bill was referred to the Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources. A hearing was held Feb. 25. **KWF opposes this bill because there is currently an administrative method to establish or change the species list and should not be done legislatively.**

HB 2365 — this bill deals with property and conservation easements. This bill is similar to SB 323 and would eliminate most Kansas conservation easements. It was referred to Committee on Energy and Environment. **KWF opposes this bill, also.**

HB 2422 — This bill would define watercraft to include documented vessels for the purposes of taxation. Bill was referred to the House Committee on Taxation. This bill had a hearing on January 28. This bill passed as amended 118-0. It was referred to the Senate Committee on Assessment and Taxation.

HB 2447 — this bill deals with real property; trespass and liability. It stipulates that a landowner owes "a trespasser only the duty of care that existed at common law or in statute as of July 1, 2014." The bill was referred to the Committee on Judiciary. Hearing held Jan. 30. Passed the House 119-2. Referred to Senate Committee on the Judiciary.

HB 2473 — This is a large bill dealing with weapons, but there are provisions in it related to seized firearms and disposition to Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism. It was referred to the House Committee on Federal and State Affairs. This bill had a hearing on February 4. The bill is on House General Orders.

HB 2499 — this bill would enact the state sovereignty over non-migratory wildlife act. Referred to Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources.

HB 2538 — This bill would repeal K.S.A. 32-703, which says that wildlife in the state, not held in private ownership, are hereby declared to be state owned & amend the statute to give landowners the right of first refusal to all antlers of deer wildlife illegally hunted on such landowner's land. This bill was referred to the House Committee on Agriculture and

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KFW membership passes resolutions for 2014

KANSAS WILDLIFE FEDERATION

2014 Resolution SUPPORT FOR THE INCREASED PRICE OF THE FEDERAL DUCK STAMP

Whereas, March 16, 2014, marks the 80th anniversary of the Migratory Bird Hunting Stamp Act (the Duck Stamp Act); and

Whereas, one of the founders of the National Wildlife Federation, Ding Darling, was the creator of the first Duck Stamp; and

Whereas, the federal duck stamp program provided a funding source to preserve and protect wetlands; and

Whereas, this nation's wetlands provide productive habitat for fish and wildlife, contain biologically rich ecosystems, support numerous recreational activities, provide commercial fishery and fur resources, reduce flooding, recharge groundwater, trap pollutants and sediments, and control erosion; and

Whereas, about 50 percent of this nation's original wetlands have been destroyed and about 450,000 acres of wetlands are lost each year; and

Whereas, since its enactment, the federal duck stamp program has protected more than 6 million acres of wetlands – an area the size of Vermont – through expenditures of more than \$750 million; and

Whereas, the federal duck stamp program has contributed to the conservation of more than 2.5 million acres in the Prairie Pothole region, including the protection of 7,000 waterfowl production areas totaling 675,000 acres; and

Whereas, land prices for wetlands and wetland habitat have increased 250% since 1991; and

Whereas, the fee for a Duck Stamp has not increased since 1991; and

Whereas, the federal duck stamp program is one of the most effective federal programs in existence, using \$0.98 of every dollar on the ground; and

Whereas, a bill, S 1865, has been introduced in the U. S. Senate to increase the price of the federal duck stamp to \$25.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT

RESOLVED that the Kansas Wildlife Federation assembled during its annual meeting, February 22, 2014 in Salina, Kansas, reaffirms its commitment to the Migratory Bird Hunting Stamp and calls upon Congress to pass S 1865; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Congress provide additional legislation to regularly review the fee for the Migratory Bird Hunting Stamp (the Duck Stamp) to ensure the fee is commensurate with changes in wetland values.

KANSAS WILDLIFE FEDERATION

2014 Resolution CALL FOR PROTECTION OF PUBLIC LANDS AND WILDLIFE FROM FERAL CATS

Whereas, in the past year, a series of new scientific studies have been published documenting extensive wildlife mortality resulting from cat predation, growing risk to human health from rabies and toxoplasmosis spread by cats, and the ineffectiveness of trap, neuter, release (TNR) programs at stemming cat populations; and

Whereas, this issue was raised with the Department of the Interior in an April 12, 2011, letter to Secretary Ken Salazar. To date, no meaningful actions needed to address this problem have been taken by the Department; and

Whereas, as the Smithsonian Institution and FWS have found, there is great urgency due to the high mortality wildlife populations face. A peer-reviewed study by scientists from these two organizations estimated that approximately 2.4 billion birds and 12.3 billion mammals are killed in the United States by cats every year; and

Whereas, while both owned and un-owned cats contribute, un-owned (e.g., feral) cats are responsible for over two-thirds of these bird deaths and nearly 90 percent of mammal deaths; and

Whereas, cats are now the number one source of direct anthropogenic mortality for birds and mammals, and their impact on wildlife will only increase as the numbers of cats – which have tripled in the last 40 years – continue to rise; and

Whereas, most recently, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has determined that feral cat colonies pose a threat to human health. According to the CDC, cats are consistently the number one carrier of rabies among domestic animals and disproportionately pose a risk of human exposure to rabies because of the increased likelihood of human-cat interactions; and

Whereas, a recently published study led by CDC scientists stated, “The propensity to underestimate rabies risk from cats has led to multiple large-scale rabies exposures.” Continued tolerance for roaming feral cats is, according to the Florida Department of Health, “not tenable on public health grounds because of the persistent threat posed to communities; and

Whereas, toxoplasmosis also threatens the health and welfare of people and wildlife. This disease is caused by a parasitic protozoan that depends on cats to complete its life cycle. Up to 74 percent of all cats will host the toxoplasmosis-causing parasite in their lifetime and shed hundreds of millions of infectious eggs as a result. Any contact, either directly or indirectly, with cat feces risks human and wildlife health; and

Whereas, in humans the parasite often encysts within the brain, which may cause behavioral changes and has been linked to schizophrenia, Alzheimer's, and other neuro-inflammatory diseases. Pregnant women may suffer sudden abortion or fetal developmental defects (e.g., blindness). Wildlife are similarly at risk, and contamination of watersheds with infected cat feces has been linked to the deaths of a number of freshwater and marine species (e.g., otters, Hawaiian monk seals); and

Whereas, TNR programs fail to reduce cat populations and cannot be relied upon as a management tool to remove cat colonies or protect people and wildlife. Multiple peer-reviewed studies, including the CDC's, have found that TNR programs do not adequately reduce feral cat populations or effectively mitigate health concerns. TNR colonies may actually lead to increased numbers

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RESOLUTIONS

Continued from Page 23

of cats. One long-term study of TNR in Rome, Italy, went so far as to call TNR a “waste of money, time, and energy.”

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Kansas Wildlife Federation assembled during its annual meeting, February 22, 2014 in Salina, Kansas, affirms the only sure way to simultaneously protect wildlife and people is to remove feral cats from the landscape; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that cat colonies are a common problem on many federal lands managed by the Department of the Interior and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. KWF urges that each agency develop a clear policy for the removal of cat colonies on the federal lands they are responsible for stewarding.

KANSAS WILDLIFE FEDERATION 2014 Resolution

PROMOTE CONTINUOUS CRP AS MEANS OF MAKING FARM- ING EASIER AND UPLAND BIRD FRIENDLY

Whereas, in Kansas, most land is privately owned and in agricultural production and therefore most upland bird (pheasant and quail) habitat is on private farm land; and

Whereas, edge habitat occurring when two cover types meet has decreased due to changes in farming practices and the trend to ever larger field sizes by removing fence rows, etc., resulting in huge fields of a single crop like wheat or corn with limited benefit to upland birds; and

Whereas, the Continuous Conservation Reserve Program, CCRP, a USDA conservation program is available to retire small acreages of land for specific conservation purposes (buffers), normally planted to native grass and allow the majority of the field to be farmed as usual; and

Whereas, CCRP is open to continuous enrollment and farmers can enroll in a variety of practices. Examples include filter strips along each side of a

defined drainage, field borders around the perimeter of a field and SAFE which can be small parts within the field for wildlife habitat; and

Whereas, there is a great need and opportunity to enroll more land in CCRP, creating better soil conservation and increasing diversity along with upland bird habitat.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Kansas Wildlife Federation assembled during its annual meeting, Feb 22, 2014 in Salina, recommends the start of a publicity campaign to market CCRP buffers to members of the Kansas Conservation Coalition, National Resources Conservation Service at the national, state and county levels and private landowners; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that KWF emphasize practices that will make farming more efficient, by eliminating point rows and other hard to farm places, as an incentive to gain participation by landowner/tenants.

KANSAS WILDLIFE FEDERATION 2014 Resolution

OPPOSITION TO THE PRIVATI- ZATION OF WILDLIFE IN KAN- SAS

Whereas, the Kansas Constitution declares that wildlife belongs to the People of Kansas; and

Whereas, this tenet has been the foundation of the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation; and

Whereas, HB 2538 would repeal K.S.A.32-703, which states: The ownership of and title to all wildlife, both resident and migratory, in the state, not held by private ownerships, legally acquired, shall be, and are hereby declared to be in the state.; and

Whereas, HB 2538 declares: Landowners shall have the right of first refusal to all antlers of deer illegally hunted on such landowner’s land; and

Whereas, HB 2538 in essence privatizes the ownership of the Kansas deer herd to the landowner on which they reside; and

Whereas, current law holds landowners harmless for damages caused by wildlife residing on their property.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT

RESOLVED that the Kansas Wildlife Federation assembled during its annual meeting, February 22, 2014 in Salina, Kansas, is opposed to the tenets of HB 2538 or any other legislation that privatizes the ownership of Kansas’ wildlife; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that KWF urges the Kansas Legislature to defeat HB 2538; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Kansas Wildlife Federation urges the Kansas Legislature to modify HB 2538 to hold landowners monetarily responsible for property damages incurred by deer from their property should the bill be enacted.

KANSAS WILDLIFE FEDERATION 2014 Resolution

SUPPORT FOR INTEGRATED ROADSIDE VEGETATIVE MAN- AGEMENT ON COUNTY AND TOWNSHIP ROADS IN KANSAS

Whereas, Kansas has over 10,000 miles of state administered roads; and

Whereas, there are approximately 80,500 miles of county administered roads in Kansas; and

Whereas, Kansas has thousands of miles of township and local entity administered roads; and

Whereas, the Kansas Department of Transportation continues to expand the use of Integrated Roadside Vegetative Management (IRVM) practices to improve aesthetics, reduce maintenance costs and enhance wildlife habitat on their roadsides; and

Whereas, Kansas counties, townships and local entities could benefit by implementing IRVM practices on roadsides under their administration.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Kansas Wildlife Federation assembled during its annual meeting, February 22, 2014 in Salina, Kansas, urges counties, townships and local entities to adopt Integrated Roadside Vegetative Management (IRVM) practices on roadsides under their administration; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that KWF urges adjacent landowners to county and township roadsides to endorse implemented IRVM practices.

Kansas recognized for use of native grasses in CRP

The National Bobwhite Technical Committee (NBTC) recently bestowed their Group Achievement Award to the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and Farm Service Agency (FSA) in Kansas. The award reflects achievements of groups of individuals or organizations that have had a measurable positive impact on wild bobwhite quail populations. The NBTC consists of the nation's top bobwhite biologists, researchers, resource managers and conservation groups who are dedicated to restoring native bobwhite quail populations.

With this award, the NBTC is praising the Kansas offices of NRCS and FSA for their unique implementation of the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), which became part of the Farm Bill in 1985. CRP pays private landowners to take highly-erodible farmland out of production and plant it to grass. In the program's early stages, Kansas policy makers were faced with critical decisions about the types of grasses that would be required in a state with such a wide diversity of soil types.

Those policy makers determined the most beneficial cover for CRP would be mixes of warm-season, native grasses, the same grasses found in our native prairies. Looking back, it appears to have been one of those moments in time where all the stars aligned and policy was devel-

oped that would have major implications for the future of wildlife and other natural resources in Kansas.

The decision was not met with unanimous support. Other states wanted consistency across state lines and were pushing the use of Old World bluestems, which were cheap and relatively easy to establish. Native grasses were more expensive and practical experience in establishing those grasses was lacking. Many assumed the CRP program would not be around long enough to warrant the cost of expensive grass mixes only to see the land broken out again in the future.

But staff in Kansas NRCS offices reasoned that establishing a mix of native grasses would provide the producer greater options for future use once the contracts expired. Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism staff knew the value of native grasses to wildlife and the department's field biologists had been working with private landowners to establish native grasses through wildlife habitat enhancement programs. A seed company in western Kansas was already selling native plant materials and had experience developing mixes for various parts of the state.

With agreement among technical staff across agency lines in Kansas and private industry ready to meet the needs of producers, administrators within NRCS and FSA strongly backed the decision to use

native grasses, ensuring long-term benefits for many Kansas wildlife species.

During the late 1990s, KDWPT began documenting the presence of the lesser prairie-chicken in portions of their historic range where they had not been seen for more than 60 years. This significant re-occupation was due to nesting cover provided by native grasses in CRP. FSA and its partners in Kansas had been targeting CRP enrollment within the historic range of the lesser prairie-chicken since 1996 by establishing Conservation Priority Areas. Since that time, increases in pheasant and quail populations have also been observed in those same areas. That portion of western Kansas is one of the only places in North America where quail populations have trended upward over the last couple of decades.

In making this award to NRCS and FSA, the NBTC also wanted to recognize individuals who were instrumental in making the "first native first" policy a reality nearly 30 years ago. Those individuals include James Habiger, former NRCS state conservationist, Jess Crockford, former NRCS state range conservationist, Bob Higgins and Rich Hager, former NRCS biologists, Al Schmatter, former FSA Conservation Program Manager, Bob Wood and Charles Lee, former KDWPT agriculture liaisons and Sharp Brothers Seed Company of Healy Kansas.

LEGISLATION

Continued from Page 22

Natural Resources. Hearing held Feb. 17. House passed this bill 106-17. It was referred to the Senate Natural Resources Committee on March 5. **KWF opposes this bill. It in essence gives landowners ownership of wildlife in Kansas. This overturns 150 years of wildlife management tenets in the United States.**

HB 2548 – this bill creates the water program management fund and transferring the air quality fee fund. It was referred to the Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources. Hearing held

Feb. 17. Committee recommended bill be passed by House.

HB 2626 — This bill would authorize the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism to allow persons issued valid hunting licenses and big game permits to use leashed tracking dogs to track and find dead, wounded or injured big game. This bill was referred to the House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources. This bill had a hearing February 19.

HB 2627 — This bill would remove the requirement of hunter education completion for those who hold concealed carry permits. This bill was referred to the House Committee on

Agriculture and Natural Resources. **KWF opposes this bill. Information covered by conceal carry training does not cover material and info in Hunter Education classes.**

HB 2694 — This bill would make hunting on any private land without landowner written permission criminal hunting, removing current requirements that landowners post or mark land as requiring written permission. This bill was referred to the House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources. Hearing was held Feb. 19. **KWF opposes this bill. It puts unreasonably burdens on the sportsmen and will greatly reduce access to private lands.**

It's Timberdoodle time!

One of the American Woodcock's more colorful folk names is "timberdoodle," probably for the bird's forest-edge haunts, erratic, zigzag flight, and twittering call notes. These plump little birds are technically shorebirds, though they're found far from any beach. Like the Spruce Grouse, they are beautifully camouflaged to match the forest floor, in varying tones and patterns of brown, black, buff, and gray.

American Woodcocks share their second-growth habitat with the Golden-winged Warbler and benefit from conservation measures designed for that bird. Rarely seen, the woodcock spends most of its time hidden in fields and forests, where it probes for earth-

worms with a flexible-tipped bill that can reach worms more than two inches underground. Its large eyes are positioned high and near the back of the skull, an adaptation that enables the bird to keep watch for danger while probing for food.

Since American Woodcocks are nocturnal migrants, they are a frequent victim of collisions with communications towers, glass windows, and other man-made structures.

On late winter and early spring evenings, male woodcocks perform conspicuous displays, dubbed "sky dances" by naturalist Aldo Leopold. A male begins by giving a buzzy, nasal peent call, turning in a tight circle while calling to broadcast to all nearby

females. Then he suddenly launches into the air, circling higher and higher until almost invisible, wings making a distinctive chittering sound all the while. At the apex of his display flight (200-350 feet), the male switches to a series of high-pitched chirps, then tumbles back to earth in a steep dive, where he begins his display anew.

Long-term woodcock declines are apparently tied to natural forest succession and habitat loss due to development. Because they forage on the forest floor, woodcocks can accumulate pesticides in their bodies; their heavy diet of earthworms, which makes up more than half its diet, makes them vulnerable to poisoning by lead, cadmium, and other heavy metals.

Connecting kids to nature in the digital age

NWF report: Friending fresh air

So how do parents balance the role of technology in their kids' lives with the simple pleasures and lasting benefits of outdoor play? Better yet, how do they use technology to get kids moving, exploring and interacting with the outdoor world around them?

Be Out There takes an in-depth look at how to balance screen time with green time in the report, *Friending Fresh Air: Connecting Kids to Nature in the Digital Age*. Here, we offer insight on how to use technology you already love and still connect your kids to nature.

Bridge the Indoor/Outdoor Gap with

Tech

1. Use technology to help plan outdoor time or inspire your next outdoor adventure.

2. If they love it, embrace it, and take it outside!

3. Keep a record of your experiences with the help of electronics to take photos, make videos or keep an electronic journal of adventures and discoveries

"Everything in moderation" is a wise old saying that applies to many aspects of our lives. As much as we love chocolate, a diet of cookies and candy bars just doesn't cut it in the nu-

trition department. Likewise, technology can be a wonderful tool for learning and playing, but kids require a balance of screen and green experiences to grow up happy and healthy. Kids, and even parents, need time to recharge their own batteries, so don't forget the importance of unplugging completely and enjoying some disconnected connection with nature, too.

Smartphone or not, it's good for kids to Be Out There!

To download the entire report, go to: <http://www.nwf.org/~media/PDFs/Be%20Out%20There/BOTTechReport85x11FINAL.ashx>

Have you seen a prairie-chicken lek this spring?

The Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism (KDWPT) is collecting opportunistic prairie-chicken lek observations again this year across Kansas. If you can help in this effort it would be greatly appreciated. Below are instructions for submitting a lek observation. Please share this link with other folks who you feel can help in this effort.

Chicken Lek Reporting Instructions

If you observe a prairie-chicken lek (display site) this spring please report your observation into KDWPT's

online database (link below). If you report a lek you will need to know the geographic coordinates (latitude and longitude) of the display site, which you can collect with either a GPS unit or by referencing a map. The location data and the date of observation are the only required information when reporting a lek. Other data will be accepted if you can gather it [e.g. bird count and species presence (greater and/or lesser prairie-chickens)].

The data from this effort are extreme-

ly important to the department because they help target prairie-chicken conservation programs and provide siting recommendations to energy developers. Your help will ensure that KDWPT is using the best possible data to make those decisions.

Reporting a Prairie-chicken Lek Observation: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/chickenleks>

If you have any questions, contact Jim Pitman, KDWPT's Small Game Coordinator 620-342-0658.

Enrollment in WAFWA lesser prairie-chicken conservation efforts opens

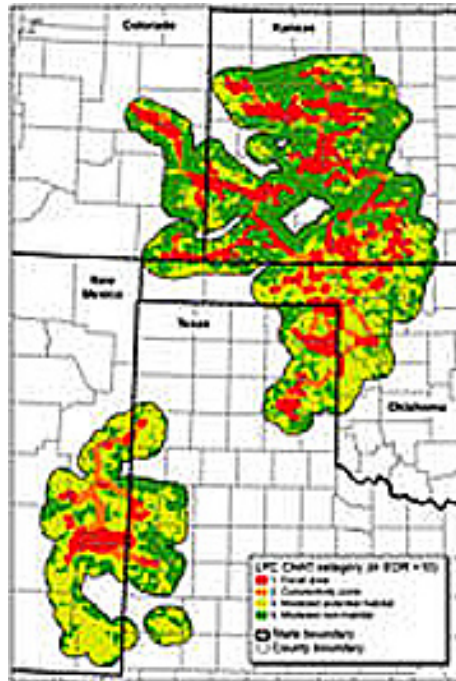
Lesser prairie-chicken range-wide plan reaches 2.5 million acres in five states; industry enrollment provides nearly \$15 million for habitat conservation

Private companies in five states have now enrolled more than 2.5 million acres in the Lesser Prairie-Chicken Range-wide Conservation Plan, representing oil and gas, pipelines, electric transmission and wind energy, resulting in nearly \$15 million for habitat conservation over the next three years. Added to more than 1.3 million acres of oil and gas leases under conservation agreements in New Mexico, this brings the total industry commitment close to 4 million acres.

Range-wide plan enrollment now includes 14 electric transmission companies, representing most of the electric grid across the species' range in New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas. Also, eight oil and gas companies have enrolled more than 2 million acres across all five states. And, two wind energy developments and one natural gas pipeline company have signed on, with more in the process of enrollment.

Last Friday, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service announced it had signed a Range-wide Oil and Gas Industry Candidate Conservation Agreement with Assurances (CCAA) with the western association, under the range-wide plan developed by WAFWA and state wildlife agencies in Colorado, Kansas, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas. The service also announced an accompanying Environmental Assessment. The service has proposed listing the bird as threatened under the federal Endangered Species Act, with a final determination expected by March 31.

"Under the range-wide plan, a broad coalition of government, industry, agriculture and conservation interests is demonstrating unprecedented collaboration, showing we can take care of this bird and its prairie habitat without needing to list it," said Bill Van Pelt, Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies



This map depicts the area of eligibility for the WAFWA lesser prairie chicken conservation program. Offers received from focal areas and connectivity zones will receive higher priority in the application process.

(WAFWA) grassland coordinator.

"When you consider all acreage enrolled in the range-wide plan, plus various CCAAs, Farm Bill programs, and other conservation programs across the lesser prairie-chicken's range, the total area is about the size of the states of Vermont and New Hampshire combined. This is also approximately half the size of the species' current range. We believe this sets a record for conservation delivery on predominantly private land for a species under listing consideration."

The range-wide CCAA provides another option for oil and gas companies, which can also enroll directly in the range-wide plan. CCAAs are prelisting conservation tools, where

enrollment must occur prior to a listing decision. Unlike the CCAA, enrollment under the range-wide plan can occur at any time before or after the listing decision.

Enrolling companies get regulatory assurances through a special USFWS rule or a CCAA permit, so that if the species is listed the companies have a pathway to continue operations and development in the region. The companies agree to pay modest enrollment fees, follow a list of guidelines to minimize impacts on the bird, and agree to pay for impacts they cannot avoid. The money goes to farmers, ranchers and landowners to protect and restore habitat for the bird.

Complementing the range-wide plan, landowner CCAAs offer legal assurances for farmers and ranchers in New Mexico, Texas and Oklahoma. These cover a total of nearly 2.3 million acres across the three states. Landowners in Colorado and Oklahoma, who do not have access to a ranching CCAA, can enroll their lands under the RWP and receive the same assurances.

The range-wide plan includes habitat management goals and conservation practices to be applied throughout the lesser prairie-chicken's range, guided by the Crucial Habitat Assessment Tool (CHAT) online database and mapping system.

The range-wide plan can be viewed on the WAFWA website. Industry representatives with questions about the plan may contact Sean Kyle, chairman of the Lesser Prairie Chicken Interstate Working Group, at sean.kyle@wafwa.org. In Kansas, farmers, ranchers, and landowners may contact Jim Pitman, Small Game Coordinator for the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism, at jim.pitman@ksoutdoors.com or (620) 342-0658 to answer questions about enrollment in the plan.

March 16 marks 80th anniversary of Duck Stamp

In response to stunning losses of wetlands and waterfowl in the early 1900s, a discussion arose in the 1920s concerning the possibility of creating a Federal Waterfowl Hunting license. This would be a stamp not unlike licenses that many states had used for years for hunting, with proceeds going to save wetland habitat. Through the 1920s, debates among conservationists, policy-makers, and hunters raged over how best to secure wetlands and waterfowl. Meanwhile, the resources degenerated, setting up conditions that would in the next decade be known as the Dust Bowl.

With the 69th Congress (1925-1927), Senator Peter Norbeck (R-SD) pushed a conservation bill, but it ultimately had the federal license portion removed. What eventually passed Congress—the Migratory Bird Conservation Act of 1929—did have a number of important elements (including creating a Migratory Bird Conservation Commission), but it had no reliable funding mechanism. (Only annual federal appropriations could sustain MBCC acquisition decisions.)

With aftermath of the stock market crash of 1929, most hope for federal appropriation for this sort of con-



servation declined, and the stamp-funding issue arose once again. A new U.S. President, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, was sympathetic to the cause of conservation. (For example, among actions in his first 100 days, in 1933, he created the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), a program which would be used to build roads, bridges, dams, and impoundments at many refuges.)

FDR soon appointed a Presidential “Committee on Wild-Life Restoration” consisting of three visionary conservationists: Thomas Beck (editor of *Collier’s Weekly*), Jay Norwood “Ding” Darling, and Aldo

Leopold. In about two dozen brilliant pages, the “Beck Commission” identified a series of potential projects to secure an initial five million acres of “submarginal” lands for broad-scale wildlife conservation, including lands purchased through federal “duck stamp proceeds.”

At the same time, a bill to establish the stamp was being promoted by Senators Norbeck and Frederic C. Walcott (R-CT). In the House of Representatives, Congressman Richard Kleberg (D-TX) took the lead.

The bill soon passed and was

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Kansas commercial fish bait program

By Cindy Higgins

In a move to reduce aquatic nuisance species, KDWPT changed commercial bait shop regulations in 2012. Staff then visited 275 permit-holding bait shops twice to ensure compliance. A 2013 follow-up survey showed 92 percent of bait shop owners were confident the bait they sell is free of ANS, and most were satisfied with the species they sold. Saying potential problems loomed with those who harvest their own bait or import it, Susan Steffen, environmental scientist, KDWPT, noted in her presentation Jan. 31 at the Kansas Natural Resource Conference, Wichita, “We have not found any Rudd or Asian carp on visits. Some of the

more common violations were not significant threats such as pet fish in their shops or tadpoles leftover after a pond harvest and accidentally put in the tank. Most violations were minor, and owners didn’t even realize they were doing something wrong. For example, some owners couldn’t tell the difference between a sunfish and a goldfish.”

While making compliance visits, KDWPT staff noted the importance of bait shop personnel as a dissemination source. “Bait shops are as main source of contact for anglers and can be seen as local fishing experts,” Steffen said. “They are some of our best ways to reach the angling public.” Steffen said KDWPT plans to work with bait shop owners to eradicate the misconception

linking birds to the invasive species. “We are going to educate commercial bait permits holders that birds do not spread ANS. Someone suggested killing all birds because zebra mussels can get on their feathers. We know this is highly improbable but if bait shop owners believe this and tell the public.. ..”

Kansas Fishes: Process and Product, a combined effort of six Kansas universities, several state agencies, and numerous biologists throughout the state, will be available June 2014. This publication updates three previous volumes on Kansas fish authored by Frank Cross. For additional information, see <http://www.fhsu.edu/biology/Eberle/GPFishes/KansasFishBook/>

Grow your own birdseed

Use these 10 plants to bring more feathered friends into your backyard

By Stacy Tornio Birds & Blooms

Plants have a lot more to offer than just beautiful flowers. Why not get the most out of your garden by growing plants with multiple benefits? Here, you'll find 10 great blooms that offer seeds for birds.

Autumn Joy sedum (Sedum 'Autumn Joy', Zones 3 to 9)

Just when your other plants start to fade, Autumn Joy sedum will take the spotlight with its star-shaped blooms. Grow in full sun to light shade until the first frost.

Black-eyed Susan (Rudbeckia, Zones 3 to 9)

This is another garden classic birds adore. The traditional black-eyed Susan has dark centers and bright-yellow flowers, but now there are even more varieties to choose from. Grow in full sun to light shade for blooms in summer through autumn.

Blazing star (Liatris species, Zones 3 to 9)

Many gardeners know this plant as gayfeather. Don't be surprised when you see an American goldfinch gripping the purple spikes of this flower head. It grows up to 5 feet in full to

partial sun and blooms in summer.

Coreopsis (Coreopsis, hardiness varies by variety)

It's not hard to find an annual or perennial coreopsis (also called tickseed) that will flourish in your yard. Plant in full sun and resist the urge to overwater, as it's a drought-tolerant superstar that blooms in late spring through late summer.

Cosmos (Cosmos bipinnatus, annual)

With its gorgeous daisy-shaped blooms, this low-maintenance beauty seems too good to be true. Grow single or double blooms in full sun, and you'll have flowers (and seeds to offer feathered friends) from summer through late fall.

Goldenrod (Solidago species, Zones 3 to 9)

All it takes is a few goldenrod plants to light up your garden in late summer and fall. Plant in full sun for best results. Deadhead the flowers to promote continued blooming, which in turn offers an ongoing food source for birds.

Mexican sunflower (Tithonia rotundifolia, annual)

The vibrant, orange flower heads of

Mexican sunflower will make a bold statement in any garden. Often mistaken for a zinnia, this sun- and heat-loving plant definitely holds its own when it comes to attracting birds.

Purple coneflower (Echinacea purpurea, Zones 3 to 9)

Birds will feast on the cones of this backyard favorite. New varieties offer a wide range of colors, including purple, pink, white, yellow and orange. Plant in full sun for great results mid-summer to early fall.

Purple majesty millet (Pennisetum glaucum 'Purple Majesty', annual)

It's relatively new to the plant world, but birds have caught on fast! The plant itself is 4 to 5 feet tall, while the flower stalk offers another foot of delectable goodies for birds. Grow in sun or shade to get amazing foliage from spring to fall.

Sunflower (Helianthus annuus, annual)

You can't expect to grow your own seed without this classic bird magnet. There are plenty of varieties to choose from, including cultivars that range from 2 to 15 feet tall and colors from yellow to red. Grow in full sun for summer and fall.

STAMP

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signed into law by FDR on March 16, 1934. With Roosevelt's signing, the Migratory Bird Hunting Stamp Act, popularly known as the Duck Stamp Act, required all waterfowl hunters 16 years of age or older to buy an annual stamp.

The artwork for the first stamp (1934-1935), showing a pair of landing Mallards, was created by Ding Darling in about an hour. The

rush was due to a sudden printing deadline. Darling, the Pulitzer-Prize winning American cartoonist and dedicated conservationist, had just recently been appointed the Chief of the Bureau of Biological Survey by FDR.

The revenue generated from the stamp was directed to the Department of the Agriculture. Five years later, the authority was transferred to the Department of the Interior and the new U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to buy or lease wetland habitat.

The rest, as they say, is history.

Now, 80 years later, we can review the use of stamp funds, currently close to \$900 million, and we can visit the wetland, riparian, and grassland habitats in the National Wildlife Refuge System that have been secured through the official decisions of the Migratory Bird Conservation Commission. Waterfowl, other birds and wildlife, and the American public have all benefited greatly from the Stamp, and we can certainly celebrate that fact after these 80 years.

For more information, go to: <http://www.friendsofthestamp.org>

Before you rescue

What you should know before helping your feathered friends

**By George Harrison
Birds & Blooms**

It's only natural for people who care about birds to want to help them when they are injured or abandoned. Unfortunately, these good intentions aren't always the best for our feathered friends.

By caring for needy wildlife, people often create a much greater problem for the animals they are trying to help. So before you take matters into your own hands, remember these few tips.

Out of Sight, Not Out of Mind

People often make the mistake of assuming a lone baby bird (like the eastern bluebird, above) has been abandoned and needs help. This usually involves a fledgling, found alone on the ground or in a shrub, begging for food. It has its mouth open and is flapping its wings, but there are no parents in sight.

It's logical to think the baby bird is lost or abandoned. But this is rarely the case. Chances are, the parents know where the fledgling is, but they are hiding to keep from drawing attention to their offspring. If the parents are not nearby, they might be off gathering food or feeding a sibling. Rest assured, the baby bird has not been forgotten. Any fledgling that calls for food (like the young eastern kingbird, above right) will

be heard and cared for.

Sometimes an infant bird (also known as a nestling) gets out of its nest before it is old enough to fly. When this happens, the best thing you can do is simply place the baby back into its nest.

Now one of the great birding myths claims if you do this, the parents will then reject the baby. This is not true! Birds have a poor sense of smell, so putting the nestling back in its nest is fine.

If an entire nest falls out of a tree or shrub and the young or eggs are still in it, secure it to a location as close to its original position as possible. There is a good chance the parent birds will accept it, especially if the young are still there.

The same is true of larger birds such as hawks and owls, but in this case, it's best to leave the birds alone altogether. Raptors may pose a danger to humans who attempt to handle them. Even the babies have sharp talons and beaks that can cause serious injury.

Home Remedy

An injured or sick bird is another matter. Our natural instinct and compassion tells us to help a suffering animal, so many people want to take an ill bird home, confine it to a cozy box or cage and attempt to cure it. But by taking a sick or injured bird into captivity, a well-meaning person is violating federal and state laws. It is illegal to keep native species in captivity or disturb them in any

way, even those that are sick and injured.

Besides, caring for wildlife requires extensive knowledge in wildlife nutrition and natural history. If it has a broken wing or leg, only a licensed rehabilitator should treat it.

Further, if a bird is sick, it's nearly impossible to know why. It could be the West Nile virus, pesticide poisoning or a number of other things. Treatment by a layperson almost always ends with the death of the animal. The stress of capture by humans is usually too much for the ill animal to handle.

When you find a sick or injured bird, the best option is to leave it alone. If necessary, you can call a local wildlife rehabilitation center, which often operate through local humane societies or nature centers.

Another rescue challenge arises when a bird hits a window, stunning it or knocking it unconscious. The best care to give a bird that is stunned is to leave it where it falls, and cover it with a colander or large sieve. This will contain the bird and protect it from predators. It should recover within 20 or 30 minutes, and then you can release it.

Overall, the first year of life is difficult for young birds, but the best thing you can do is let nature take its course. So use your good intentions to build a birdhouse or fill a feeder, and then sit back and watch your feathered friends do the rest.

Kansas Forest Service hires forester for northwest Kansas

The Kansas Forest Service is pleased to announce the employment of Bryan Peterson, who will begin serving as the northwest district forester, located in Hays, beginning Monday, March 3. Peterson's office will be located in the area Natural Resource Conservation Office (NRCS).

Peterson has a double major in Forest Management and Urban Forestry from the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, and most recently

has been managing the Midland Marketing Coop in Palco.

Peterson will provide services in a 24-county district, working directly with farmers, ranchers and landowners interested in planting and renovating windbreaks and he will assist communities manage and care for their trees. Peterson will also provide assistance with tree health concerns associated with drought, insects and disease.

Additional information about the

services Peterson will provide and the district he covers can be found on at www.kansasforests.org/programs/rural/services.shtml.

Peterson replaces Jim Strine, who served 35 years to the people of Kansas as a District Forester. Jim joined the KWF Board of Directors in July as a Director at Large. Jim's expertise in forest and riparian habitats and his long-time experience in northwest Kansas will provide excellent guidance as a member of the KWF Board.

Morel mushrooms: Wild game's best friend

By Joel Webster
TRCP Blog

If you're like me, you are always looking for different ways to prepare wild game. One of my favorite accompaniments to grilled elk is sautéed morel mushrooms. Considered a delicacy in many parts of the world, morels have a delicious nutty flavor that pairs wonderfully with grilled backstrap, and they are a lot of fun to gather.

While expensive at the store, morels can be picked for free in the same woods where you hunt deer and elk. Morels appear in the spring months when the weather begins to warm, and can be found in cottonwood bottoms, woodlots and mountain forests. In the high elevations of the West, morels can

be picked as late as July. As a general rule, when you've bagged your tom turkey, the time should be right for picking.

Morel pickers generally have their best luck finding the mushrooms in recently disturbed areas, such as forests that burned the previous summer, or in cottonwood bottoms with significant beaver activity. From my experience, fires can be the most productive morel picking areas and a single person can gather several pounds in a day if the conditions are favorable.

Morels can easily be dried in a food dehydrator and then stored for a long-time. I generally set aside a bowl of fresh morels to use in the near-term and I then dry the rest and use them for special occasions throughout the year.

When grilling deer or elk steak, sauté onions and morels in butter and finish the mushrooms with a splash of sherry. When the onions are caramelized and the moisture is cooked out of the morels, I pile the mushrooms and onions on top of elk or venison steaks. The blend of flavors is hard to beat, and guests always ask for seconds.

Morels can be used in an almost endless array of meals. You can stuff them with sausage, use them in gravy and get fancy with French cuisine.

While morels are fairly easy to identify, always do your research and know what you are doing before eating wild mushrooms. Morels must be cooked before eaten. Raw morels contain a toxin that will make you sick. That toxin is removed when they are cooked.

Teaming with Wildlife lauds members of Congress for supporting conservation

The Teaming With Wildlife Coalition and the Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies Monday lauded Senators James Risch (R-ID) and Mary Landrieu (D-LA), and Congresswoman Betty McCollum (D-MN) and Congressman Jeff Fortenberry (R-NE) for their leadership in championing legislation that supports on-the-ground conservation to prevent fish and wildlife from becoming endangered.

The Congressional Awards presentation culminated the Teaming With Wildlife Coalition's annual, two-day advocacy Fly-In on Capitol Hill to raise awareness of the State and Tribal Wildlife Grants Program, the only federal program providing funding to states and their partners to conserve the more than 12,000 species that are at risk of landing on the endangered species list.

"I recognize that I am receiving this award because of hardworking Idahoans who work to maximize every dollar of the state wildlife grant funding I've worked to secure and to keep species off of the endangered species list," said Senator Risch.

"I'm very gratified by your recognition of me for, hopefully, what is our good contribution to your work to

educate, promote and protect that which is wholesome, natural and good for the well-being of our country," said Congressman Fortenberry.

The State and Tribal Wildlife Grants Program provides each state and territory with approximately \$1 million annually to develop and implement their congressionally mandated State Wildlife Action Plans. The Plans assess the health of each state's wildlife and habitats; identify the problems they face; and outline the actions needed to conserve them over the long term. Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism is currently working to update their state plan in cooperation of Kansas conservation organizations and interested individuals.

Since 2010, funding for the State and Tribal Wildlife Grants Program has been cut by more than 35 percent. In addition, further cuts to program lead to increased federal ESA listings and threaten the associated jobs and local economies tied the \$45 billion wildlife recreation industry.

In addition to recognizing Members of Congress for their support of the State and Tribal Wildlife Grants Program, the Teaming With Coalition's

Steering Committee presented two awards to Coalition members.

The Virginia Conservation Network, an affiliate of the National Wildlife Federation (NWF), received the Teaming With Wildlife Member Achievement Award for outstanding achievement in supporting funding for state wildlife diversity conservation.

Approximately 100 attendees participated in the annual Teaming With Wildlife Fly-in held February 25-26 in Washington, DC. Fly-in advocates held meetings with Members and staff in more than 150 congressional offices.

We just learned that in the FY15 Budget Request, the President is recommending a 15% cut to the State & Tribal Wildlife Grants program. This would drop funding to just \$50M for next fiscal year, down \$8.7 M from FY14.

The proposed cut was made to the program despite an overall increase of \$72M to the Fish & Wildlife Service resource management budget. Similar cuts were not made to other grant programs. NWF and KWF are still trying to learn why the Administration targeted this successful and popular program for

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Turkey hunting: Remembering my first turkey hunting stories

By Hunter Worth

Turkey hunting, like so many other things in my life, did not come naturally. I have always been what you might call a “slow starter,” often accused of marching to the beat of a different tune. In summer, when I took the mound, you could count on two or three innings of balls and hit batters before I settled down and began recording outs. When that first gobbler strutted in front of me, I almost lost control of all bodily functions—almost.

He would not come any closer. Seventy yards out, an invisible force field lay between his “strut zone” and my position on a black walnut tree that green, spring morning. The spring was not cause for the only green element in the woods. As soon as the bird started strutting away from me, I jumped up and took off at a dead sprint, fingers ready to work the safety and trigger on my Mossberg 835. My 12-year-old, dysfunctional brain told me that I could close the 20-yard gap I needed for a reasonable shot without him ever hearing me. Wrong. Before I stood erect, he was telling the flight attendants to prepare for takeoff. I unloaded my gun at him without touching a feather, but comparable to what it must have been like when Jimi Hendrix played that first note on his first guitar, I became a fanatic.

Those first few seasons of turkey hunting pushed me to do things I now deem unreasonable and unsafe. At times, it got to the point I was so frustrated I would jump in my dad’s pickup to try and close the distance. Wisely, he banned me from the truck during the months in spring when I didn’t seem to be myself.

I had yet to kill a turkey by the spring of my 15th year, but I was a book- and magazine-learned expert. I steamed with jealousy as I watched the Primos team kill turkeys on what looked like an effortless, daily basis (it wasn’t until later in that I learned many hours are put into making hunting videos).

My first turkey did not come the way I had envisioned, but in the awkward way it was supposed to happen. Ambling through a pasture after being defeated by a couple of jakes that morning, I walked

up on a big group of turkeys that, miraculously, did not see me. I was on a little rise above the 10 or so hens and equal number of gobblers. From a recent article in one of the “expert” magazines, I knew they weren’t supposed to be grouped up that time of year, but not having time to analyze the situation, I took action.

There were no trees or cover within 50 yards, so I followed my instincts and did the only feasible thing I could think of, lay down. Now, when I say that I lay down, you’re probably thinking the prone position, as any hunter familiar with the practices and principles of shooting would do. But for whatever reason, when I threw myself to the ground, it was on my back where I readied my gun and prepared to make a stand.

I moved the diaphragm call from cheek to tongue and began yelping softly. The throaty gobble of a mature tom answered directly. I lifted my head up, watching for movement in front of me while also laboring through a hellacious abdomen workout. Talk about awkward. There I was, lying out in the middle of an open pasture with a mess of turkeys possibly about to head my way. Watching this from above would have been priceless.

Another soft yelp, another instant response. My heart was beating so loudly in my straining ears I was having trouble concentrating. My stomach muscles were on the verge of collapsing when I caught movement. A head. A red head! Another popped up beside it and then went down.

The birds were working straight to me and a little off to the right. The bottom corner of the butt of my gun rested firmly against my armpit. Since they were a little below me, I could only see their heads. And since I had an itch worse than poison ivy on my manhood to kill my first tom turkey, I shot at the next head that popped up.

The gun went off in usual fashion, the 3-1/2-inch turkey load kicking like a deranged donkey. Amid the stars in the sky, turkeys were flying around my head. I could tell something had happened, but my body was too numb to move and my brain sent no waves as I lay sprawled

out on the ground. As I contemplated my next move, I remembered a recent encounter with a turkey and sat up to see if I drew blood.

And draw blood I did! The recoil from my shotgun sent the butt, stock, trigger guard, and every other part right across my face. When I wiped my runny nose, it occurred to me that it wasn’t the allergies I so often acquire in the spring causing bodily fluids to run down my face. It scared me when I pulled my bloody hand away. I stood up thinking my nose was broken, but the sight of a bundle of feathers flopping on the ground a short distance away helped me momentarily forget about the whole incident.

The day was mine! After marveling at the beautiful bird, I dropped my gun and vest and took off at a dead sprint to the four-wheeler on the other side of the pasture.

Cranking the engine, I skipped the first few gears as I mashed the throttle. The rules were to drive it slowly, especially up and down the hills that make up the majority of our farm. But while my dad was waiting, ready to whip me for coming down the hill to the cabin at top speed, his curiosity overtook his anger. What he saw was his lanky, awkward-looking, 15-year-old son with a bloody face and his first turkey riding dutifully on the back. He still wasn’t sure whether to yell or cry when I pulled up, but the smile on my face reverberated a joy that only a father and son, two lifelong hunting buddies, could share. The bond is unspoken.

I have gone on to take some nice gobblers in my hunting career. Some hunts I was lucky enough to share with my dad, some I managed on my own. Some of the hunts were the most exciting outings of my life and some happened in the “roost ‘em and hunt ‘em” fashion. All encounters with spitting and drumming and longbeards make my blood boil. But none stand out like that first one. “Firsts” are one and done. There will never be another first in life whether it be a first kiss, a first love, or puberty, which ties into both.

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Timely information for 'bluebird landlords'

By SeEtta Moss
Birds & Blooms Birding
e-newsletter

When someone puts up a bluebird house they become a 'bluebird landlord.' The North American Bluebird Society's Facebook page provides information needed on a timely basis to be a good 'bluebird landlord including the following important information (headers and emphasis are mine):

Bluebird Monitoring Tip: By Day 13-14, males have bright blue feathers. STOP ACTIVE MONITORING NOW to avoid premature fledging, unless you suspect a problem. You can still check the box from a distance to verify that the parents are feeding the young. One way to tell they are at this age is that

the parents tend to only dip their heads into the box to feed (but may still enter to remove fecal sacs. Females have white edging on outer tail feathers.

By this stage, babies are strong enough to cling to the entrance of the nestbox to look out. They have a narrow ring of white feathers around each eye, and their breasts are speckled with gray.

Mealworm & suet precautions: Natural food is plentiful in most areas of the country this time of year and should make up the primary source of nutrition for wild birds. Supplemental foods such as mealworms and suet mixtures should be offered in limited amounts, if at all, as baby birds need the nutrition of insects and berries for their bodies to be healthy and strong. Supplemental

foods can be helpful during extended periods of rainy weather (when insects are not available) and during the colder months when natural food sources are scarce. Supplemental feeding also depletes calcium from the diet of egg-laying female birds, resulting in weak, thin-shelled eggs. If you do feed suet or mealworms to your wild birds, please limit the amounts so that they can also obtain necessary nutrients from natural food sources.

The North American Bluebird Society has a great webpage with lots of information about bluebirds including a number of 'Fact Sheets' with plans for bluebird houses, mealworms, monitoring and more.

Are you a 'bluebird landlord' this year?

Interior secretary announces Izembek decision

In late December, the Secretary of the Interior, Sally Jewell, announced a decision on the status of Izembek National Wildlife Refuge on the Alaska Peninsula. This decision concluded a four-year analysis to consider a land exchange with the State of Alaska and the construction of a road through the refuge.

The idea of a road has been discussed since at least the 1980s with the residents of the town of King Cove. The town wanted a road through the refuge to improve access to Cold Bay and its airport for personal, medical, and commercial purposes. The proposal involved the offer of a swap of about 56,000 acres for conservation in exchange for the right to build the road. The distance between King Cove and Cold Bay is approximately 35 miles, requiring about 12 miles of new one-lane gravel road.

While the offer of the land exchange would have brought substantial acreage

into the National Wildlife Refuge System, the proposal was rejected. The decision concluded that the increased acreage could not compensate for the unique values of existing refuge lands, nor the anticipated effects that the proposed road would have on wildlife, habitat, subsistence resources, and wilderness values of the refuge.

Izembek NWR was established in 1960 and designated official Wilderness in 1980. The refuge serves as vital habitat for shorebirds and waterfowl - including 98 percent of the world's population of "Pacific Black" Brant. The proposed road would have bisected the isthmus where most of the refuge's 315,000 acres of congressionally-designated Wilderness is located.

By designating this area as Wilderness in 1980, a highly protective category for public lands, Congress recognized the importance of protecting Izembek, a place

where natural processes prevail with few signs of human presence. At the core of the areas protected are internationally significant eelgrass beds in Izembek and Kinzarof Lagoons, thought to be the largest in the world, as well as adjacent wetlands and uplands of the narrow isthmus. In addition to the Brant, other birds that depend on these wetlands and eelgrass beds include Emperor Geese, Steller's Eiders, and many other waterfowl and shorebirds.

In February, 2013, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service had issued a rejection of the proposed road and associated swap, but the ultimate decision was delayed so that the new Secretary of the Interior, Jewell, could oversee additional steps in review.

A copy of the Record of Decision is available here: www.fws.gov/alaska/nwr/izembek/pdf/eis/rod_signed.pdf

For more see: <http://izembek.fws.gov>.

TURKEY

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That is what is so special about hunting. Certainly we have kills that fall into the category of "first," but that is just one

small aspect of being a hunter, a fisherman, and a conservationist. Now that I am older, I have been lucky enough to share many firsts with hunters who are new to the sport. That same spring of my first turkey, my dad and I planted a few hundred sawtooth oak saplings that produced their first acorns just a couple

of summers ago. Turkey, deer, and other wildlife will benefit from those trees for years just as my family and friends will. However, the cycle of life does not stop there. God willing, the generations that follow me will also continue to benefit from something once so green that has grown to maturity in its own way.

Do butterflies sleep?

By Jill
Garden Club Newsletter

Butterflies don't sleep in the sense we might think of. They don't (in fact, can't) close their eyes and snuggle down like humans or dogs or even birds. So what do they do at night? The simple answer is that they rest – but the resting is not so much because they are “tired”, but more because they just can't do much of anything else when it's dark outside.

Butterflies are ectothermic, which means their body temperature is mainly dependent on the temperature of the environment around them. Butterflies require a pretty high body temperature to be active – around 85 degrees F. When the sun is out, they are capable of warming their bodies up to 20 degrees higher than the surrounding air, so they can fly even on days when temperatures are in the 60s or 70s.

At night, when the sun sets and temperatures drop, butterflies rest in safe places. They usually hang upside-down from a leaf or twig (tiny hooks on their feet allow them to grip nearly any surface) with their wings closed. This protects them from any passing showers and hides them from most predators. Some butterflies rest individually, while others gather in groups, a behavior known as “roosting”. Roosting butterflies include zebra longwings (as shown above), and monarchs, particularly during migration.

Of course, darkness is when the night-shift of nocturnal moths takes over. Moths also require warm temperatures to fly, which is why in many northern areas, you'll only find these creatures for a short time in mid-summer, when they're least likely to face cold nights. Without the sun to warm them, moths absorb residual heat from their surroundings, and also “shiver” their wings to raise their body temperature.

You can help provide places for resting butterflies to find shelter by planting ornamental grasses and shrubs in your garden. (Though specially-made



“butterfly houses” are available for purchase, butterflies really are unlikely to use them; they generally just wind up housing pests like wasps.) Look

for resting butterflies first thing in the morning, before the sun has hit their sheltering place. You'll have the opportunity for great photos!

500,000 cranes are headed for Nebraska in one of Earth's greatest migrations

At the end of March, 80 percent of the world's crane will converge upon one 80-mile stretch of land

By Alex Shoumatoff
Smithsonian Magazine

Nature got it right with the cranes. They have been around since the Eocene, which ended 34 million years ago. They are among the world's oldest living birds and one of the planet's most successful life-forms, having outlasted millions of species (99 percent of species that ever existed are now extinct). The particularly successful sandhill crane of North America has not changed appreciably in ten million years. There are 15 Gruidae species, and in all the human cultures that experience the birds, they are revered.

Neolithic peoples in Turkey in 6500 B.C. imitated the dances of cranes as part of marriage rituals. Dance is one thing cranes are credited by many societies with giving us. Another is language, perhaps because they are so vocal and a single crane's calls, amplified by its saxophone-shaped trachea—the wind-pipe in its long neck—can carry a mile. And unlike geese, with their disciplined, purposeful vees, cranes fly in loose, drifting, chimeric lines that are constantly, kaleidoscopically coming apart and forming, the ancient Greeks imagined, many letters. Crane hieroglyphs were applied to the Temples of Karnak 4,000 years ago.

Traveling west from Lincoln on I-80, we begin to see masses of the stately birds in the rows of corn stubble flickering by. Ranging in height from three to four feet, they are moving on black stiltlike legs (their "knees" are modified heels, so they actually walk on their toes), with their necks bent down, stabbing at the stubble with long daggerlike beaks, flipping cow pies, crunching up insects, snails, frogs and snakes. The adults have bare red foreheads that expand when they are worked up and compact feathers covering their ovoid torsos—except for their bustles, the loosely stacked tips of their wing feathers that extend past the short tail and flare up when they are agitated.

Not only the cranes, but some 20 mil-



lion other migrating birds belonging to 300 or so species stop over on the Platte, including 280 of the remaining whooping cranes, 90 percent of the white-fronted geese that ply the midcontinent, thousands of endangered piping plovers, 30 percent of the northern pintails, 50 percent of the mallards, as well as bald eagles and some two million snow geese. Soon after we travel under Kearney's Gateway (to the Great Plains) Arch, we pass a depression—an old borrow pit—smothered with maybe 20,000 milling snow geese, like a blanket of snow. The geese come earlier than the cranes and clean out many of the cornfields near the river, but there is plenty of waste grain in the central Platte valley to go around. Michael Forsberg, a Lincoln-based wildlife photographer, calls this stretch of the Platte "the pinch in the hourglass" for all these converging northbound migrants.

To Forsberg, the sandhill crane is the ambassador of the plains. Some 70,000 crane watchers flock to the Platte annually, last year from every state in the union and 47 foreign countries, injecting \$11

million into the local economy. People tend to think of Nebraska as a fly-over or drive-through state, he says, but there is incredible beauty, only it's subtle—except when the cranes are here.

Crane-watching consists mainly of taking in three activities: when they wake up and take off from the sandbars on the rivers, when they come back to them to roost, and during the day when they are out foraging in the cornfields and doing their dances. The most popular place to see the sandhills on the river is the National Audubon Society's Rowe Sanctuary in Gibbon, just outside Fort Kearney. One morning at 5, I tiptoe into a viewers' blind at Rowe with a score of other tourists and we station ourselves and our cameras at its little windows. No flash or LED lights are allowed. It is bitter cold, ten degrees with the windchill. As day begins to break, we see that a 100-foot channel of the river, with shards of ice on its surface, is gliding silently by right below us. Its pebbly bottom is only

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W. Pa. man upset over \$100 fee for road kill bear

By The Associated Press

A western Pennsylvania man paid the price for his close encounter with a bear, and he's not happy about it.

Greg Thompson hit and killed the bear with his truck. Wanting to keep the animal to get a rug made, he called the Pennsylvania Game Commission, which then demanded that he pay \$100 to take ownership of his roadkill.

Thompson and his wife were traveling down a busy stretch of Route 119 in Fayette County when the 160-pound bear surprisingly came off the highway embankment and into the path of his Ford truck.

"I tell you what, it sounded like a stick

of dynamite going off," he told Channel 11's Lisa Sylvester. "Believe it or not, it was like POW! It was over in seconds."

Thompson said it's a lucky thing that only the bear was killed.

"If I wouldn't have hit this bear, it would have probably been a tragedy," Thompson explained. "The woman that was beside us was in a small car and that bear was headed straight for the driver's door. It probably would have done significant damage to her."

Thompson decided that he would keep the bear's skin as a souvenir, but the Game Commission wouldn't allow it unless he first paid \$100.

"There's damage to the front of my vehicle," Thompson said. "I shouldn't

have to pay a hundred bucks. They should have to pay my deductible."

Channel 11 News looked up the state regulation on wildlife killed by motor vehicles. It states that if you hit a wild animal and want to keep it, you must pay the state. Deer antlers will cost you \$10 per point, a deer cape is \$25, a fox is \$50 and \$100 is the minimum charge for a bear.

Thompson reluctantly paid the fee. The bear roadkill is now his.

He said, "I told my wife I'm going to put him on my wall with a plaque (that reads) 'killed with a 2010 F-150 Ford.'"

For his trouble and expense, Thompson now has a great story to tell ... and a new bear rug.

Brent Theede awarded Wetland Manager of the year

By Kansas Ducks Unlimited

Managing McPherson Valley Wetlands and Marion Wildlife Area is how Brent Theede earns his living, but for this Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism (KDWP) employee, his job is more than a paycheck- it's a passion. At the 2014 State Ducks Unlimited Convention in Overland Park in February, Theede's passion was formally recognized and awarded during Saturday's award ceremony as Theede was presented with the 2013 Wetland Manager of the Year Award. There to help celebrate was Theede's supervisor, KDWP public lands regional supervisor, Stuart Schrag. It was Schrag that nominated Theede for the award, and according to him, Theede was nothing short of deserving.

"Brent exemplifies the professionalism and dedication needed for proper moist soil management," says Schrag. "Since starting at the Wetlands, Brent has diligently devoted his efforts in improving the area for waterfowl of all species and the sportsmen who pursue them."

"There is a 'feast or famine' uniqueness to wetland management," says Schrag. "The months, and sometimes years, of tediously maintaining dikes, repairing water control structures, clearing trees, spraying noxious and invasive plants, removing troublesome beavers, and running and checking pumps all

hours of the night can finally pay off in one rain event, and 2013 was a 'feast' year." Schrag went on to explain that heavy late-summer rains flooded the wetlands leaving pristine conditions heading into the early teal season. The fruits of Theede's labor were evident within just the first two and a half weeks of the regular duck season, and by season end, McPherson Valley Wetlands had experienced a season of record-breaking

harvest numbers.

"Around 3,370 hunters harvested 6,010 ducks for the 2013-2014 season, shattering the current record by 2,800 ducks," says Schrag. "While the rain played a major factor, if not for Brent's dedication and professional standards in moist soil management, everything would have not come together to set the environment for overall success and a record-breaking year."

CRANE

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a foot or two down. Across the channel is a sandbar on which the faint gray forms of several thousand lesser sandhills, still sleeping on their feet with heads tucked under a wing, become increasingly apparent. They are headed to the Kuskokwim Delta in the Yukon and western

Alaska, some all the way to Chukotka, in eastern Siberia. The smaller the crane, the farther it flies to its nesting grounds and the shorter and more needle-line its beak.

Read more: <http://www.smithsonianmag.com/science-nature/500000-cranes-are-headed-nebraska-one-earths-greatest-migrations-180949816/#qwIbV7WRmDmj5Vr1.99>

CONSERVATION

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a cut and we are discussing what actions to take. We are communicating with Hill staff but it would be very helpful if you could send a brief email to our

congressional members and let them know about this cut and that you are concerned. The State and Tribal Wildlife Grants program has already been cut by 35% and additional cuts will have added impacts to at-risk species conservation.

For more information about Teaming With Wildlife and State Wildlife Action Plans, go to www.teaming.com.

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!

How You Can Help:

- * **Basic Membership:** As a Basic member, for \$30 you'll receive 6 issues of the KWF newsletter packed with the latest information on wildlife resources, events and issues around the state. You also have voting privileges at the KWF Annual Meeting.
- * **Expanded Membership:** When you send in your Expanded member dues of \$75, you receive the basic membership benefits and a complimentary ticket to the KWF Annual Meeting and CAP banquet.
- * **Kansan:** For an annual fee of \$150, you receive all the benefits listed above plus an additional complimentary ticket to the KWF Annual Meeting and CAP banquet.

Here's How to Join:

Complete the form on Page 14 and mail with your membership fee to:
Kansas Wildlife Federation, P.O. Box 771282, Wichita, KS 67277-1282