

## *The Voice of Outdoor Kansas*

**January-  
February 2017**

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

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Go to our Web site,  
[www.kswildlife.org](http://www.kswildlife.org),  
for additional KWF information

## **WAFWA secures first private land conservation easement for Lesser Prairie-chickens**

The Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (WAFWA) has finalized permanent conservation agreements with a private landowner to conserve 1,781 acres of high-quality lesser prairie-chicken habitat in southcentral Kansas. This is the first permanent conservation easement in the mixed-grass prairie region secured as part of the Lesser Prairie-chicken Range-wide Plan.

The conserved acreage – native rangeland managed for livestock production – is occupied by lesser prairie-chickens and is located within one of the highest priority conservation areas identified in the range-wide plan.

The transaction includes a conservation easement purchased by WAFWA and held by Pheasants Forever that legally restricts future development and activities that would be detrimental to the bird's habitat. All other property rights associated with historical use of the land will be retained by the private landowner. WAFWA has also established an endowment that will provide the landowner with sufficient payments to implement a lesser prairie-chicken conservation plan in perpetuity. This transaction not only permanently protects key prairie habitat, but also ensures that this property will remain a working cattle ranch.

"This conservation easement is another milestone in the successful implementation of the range-wide plan and will permanently secure important habitat that the birds need to thrive," said Roger Wolfe, WAFWA's lesser prairie chicken program manager. "We appreciate the collaboration with Pheasants Forever, our industry partners who are funding this effort, and the conservation-minded landowner who has made this possible."

"It took a lot of work on the part of WAFWA, Pheasants Forever and ourselves to find a balance between the needs of the lesser prairie-chicken and maintaining historical use of the land," said Tom Hammond, manager of the property. "The result is an innovative approach that acknowledges and rewards landowners for permanently conserving large tracts of habitat, while maintaining the integrity of the land for the long-term benefit of the landowner and the species. There is high-quality habitat there now because we have managed the range properly for both grazing and wildlife. These agreements make sure that approach remains in place forever."

The range-wide plan is a collaborative effort of WAFWA and the state wildlife

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



# KANSAS WILDLIFE FEDERATION

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Steve Sorensen

# President's Message

What does the word “member” mean to you? Many organizations depend on this term used for you, our stakeholder. Whether it is someone that received a free gift membership or paid several thousands of dollars, having that relationship with engaged people to help us organizations achieve our mission is vitally important.

Now, when you picture the Kansas outdoors, its wildlife and general landscape, what do you see? When you think about your children, grandchildren, or even great-grandchildren playing outdoors, what do you long for them to experience? I know what I want for my great-grandchildren. It is something similar to what I experience today: the knowledge that the Flint Hills is still the nation's last great expanse of tallgrass prairie filled with wonderful flora and fauna; the fact that Kansans still have access to a clean and plentiful water supply; the fact that the rivers and lakes are filled with great fishing and recreation opportunities; that a nature walk is filled with just that – nature in all its glory. That is what I envision for the future of youth in my life. The Kansas Wildlife Federation, with the help of our members, is here to help ensure those visions become reality for our present and our future.

The Kansas Wildlife Federation's mission is to promote hunting, fishing opportunities and associated recreation for the benefit of all. As an affiliate of the National Wildlife Federation, we concentrate all of our efforts, time and money to outdoor issues that affect Kansans. This last year, through the assistance of receiving a National Wildlife Federation mini-grant, we were able to improve habitat for a very special wildlife friend – our pollinators. We were able to provide seed packets at various events for the planting of plants pollinator species need for survival.

We once again hosted our decades old program for getting youth outdoors – the KWF Outdoor Adventure Camp. We are very proud to have been one of the first outdoor mentoring programs in Kansas and one of the longest lasting. Through our member's support, we are able to keep the outdoor camp open to area youth!



Sometimes it is the behind the scenes work, the non-glamorous side, of an organization that is in most need of its members and their voices. We continue to keep a vigilant eye on the national and state legislature for introduced legislature or regulations that could affect our clean water, wildlife's habitat and continue to advocate for you, the outdoor enthusiast.

In the upcoming year, the Kansas Wildlife Federation's promises to keep providing the above services, in addition to working towards our goals for 2017 that will greatly enhance your experience with our great outdoor organization. In order for us to continue planting pollinator plots, getting youth outdoors, providing a voice for our wildlife & our great Kansas outdoors, continuing to make the Kansas Wildlife Federation a household name for Kansas wildlife, we need you as our member! Today!

Later this month, we will be sending out our membership renewal forms. We know that your schedule is as busy as or even busier than ours. In order to save you time and us money, we have attached a form for you to easily use to renew your membership for 2017 and we will not fill your mailbox with renewal letters. If you know of someone that loves the Kansas outdoor way of life like you, please consider introducing them to the Kansas Wildlife Federation through a gift membership. Together, with your participation and assistance, we can truly make a difference to help preserve the Kansas outdoors for the next generation of outdoor lovers.

# Monarch butterfly conservation efforts expanded

Partnership provides technical assistance, funding and predictability to participating agricultural producers

The monarch butterfly is a new national priority species of Working Lands for Wildlife (WLFW), a partnership between the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). Populations of monarchs, a pollinator species cherished across North America, have declined significantly during the past two decades. This collaboration aims to help the species recover by working with agricultural producers to make wildlife-friendly improvements on their farms, ranches and forests.

"Producers can make simple and inexpensive tweaks on working lands that provide monumental benefits to monarch butterflies and a variety of other insects and wildlife," said NRCS Chief Jason Weller. "By adding the monarch to Working Lands for Wildlife, we can accelerate conservation for the species at the heart of its migration corridor."

NRCS and USFWS recently completed a conference report that explains how conservation practices can help the eastern monarch population, a species known for its remarkable annual, multi-generational migration between central Mexico and the United States and Canada. This report is an initial step toward adding the monarch to WLFW, which uses a science-based, targeted approach to help a variety of at-risk species.

"We need to make every effort to help ensure monarchs don't become endangered now and in the long term," said USFWS Midwest Regional Director Tom Melius. "Conservation efforts on agricultural lands across the nation can have a significant positive impact on monarchs as well as many other pollinator insects and birds. Working with farmers and other private landowners, we can ensure a future filled with monarchs."

The monarch butterfly joins an array of wildlife species across the country already part of WLFW, including the greater sage-grouse and New England cottontail, two recent successes in species conservation. The USFWS determined in 2015 that the two species didn't warrant protections under the En-

dangered Species Act (ESA) because of voluntary conservation efforts underway to restore habitat.

Through WLFW, NRCS provides technical and financial assistance to help producers adopt conservation practices that benefit the monarch. Meanwhile, through the conference report, the USFWS provides producers with regulatory predictability should the monarch become listed under the ESA. Predictability provides landowners with peace of mind – no matter the legal status of a species under ESA – that they can keep their working lands working with NRCS conservation systems in place.

Work through WLFW centers on 10 states in the Midwest and southern Great Plains that are considered the core of the monarch's migration route and breeding habitat. Much of this work will focus on planting and enhancing stands of milkweed and other high-value nectar plants for monarchs. Assistance is available to producers in Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio, Oklahoma, Texas and Wisconsin.

USFWS has committed significant funding – \$20 million over five years – to support monarch conservation efforts. Additionally, USFWS is working with partners, including the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, National Wildlife Federation and the Mexican and Canadian governments to leverage resources and investments to support and implement conservation actions across the continent.

During the past two years, NRCS has made available \$6 million through a variety of Farm Bill conservation programs for monarch conservation in the 10 states. Additionally, NRCS is working with partners, including The Xerces Society and General Mills, to increase staffing capacity to help producers design customized conservation strategies for working lands.

The two agencies' efforts contribute to a multi-agency, international strategy to reverse the monarch's population

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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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## Kid's Wildlife Friends

# Save the monarch butterfly

### From the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

The monarch butterfly is one of the most recognizable species in North America and it's in trouble. Monarchs undertake one of the world's most remarkable migrations, traveling thousands of miles over several generations from Mexico, across the United States, to Canada.

North American monarch butterflies are in trouble. Threats, including climate change, pesticide use and habitat loss are having a devastating impact on their populations and the migration phenomenon. Unless we act now to help the Monarch, this amazing animal could disappear in our lifetime.

Monarchs are now in the process of being considered for protection under the Endangered Species Act. Our hope is that we can implement conservation measures that help the butterfly to the point that we don't have to list it.

The state of Monarchs reflects the health of the American landscape and its pollinators. Monarch declines are symptomatic of environmental problems that also pose risks to food production, the spectacular natural places that help define our national identity, and our own health. Conserving and connecting habitat for monarchs will benefit many other plants and animals, including critical insect and avian pollinators, and future generations of Americans.

We can save the monarch, but it will take a concerted national effort by everyone.

#### You can help!

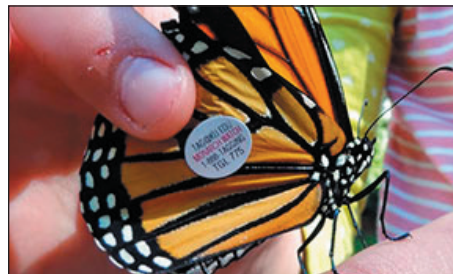
Every place outside can become an oasis for monarchs and other pollinators—rural and urban. Schools, youth and community groups, businesses, and state and local governments can participate. Plant milkweed and nectar plants native to your local area, garden organically to minimize your impact on native plants, protect monarch habitat along roadsides, rights of way, and other public and private lands, become a citizen scientist and monitor monarchs in your area, and educate others about pollinators, conservation and how they can help. By enlisting a broad group of partners, from school children to CEOs, we will build a connected conservation constituency.

#### Learn more and get involved

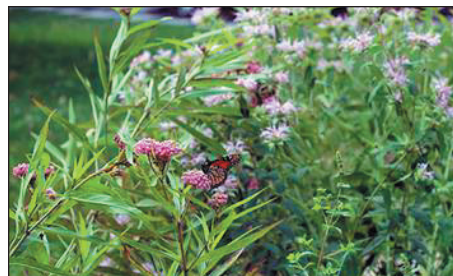
**Learn why the monarch butterfly is in trouble and how you can help**



**Monarch butterfly on swamp milkweed in Michigan. Photo by Jim Hudgins/USFWS.**



**Tagged monarch butterfly. Photo by USFWS.**



**Pollinator garden in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Photo by Courtney Celley/USFWS.**

The monarch butterfly is one of the most recognizable species in North America and it's in trouble. Climate change has intensified weather events which may impact monarch populations. Pesticide use can destroy the milkweed monarchs need to survive. Habitat loss and fragmentation has occurred throughout the monarch's range. You can help! Learn more »

#### **How to build a butterfly and pollinator garden in seven steps**

Monarch butterflies and pollinators are in trouble. You can help by planting a pollinator garden! You can plant a garden

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# New year, new challenges

## What's on tap for rivers in the new year?

As we move into a new year and a new political era, here's our game plan to protect and restore rivers and conserve clean water for people & nature.

### Christopher Williams

Senior Vice President of Conservation  
American Rivers

Strap on your PFD, there's rough water ahead.

No matter who you supported in the recent election, the result requires facing some hard truths. Based on positions taken during the campaign, it's clear that a Hillary Clinton victory would have meant a largely seamless continuation of President Obama's environmental policies; energetically taking on climate change, redoubled efforts to protect clean water and clean air, and careful stewardship of natural resources and public lands. The election of Donald Trump will move things in a radically different direction.

While President-elect Trump has said he wants to uphold the conservation legacy of Theodore Roosevelt, he has also stated on more than one occasion that climate change is a "hoax." He has promised to pull the plug on the Obama administration's Clean Power Plan and the Clean Water Rule that restored federal protection of small streams and wetlands across the country. And he plans to dramatically increase oil and gas, mining, and timber exploitation of federal lands.

So far, his choices to head federal environmental and natural resource agencies show a determination to move this agenda forward, and then some. His choice to head the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Oklahoma

Attorney General Scott Pruitt, is a climate change denier who has made his living suing to prevent the EPA from making strong moves to protect air and water. President-elect Trump's pick for Interior Secretary, Congressman Ryan Zinke of Montana, has a mixed conservation record, but has opposed the Clean Water Rule and supports increased energy development on federal lands. Meanwhile, a new Congress also will arrive in January, emboldened by the Trump administration to attempt rollbacks of our most important and effective environmental laws.

Mount a strong defense

This isn't the first administration or the first Congress hostile to environmental protection. I cut my teeth as a conservationist during the first Bush Administration, successfully defending the Clean Water Act and the Endangered Species Act from legislative attack. Those two keystone environmental laws remain the basis for much of the work we do to protect rivers and clean water.

Just this year, American Rivers thwarted an effort by the hydropower industry to roll back protection for rivers from the damaging effects of dam construction and operation. We face a monumental challenge from a Congress dominated by opponents of environmental protection and backed by a seemingly anti-environmental administration. But we know how to play defense and, staffed with some of the best environmental

advocates, we're good at it.

Redouble our efforts in the field

We are also really good at getting things done in the field, and we will build on that success as Washington becomes a potentially more difficult place to get results. American Rivers' River Restoration Program is the nation's undisputed leader in dam removal, spearheading the removal of over 200 dams and providing guidance and technical support to hundreds of others.

Our Clean Water Supply team is promoting better management of water resources in river basins and metropolitan areas from Tucson to Atlanta, bringing together stakeholders across the political spectrum. Our field work to conserve rivers and wetlands has resulted in restored wetlands in California, pristine rivers protected from oil and gas drilling in Montana, and new recreation and tourism opportunities in South Carolina.

With greater challenges ahead at the federal level, we'll continue to build on our work with state and local governments, where we've had great success influencing law and policy at the grassroots.

Speak out for rivers and clean water

American Rivers is the leading voice for rivers and clean water in the United States and that role is more important than ever. We will use every opportunity to educate policy-

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## MONARCH

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anywhere - your yard, school, church, business or even in a pot for your front steps.

A simple, native flower garden will attract beautiful butterflies to your yard and help pollinators stay healthy. In addition to nectar from flowers, monarch butterflies need milkweed to survive, so if you notice the leaves on your milkweed have been chomped, don't worry, it's a great sign!

**We need your help - join us to save the monarch**

The monarchs have migrated, but that doesn't mean conservation takes a break. Now is a great time to be thinking about winter seed prep and planning your garden. This



Our goal is to restore the monarch butterfly population to 225 million by 2020.  
**Monarch butterfly on New England aster. Photo by Rick Hansen/USFWS.**

is also the perfect time to inspire others to join in saving the monarch. Share this video with your friends, and help us reach our goal of a healthy and stable monarch population.

**We've done this before**

A billion monarch butterflies once flut-



**Monarch butterflies on goldenrod. Photo by Rachel Laubhan/USFWS.**

tered across the North American landscape, representing one of the greatest migration phenomena in all of nature. Over the last 20 years, their numbers declined precipitously, with the eastern population falling to a mere 33 million in 2014.



# Kansas water supply numbers

By Matt Nowak, KWF Secretary

Water supply and management in Kansas is really complex and you can get a feeling for the complexity by reading the Kansas Water Plan. The latest version on line is the 2014 version.

I was surprised to learn that there are about 28,000 miles of rivers and streams in Kansas along with 120,000 impoundments. That sounds like a lot of water storage, but more than 80 percent of those impoundments are farm ponds of less than 1 acre.

Eighty-four reservoirs are used for the public water supply of which 24 are federal reservoirs. I find it interesting that of those 24, only 21 can be used for public water supply and that only 17 are routinely used. Of further interest is that Kansas owns water storage in only 13 of those 24 reservoirs. Most of the federal reservoirs are in eastern Kansas which is easily understood since that is where most of the precipitation happens and the topography allows for reservoir construction.

Apparently the state can purchase water storage capacity in the federal reservoirs, but if the state is practically bankrupt, I guess that precludes the state from buying much more storage capacity in the near future.

Now let's compare the surface water storage capacity to the surface water sliding by in the Missouri River. The average monthly

flow of the Missouri River measured at Saint Joseph since 1928 is greater than 28,000 million gallons per day. Wow, that's a lot of water slipping by every day.

The minimum monthly average flow based on numbers collected since the building of the main stem dams on the upper Missouri in the 1950's is greater than 6,000 million gallons per day. Here's the fun part. For the 17 federal reservoirs in Kansas used for water supply, the total supply yield is about 600 million gallon per day. In other words, at its minimum flow, the Missouri sends more than 10 times the total amount of water in the federal reservoirs used for public water storage in Kansas.

The Water Plan also graphs the projected loss of storage capacity due to sedimentation for all of the reservoirs and it also shows the present condition. For example, John Redmond Reservoir and Tuttle Creek are at about 40 to 45 percent loss of storage capacity. Perry Lake is somewhere around 20-something percent loss of capacity. The graph shows the estimated loss over the years and it only goes in one direction, that is, downwards towards less storage capacity.

The Water Plan acknowledges that many studies have been conducted concerning how to use the Missouri River's tremendous capacity to provide water to Kansas and I suspect that those studies will continue to

surface, especially if sedimentation rates increase. The interest in using the Missouri River will probably remain even if sedimentation rates remain the same as the graphs show that the reservoirs are losing capacity every day.

One thing that should concern everyone is the threatened reversal of environmental laws that are designed to minimize or to mitigate for sedimentation. Practically speaking, although the Missouri River is a potential source of water for Kansas, it is not likely to happen for a number of reasons – fiscal being one big one.

Governor Brownback was quite pre-scient when he stated that unless Kansas does something about the water supply, the lack of water in Kansas will stop economic and population growth in the state. There is not much that we can do about the weather, but we can fight to keep laws that prevent increased sedimentation into our reservoirs.

Laws that are proposed to benefit individual landowners may be not be the best to protect our water supply. Here on the Kansas Coastline we have access to a vast supply of water, but most of the state relies on a shrinking storage supply and they need all the protection that they can get or they may have to consider moving out of state.

Matt Nowak is a retired Natural Resources Specialist and lives in Lansing.

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## RIVERS

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makers, opinion leaders, and the public about the importance of rivers and clean water. In traditional and social media, at conferences and meetings across the country, we will be a clear voice for greater conservation efforts and aggressively call out attempts to roll back protection for rivers and streams. We will defend the roles of sound science and public participation in environmental policy-making, working to ensure that our nation's lands and waters are managed sustainably and equitably for all Americans.

Capitalize on opportunities

Despite the changes in the White House and Congress, there will be opportunities in the coming years to promote proactive river conservation at the federal level. Rivers and clean water should be bipartisan issues, and in fact some major river conservation success stories have unfolded in what seemed at the time to be unlikely political circumstances. The highly successful effort to restore New

England's Penobscot River began with an investment of federal funds by the George W. Bush administration; a Republican Congress in 2006 passed into law the program that provided funding for many of American Rivers' dam removal projects over the last 10 years; and legislation that protects the headwaters of the Snake River as Wild and Scenic is named after the late conservative Republican Senator Craig Thomas of Wyoming.

It's not immediately clear when those opportunities will arise, so we will need to be ready. That's where American Rivers' River Conservation Agenda for the New Administration comes in, six policy proposals that should have bipartisan appeal as they address pressing water supply and quality issues, support economic growth, promote efficiency and cost savings in government natural resource management programs, and protect and restore rivers and streams across the country:

Celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act with a bold initiative to strengthen and expand the Wild and Scenic Rivers System.

Establish a Clean Water Trust Fund to

finance improvements to natural and man-made infrastructure to ensure that clean water is readily available to all Americans.

Adopt integrated water resources management as the organizing principle for federal water management.

Launch an "Open Rivers Initiative" to coordinate and prioritize dam removal across the country.

Improve protection and management of the nation's floodplains.

Prioritize and focus Farm Bill programs and other agriculture funding to solve water and river conservation challenges.

Together, We Can Do This

As we move into a new year and a new political era, we need to be clear-eyed about the challenges we face, but we can't let those challenges discourage us or deter us from our course. In fact, there is still a lot we can accomplish for river conservation.

As any good river guide will tell you, when the water is at its roughest is not the time to hunker down. Rather, it's time to put on your helmet, find your point-positive, and paddle like hell.

# Media clouds issue of keeping wild deer as pets in Kansas situation

By National Deer Alliance

When the news broke about a Kansas game warden shooting a mule deer doe that a family had taken in as a pet, the national media couldn't wait to get its hands on the story and do its best to lay blame at the feet of the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism (KDWP). News agencies from coast to coast ran with the story, and it eventually made it into mainstream publications, such as People Magazine, before eventually spreading to Europe, and beyond. The result is a frenzied public that doesn't fully understand the issue, and even harassment and death threats hurled at the KDWP on social media. Sadly, this is a script we've seen played out many times before with wildlife incidents, and it's not going to stop any time soon.

Eventually KDWP issued a statement, which included Secretary Robin Jennison saying, "Clearly things could have been handled much better in the field. It was a bad deal, and our agency has a responsibility to learn from it. We need to get some clear policies in place to help our officers in the field." While it can be argued that the situation could have been handled in a more sensitive manner, the fact remains that it was the family that illegally domesticated the deer, including bringing it into their home, that ultimately resulted in its death.

Wild deer are not pets, and it is never a good idea to regularly feed and interact



with them, and especially bring them into a home. Not only is it dangerous for both people and the deer, it's almost a certainty that the relationship won't end happily. Unfortunately, the fact that this was an illegal act by the family in the first place, and that they are ultimately culpable for the deer's death, only received a few sentences at best in most news stories. Apparently it makes for a much juicier story to pin the blame on

the KDWP.

While stories like this are unfortunate, it is irresponsible for media outlets to sensationalize them to attract readers and encourage drawn out discussions on their social media platforms, ultimately in an attempt to impress advertisers with their viewership and engagement numbers. Wild deer should remain wild. End of story.

## 2017 fishing regulations summary available online

With just the flick of a lure, you could land your best catch yet this spring, and with just the click of a mouse, you can access Kansas' best fishing resource online. The electronic edition of the 2017 Kansas Fishing Regulations Summary is now available online at [ksoutdoors.com](http://ksoutdoors.com) and that means information on this year's new regulations, special seasons, creel and length limits, license fees and legal fishing methods is at your fingertips. To download a free

copy, simply visit [ksoutdoors.com/Fishing](http://ksoutdoors.com/Fishing) or view the easy-to-use, full-color pamphlet right there online. Printed copies will be available in mid-January wherever licenses are sold.

Inside the 2017 Kansas Fishing Regulations Summary, anglers can also view lists of all public waters, along with their location and any special regulations in effect. At the turn of a page, anglers can see which community lakes don't charge extra

fees for fishing, as well as community lakes designated as Family Friendly Facilities (FFF) that offer restrooms, security patrols, security lighting, easy access to the water and zero-alcohol policies. There is also a special section that includes color illustrations of common Kansas sport fish.

Catch up on Kansas' regulations this winter, so you can catch your fill this spring.

For more information on Kansas fishing, visit [www.ksoutdoors.com/Fishing](http://www.ksoutdoors.com/Fishing).



# 2017 fish consumption advisories

The Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) and the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism (KDWPT) are issuing revised fish consumption advisories for 2017. The advisories identify types of fish or other aquatic animals that should be eaten in limited quantities or, in some cases, avoided altogether because of contamination. General advice and internet resources are also provided to aid the public in making informed decisions regarding the benefits as well as the risks associated with eating locally caught fish from Kansas waters.

## Definitions:

Bottom-feeding fish: buffalos, carp, carp-suckers, catfishes (except flathead catfish), sturgeons, and suckers.

Predatory fish: black basses, crappies, drum, flathead catfish, perches, sunfish, white bass, wiper, striper, walleye, saugeye, and sauger.

Shellfish: mussels, clams, and crayfish.

General Population: Men and women 18 years of age or older.

Sensitive Populations: Women who are pregnant, may become pregnant, or are nursing and children age 17 or younger.

Meal size (before cooking):

Adults and Children age 13 and older = 8 ounces

Children age 6 to 12 = 4 ounces

Children younger than 6 = 2 ounces

## Statewide Advisories

Kansas recommends the following consumption restrictions because of mercury in fish:

1. Sensitive Populations should restrict consumption of all types of locally caught fish from waters or species of fish not specifically covered by an advisory to one meal per week because of mercury.

2. Largemouth, smallmouth, and spotted bass (black basses):

A. Sensitive Populations should restrict

consumption of these species to one meal per month because of mercury.

B. General Public should restrict consumption of these species to one meal per week because of mercury.

Waterbody specific advisories for all consumers

Kansas recommends not eating specified fish or aquatic life from the following locations:

1. The Kansas River from Lawrence (below Bowersock Dam) downstream to Eudora at the confluence of the Wakarusa River (Douglas and Leavenworth counties); bottom-feeding fish because of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs).

2. The Spring River from the confluence of Center Creek to the Kansas/Oklahoma border (Cherokee County); shellfish because of lead and cadmium.

3. Shoal Creek from the Missouri/Kansas border to Empire Lake (Cherokee County); shellfish because of lead and cadmium.

4. Cow Creek in Hutchinson and downstream to the confluence with the Arkansas River (Reno County); bottom-feeding fish because of PCBs.

5. The Arkansas River from the Lincoln Street dam in Wichita downstream to the confluence with Cowskin Creek near Belle Plaine (Sedgwick and Sumner counties); bottom-feeding fish because of PCBs.

6. Antioch Park Lake South in Antioch Park, Overland Park (Johnson County); all fish because of the pesticides dieldrin, heptachlor epoxide, chlordane, and dichlorophenyl-trichloroethanes (DDTs).

Kansas recommends restricting consumption of bottom-feeding fish to one meal per month from the following location because of PCBs:

1. The Little Arkansas River from the Main Street Bridge immediately west of Valley Center to the confluence with the Arkansas River

in Wichita (Sedgwick County).

General advice for eating locally caught fish in Kansas

1. Sensitive populations should consider restricting their total mercury intake for both supermarket fish and locally caught species. Concerned parents and other persons may wish to consult with a physician about eating fish and mercury exposure.

2. Mercury exposure can be reduced by limiting the consumption of large predatory fish. Larger/older fish of all types are more likely to have higher concentrations of mercury.

3. Avoid the consumption of fish parts other than fillets, especially when eating bottom-feeding fish. Fatty internal organs tend to accumulate higher levels of fat-soluble contaminants such as chlordane and PCBs than fillets.

4. Consumers can reduce their ingestion of fat-soluble contaminants such as chlordane and PCBs by trimming fat from fillets, and cooking in a manner in which fat drips away from the fillet.

5. Avoid subsistence level (relying on wild-caught fish for daily nutritional needs) fishing activities in large rivers within or immediately downstream of large urban/industrial areas and wastewater outfalls. Fish in these areas are more likely to contain traces of chemical contaminants.

6. In waterbodies where watches or warnings related to harmful algae blooms have been applied, fish should be consumed in moderation and care taken to only consume skinless fillets. Avoid cutting into internal organs and rinse fillets with clean water prior to cooking or freezing.

Internet resources from KDHE, KDWPT, EPA, FDA, and the American Heart Association

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## January brings Bald Eagles to Kansas

Seeing a wild bald eagle is always a thrill and thanks to conservation efforts, our nation's symbol is more common than ever. However, if you want to optimize your viewing opportunities and learn more about eagles and other birds of prey, plan to attend Eagle Day at Milford Reservoir on Jan. 14, 2017. This is the best time of year to see bald eagles in Kansas, when large numbers of these amazing birds congregate around lakes and wetlands.

Eagle Day will feature a series of educational programs at the Milford Nature Center: "Raptors" at 9:15 a.m., 11:30 a.m. and 1:45

p.m.; "Owls" at 10 a.m., 12:15 p.m. and 2:30 p.m.; "Nesting Eagles In Kansas" at 10:45 a.m. and 1 p.m.; and "Birds Of Prey" at 3:15 p.m. Live eagle programs will be conducted at 10 a.m., 12:15 p.m. and 2:30 p.m. at the Starbird Classroom. The Kids' Tent will have activities and crafts for youngsters, and all visitors will be treated to hot chocolate and popcorn courtesy of the Milford Friends.

Bus tours to view wild eagles will leave the nature center every half-hour, beginning at 9 a.m. and continue through 2 p.m. There is no charge to attend any of the programs and the bus tours are free, as well, thanks to

B&B Busing. Entrance to Milford State Park is also free on January 14, so Daily Vehicle permits are not required. For more information, contact the Milford Nature Center, 785-238-5323 or the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Milford Office, 785-238-5714.

Other eagle day events will occur at various locations during the month of January, including the Kaw Valley Eagle Days at Lawrence Free State High School, Jan. 21, 2017. Go to [www.kawvalleyeaglesday.com](http://www.kawvalleyeaglesday.com) for more information. And be on the lookout for notices of other eagle day events at lakes near you.



# NWF CEO: Zinke right on public lands

This letter to the editor from Collin O'Mara, president and CEO of the National Wildlife Federation, was originally published in the Wall Street Journal in response to their Dec. 19 editorial.

We do not agree with the incoming administration on everything and look forward to learning more during confirmation hearings, but the President-elect and Rep. (Ryan) Zinke are exactly right on this issue. Mr. Trump knows that more than three-quarters of sportsmen and women rely on public access to wildlife habitat and streams that public lands provide for hunting and

fishing.

Economically, public lands serve as the foundation of our \$646 billion outdoor economy, sustaining 6.1 million jobs, with 72% of Americans in the West viewing public lands as important to the economy. The National Park System attracts 300 million visitors annually, spending nearly \$17 billion in nearby communities.

America's public lands absolutely must be managed better. We need more active restoration focused on reducing wildfires, increasing wildlife populations, improving watershed health, expanding recreational

opportunities and increasing local economic development opportunities. We need more collaboration and less litigation.

The answer is not selling the land to private interests, which will eliminate public access and degrade habitat, or transferring land to states, many of which already face budget challenges and may resort to selling the land.

Throughout the campaign, Mr. Trump promised hunters and anglers that he would uphold Theodore Roosevelt's public lands legacy. His nomination of Rep. Zinke signals that he intends to fulfill this pledge.

## House opens door for transfer of federal lands

Emboldened by the change of administration, GOP lawmakers are quietly making moves that would permit a potentially vast transfer of federal land to states and other entities.

On a party line vote last week, the House of Representatives approved rule changes that would expedite such transfers, alarming environmental and recreation groups that have long called for "public lands to stay in public hands."

President-elect Donald Trump and his pick for Interior secretary, Rep. Ryan Zinke, a Montana Republican, have both said they oppose turning federal lands over to states or localities. Even so, Zinke joined his party in

approving the Jan. 3 rules package, raising questions about how Trump might act if lands transfer legislation were to reach his desk.

"I'm not very confident. I am very worried," said Sharon Buccino, a lawyer who directs the land and wildlife program at the Natural Resources Defense Council, an advocacy group. "Both Trump and Zinke say they oppose the transfer of federal land, but when it came to vote last week, Zinke voted to make it easier to do land transfers."

Zinke, whose Senate confirmation hearing is Tuesday, could not be reached for comment. Neither his office nor the Trump transition team responded to inquiries about

his vote. A former Navy SEAL commander who served in Iraq, Zinke is an avid hunter and fisherman. This summer, he resigned as a delegate to the Republican National Convention after the GOP drafted a platform supporting transfer of federal public lands to states who wanted them.

As the nation's biggest landlord, the U.S. government controls more than two billion acres of property nationwide, including 47 percent of the American West.

But the management of vast tracts by the U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management has sparked conflict, including armed standoffs involving Cliven Bundy and his sons over cattle grazing in Nevada.

## Scenic Ranch Preserved in the Flint Hills

The Kansas Land Trust celebrates the preservation of the Youngmeyer Ranch in Elk County. This 4,700-acre prairie nested in the Flint Hills will forever be preserved as a working ranch. Owned by the Earl W. Jr. and Terri Youngmeyer Family Foundation, this prairie will also be an ecological research site for Wichita State University. Over 500 prairie plant species have been documented on this site including rich biodiversity indicator

species such as green dragon, bottle-brush sedge, ground-plum milk vetch, bread-root scurf-pea, inland ceanothus, and two-flower celestial-lily. This prairie also provides rich wildlife habitat for the greater prairie chicken.

KLT gives special thanks to Daniel Ofidani, trustee for the Youngmeyer Family Foundation, and their funding partners. Over the past several years the Kansas Land Trust

collaborated with National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to conserve over 16,000 acres, including the Youngmeyer Ranch, through a Native Environment Conservation Plan with financial support from Tradewind Energy and Enel Green Power North America, owner and operator of the Caney River Wind Project.

Working with their partners, KLT will invite you to a dedication of this conserved prairie next spring.

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## FISH

*Continued from Page 8*

To view the advisories online and for information about KDHE's Fish Tissue Contaminant Monitoring Program please visit our website at: [http://www.kdheks.gov/befs/fish\\_tissue\\_monitoring.htm](http://www.kdheks.gov/befs/fish_tissue_monitoring.htm)

For information about harmful algal blooms, including current watches and warnings, visit this KDHE website: <http://www.kdheks.gov/algae-illness/index.htm>

For information about fishing in Kansas including licensing, regulations, fishing reports and fishing forecasts please visit the KDWP fishing website: <http://ksoutdoors.com/Fishing>

For general information about mercury in fish, national advisories, and advisories in other states please visit this EPA website: <http://www2.epa.gov/choose-fish-and-shell-fish-wisely>

For information about sensitive populations and mercury in fish please visit this FDA website: <http://www.fda.gov/food/resources-for-you/consumers/ucm110591.htm>

For information regarding personal care

products and pharmaceuticals in fish please visit this EPA website: <https://www.epa.gov/fish-tech/pilot-study-pharmaceuticals-and-personal-care-products-fish-tissue>

For information about the health benefits vs. the risks of including fish in your diet please visit this American Heart Association website: [http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/GettingHealthy/NutritionCenter/Fish-101\\_UCM\\_305986\\_Article.jsp](http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/GettingHealthy/NutritionCenter/Fish-101_UCM_305986_Article.jsp)

For technical information regarding the EPA risk assessment methods used to determine advisory consumption limits please visit: <http://www2.epa.gov/fish-tech>

# GOP targets Endangered Species Act

Republicans see an opportunity to advance broad changes to law

## From Morning Ag Clips

In control of Congress and soon the White House, Republicans are readying plans to roll back the influence of the Endangered Species Act, one of the government's most powerful conservation tools, after decades of complaints that it hinders drilling, logging and other activities.

Over the past eight years, GOP lawmakers sponsored dozens of measures aimed at curtailing the landmark law or putting species such as grey wolves and sage grouse out of its reach. Almost all were blocked by Democrats and the White House or lawsuits from environmentalists.

Now, with the ascension of President-elect Donald Trump, Republicans see an opportunity to advance broad changes to a law they contend has been exploited by wildlife advocates to block economic development.

"It has never been used for the rehabilitation of species. It's been used for control of the land," said House Natural Resources Committee Chairman Rob Bishop. "We've missed the entire purpose of the Endangered Species Act. It has been hijacked."

Bishop said he "would love to invalidate" the law and would need other lawmakers' co-operation.

The 1973 act was ushered through Congress nearly unanimously, in part to stave off extinction of the national symbol, the bald eagle. Eagle populations have since rebounded, and the birds were taken off the threatened and endangered list in 2007.

In the eagles' place, another emblematic species — the wolf — has emerged as a prime example of what critics say is wrong with the current law: seemingly endless litigation that offers federal protection for species long after government biologists conclude that they have recovered.

Wolf attacks on livestock have provoked hostility against the law, which keeps the animals off-limits to hunting in most states. Other species have attracted similar ire — Canada lynx for halting logging projects, the lesser prairie chicken for impeding oil and gas development and salmon for blocking efforts

to reallocate water in California.

Reforms proposed by Republicans include placing limits on lawsuits that have been used to maintain protections for some species and force decisions on others, as well as adopting a cap on how many species can be protected and giving states a greater say in the process.

Wildlife advocates are bracing for changes that could make it harder to add species to the protected list and to usher them through to recovery. Dozens are due for decisions this year, including the Pacific walrus and the North American wolverine, two victims of potential habitat loss due to climate change.

"Any species that gets in the way of a congressional initiative or some kind of development will be clearly at risk," said Jamie Rappaport Clark, president of Defenders of Wildlife and a former Fish and Wildlife Service director under President Bill Clinton. "The political lineup is as unfavourable to the Endangered Species Act as I can remember."

More than 1,600 plants and animals in the U.S. are now shielded by the law. Hundreds more are under consideration for protections. Republicans complain that fewer than 70 have recovered and had protections lifted.

"That tension just continues to expand," said Jason Shogren, professor of natural resource conservation at the University of Wyoming. "Like a pressure cooker, every now and then, you've got to let out some steam or it's really going to blow."

Congress reconvened last week with two critics of the law holding key Senate leadership positions — Wyoming Sen. John Barrasso as the incoming chairman of the Committee on Environment and Public Works and Alaska Sen. Lisa Murkowski as chairwoman of the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Spokesman Mike Danylak said Barrasso will seek to "strengthen and modernize" the management of endangered species but offered no specifics.

Barrasso's predecessor, Sen. Jim Inhofe of Oklahoma, suggested in an interview that one species should be removed from the list every time another is added. Another Republican, Alaska Sen. Dan Sullivan, said he wants to limit applications for protections to one spe-

cies at a time.

In the House, Rep. Tom McClintock of California, chairman of the House Subcommittee on Federal Lands, said he wants to ease logging restrictions in national forests to reduce tree density blamed for catastrophic wildfires.

Some Democrats, too, have been frustrated with the law: Minnesota Rep. Collin Peterson and two other Democrats joined 11 Republicans last week on a bill to end protections for wolves in the Great Lakes and Wyoming.

Simply by striking a few key words from the law, it could be transformed from a tool to protect huge areas of habitat for imperiled species into little more than limits on hunting for protected animals, said J.B. Ruhl, a Vanderbilt University law professor considered a leading expert on the act.

Trump's position is unclear. A strong advocate for energy development, he has lamented environmental policies he says hinder drilling. But his appointment of Montana Rep. Ryan Zinke as Interior secretary was seen by some conservationists as a signal that Trump will support protections for public lands to the benefit of fish and wildlife.

The Trump transition team did not respond to requests for comment. The incoming administration already has immigration, the health care law repeal and infrastructure improvements atop its agenda.

If the administration or Congress wants to gut the law, "they certainly can do it," Vermont Law School professor Patrick Parenteau said. "The real question with the Endangered Species Act is where does it rank?"

Advocates and senior Obama administration officials argue the law's success is best measured by extinctions avoided — for 99 per cent of protected species, including black-footed ferrets, whooping cranes, American crocodiles and hundreds of others.

"There's a lot of evidence that some species are conservation-reliant," Ruhl said. Political fights over certain species have dragged out for decades, he added, because recovering them from "the brink of extinction is a lot harder than we thought."



# DU celebrates 80 years of conservation

Sunday, Jan. 29, marked Ducks Unlimited's (DU's) 80th anniversary. Started by a small group of sportsmen on a mission to save North America's waterfowl populations – and the continent's strong waterfowling traditions – DU was founded in 1937 during the Great Depression and one of the worst droughts in history, far from ideal circumstances for an organization in its infancy.

On Jan. 29, Ducks Unlimited will celebrate 80 years of conservation. Eight decades later, DU is celebrating 80 years of conservation success due to the tireless support and efforts of generations of DU members, volunteers and partners who have championed the organization's critical conservation mission to conserve and restore wetlands and other vital habitats for North America's waterfowl.

"DU's 80th anniversary is a milestone in conservation history," said DU CEO Dale Hall. "This anniversary would not be possible without the dedication of our volunteers and supporters, as well as the many agency and organizational partners who, time and time again, have helped us succeed in our mission."

Over the last 80 years, DU has completed more than 100,000 conservation projects and conserved more than 13.8 million acres across North America through on-the-ground, science-based conservation work.

"For 80 years, the men and women of Ducks Unlimited have stood shoulder to shoulder with the Fish and Wildlife Service, the states and our counterparts in Canada and Mexico, playing a vital role in successful efforts to conserve and protect North America's waterfowl populations and wetland habitat for future generations. As we work to address the conservation challenges of the 21st century, DU's conservation work and the support of its members have never been more crucial," said U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Director Dan Ashe. "On behalf of the Service, I want to congratulate DU for reaching this milestone, and thank the entire organization and its members for your advocacy, passion and commitment to conservation."

The anniversary also coincides with DU's latest campaign, "Rescue Our Wetlands: Banding Together for Waterfowl." The \$2 billion continental campaign was launched at the organization's 78th annual

convention in Milwaukee, and is one of the most ambitious conservation campaigns ever undertaken. Funds raised through the campaign will be used to conserve vital wetlands and other wildlife habitats on North America's most important waterfowl landscapes.

"Every DU member, partner and supporter has a role to play in Rescue Our Wetlands, and can help us achieve our conservation priorities of protecting, restoring or enhancing critical wetlands habitat across the continent," Hall said. "While this anniversary is a landmark for the organization, we must not lose sight of how we arrived where we are today: the hard work of volunteers and partners. We must all continue to do our part, right now, to ensure wetlands sufficient to fill the skies with waterfowl today, tomorrow and forever."

To help celebrate the milestone, Ducks Unlimited magazine and DU's website and social media channels will feature anniversary stories and promotions, and the organization will celebrate 80 years of conservation during its annual national convention in San Antonio.

## State competition tests students' plant and animal knowledge

Think you know Kansas' flora and fauna inside and out? Would you be willing to put your knowledge to the test? One hundred sixteen students in 29 teams from 33 schools across the state did just that during the 2016 Annual Kansas ECO-Meet State Finals competition on November 3, and the results were impressive. Held at the Kansas Wetlands Education Center and Camp Aldrich near Great Bend, the ECO-Meet tested students' knowledge via an invertebrates and tallgrass prairie ecosystems test.

To compete at the state level, students had to qualify at one of ten regional competitions held in September and October at Milford Nature Center, Lakewood Park Discovery Center, Sternberg Museum, Prairie Park Nature Center, Dillon Nature Center, Lee Richardson Zoo, Wilson Lake

Corps of Engineers, Great Plains Nature Center, Southeast Kansas Education Service Center and Ernie Miller Nature Center.

At the state competition, a total of 29 teams participated. Schools represented at the state competition included Clay Center, Goddard, Goessel, Inman, Maize, Miltonvale, Nickerson, Pike Valley, Pratt, Salina South, Shawnee Mission South, St. Mary's-Colgan of Pittsburg, Tescott, Tonganoxie, Wakefield, and Wilson.

2016 Kansas ECO-Meet State Finals Results are as follows:

### Overall Team

1st – Wilson HS Team A: Anna Criswell, Aaron Dlabal, Kyle Goldwater and Trey Fink - \$300/student scholarships awarded. Coached by Melanie Falcon.

2nd – Shawnee Mission South High

School: Megan Jenkins, Madison Goerz, Marc Almloff and Steffen Seamon - \$200/student scholarships awarded. Coached by P. J. Born.

3rd – Goddard HS: Cameron Boyd, Clara Towey and Sarah Tomtschik - \$100/student scholarships awarded. Coached by Marylee Ramsay.

### Individual Events

#### Invertebrates

1st – Aaron Dlabal, Wilson High School - \$200 scholarship

2nd – Madison Goerz, Shawnee Mission South High School - \$100 scholarship awarded.

#### Tallgrass Prairie Ecosystem

1st – Madison Goerz, Shawnee Mission South High School - \$200 scholarship

2nd – Aaron Dlabal, Wilson High School - \$100 scholarship awarded.

# Pheasants Forever improves 1.7 million acres in 2016

In 2016, Pheasants Forever, Inc., including its quail division, Quail Forever, improved habitat for pheasants, quail and other wildlife on more than 1.7 million acres. These accomplishments are attributed to working with more than 31,000 individual landowners, and chapter affiliates completing more than 15,200 wildlife habitat projects across the United States and Canada.

Howard Vincent, Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever's president and CEO, says the organization's local volunteers - including 740 Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever chapters across the country - continue to spearhead habitat results. "Our continued dedication to the organization's mission of wildlife habitat conservation is demonstrated by record-setting acres, an emphasis on permanent protection, and the growth of our youth education programs." Pheasants Forever's accomplishments also come with as little overhead as possible and the nonprofit continues to be recognized as a 4-star charity by Charity Navigator for the fifth consecutive year.

**Wildlife Habitat Projects**

Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever Farm Bill wildlife biologists worked with 31,338 landowner contacts in 2016 interested in voluntary conservation program enrollment, leading to nearly 1.33 million acres of habitat improvements for wildlife. Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever chapter projects - nesting cover, upland & wetland restoration, food & cover plots and land acquisition projects - accounted for 382,031 acres of improved wildlife habitat in 2016.

## **Land Acquisition / Permanent Wildlife Habitat Protection**

Because of 21 land acquisition projects

in 2016, 3,674 acres of wildlife habitat have been permanently conserved by Pheasants Forever. All these properties have or will be turned over to state/federal natural resource agencies and opened to public outdoor recreation, including hunting.

## **Youth, Education & Public Awareness**

Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever chapters set an organizational record for youth programs in 2016, with 2,570 events held nationwide which attracted over 147,000 youth participants. Chapters hosted youth hunts, sponsored shooting teams, helped with youth pollinator projects and held family field days in their communities.

Pheasants Forever, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization. Pheasants Forever's full Annual Report will be published in the spring 2017 issue of the Pheasants Forever Journal of Upland Conservation.

# Friends of the Great Plains Nature Center Receives National Award

The Great Plains Nature Center's (GPNC) support organization, Friends of the Great Plains Nature Center, recently received the award for "Excellence in Interpretive Support" at the annual conference of the National Association for Interpretation (NAI) in Corpus Christi, Tex. in November. NAI is the national professional organization for people who work in resource interpretation, delivering public educational programming at nature centers, museums and historical sites.

The GPNC - a free, public educational facility located in Chisholm Creek Park in northeast Wichita - was created through a three-way partnership between City of Wichita Park and Recreation, Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The friends group is a 501(c)(3) organization that has supported the mission and operation of the GPNC for the last 18 years providing services that include:

Handling grants, donations and other



forms of financial assistance

Hiring staff, including three full-time naturalists who are directly involved in interpretation

Facilitating print publications, including 12 pocket guides, 10 posters and four books

Coordinating volunteers, whose efforts

are critical to the center's operation

The friends group received prior recognition as Conservation Organization of the Year by the Kansas Wildlife Federation in 2009.

For more information on GPNC, visit [www.gpnc.org](http://www.gpnc.org) or call the center at (316) 683-5499.



# KDWPT biologists discuss bobwhites in new TV series

“Bobwhites on the Brink,” a five-part film series by the syndicated television conservation news magazine, This American Land, examines the reasons for the nationwide decline of the bobwhite quail and the efforts being made to reverse the trend on the American landscape. In the fourth segment (#604) of the series, viewers are brought to Kansas in large part due to the success of the state’s Conservation Reserve Program in providing species habitat. The segment explores how agricultural operations in the U.S. have morphed from small field/multi-farm set-ups, to giant corporate expanses of row crop acreage, and how Kansas is leading the country in demonstrating how bobwhite habitat can be successfully integrated on working lands.

Some Kansans may have viewed the

series on Smoky Hills Public Television and on the Kansas Topeka Washburn University PBS stations late last year, but for those who missed it, there’s still time to tune in. “Bobwhites on the Brink” will air on KTWU Channel 11, Topeka, Sundays at 3:30 p.m., beginning January 15. However, the last two shows of the series (#604 and #605) will air at 3:30 p.m. and 4 p.m. on February 5 in a 1-hour block. The series will also be available online on the This American Land website, [www.thisamericanland.org/Episodes/season-six](http://www.thisamericanland.org/Episodes/season-six); on NBCI’s YouTube channel, [www.youtube.com/user/BringBackBobwhites](http://www.youtube.com/user/BringBackBobwhites); and on the KDWPT website, [ksoutdoors.com/Hunting/Upland-Birds/Bobwhite-Quail](http://ksoutdoors.com/Hunting/Upland-Birds/Bobwhite-Quail).

The National Bobwhite Conservation Initiative (NBCI), in partnership with

select states, worked over a period of several months to help develop the story. The Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism worked directly with NBCI to demonstrate how the expansion of mechanized clean-farming techniques in row crop agriculture have effected bobwhite quail, among other grassland birds and wildlife species.

In addition to Kansas, film crews visited South Carolina, Texas, and Kentucky to document how a decline in active forest management and the conversion of livestock grazing operations from native grasses to exotic fescue across millions of acres, combined with changes in row-crop agriculture, have decimated habitat range-wide for bobwhites and related wildlife over time.

## Resident hunters can apply for Unit 4 spring turkey permit

Five-hundred permits are allocated for the 2017 spring season in Kansas’ Unit 4 turkey management unit. The resident-only permits are available through a lottery drawing. For a nonrefundable application fee of \$6.50, in addition to the permit price, resident hunters age 16 and older may apply online from January 9 through February 10, 2017 to enter the drawing. Kansas hunters age 15 and under may purchase a spring turkey permit valid statewide over the counter or online and do not need to enter the Unit 4 draw. To apply for a Unit 4 permit, visit [ksoutdoors.com](http://ksoutdoors.com) and click “Hunting,” “Applications and Fees,” then “Turkey.”

Unsuccessful applicants will receive a

refund check for the permit price and be issued a preference point. Hunters may elect not to apply for a permit and purchase a preference point only by selecting the Spring Turkey Preference Point Application online. Only one point may be obtained per year.

Unit 4 Spring Turkey draw pricing:

General Application: \$32.50

Landowner/Tenant Application: \$20.00

General Combo Permit/Game Tag Application: \$42.50

Landowner/Tenant Combo Permit/Game Tag Application: \$25.00

Nonresident Tenant Application: \$37.50

Nonresident Tenant Combo Permit/Game Tag Application: \$50.00

Preference Point only: \$6.50

Any individual who has purchased a Spring Turkey Permit is eligible for one Second Turkey Game Tag. Game tags are valid in Units 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6 ONLY. All other spring turkey permits and game tags are sold over-the-counter and online.

The 2017 Kansas spring turkey season will open April 1-11 for youth and hunters with disabilities, April 3-11 for archery hunters, and April 12-May 31 for the regular season.

For more information, visit [www.ksoutdoors.com](http://www.ksoutdoors.com), or call (620) 672-5911.

## Kid's Wildlife Friends

### Why Woodpeckers can safely slam their faces into trees

**By Bob Sundstrom**  
National Audubon Society

As any artisan knows, when you have a job to do, it pays to have the right tools.

A Pileated Woodpecker leans back and then slams its chisel of a bill into the side of a living tree. Now, most animals would be knocked unconscious by slamming their faces into a tree at twenty-five miles per hour.

Not this one. It’s a skilled carpenter. Its head is its primary tool. And it’s highly evolved for the job. All woodpeckers have an enlarged brain case, so the brain sits above the level of direct hammering impact. The skull’s frontal bones, folded at the base of the bill, act as a shock absorber, together with a set of muscles there.

Now out comes the woodpecker’s amazing tongue, at least three times the length

of its bill, with sticky barbs at the tip, to snag ants and other insects deep in the tree. When not extended, the tongue is sheathed up the back of the bird’s skull, curling all the way around to the eyes!

So knock on wood! If you’re lucky, there’s an Audubon chapter near you, ready to help you learn more about the amazing abilities of birds. Begin with a visit to our website, [www.birdnote.org](http://www.birdnote.org).

# The great late pheasant season

While the opening weekend of pheasant season is a highly-anticipated tradition, it may not provide the best hunting of the year. Hunting can actually be better later when winter weather arrives and fewer hunters are in the field.

The big groups of hunters are usually gone after the second weekend of the season, leaving only dedicated bird hunters, who have Walk-in Hunting Access tracts and other public lands to themselves. And it's often easier to get permission on private land after opening weekend, especially after the firearm deer season, which ends on Dec. 11 this year.

Colder weather and a little snow on the ground can dramatically improve hunter

success because pheasants often congregate in heavy cover in these conditions. The cool air temperature and moisture will also help bird dogs find more birds.

And while it's easier to predict where you'll find late-season pheasants, you can't pull up to a likely-looking weed patch and start slamming doors and hollering at dogs. Late-season birds didn't survive a month of hunting season by being stupid, and success requires some strategy and stealth. In fact, a single hunter quietly following a close-working dog in heavy cover may have the best chance of surprising birds for close flushes. A small group of hunters will increase their odds of success if they park some distance away from the heaviest

cover and approach quietly. Strategically-placed blockers will also add birds to the bag on late season hunts.

Hunting birds on a crisp morning in fresh snow is every pheasant hunter's dream. New snow provides great tracking conditions, providing sign of not only where birds are located, but also of where other hunters have already been.

Don't give up after the opening weekend this year. Watch the weather and make plans to hunt after the first winter storm passes through. Revisit the heavy weed patches that made you sweat on opening day and you'll likely find your best hunting of the year.

## Women-only weekend event teaches outdoor skills

Getting started in hunting, fishing, or just about any outdoor activity, can be intimidating for most people, but especially for women. Ladies today are faced with societal and familial pressures that often prevent them from pursuing outdoor quests, but the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism has a solution for that: Becoming An Outdoors-Woman (BOW) workshops. BOW workshops – or rather really fun weekend rendezvous where women can take classes of their choosing – provide outdoor skills training in a fun, friendly, and laid-back atmo-

sphere. Interested women are encouraged to sign up for the next workshop, May 5-7 at Rock Springs 4-H Center in Junction City. With more than 25 different classes to choose from, attendees can craft the perfect outdoor weekend, tailored specifically to their interests.

Cost for the three-day workshop is \$250, which includes lodging, meals and class supplies. Three \$100 scholarships are available to first-time participants based on financial need.

Early registration will be open to first-time participants through February 10. If

spots still remain, past participants may register thereafter. Registration closes April 25. Applicants are encouraged to apply early as spring workshops fill up fast. To register, visit [www.ksoutdoors.com](http://www.ksoutdoors.com) and click "Education," then "Becoming an Outdoor Woman."

For questions, call or email Jami McCabe at (785) 845-5052 or [kansasbow@sbcglobal.net](mailto:kansasbow@sbcglobal.net).

To learn more, and view pictures of past workshops, visit the BOW Facebook page found under "Becoming an Outdoors Woman KANSAS."

## 'Tis the season to go birding

Winter weather – we'll wait outside stores in it for great deals, drive around in it and view Christmas light displays, we'll even cheer on our favorite teams in it, so why not bundle up and go birding in it? Christmas Bird Count traditions provide a great way to spend time outdoors with friends and family, learn about the birds of Kansas, and enjoy the camaraderie of other nature enthusiasts. All you need to participate is clothing

appropriate for traipsing outdoors on a mid-winter day, a pair of binoculars, and a good field guide. Add in a little adventurous spirit and you're ready to go.

The Kansas Ornithological Society (KOS) has compiled a comprehensive list of Christmas Bird Counts occurring throughout the state on their website, [www.ksbirds.org](http://www.ksbirds.org). There you'll find a list of events scheduled to date, along with locations and contact information.

Birders of all skill levels are welcome to the events, where groups will spend time canvassing established circular census areas, recording species and numbers of birds observed. Information recorded at events is entered into regional and national databases and can show population and migration trends.

So this Christmas, gear up, get out, and see what birds are out and about for the count.



# How to welcome winter birds

Fall may mean migration, but one bird's north is just another bird's south

**By Ashley P. Taylor**  
National Audubon Society

Sad some of your favorite birds are going south for the winter? Don't worry—others are coming to take their places. As birds that breed in the lower 48 states head to Central and South America, those from the boreal forests of Canada and Alaska are also heading south in search of warmer climes. One study found that in California's Central Valley, there are just as many different bird species around in the winter as in the summer.

While there isn't good data showing whether this seasonal trade-off is just as balanced in other locales, "winter visitors" can be found all over the country, says Jeff Wells, Science and Policy Director for the Boreal Songbird Initiative ([www.borealbirds.org](http://www.borealbirds.org)) "There's this massive sea of a billion or more birds that come down into the U.S. and become, often, the common birds of backyards and parks and lakes and ponds," says Wells. "Yet we don't think so much about where they're coming from and what their needs are."

Helping these winter visitors out could help sustain their populations in both their wintering and summering grounds.

Birds have the same needs—food, water, shelter—in winter as they do any other time. Winter habitat has also been shown to affect breeding success, according to studies on tropical-wintering birds, and the same could be true for the boreal birds wintering here, says Kristen Dybala, who led the California study. If the birds don't find quality habitats with good food, their health suffers, Dybala explains, and it may take them longer to gather the energy to migrate back to their breeding grounds. When they finally arrive, the best breeding spots might be taken. "Each stage of the annual cycle kind of depends on the previous one," says Dybala. Basically, it's a snowball effect.

So what can you do to welcome the boreal birds to your backyard this winter? Here are some tips from Stephen Kress, who directs Audubon's Project Puffin.

Create a songbird border of native trees and shrubs to shelter your yard from the wind. Choose berry-producing landscape plants, such as juniper trees and shrubs like dogwood, serviceberry, and viburnum; many boreal birds, such as the Cedar Waxwing, the Yellow-rumped Warbler, and several sparrow species, eat berries during the winter. Fall is the perfect time

to plant, says Kress—though be sure to put wire-mesh cages around the new plants to protect them from mice, deer, and rabbits.

Make a brush pile in the corner of the yard to shelter the birds from predators and storms and to provide night roosting places. Put logs and larger branches on the bottom and layer smaller branches on top.

Rake leaves up under trees and shrubs—and leave them there. The resulting mulch will make a lush environment for the insects and spiders that these birds, such as the Savannah Sparrow and Golden-crowned Sparrow, like to eat.

Turn part of your lawn into a mini-meadow by letting it grow up in grass and weeds. (Mow it once a year, in late summer.) Seed-eating boreal visitors, including several sparrow species and the Dark-eyed Junco, will benefit from your letting things go literally to seed. "In general, overly tidy gardeners are poor bird gardeners," Kress writes in *The Audubon Guide To Attracting Birds*.

For other tips on how to make your property hospitable to birds, check out *How To Make Your Yard Bird-Friendly*, *Make Migration-Friendly Window Decorations* and, of course, Kress's book.

## Spring turkey hunting clinic in Emporia March 25

The Flint Hills Gobblers Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation will hold its 16th Annual Spring Turkey Hunting Clinic and Internet-Assisted Hunter Education Class on Saturday, March 25 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. The event will take place at Dry Creek Sporting Clays, south of Emporia, and is open to anyone interested in learning how to become a better turkey hunter. This three-time national award-winning event is free of charge and includes lunch. Participants must be registered by March 1, and space

is limited to the first 250 registrants.

Participants age 17 or younger will receive a commemorative T-shirt and JAKES (Juniors Acquiring Knowledge, Ethics and Sportsmanship) membership. Prizes will also be drawn for youth at the end of the clinic.

Participants will go through several education stations covering various aspects of turkey hunting, including: turkey biology and management, turkey hunting equipment and safety, turkey calling and locator calling, scouting and roosting,

bowhunting, shotgun hunting and safety, and trap and target shooting.

An Internet-Assisted Hunter Education Class field day will also be taught during the clinic; however it will be limited to the first 25 youth ages 11 to 17 who register and complete the internet coursework ahead of time.

To register for the clinic or Internet-Assisted Hunter Education Class, contact Gib Rhodes at (620) 437-2012 or [gib@madtel.net](mailto:gib@madtel.net).

# Wild about Kansas photo contest winners selected

Kansas Wildlife and Parks Magazine, a bimonthly, subscription-based publication of the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism, will publish winning entries from the 2016 Wild About Kansas Photo Contest in the 2017 January/February photo issue. This year's judges reviewed 213 submissions from 113 photographers of all ages and skill levels, providing a tough job for the panel of five. After much deliberation, 39 entries were selected to be published in the magazine's special photo issue.

Photos were judged based on creativity, composition, subject matter, lighting, and overall sharpness. Categories included wildlife, outdoor recreation, landscapes, other species, and hunting and fishing. The 2016 results are as follows:

**Adult**  
**Wildlife**  
1st: Tony Pianalto, "Majestic"  
2nd: Kevin Fruechting, "Twin Toms"  
3rd: Chuck Gibson, "Hummingbird"  
Honorable Mention: Frank Orth, "Screech Owl"  
**Outdoor Recreation**  
1st: Chenoa Casebier, "Sleeping Under The Stars"  
2nd: Jeff Doggendorf, "Dry Rattlesnake Creek Riverbed"  
3rd: Kayla Borell, "Rise To Wake"

Honorable Mention: Rick McPherson, "Frostbite Regatta"

**Landscapes**  
1st: Robert Dilla, "Sunset Through The Keyhole"

2nd: Tim Wood, "On Konza Prairie"  
3rd: Nicki Tomlinson, "Autumn Reflections"

Honorable Mention: Chuck Gibson, "Lovewell"

**Other Species**  
1st: Jaci Novak, "Snack Time"  
2nd: Mary Mejia, "Honey Bee At Sunflower"

3rd: Chuck Gibson, "Frog"  
Honorable Mention: Rick McPherson, "Bison At Maxwell Refuge"

**Hunting and Fishing**  
1st: Dale Benedict, "Spring Turkey Opening Day"

2nd: Clarence Maedgen, "Breaking Ice"  
3rd: Tony Pianalto, "Rooster"

Honorable Mention: Kristin Vinduska, "My Retirement Plan"

**Youth**  
**Wildlife**  
1st: Isaac Schultz, "Buddy"  
2nd: Solomon Schultz, "Cute"  
3rd: Madison Larson, "Groundhog"  
Honorable Mention: Lily Schultz, "Lily Frog"  
**Outdoor Recreation**

1st: Madison Larson, "Watching Fireworks"

2nd: Elly Gossard, "Sisters Exploring"  
3rd: Isaac Shultz, "Family Time"

Honorable Mention: John Walker, "Nice Shot"

**Landscapes**  
1st: Johanna Walker, "Cider"  
2nd: Yazmin Adams, "Fun Under The Sun"

3rd: Elly Gossard, "Calm Lake Day"  
Honorable Mention: Cloey Kennemur, "Sitting On The Dock Of The Bay"

**Other Species**  
1st: Lily Shultz, "Gathering"  
2nd: Kieren Shultz, "Big"  
3rd: Corley Becker, "Resting Frog"  
Honorable Mention: Johanna Walker, "Blending In"

**Hunting and Fishing**  
1st: Ashley Fields, "Crappie Bait"  
2nd: Kieren Shultz, "Peaceful"  
3rd: Solomon Shultz, "Fishin'"  
To subscribe to Kansas Wildlife and Parks Magazine today and start receiving Kansas' premiere outdoor magazine, call (620) 672-5911, or visit [www.ksoutdoors.com/Services/Publications/Magazine](http://www.ksoutdoors.com/Services/Publications/Magazine).

Details on the 2017 contest will be made available on [www.ksoutdoors.com](http://www.ksoutdoors.com) in early spring.

## USDA program nets more than 7,000 acres of Kansas grasslands

More than 7,400 acres of land in Kansas has been included in a grasslands conservation program, according to a news release from the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

A total of over 300,000 acres in 43 states has been accepted into the voluntary Grasslands Conservation Reserve Program, the release said.

As part of the program, grasslands threatened by development or conversion to row crops are maintained as livestock grazing areas. Approximately 200,000 of the accepted

acres were offered by what the department considers small-scale livestock operations.

Val Dolcini, the department's Farm Service Agency administrator, said in the release that the acceptance of land into the program showed that U.S. family farmers and ranchers "can have a big impact on environmental conservation."

As part of the program, small livestock operations with 100 or fewer head of cattle can submit applications to enroll up to 200 acres of grasslands per farm. Participants can

receive annual payments of up to 75 percent of the grazing value of their land, the release said.

Since 2009 under the Obama administration, the department has invested more than \$29 billion to "help producers make conservation improvements" to help address the "growing impacts of a changing climate," according to the release.

For more information on the conservation efforts of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, visit [fsa.usda.gov/conservation](http://fsa.usda.gov/conservation).

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## WAFWA

*Continued from Page 1*

agencies of Kansas, Colorado, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas. It was developed to ensure conservation of the lesser prairie-chicken by providing a mechanism

for voluntary cooperation by landowners and industry, and improving coordination between state and federal conservation agencies. Funding for WAFWA's conservation efforts comes from voluntary mitigation payments by industry partners that are enrolled in the plan. The plan allows agriculture producers and industry to con-

tinue operations while reducing impacts to the bird and its grassland habitat.

Landowners interested in participating in one of the short-term, long-term or permanent conservation options available under the Lesser Prairie-chicken Range-wide Plan are encouraged to contact Roger Wolfe at [roger.wolfe@wafwa.org](mailto:roger.wolfe@wafwa.org).

# Strengthening the MBTA

## American Bird Conservancy

2016 marked the 100th anniversary of the Migratory Bird Treaty, a crucial agreement that has helped protect, recover, and maintain populations for migratory birds. In light of this centennial, it is good to know that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is considering new standards to keep migratory birds from being trapped in oil pits, electrocuted by power lines, and dying from other preventable causes.

The Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA), unlike the Endangered Species

Act or the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act, currently has no provision for any "incidental take permit" for migratory birds. Creating a parallel provision to protect migratory birds would enable managers, businesses, farmers, and communities to apply best management practices to reduce mortality and mitigation measures.

The USFWS has announced its intention to prepare a programmatic environmental impact statement (EIS) to evaluate the effects of creating a permitting system

to reduce and mitigate for preventable sources of mortality. A draft EIS may be available as early as the end of 2016.

The official "Notice of Intent" includes potential options to establish incidental take authority permitting for sectors and projects that have known impacts to migratory birds such as wind power development, oil and gas drilling, communications towers, power lines, and tall towers.

This will be important development to watch.

## Connectivity is key for preserving isolated Sage-grouse populations

Greater Sage-Grouse depend on large, intact tracts of sagebrush habitat. Current sage-grouse conservation plans focus on protecting selected "priority areas," but these areas vary in size and proximity to each other—will they be able to sustain thriving, interconnected populations over time? A new study from The Condor: Ornithological Applications evaluates this approach.

Small, isolated populations of sage-grouse are especially vulnerable to threats like wildfires and West Nile virus, and genetic diversity declines if birds don't have the ability to occasionally interbreed with other groups. This study provides land managers with a new way to rank priority areas based on their contributions to connectivity.

Using a statistical technique known as graph theory, Michele Crist, Steven Knick, and Steven Hanser of the U.S. Geological Survey examined how the spatial arrangement of priority areas might affect their abil-

ity to function as an interconnected network of reserves. They found that of the three networks of sage-grouse priority areas—the Washington network, the Bi-State Network comprising California and Nevada, and the Central network, which is the largest and includes parts of ten states—only the priority areas of the Central network had a high degree of connectivity, and even there connectivity was dominated by a small number of large, centrally located sites.

"Graph theory is a way to describe a network based on sets of nodes and their connections with others. The network's characteristics reveal a lot of information about how that network functions," says Knick. "For example, importance within the network can be inferred from being large and having many connections or by connecting different groups within the network. The analysis is commonly applied to understand social networks."

"Managing the differing ecologies of a landscape-scale species presents many challenges even in a perfect world of unlimited resources and complete agreement amongst all associated stakeholders. As that is almost never the case, having studies such as the one presented here is essential to inform sound, science-based decisions," according to Pat Deibert, National Sage-Grouse Conservation Coordinator for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. "This exploration of connectivity and inferences for the long-term viability of prioritizing landscapes for conservation of the Greater Sage-Grouse is extremely valuable for assessing the efficacy of the current management strategy and informing decisions and appropriate adjustments in the future."

Range-wide connectivity of priority areas for Greater Sage-Grouse: Implications for long-term conservation from graph theory is available at <http://americanornithologypubs.org/doi/full/10.1650/CONDOR-16-60.1>.

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# What's the real risk of Monsanto's controversial weed killer?

The latest government report on glyphosate contradicts the findings of the World Health Organization's cancer group

By Willy Blackmore  
TakePart

Over the past 30 years, the Environmental Protection Agency has considered the health risks posed by the herbicide glyphosate—best known by the Monsanto brand name Roundup—on five occasions. When it first looked at the issue in 1985, the agency determined that glyphosate was a “possible human carcinogen.” A year later, a third-party panel called into question the study that first assessment was based on, and the EPA declared glyphosate “not classifiable as to human carcinogenicity”—the jury’s still out, essentially—while promising to continue to examine the issue as new research came out. Then, in 1991, the EPA took another look and backed off further from its initial assessment, saying there was “evidence of non-carcinogenicity for humans.” In 2015, that assessment was updated to the safer-sounding “not likely to be carcinogenic to humans.” On Friday, a new review of research published by the EPA again found that the herbicide, which is now the most widely used in agricultural history, does not cause cancer.

But there’s a bit of a problem with the agency’s three-decade drift toward declaring the herbicide as safe in stronger and stronger terms: Last year, the World Health Organization’s International Agency for Research on Cancer declared that glyphosate was “probably carcinogenic to humans.” The announcement was major news: The declaration has put glyphosate into regulatory limbo in the European Union, where its safety approval may not be renewed, and has led to calls to ban the chemical outright in the United States. In the wake of the IARC announcement, tests of food products paid for by consumer groups have found trace levels of glyphosate in everything from beer to eggs to oatmeal.

The new EPA report—part of its ongoing risk assessment of glyphosate that is now years behind schedule and may not be completed until next spring—follows another that was published briefly on the agency’s website before being taken down. (The EPA said it was pub-



lished prematurely, but the pages were marked “final.”) It too determined that glyphosate is not a carcinogen.

It has all led to growing consumer concern over glyphosate—and distrust of both Monsanto, its major producer, and the processes by which its safety is determined.

So does glyphosate cause cancer? Consumers tend to see things like carcinogenicity in black-and-white terms: something either gives people cancer or it does not. Just look at the calls for the herbicide to be banned: Armed with the “probably carcinogenic to humans” claim, petitions like one from Care2, which garnered more than 128,000 signatures, argue, “Glyphosate should not be in our consumer products in any amount. It is not safe as previously claimed.”

Reviews of scientific literature like those conducted by the IARC and the EPA are anything but black and white. The process involves sifting through piles of research data, determining what qualifies as a sound result, and making a case—carcinogenic or not carcinogenic—based on the evidence that the bulk of the data, especially the sound data, supports.

**Should a weed killer that might**

**cause cancer be banned?**

In the IARC report from last year, the authors wrote, “There was limited evidence in humans for the carcinogenicity of glyphosate.” The case-control studies the IARC scientists looked at “reported increased risks for non-Hodgkin lymphoma that persisted after adjustment for other pesticides.”

But those studies predominantly looked at white men in the United States, Canada, and Sweden. Sure, in recent history in those places, white men have done a lot of farming, and what with farmers encountering glyphosate in far higher amounts than anyone ingests by eating oatmeal or honey, that seems like a reasonable place to start investigating whether exposure to an agricultural chemical might give someone cancer. But it’s not a representative sample of humanity—no women, a single ethnicity, and in a limited geographical area. The IARC authors looked at some studies on lab animals and at research done on increased blood levels of a compound associated with glyphosate, but the non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma studies provided the bulk of the evidence.

In compiling the EPA review, a much

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*Continued on Page 19*

# American Bird Conservancy issues statement on neonicotinoid pesticides

While American Bird Conservancy is pleased that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has released its preliminary risk assessments (<https://www.epa.gov/pesticides/epa-releases-four-neonicotinoid-risk-assessments-public-comment>) for four neonicotinoids—imidacloprid, clothianidin, thiamethoxam, and dinotefuran—we are very disappointed that EPA has again pushed back any plans for reviewing the threat of these pesticides to birds. As a 2013 ABC report concluded, a single seed coated with a neonic is enough to kill a songbird.

The new EPA risk assessments make only peripheral mention of such neonic-coated seeds, which are used on over 100

million acres of cropland. And while the agency emphasizes that it is adjusting timelines in order to synchronize its neonic risk assessments, it has still not addressed the need for a cumulative risk assessment of these pesticides—in spite of the fact that ABC’s 2015 Congressional cafeteria study found as many as five different neonics concurrently on single foods. It is worth noting that EPA’s aquatic risk assessment for the neonic imidacloprid acknowledges many of the same high exposures and elevated risks found by Canada and Europe, both of which have robust plans to phase out these dangerous pesticides.

EPA is opening a 60-day comment period on its risk assessments for imidacloprid,

clothianidin, thiamethoxam, and dinotefuran. (See detailed review schedules here.) ABC will be reviewing the assessments closely and submitting further comments.

American Bird Conservancy is the Western Hemisphere’s bird conservation specialist—the only organization with a single and steadfast commitment to achieving conservation results for native birds and their habitats throughout the Americas. With a focus on efficiency and working in partnership, we take on the toughest problems facing birds today, innovating and building on sound science to halt extinctions, protect habitats, eliminate threats, and build capacity for bird conservation.

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## ROUNDUP

*Continued from Page 18*

broader swath of research was reviewed, and the authors also considered the studies included in the IARC report that looked at farmers exposed to glyphosate. The EPA found fault with all the studies, determining that they showed a statistically insignificant increase in risk or did not properly control for other pesticide exposures. In discussing the non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma studies, the authors wrote, “There is clearly a strong potential for confounding by co-exposures to other pesticides since many are highly correlated and have been reported to be risk factors for NHL.” This means that these men may have developed cancer because they worked with pesticides, but glyphosate might not have been the culprit.

With regard to non-Hodgkin’s lym-

phoma, the EPA authors concluded, “Due to study limitations and contradictory results across studies of at least equal quality, a conclusion regarding the association between glyphosate exposure and risk of NHL cannot be determined based on the available data.”

So does glyphosate cause cancer? The IARC said it’s probable and largely based that assertion on a series of studies that found “limited evidence” that it is carcinogenic to humans. That’s the group’s mandate: to determine if a chemical might, even in rare circumstances, cause cancer. The IARC review by no means says that eating foods that contain trace amounts of glyphosate is a cancer risk. While the EPA arrived at a different conclusion with regard to the non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma studies, it did determine that a link between glyphosate and that type of cancer couldn’t be determined based on the existing data. Though it noted that many of the studies were conducted before 1996, when Roundup

Ready crops were first introduced and glyphosate use began to skyrocket.

While it’s likely that more tests finding trace amounts of glyphosate in food products will grab headlines and that there will be continued calls for new regulations, the focus on risk to consumers may be a case of missing the forest for the trees. As Paul Towers of the Pesticide Action Network told TakePart in May, there may be health concerns, “but I think the bigger problem—and potential solution—lies with the USDA supporting a better agricultural system that doesn’t rely on these chemicals. I think our biggest concern remains the kind of system that agriculture gets stuck in—the pesticide treadmill of overuse, misuse, developing or encouraging invasive pests or invasive weeds that we then need to bring in the next chemical in order to deal with.”

Solving that problem involves asking a question more complicated than whether or not glyphosate causes cancer.

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## BUTTERFLY

*Continued from Page 3*

decline in North America, estimated to have decreased from one billion butterflies in 1995 down to an estimated 34

million. Through the National Strategy to Promote the Health of Honey Bees and Other Pollinators, released by the White House, the United States has a goal of increasing the eastern population of monarchs back to 225 million by 2020.

Producers interested in NRCS assis-

tance should contact their local USDA service center to learn more. NRCS accepts landowner enrollment applications on a continuous basis. NRCS offers more than three dozen conservation practices that can provide benefits to monarchs as well as a variety of other pollinators.

**Kansas Wildlife Federation  
P.O. Box 771282  
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## Here's How to Join:

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