

The Voice of Outdoor Kansas

**September-
October 2015**

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

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

Fishing and hunting fee increases discussed

During the Workshop portion of the Kansas Wildlife, Parks and Tourism Commission's August public meeting in Great Bend, commissioners heard a proposal from department staff to raise fees for hunting and fishing licenses. The proposal outlined fee history, revenue needs and compared proposed fees with those of surrounding states.

The Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism (KDWP) has not increased hunting and fishing license fees since 2002, and fees for deer and . Spending has remained constant, but the uncommitted portion of the Wildlife Fee Fund has begun to shrink. A healthy Wildlife Fee Fund with an uncommitted balance is important for cash flow at certain times of the year and ensures that excise taxes on hunting and fishing equipment allotted to the state through the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration program can be captured.

KDWP staff outlined the programs that need continued funding to provide quality hunting and fishing opportunities and ensure wildlife and important habitats are conserved. Priority programs include: Walk-In Hunting Access – leases more than 1 million acres of private land for public hunting access, more than tripling the amount of land open to hunting; FISH – leases private ponds and streams for angling access; Community Fisheries Assistance Program – enhances fishing opportunities on community-owned lakes and pays to remove any angler fees; the Pass It On and Aquatic Education programs – provide hunting, fishing and outdoor experiences to thousands of youth annually; and private land programs – assist landowners to improve wildlife habitat with economically feasible methods. There are also day-to-day operations that require funding, including law enforcement, four state fish hatcheries that produce 100 million sport fish annually, managing wildlife and habitat on more than 350,000 acres of federal and state land, and managing sport fisheries on 24 federal reservoirs, 44 state fishing lakes and more than 200 community lakes.

The fee proposal also includes recommendations for value-added options with substantial savings. For example, resident hunters and anglers currently pay \$18 for a fishing or hunting license and \$36 for an annual combination license. The proposed fee for a general resident hunting or fishing license is \$25, but the proposal also includes an annual fish/hunt combination license for \$45 and an early-buy combination for \$40 if purchased before March 1. The proposed early-buy combo license would be just \$4 more than what current combo license buyers are paying.

Other value-added licenses being recommended include 5-year hunting and fishing licenses. The recommended price for a five-year fishing or hunting license is \$100, a

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Protecting the Land... Passing on Our Traditions



KANSAS WILDLIFE FEDERATION

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Steve Sorensen

President's Message

This last summer proved to be a somber summer for the Kansas Wildlife Federation family. Our own Conservation Vice-President, Steve Sorensen, lost his wife, Carol, suddenly on July 24th. Carol was the former Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks secretary and Comfort Care Patient Transport driver. Carol enjoyed reading, sandhill cranes, sunflowers and introducing her grandchildren to the environment. A memorial has been established in her name with the Kansas Wildlife Federation. As well, the KWF Board, in cooperation with the Great Plains Nature Center in Wichita, planted a special Pollinator Memorial Garden in her name at the front entrance of the Great Plains Nature Center in Wichita. A plaque dedication ceremony will occur next spring. Shortly after Carol's passing, Steve underwent back surgery. Steve continues to recuperate from his surgery, but he is ever-amazing in his strength and dedication to the KWF and the natural world around him. Please continue to keep Steve and his family in your thoughts and prayers.

On another pollinator note, the Kansas Wildlife Federation is beyond excited for the upcoming Annual Meeting with much discussion and learning sessions focused on Pollinators and Kansas Prairies. This will be no ordinary Annual Meeting - this will be our 65th Annual Meeting! In those 65 years, many awards have been given to wonderful, Kansas conservationists. This



year will be no exception. Do you know someone who has volunteered countless hours towards a particular wildlife project or someone who has devoted themselves beyond normal expectations for conservation? We hope you will consider those you work with or know who have performed beyond the call of duty, someone who deserves to be recognized for their contributions to Kansas' wildlife and natural resources. Let's not let them go unrecognized for their dedication and sacrifices. The various award categories include Land and Soil Conservation, Youth Conservationist, Conservation Communicator, Conservation Educator,

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Calendar of Events

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| Oct 12-18 | National Wildlife Refuge Week |
| Nov. 6-7 | Kansas Environmental Education Conference, Sundstrom Conf. Center Lindsborg |
| Nov. 6-8 | Kansas Herpetological Society annual meeting, FHSU, Sternberg, Hays |
| Nov. 13-14 | Kansas Rural Center 2015 Farm and Food Conf. Four Points Sheraton, Manhattan |
| Dec. 22 | First Day of winter |
| 2016 | |
| Feb. 4-5 | Kansas Natural Resources Conference, Double Tree by Hilton, Wichita |
| Feb. 26-27 | KWF 65th Annual Meeting, Hotel at Old Town, Wichita Visit www.kswildlife.org |

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

KDWPT: Mountain lion seen in Barton County

Video from a trail cam shows a mountain lion north of Great Bend in the Barton Hills area.

Officials with the Kansas Department of Wildlife Parks and Tourism have confirmed the video.

The short 20 second video that was shot at 10:06 p.m. on September 7th, made the rounds on Facebook.

It was a video that has also been seen by Wildlife and Parks biologist Charlie Swank who says he checked out the area and confirmed that the video was authentic.

"We go out and check and make sure the area matches the photograph or video we receive," said Swank. "We've had everything from pigs, dogs, house cats and

more show up and be called a mountain lion."

Swank says having mountain lions in Kansas is nothing new, but with the advent of trail cams they can now get a better handle of the number of cats that move through the state.

The first confirmed mountain lion in Kansas in modern times was shot and killed in 2007 in Barber County in south-central Kansas.

Ten more have been verified since then, for a total of 11 confirmed sightings.

The latest sighting prior to the recent sighting in Barton County was confirmed last August in Rooks County, north of Webster Reservoir.

Enter your favorite outdoor photos in the 2015 Wild About Kansas photo contest

The peak of summer and start of fall can provide stunning lighting and subject matter for outdoor photographers. Whether it's a catfish fresh out of the water, a crimson sunset over a pasture, or a whitetail peeking through a tree line, Kansas Wildlife & Parks magazine staff want to see what makes you Wild About Kansas.

Photographers of all skill levels are encouraged to submit their favorite wildlife, outdoor recreation, and landscape photos before Oct. 23. There is no fee to enter, and the contest is open to both residents and

nonresidents.

Photographers can submit up to three original photos taken in the state of Kansas. Photos must fit into one of the three categories – wildlife, outdoor recreation or landscape – and will be judged on creativity, composition, subject matter, lighting, and the overall sharpness.

First, 2nd, and 3rd place prizes will be awarded in each category, and one honor-

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2016 NWF Alternate Representative: David Zumbaugh

KANSAS WILDLIFE FEDERATION

Officers and Board of Directors

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

KWF supports the sustainable use and management of fish and wildlife and their habitats through education, partnerships, outreach and policy oversight.

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Kansas Wildlife Officers Association

Fredonia, KS

Quail & Upland Wildlife Federation

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CHANGE OF ADDRESS

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

Kansas Wildlife Federation Newsletter

P.O. Box 771282

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2015 Conservation Achievement Program Awards

You know someone who has volunteered countless hours towards a particular wildlife project or someone who has devoted themselves beyond normal expectations for conservation. It is important for conservationist to give credit to those who deserve it. It demonstrates that we hold these activities in high regard and gives some appreciated recognition to folks who work very hard for something they love. Do your part and consider those you work with or know who have performed beyond the call of duty, someone who deserves to be recognized for their contributions to Kansas' wildlife. Let's not let them go unrecognized for their dedication and sacrifices.

Please make an effort to identify folks who have made special efforts for wild-

life in 2015. Those who have received Conservation Achievement Program (CAP) awards in the past can attest to the pride they felt in being bestowed such a noteworthy recognition. Do your part and make certain we recognize those most deserving at the CAP banquet in February, 2016 in Wichita.

To nominate someone simply e-mail a nomination of 400-500 words (more or less) to drkidd@gmail.com. Make sure you put full contact information for yourself and the nominee, including mailing and e-mail addresses and phone numbers. Do it now! E-mail me if you'd like a cyber copy of the form. Thanks for your help with this very noteworthy program for wildlife conservation in Kansas. Get your nominations to us by **November 1**.

Official entry form 2015 Kansas Wildlife Federation Conservation Achievement Program Awards

The Kansas Wildlife Federation CAP awards recognize outstanding accomplishments in Kansas's conservation fields. Nominations should be made for efforts worthy of state recognition. The accomplishment should reflect a long-time commitment to natural resources in Kansas with a significant effort during the past year. Awards are presented in 13 categories to capture the wide range of efforts that benefit wildlife and the cause of conservation. Past year's winners are not eligible for nomination in the same category for three years. Current KWF officers are not eligible.

- Wildlife Conservationist. For outstanding achievement in fish or wildlife resource management. Nominees should have demonstrated leadership in management, restoration, or research of habitats or wildlife species.

- Water Conservationist. For outstanding achievement in water pollution control, conservation, and protection of rivers and wetlands, prevention of degradation of water quality through effective planning and management or other activity aimed at maintaining or improving water standards.

- Land and Soil Conservation. For

outstanding achievement in watershed protection, wetlands development, erosion control, habitat improvement or other management practices that improve land so as to benefit wildlife.

- Conservation Education. For outstanding achievement in educating others in conservation. The process may be formal or informal. The nominations may be for leadership, which by example of demonstration, aids in the environmental/wildlife education of others.

- Forest Conservation. For outstanding achievement in forest and woodlands management, including reforestation, preservation of wilderness areas and wildlife habitat development.

- Conservation Communicator. For outstanding conservation achievement in effectively conveying the conservation message and creating public awareness of conservation issues in the news and other media.

- Youth Conservationist. For outstanding conservation efforts for someone under 21 during the contest year. Winners should have demonstrated ability and accomplish-

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CAP Nomination Form

To make a nomination, send this form with attached write up to Randy Kidd, CAP Chairman, drkkidd@gmail.com. Nominating write-ups should be approximately 400-500 words, and should list the accomplishments of the nominee, especially those accomplishments during the contest period (2015). The Deadline for nominations is **November 1, 2015**. Any questions, contact: Randy Kidd drkkidd@gmail.com or 785-840-8560.

Name of nominee _____

Address _____

Phone(s) _____ e-mail(s) _____

Award Category _____ (please specify one of the categories, above)

Nominator's name _____

Address _____

Phone(s) _____ e-mail(s) _____

Randy Kidd CAP Chair

16879 46th St.
McLouth, KS 66054-4125
rrkidd@gmail.com
Ph. 785-840-8560

CAP

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ment in some phase of conservation. Youth groups are eligible as well.

- Conservation Organization. For outstanding achievement by an organization during the contest period. May include civic clubs, conservation groups, garden clubs, sportsman's clubs, businesses, professional organizations and others.

- Stream Team or Stream Monitor. For outstanding efforts by a group of citizen volunteers or individual in monitoring and contributing to the protection of our state's waterways. Nominees should have demonstrated leadership in stream monitoring, protection and educational efforts.

- Conservation Legislator. For outstanding achievement by a legislator in conservation legislation that took place in or culminated in the contest year. Competition is open to state or federal legislators and their staff members.

- Farmer/Rancher Wildlife Conserva-

tionist. This award is to recognize special efforts of a farmer and/or rancher who has made extra efforts towards conserving wildlife.

- Outdoor Skills Instructor. This award recognizes wildlife, nature, shooting, and outdoor instructors for their superior involvement in educating others.

- Conservationist of the Year. The Conservationist of the Year will be selected from all the nominations submitted in all categories. This award will be based on exemplary service to Kansas's fish, wildlife and environmental conservation efforts.

CONTEST

Continued from Page 3

able mention per category will be named, as well. Winners will be featured in the 2016 Kansas Wildlife & Parks January/February photo issue.

Entries must be received no later than 5 p.m. on Oct. 23. An entry form must be submitted for each participant and can be obtained by visiting www.ksoutdoors.com/Services/Publications/Magazine/Wild-About-Kansas. Photo format should be JPEG or TIFF and file size should be not less than 1mb and not more than 5mb.

For more information, visit ksoutdoors.com/Services/Publications/Magazine/Wild-About-Kansas, or contact contest coordinator Nadia Marji at nadia.marji@ksoutdoors.com.

FEES

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savings of \$25. The price for a five-year combination hunting/fishing license would be \$180, which is a \$70 savings and equal to what hunters are paying currently for combination licenses over a five-year period.

Other recommended fee increases include: nonresident hunting license from \$70 to \$95; nonresident deer permit from \$315 to \$415; nonresident spring turkey permit from \$30 to \$60; general resident deer permits from \$30 to \$40; and resident turkey permits from \$20 to \$25. A complete listing of all proposed fee changes can be downloaded from www.ksoutdoors.com, by clicking on "Commission," "Pending Draft Regulations," and then "October 22, 2015 60-day Notice." The fees changes are included in K.A.R. 115-2-1.

Duck numbers remain high

Drier conditions on the prairies demonstrate importance of Boreal Forest habitats

| 2015 WATERFOWL SURVEY ducks.org/ducknumbers | | | | |
|--|--------|--------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Species | 2015 | 2014 | % change from 2014 | % change from LTA |
|  Mallard | 11.643 | 10.900 | +7 | +51 |
|  Gadwall | 3.834 | 3.811 | +1 | +100 |
|  American Wigeon | 3.037 | 3.117 | -3 | +17 |
|  Green-winged teal | 4.081 | 3.440 | +19 | +98 |
|  Blue-winged teal | 8.547 | 8.542 | 0 | +73 |
|  Northern shoveler | 4.391 | 5.279 | -17 | +75 |
|  Northern pintail | 3.043 | 3.220 | -6 | -24 |
|  Redhead | 1.196 | 1.279 | -6 | +71 |
|  Canvasback | 0.757 | 0.685 | +11 | +30 |
|  Scaup | 4.395 | 4.611 | -5 | -13 |
| Total Ducks | 49.522 | 49.152 | +1 | +43 |
| May Ponds (US/Can) | 6.308 | 7.181 | -12 | +21 |

Numbers in millions. LTA (Long-term Average)

The 2015 Trends in Duck Breeding Populations report released by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) indicates another strong year for waterfowl populations. The report is based on surveys conducted in May and early June by the USFWS and Canadian Wildlife Service in partnership with state and provincial agencies and private conservation organizations. Overall duck numbers were statistically similar to last year and remain high. Total populations were estimated at 49.5 million breeding ducks in the traditional survey area. This estimate represents a 1-percent increase from last year's estimate of 49.2 million birds, and is 43 percent higher than the 1955-2014 average.

"We are fortunate to see continued

high overall duck populations in North America's breeding areas this year," said DU CEO Dale Hall. "Though conditions were dry in some important habitats, we had large numbers of birds returning this spring and good conditions in the Boreal Forest and other areas of Canada. It looks like some typical prairie nesters skipped over the U.S. prairies and took advantage of good conditions farther north. This is an important reminder about the vital need for maintaining abundant and high-quality habitat across the continent. The Boreal Forest, especially, can provide important habitat when the prairies are dry. But the Boreal is under increasing threats from resource extraction."

Fishing participation rate holding steady says survey

From The Fishing Wire

Forty-six million Americans, or 15.8 percent of the U.S. population ages six and older, participated in fishing last year according to the 2015 Special Report on Fishing released by the Recreational Boating & Fishing Foundation (RBFF) at the International Convention of Allied Sportfishing Trades show (ICAST) in Orlando, Fla. Produced in partnership with the Outdoor Foundation, the report details the state of fishing participation throughout the country in 2014, offering detailed information on participation by gender, age, ethnicity, income, education and geographic region.

"We are pleased with the findings of this report, including the 2.4 million newcomers who tried fishing for the first time in 2014," said RBFF President and CEO, Frank Peterson. "Fishing remains a popular outdoor activity and with increasing numbers of newcomers, we look to growing overall participation in the future, securing critical support for state conservation efforts."

Now in its seventh year, the report provides a comprehensive look at overall

trends in participation. The report also looks into barriers, motivating factors and preferences of key groups while also identifying opportunities for engaging new audiences. As both foundations look to tap into the growing youth and Hispanic populations, special attention is paid to these segments of the U.S. population in the report.

"Recreational fishing is an essential piece of America's outdoor tradition, often leading children to a love of the outdoors and a healthy, active lifestyle," said Chris Fanning, executive director of the Outdoor Foundation. "We hope this report will help the fishing industry - and the entire outdoor industry - engage young fishing participants and ultimately create the next generation of passionate outdoor enthusiasts."

REPORT KEY FINDINGS:

Outdoor Activity - Among adult outdoor participants, fishing is the second most popular outdoor activity

Newcomers - More than 2.4 million people, had their very first fishing experience in 2014

Women anglers - Over 47% of first-time fishing participants are female

Social - Nearly 82% of fishing trips involve more than one person

Youth - Fishing participation as a child has a powerful effect on future participation - more than 85% of adult anglers fished as a child, before the age of 12

Future Participants - Almost 4.3 million youth (11%) would like to try fishing, a growth opportunity for the industry

Number of outings for Hispanic participants - Hispanic Americans fishing participants average 25.8 days on the water per year; over six days more than the average for all fishing participants (19.4 days)

Spontaneous - 81% of fishing trips are spontaneous or planned within a week of the trip

Motivation - Spending time with family and friends continue to be the largest reason to participate in fishing, specifically, 72.2% for ages 6-12 and 66.8% for ages 13-17

To download the report, as well as an infographic detailing the top findings, visit the Take Me Fishing Resource Center.



SAVE THE DATE!

65th Annual Meeting

When: February 26-27, 2016

Where: Hotel at Old Town
830 East 1st Street N
Wichita

Pollinators & Prairies. Prairies & Pollinators.

Go hand in hand, like PB&J. They are equally important to the Kansas landscape.

Mark your calendar! You won't want to miss out on our big celebration event featuring special guest speaker, National Wildlife Federation CEO, Collin O'Mara, and other great speakers!



Photos by Casey Wilson
caseywilson.com



FOR MORE INFORMATION: VISIT
WWW.KSWILDLIFE.ORG

Without Congressional compromise, conservation will come to a halt

What 34 sportsmen's groups have joined forces to ask of our nation's lawmakers as they craft next year's budget

**By Steve Kline
TRCP Blog**

Agreement in the year 2015 seems to be a rare thing—whether it's among Republicans and Democrats or about Coke or Pepsi. Even hunters and anglers have loyalties that can lead to fireside arguments about smallmouth or cutthroat,

ducks or deer. With so many options, disagreement just seems to be the natural status quo.

But there was absolutely no disagreement last week, when 34 of the nation's leading hunting and angling conservation organizations, representing sportsmen and women from every region of the country, signed a letter urging Congress-

sional leadership to begin negotiating a bipartisan budget deal.

Many of the issues that we work on at the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership are regional by nature of being specific to certain terrain or species, like sage grouse, red snapper,

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PRESIDENT

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Wildlife Conservationist, Water Conservationist, Conservation Legislator, Conservation Farmer/Rancher, Forestry Conservationist, Stream Team Conservationist, Outdoor Skills Instructor, Conservation Organization, and Conservationist of the Year. To nominate someone simply e-mail a nomination of 2,000 words (more or less) to drkidd@gmail.com. Make sure you put full contact information for yourself and the nominee, including mailing and e-mail addresses and phone numbers.

To start the celebration off, we will hold our Annual Board Meeting during the day on Friday, February 26th at the Great Plains Nature Center, leading into a special movie showing that evening in their fantastic auditorium. More on the movie in the next edition.

In celebration of our 65 years, we will be honored with the presence of a very special guest speaker for the Saturday evening CAP Awards Banquet at the Hotel at Old Town in Wichita. Collin O'Mara, President and CEO of the National Wildlife Federation will be the featured speaker. Collin's dynamic personality successfully leads America's largest wildlife conservation organization in protecting wildlife ranging from bison to monarch butterflies, ensuring healthy waters and sustainable habitats, advancing environmental education, and connecting people with the great outdoors. Taken directly from NWF's website: Collin, prior to joining the NWF, came from the state government of Delaware where he has led the Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control since 2009. In that position, Secretary O'Mara served as the



Collin O'Mara

state's top environmental official, led the state's efforts to conserve and restore wildlife and fishery habitat, improve air quality and public health, ensure access to clean water, expand outdoor recreation and environmental education opportunities, and enhance the state's resilience to extreme weather and other climate impacts.

When O'Mara was appointed in 2009, he was the youngest state cabinet official in the nation. Over the past several years, he has spearheaded a range of initiatives, including Delaware's "No Child Left Inside"/Children In Nature campaign, a comprehensive strategy to confront childhood obesity by reintroducing children to the outdoors; the First State Trails and Pathways Plan, a multi-year initiative to expand and connect the state's trail system; and the Delaware Bayshore Initiative, an effort to establish the region as a world-class conservation and low-impact recreation tourism destination for hunting, birding, fishing, hiking, canoeing, and kayaking, as part of the President's America's Great Outdoors Initiative.

In addition, Secretary O'Mara led the largest investment in environmental infrastructure in Delaware's history, including more than \$200 million in wastewater and storm water systems, beach restoration, dam and dike repair, drainage projects, and park and wildlife area. At the same time, he successfully executed the first significant reorganization of the state's Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control since 1972, to make the agency more

effective at implementing strategic priorities and more efficient in carrying out its mission at a time of limited resources.

O'Mara has served on numerous boards including as Co-Chair of the Natural Resources and Agriculture Subcommittee of the President's Task Force on Climate Adaptation and Preparedness, past Chair of the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, past Chair of the Ozone Transport Commission, Chair of the Climate and Energy Subcommittee of the Environmental Council of the States, Executive Council of the Chesapeake Bay Program, the Sustainable Energy Utility Oversight Board, State Water Supply Coordinating Council, the Delaware Cancer Consortium, Open Space Council, Nutrient Management Commission, the Center for the Inland Bays, and the Partnership for the Delaware Estuary.

A native of Syracuse, New York, O'Mara was a Marshall Scholar at the University of Oxford, a University Fellow at the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, and a Presidential Scholar at Dartmouth College. He is a Catto Fellow at the Aspen Institute, a U.S. Green Building Council LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) accredited professional, and completed Stanford Business School's Executive Management Program in Environmental Sustainability.

During all of those activities, he is also the proud father of young daughter, Riley Elizabeth.

I have been blessed with the opportunity to listen to this young man and trust me, his passion for our Nation's natural resources will leave you breathless and energized at the same time! You will not want to miss out on this KWF event!! I hope to see you there – bring a friend or three.

\$1.1 Billion from Pittman Robertson-Dingell Johnson funding

From The Birding Wire

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service announced that it will distribute \$1.1 billion in revenues generated by the hunting and angling industry to state and territorial fish and wildlife agencies throughout the nation. The funds support critical fish and wildlife conservation and recreation projects that benefit all Americans.

The Service apportions the funds to all 50 states and U.S. territories through the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration and Dingell-Johnson Sport Fish Restoration programs. Revenues come from excise taxes generated by the sale of sporting firearms, ammunition, archery equipment, fishing equipment, electric boat motors, and from taxes on the purchase of motorboat fuel.

“These funds are the cornerstone of state-based efforts that are critical to the preservation of America’s wildlife and natural resources,” said Service Director Dan Ashe. “But they are also the fuel for a massive financial engine that benefits outdoor recreationists, hunters, boaters and anglers, equipment manufacturers and retailers, and local and regional economies. Their value cannot be overstated in providing opportunities for the next generation of Americans to get outdoors,

| State | Apportionment |
|------------|---------------|
| ARKANSAS | \$19,403,525 |
| COLORADO | \$28,516,034 |
| IOWA | \$16,502,569 |
| KANSAS | \$19,984,814 |
| MISSOURI | \$29,783,609 |
| NEBRASKA | \$17,608,725 |
| NEW MEXICO | \$22,125,164 |
| OKLAHOMA | \$25,729,133 |

experience our wild places and learn the importance of conserving our natural heritage.”

Pittman Robertson-Dingell Johnson funds are distributed by the Service’s Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration program. Since their inception, the programs have generated more than \$15 billion to conserve fish and wildlife resources and support outdoor recreation opportunities for the American public. The recipient State fish and wildlife agencies have matched these funds with more than \$5 billion over the years, mostly through hunting and fishing license revenues.

“The Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration program provides critical funding for conservation projects and outdoor

recreation activities across this great nation,” said Assistant Director Hannibal Bolton of the Service’s WSFR program. “I can’t stress enough that the key to the program’s success is through our dedicated partnerships with State agencies, non-government organizations and many others.”

“It is thanks to this significant financial investment made by America’s sportsmen and women and the hunting, shooting sports, angling and boating industries that state and territorial fish and wildlife agencies can deliver science-based conservation on the ground,” said Larry Voyles, Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies President and Arizona Game and Fish Department Director. “The Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program has made the difference between the survival and abundance of some species and it helps agencies, like mine, manage a vast estate of lands and waters and connect more people to wildlife-related recreation.”

Below is a listing of surrounding states of the Service’s final apportionment of Wildlife Restoration Funds and Sport Fish Restoration funds for Fiscal Year 2015. To learn more about the Service’s WSFR program visit: <http://wsfrprograms.fws.gov/>.

CONGRESS

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or Prairie Potholes. It can sometimes be difficult, and understandably so, to get fishing groups interested in upland issues or to ask waterfowl groups to advocate for the sagebrush steppe. It’s not that these groups don’t care, it’s just that, with limited bandwidth and capacity, their focus on one core mission is essential. And so TRCP has made it our core mission to bring the widest swath of the sporting community to bear on the issues that truly impact the full spectrum of America’s hunters and anglers.

Few issues are more important to fish and wildlife habitat and the future of

quality experiences afield than conservation funding.

The end of September marks the end of the federal fiscal year 2015, and as the fiscal year ends, so does the Murray-Ryan budget deal (formally known as the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2015). It was negotiated in good faith by then-chairs of the House and Senate Budget Committees, Paul Ryan and Patty Murray, respectively. Its provisions allowed for a temporary lift from the onerous, sweeping, and automatic cuts referred to as “sequestration,” which would have fundamentally altered the landscape of fish and wildlife habitat conservation in the United States. However, the expiration of the deal means the return of sequestration and, in such a scenario, habitat projects often wind up on the cutting

room floor. Access enhancement stops in its tracks. Conservation priorities wither on the vine.

That is, unless Congressional leaders can come together on a successor agreement to Murray-Ryan. Dozens of sporting-conservation groups have gone on the record in support of Congressional negotiations that result in a bipartisan budget agreement to provide for a meaningful reinvestment in conservation funding. Private lands, public lands, marine fisheries, water, and literally everything else in the universe of issues that sportsmen care about most would be dramatically impacted by the return of sequestration.

It is time for Congressional leaders to come together for this greatly needed compromise—we can all agree on that.

2015 Outdoor Adventure Camp participants and counselors



Pintails, redheads and mallards, oh my

The 2015 Kansas duck season has kicked off – are you ready for the marsh madness? Before you throw on your waders and start unraveling decoys, there are a few things you need to know. iSportsman, the free and convenient electronic check-in system, is now offered at 23 locations throughout the state. If you have yet to create an account, consider signing up at www.kdwpt.isportsman.net. Federal Waterfowl Stamps, required of all waterfowl hunters age 16 and older, have increased in price and can be purchased for \$26.50.

According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (USFWS) 2015 Trends in Duck Breeding Populations survey, overall duck numbers remain strong as we enter the 2015-2016 hunting seasons. The USFWS stated that total populations were estimated at 49.5 million breeding ducks in the traditional survey area, which is 43 percent above the 1955-2014 long-term average and the highest count on record. Last year's estimate was 49.2 million birds.

According to the report, current species

estimates are as follows:

Blue-winged teal: 8.5 million, 73 percent above the long-term average.

Green-winged teal: 4.1 million, 98 percent above the long-term average.

Northern shoveler: 4.4 million, 75 percent above the long-term average.

Northern pintail: 3.0 million, 24 percent below the long-term average.

Mallard: 11.6 million, 51 percent above the long-term average.

Gadwall: 3.8 million, 100 percent above the long-term average.

American wigeon: 3.0 million, 17 percent above the long-term average.

Redhead: 1.2 million, 71 percent above the long-term average.

Canvasback: 0.76 million, 30 percent above the long-term average.

Scaup: 4.4 million, 13 percent below the long-term average.

All hunters who are required to have a hunting license must also have a State Waterfowl Permit, \$7, and a Kansas Harvest Information Program (HIP) Permit,

\$2.50, before hunting ducks, geese, or mergansers. Licenses, stamps and permits, except for Federal Waterfowl Stamps, may be obtained wherever licenses are sold and online at ksoutdoors.com. Apart from post offices, Federal Waterfowl Stamps may also be obtained online from www.duckstamp.com and www.usps.com.

Federal and state waterfowl permits are not required to hunt coots, doves, rails, snipe, woodcock, or sandhill cranes; however a HIP Permit is required.

2015 DUCK SEASONS

YOUTH WATERFOWL SEASONS

High Plains Unit: Oct. 3-4, 2015

Low Plains Early Zone: Oct. 3-4, 2015

Low Plains Late Zone: Oct. 24-25, 2015

Southeast Zone: Nov. 7-8, 2015

(Bag limits for the youth seasons are the same as during the regular seasons and include ducks, geese, coots and mergansers.)

Continued on Page 11

DU's Rick Warhurst receives International Canvasback Award

At his final Central Flyway Council meeting last week, Ducks Unlimited (DU) senior regional biologist Rick Warhurst received the International Canvasback Award from the North American Waterfowl Management Plan Committee (NAWMPC). The award is granted each year to an exceptional individual, corporation or organization that has made a minimum ten years' commitment to implementing and continuing the North American Waterfowl Management Plan (NAWMP). Warhurst is retiring from DU in December.

"I was surprised but honored to receive the award," Warhurst said. "It was pretty humbling."

The NAWMP was signed by the U.S. and Canada in 1986, with Mexico signing in 1994. The plan lays out a framework for how North American waterfowl populations could be brought back from the record lows of the '80s and sustained in the future.

Warhurst has worked in waterfowl habitat conservation for decades, with over 30 years at DU alone. Of his 11 years as part the Northern Great Plains Joint Venture Management Board, he has served seven as chairman. He was one of five original members of the Rainwater Basin Joint Venture Management Board and also served on the Prairie Pothole Joint Venture Technical Committee. He has helped deliver waterfowl habitat in most states of the Northern Great Plains. He says, however, it is likely his past 17 years as chair of the Central Flyway Habitat Committee that led to his nomination for the award.

"We helped the Central Flyway Technical Committee and Council address habitat issues, and we supported and made recommendations about legislative bills concerning wildlife conservation," Warhurst said.

The award was presented by Tony Leif,



DU senior biologist Rick Warhurst (left) receives International Canvasback Award at his final Central Flyways meeting before retiring. The award was given by Tony Leif (right), wildlife division director of South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks and Central Flyway Council representative on the North American Waterfowl Management Plan Committee.

who is the wildlife division director of South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks and the Central Flyway Council representative on the NAWMPC.

After his retirement from DU, Warhurst plans to work part-time for the North Dakota Natural Resources Trust as a North

American Wetlands Conservation Act Council staff representative for the Central Flyway.

Many of you may remember Rick when worked as the Area Manager at the Marias Des Cygnes Waterfowl Area near Pleasanton, KS.

DUCK

Continued from Page 10

HIGH PLAINS UNIT

Oct. 10, 2015-Jan. 4, 2016 and Jan. 23-31, 2016

LOW PLAINS EARLY ZONE

Oct. 10-Dec. 6, 2015 and Dec. 19, 2015-Jan. 3, 2016

LOW PLAINS LATE ZONE

Season: Oct. 31, 2015-Jan. 3, 2016 and Jan. 23-31, 2016

LOW PLAINS SOUTHEAST ZONE

Nov. 14, 2015-Jan. 3, 2016 and Jan. 9-31, 2016

Hunters may take six ducks daily, including no more than, 5 mallards, of which only 2 may be hens; 3 wood ducks; 3 scaup; 2 pintails; 2 redheads; and 2 canvasbacks. Possession limit is three times the daily bag limit.

Hunters taking mergansers may possess up to five a day, only two of which may be hooded mergansers. Possession limit is three times the daily bag limit.

For more information on Kansas duck hunting, visit www.ksoutdoors.com and click "Hunting," "Seasons and Limits," then "Migratory Bird Seasons," or pick up a copy of the 2015 Kansas Hunting and Furharvesting Regulations Summary wherever licenses are sold.

Why are bats, spiders and owls the scary creatures of Halloween?



Barn Owls are commonly found throughout North America and Europe. © Peter Trimming

By eNature

In most people's minds, Halloween means vampires and witches, bats, owls and spiders. Even the mere mention of these creatures sends shivers through some folks. Vampires and witches—a fear of them is understandable.

But what is it about bats, owls, and spiders that makes people associate them with evil?

One trait these creatures share is a preference for darkness. They're active mainly at night, which runs counter to our own diurnal tendencies. As a result, people tend to regard night animals as demonic.

What Makes Bats So Scary?

Consider the bat, which has long been associated with the darker side of our subconscious. Because bats appear only at night and vanish during the day, it was believed that bats were the souls of sleeping people. Likewise, depictions of the devil customarily feature batlike wings and ears (angel wings, meanwhile, are bird-



The Brazilian Free-tailed Bat is found throughout Texas. © Ron Groves

like). And since bats often dwell in caves, people commonly associate them with the underworld.

As for the connection between bats and vampires, experts trace it to an ancient Asian myth involving night spirits that feed upon the blood of sleeping victims. True vampire bats exist only in the American tropics and were not described in scientific literature until 1810. The first literary work in which a vampire transforms into a bat and flies at night in search of human victims was Bram Stoker's "Dracula," published in 1897.

But Why Owls?

Owls, too, are also generally associated with death and the underworld because of their nocturnal habits. The most widespread species, the Barn Owl, with its ghostly appearance and blood-curdling shriek, is considered a bad omen in cultures throughout the world. Several African cultures depict owls as spirits of the dead and as omens that foretell the death of anyone who sees them.

One notable exception is the Inuit belief that the Snowy Owl is a good omen. Perhaps the reason for this unusually positive view of an owl is that the Snowy Owl is a daytime creature. Diurnal activity is a necessity for this owl: it lives above the Arctic Circle where the period of breeding and peak prey abundance coincide with the endless daylight of Arctic summer.



Tarantula in burrow. © Xoque

OK, Maybe Spiders Really Are Scary To Some Folks!

Spiders are not an exclusively nocturnal group, either, though many species, especially those that hunt actively on the ground, favor darkness. These are the species most likely to hide in cupboards and clothing, which doesn't help their reputation. Perhaps the reason spiders inspire such negative responses is that they tend to be most numerous in the dark recesses of places like caves and old buildings. Also, despite the fact that most spiders are harmless to humans, poisonous species can be found on every continent.

Yet the current link between spiders and evil is not consistent with their usual treatment. Traditional myths repeatedly feature spiders as creators and omens of good fortune. The sheetweb spiders (family Linyphiidae) are known in Europe as "money spiders" because it's believed that an encounter with one means a person will soon receive some cash. Still, most haunted houses include spiders alongside the bats, owls, and witches, and these are meant to play upon our darkest fears—or should that be our fear of the dark?

Have you had any scary critter encounters this Halloween season? Or your own theory why folks find these critters so frightening?

We always love it when our readers share their stories!

KDWPT receives \$2.7 million grant for public access on private lands

On August 17, 2015, Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced that the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) awarded \$20 million in grants to 15 states to improve and increase wildlife habitat and public access for recreational opportunities on privately-owned and operated farm, ranch and forest lands. The Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism (KDWPT) received a \$2.7 million grant, the largest amount awarded to the 15 states. The grant is funded under the Voluntary Public Access and Habitat Incentives Program (VPA-HIP), which is administered by the USDA's Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS).

According to Jake George, KDWPT Private Land Programs Coordinator, the funds will be used over a three-year period to lease private land for hunting and fishing access and to help landowners improve habitat on those properties. Program promotion and outreach will occur this fall, with initial enrollment beginning late-spring to early-summer of 2016.

"We were very pleased to once again

be awarded VPA-HIP grant funding," George said. "Currently, KDWPT's Walk-in Hunting Access and FISH programs have more than 1 million acres of enrolled properties and agreements with nearly 2,300 Kansas landowners, providing numerous public hunting and fishing opportunities across the state. This additional funding will allow for further expansion and improvement of the already successful access and habitat management programs offered to Kansas landowners through KDWPT."

With respect to hunting, the focus for the funds will be on enrolling new or recently enrolled Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) properties. Participating landowners must be willing to allow public hunting access on the property for the duration of the CRP contract and enroll in wildlife-friendly conservation practices. Landowners are encouraged to enroll or re-enroll their properties in CRP between the continuous signup and the general CRP signup, which begins Dec. 1, 2015. KDWPT expects to add an estimated

40,000 to 60,000 new acres of quality access properties over the next three years.

KDWPT will also use the funds to improve fishing and paddle sports access, enrolling prime stream reaches, as well as quality privately-owned impoundments. Public access to these streams would provide a multitude of angling opportunities and open up recreational paddle sports access, which is limited in the state because most of the 10,000 miles of streams and rivers in Kansas are privately owned.

"This project with the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks, and Tourism shows how good partnerships and land management will lead to sustainable recreational and economic opportunities for years to come. Connecting outdoor recreation to private lands conservation is good for wildlife, people, and rural economies," said Eric B. Banks, state conservationist for the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

For more information on VPA-HIP and other FSA programs, visit www.fsa.usda.gov/vpa.

It's time to think treestand safety

By Marilyn Bentz
The Archery Wire

It's a fact: 82% of the people who have a treestand accident are not wearing a harness or any form of fall arrest. With that in mind, the solution seems pretty simple, right?

Why don't hunters using elevated stands wear a harness? Every manufactured treestand since 2004 has been sold with a full body harness ... and who hasn't purchased a new stand since then? There are more than a million sold every year!

The truth is, most elevated stand users - hunters like you and me - think an accident just won't happen to them. They are willing to play roulette with their lives. Treestand accidents (unlike fire-arm-related accidents) are not required to be reported to any clearinghouse or Federal or State entity. So who knows the actual statistics? No one! And if we did know, what would the magic number be to make you wear your harness ... 10%, 25%, 50%?

At what percentage would you say,

"Whoa...I better wear that harness because everyone is falling?" The point is, ANY number is too high when it comes to human life. And that doesn't take into account the negative impact to hunting when accidents are mentioned in the news. Especially when we know how to prevent the largest percentage of these accidents. Now, let's concentrate on that statistic.

Wearing a harness won't by itself keep you safe, but it certainly is one of the most important steps you can take along the way. Here are a few additional strategies:

- Stay attached to the tree from the time you leave the ground until you get back down. This may involve changing how you currently ascend and descend a tree. But I can tell you, once you use this technique you will feel so safe, you won't ever hunt from an elevated stand without doing it.

- Your harness probably came with a lineman's belt. If it didn't, you need to purchase one. A lineman's belt helps you maintain three points of contact when you are hanging a stand and when

you are ascending or descending your stand. Also, there is a technique with the lineman's belt that allows you to be doubly attached when getting into and out of your stand (which is when a significant number of accidents occur each year). You can also use your lineman's belt as a suspension trauma relief strap if you do happen to fall. Handy, yet simple gizmo that once you use it, you will wonder how you ever hunted without it. Who knows, you might also need it to help you drag that deer out of the woods!

- When you are out setting stands, do yourself a favor by selecting a couple sites for ground blinds. There are times you just don't need to be climbing, like frosty mornings, days when there is a sheet of ice on everything, mornings when you are exceedingly tired or maybe times when you are groggy from medication. By already having a ground blind set up or at least a spot in mind, you are giving yourself permission to not climb that tree when you really shouldn't be.

In bowhunter education one of our

Continued on Page 17

Ten Kansas deer test positive for CWD in 2014-2015

From Outdoor News Daily

A total of 640 deer were tested for chronic wasting disease (CWD) during the 2014-2015 seasons, and 10 of those were confirmed positive. Samples were obtained from deer killed by hunters in southcentral and southwest parts of Kansas and from sick and/or suspect deer observed in the eastern, northcentral and northwest parts of the state. The 10 confirmed positives included two mule deer, one from Rawlins County and one from Scott County; and eight whitetails including two from Decatur County and one from each of the following counties, Norton, Meade, Hodgeman, Pawnee, Kearny, and Gray.

CWD testing began in 1996 to help track the occurrence of CWD in the state's wild deer, and nearly 25,000 tissue samples have undergone lab analysis since. The first CWD occurrence documented in a wild Kansas deer was a whitetail doe killed by a hunter in 2005 in Cheyenne County. Seventy-four deer have tested positive since testing began, and most have occurred in northwest Kansas, specifically Decatur, Rawlins, Sheridan and Norton counties.

Although research is underway, there is currently no vaccine or other biological

method of preventing CWD. The only tool is to prevent the spread of CWD to new areas. Once the infective particle (an abnormal prion) is deposited into the environment – either through an infected carcass or from a live animal – it may exist for a decade or more, capable of infecting a healthy deer.

Despite the recent occurrences, the likelihood of finding CWD in a wild deer harvested in Kansas is small. That small likelihood decreases even more the farther from northwestern Kansas the deer live. In recent years, numerous cases of CWD have been documented in neighboring areas of Colorado, Nebraska and Wyoming.

While CWD is fatal to infected deer and elk, humans have never been known to contract the disease. CWD is a member of the group of diseases called transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (TSEs). Other diseases in this group include scrapie in sheep and goats, bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE or mad cow disease) in cattle, and Cruetzfeldt-Jacob disease in people.

CWD is a progressive, fatal disease that results in small holes developing in the brain, giving it a sponge-like appearance under the microscope. Decreased brain function causes the animal to display neurological signs such as depression, droopy head, staggering,

loss of appetite, and a lack of response to people. The continuing deterioration of the brain leads to other signs such as weight loss, drooling, rough coat, and excessive thirst. Caution is advised because of unknown factors associated with prion diseases, but no human health risks have been discovered where CWD occurs. Any sick deer or elk with signs listed above or exhibiting behaviors such as stumbling, holding the head at an odd angle, walking in circles, entangled in fences or staying near farm buildings for extended periods of time should be reported to the nearest KDWP office or the Emporia Research Office, 620-342-0658.

Hunters can help protect the health of the Kansas deer herd and slow CWD's spread by not introducing the disease to new areas in Kansas through disposal of deer carcass waste. Avoid transporting a deer carcass from the area where it was taken, especially from areas where CWD has been detected. If the carcass is transported, dispose of carcass waste by double-bagging it and taking it to a landfill. Landowners can also bury carcasses on their own property.

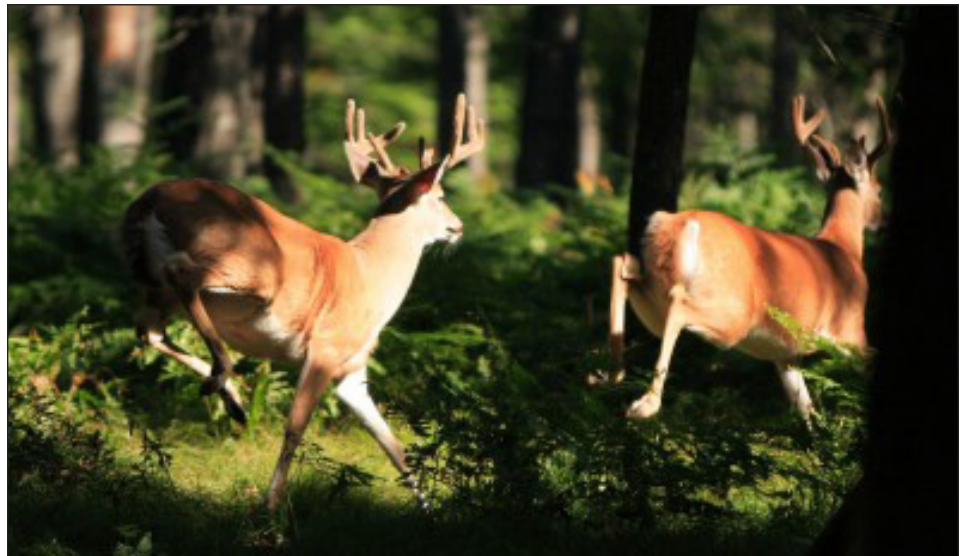
The Chronic Wasting Disease Alliance maintains an online clearinghouse of information about the disease. More information is also available at www.ksoutdoors.com.

Where are bucks hiding? New study reveals insights into buck behavior

By Daniel Xu
OutdoorHub

Any hunter knows that bucks behave differently as deer season drags on. Many inquisitive sportsmen will ask how large a buck's home range is, how far the animal will travel, whether older bucks are smarter than younger bucks, and whether that 10-pointer they've had their eye on all season really is sneaking into their food plot every night. A recently completed study by researchers at Auburn University, the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (DNR), and Brosnan Forest may shed some light on how bucks behave during hunting season.

The study, conducted by Auburn University graduate student Clint McCoy, involved capturing and collaring 40 male whitetail deer in Dorchester County's Brosnan Forest.



Deer tags help state agencies pay for wildlife research and conservation efforts. This study may teach you a thing or two about how bucks behave.

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USDA accepting more farmland for wildlife habitat in Kansas

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Kansas Farm Service Agency (FSA) Executive Director Adrian J. Polansky announced that an additional 55,000 acres of agricultural land in Kansas is eligible for funding for wildlife habitat restoration.

The initiative, known as State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE), is part of the USDA Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), a federally-funded voluntary program that for 30 years has assisted agricultural producers with the cost of restoring, enhancing and protecting certain grasses, shrubs and trees to improve water quality, prevent soil erosion and reduce loss of wildlife habitat. In return, USDA provides participants with rental payments and cost-share assistance. CRP has helped farmers and ranchers prevent more than 8 billion tons of soil from eroding, reduce nitrogen and phosphorous runoff relative to cropland by 95 and 85 percent respectively, and even sequester 43 million tons of greenhouse gases annually, equal to taking 8 million cars off the road.

In total, up to 400,000 acres of additional agricultural land will be eligible for wildlife habitat restoration funding through this SAFE announcement. The additional acres are part of an earlier CRP

wildlife habitat announcement made by Secretary Vilsack. Currently, more than 1 million acres, representing 98 projects, are enrolled in SAFE nationwide.

"This year marks the 30th anniversary of the Conservation Reserve Program, which has not only resulted in significant soil and water improvements, but also greater populations of waterfowl, game-birds and other wildlife native to the rural countryside," said Polansky. "Here in Kansas, an additional 55,000 acres in the Upland Game Bird and Lesser Prairie-Chicken SAFE projects are designed specifically to increase Ring Necked Pheasant, Northern Bobwhite Quail, Greater Prairie-Chicken and Lesser Prairie-Chicken habitats. Since establishment of the Upland Game Bird SAFE in 2008 and Lesser Prairie-Chicken SAFE in 2010, farmers and ranchers have enrolled 37,000 and 45,000 acres respectively, resulting in sustainable populations of prairie-chickens and upland game birds through one of the longest droughts in recent history. We hope to continue this progress by offering interested farmers and ranchers the opportunity to enroll another 15,000 acres in the Upland Game Bird SAFE project and 40,000 acres in the Lesser Prairie-Chicken SAFE project."

Interested producers can offer land for enrollment in SAFE and other CRP initiatives by contacting their local FSA county office at <http://offices.usda.gov>. To learn more the 30th anniversary of CRP and to review 30 success stories throughout the year, visit www.fsa.usda.gov/CRPis30 or follow Twitter at #CRPis30. And for more information about FSA conservation programs, visit www.fsa.usda.gov/conservation.

The Conservation Reserve Program was reauthorized by 2014 Farm Bill, which builds on historic economic gains in rural America over the past six years, while achieving meaningful reform and billions of dollars in savings for taxpayers. Since enactment, USDA has made significant progress to implement each provision of this critical legislation, including providing disaster relief to farmers and ranchers; strengthening risk management tools; expanding access to rural credit; funding critical research; establishing innovative public-private conservation partnerships; developing new markets for rural-made products; and investing in infrastructure, housing and community facilities to help improve quality of life in rural America. For more information, visit www.usda.gov/farm-bill.

BUCKS

Continued from Page 13

The captured bucks were separated into four age groups, with approximately 10 in each class from 1.5 years to 4.5 years old. These animals were equipped with GPS units that recorded their location approximately every half hour, and after three years of running the study, researchers were able to draw up a comprehensive map of where the collared bucks came and went inside the forest.

As it turned out, the average range of the bucks involved in the study was just 350 acres. Researchers said this number should not be indicative of the species overall, but rather is caused by the high quality of habitat within Brosnan Forest.

"Also, as you would expect, buck movements increased from an average of about 2.5 miles a day during the pre-rut to about 3.5 miles per day during the rut," McCoy said in a press release. "So even with relatively small

home ranges bucks still moved considerable distances on a daily basis related to breeding."

Surprisingly, the study found nothing to prove that older bucks were "smarter" with their movement compared to younger males. Despite having more experience, older deer had about the same home ranges and exhibited the same behavior as their younger counterparts.

"To [test] this we created 'harvest zones' around each deer stand on the property with a buffer representing the area around each stand in which a hunter could see and harvest a deer," McCoy explained. "Using daytime GPS locations (since hunting does not take place at night), we found that all bucks, regardless of age, responded negatively to increased hunting pressure. By late November the chances of a buck entering the harvest zone during daylight hours were only a quarter of what they were when the season started."

Bucks are also smart enough to take advantage of nighttime.

"On the other hand," continued McCoy, "bucks of all ages actually increased their use of food plots as the season progressed, however, this increase in use was at night. Finally, we looked at the question of how long after a stand is hunted do bucks continue to show avoidance for the area. Based on the data it appears that buck avoidance of a stand lasts about 3 days following hunting. However, even after 5 days they were not as likely to visit the site as they were before the stand was ever hunted. The bottom line is that the more a stand is hunted the less likely bucks are to pass through the area during daytime. For hunters it is best to be unpredictable when choosing your hunting locations," said McCoy.

It may also be wise to stake out bedding areas and well-traveled hotspots. Bucks are actually fairly clumped together during the daytime, while at night they spread out to visit food plots and agricultural fields.

What kind of patterns have you noticed during deer season?

New report: Clean Power Plan key to protect drinking water, wildlife habitat

America's waterways are already being stressed by climate change and President Obama's Clean Power Plan is urgently needed to protect them, according to a new report by the National Wildlife Federation. *Wildlife in Hot Water: America's Waterways and Climate Change* takes a comprehensive look at the science connecting global warming with changes to our lakes, rivers, streams and oceans like warmer water and more extreme weather, detailing impacts on the fish, wildlife and communities that depend on them.

"Hunters, anglers and outdoor enthusiasts are experiencing firsthand how climate impacts are threatening wildlife from coast to coast — fueling warming water in trout and salmon runs, toxic algae in Lake Erie and Florida, record droughts in Texas, California and Florida, and extreme storms along the East Coast," said Collin O'Mara, president and chief executive officer of the National Wildlife Federation. "The Clean Power Plan's flexible, achievable, science-based rules represent real progress for protecting fish, wildlife and America's outdoor heritage from the worst impacts of climate change."

Wildlife in Hot Water provides concrete examples of the bodies of waters that are suffering due to climate change, worsening wildlife habitat and threatening the drinking water for millions of Americans:

•**Toxic Algae Outbreaks:** Lake Erie is once again suffering toxic algae outbreaks this summer fueled by increasing runoff from extreme weather events and warming water, one year after an outbreak shut down drinking water to nearly half a million people. To the west, scientists are directly connecting the dots between a massive,

wildlife-killing Pacific algae outbreak and record-breaking warm water.

•**Warming Water and Drought:** The Pacific Northwest's salmon have been pushed to the brink by low water flows and warm temperatures, with the Yellowstone River's trout also stressed. "As much as drought across the West is stressing people, it's even more devastating for fish and wildlife, which can't plan ahead or get water from far-away places," says Doug Inkley, NWF senior scientist and lead author of the report. "They need our help."

•**Habitat Loss:** Among the most productive habitats on Earth, coastal wetlands and estuaries are now threatened with the rise of sea levels, more intense and frequent coastal storms and altered runoff. In the central U.S., land loss and drought are threatening the "prairie pothole" region (Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota and Iowa). More than 300 migratory bird species nest or migrate through this area, facing the challenge of finding suitable areas to nest and feed.

"I have been forced to close Montana's finest cold water fisheries to protect trout from excessive water temperatures and catastrophically low water flows. Climate change affects our family's business and threatens one of the most sustainable, unique parts of Montana's economy," said Dan Vermillion, a fly-fishing guide and chair of Montana's Fish and Wildlife Commission. Vermillion took President Obama fly-fishing in 2009.

Equally importantly, it threatens one of the most important gifts we can give our children — cold, bountiful waters traversing valleys of healthy forests and grasslands. We must address the changing climate before it

is too late. Future generations deserve nothing less."

The first five months of 2015 were the hottest on record, on pace to surpass 2014's record year. A recent study published in the journal *Nature* finds an increasingly visible link between global warming and extreme weather, with warmer temperatures adding fuel to superstorms like Sandy.

Wildlife in Hot Water details the steps needed to confront climate change and protect our waterways:

1. Support the Clean Power Plan.

President Obama's Clean Power Plan sets first-ever national limits on carbon pollution from power plants. "The Clean Power Plan's flexible, achievable and science-based approach represent real progress for protecting wildlife and America's outdoor heritage from the worst impacts of climate change," said O'Mara.

2. Say no to new dirty energy projects.

Oil, gas and coal development destroy, degrade, pollute and fragment habitat. Science is telling us that we must slow and stop the expansion of new dirty energy reserves—such as the massive coal fields in North America and the tar sands in Canada—which threaten important habitat and would lock in more carbon pollution for decades to come.

3. **Expand clean, wildlife-friendly energy and improve energy efficiency.** Wind (on land and offshore), solar, sustainable bioenergy and geothermal energy can help protect wildlife, habitat and our water from climate change.

4. **Maintain fully restored Clean Water Act protections.** In addition to curbing

Continued on Page 17

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Sportsmen's coalition defends federal fracking rule

Time to modernize 30-year-old rule to protect fish, wildlife, water

From The Fishing Wire

As a new federal fracking rule continues to come under fire, a national sportsmen's coalition is defending it as a commonsense update of 30-year-old regulations aimed at safeguarding fish, wildlife, water and other valuable resources on our public lands.

The Sportsmen for Responsible Energy Development coalition reacted July 15th to criticisms aired during a hearing of the House Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources. The updated regulations for national public lands, released by the Bureau of Land Management in March, are intended to complement state regulations to ensure that fracking fluids and wastewater are handled safely; well casings are strong enough to stand the high-pressure fluids; and that companies disclose what chemicals they're injecting underground.

"As the technology has advanced, where and how fracking occurs has changed dramatically in just the last 10 years while rules to safeguard our water and wildlife have not been updated for more than three decades. The BLM's new rule is a reasonable upgrade to ensure there's a minimum standard for national public lands that are managed for a number of uses, including hunting, fishing and recreation," said Kate

Zimmerman, the National Wildlife Federation's public lands policy director.

Corey Fisher, the energy team lead for Trout Unlimited, noted that a recent Environment Protection Agency study of existing data on fracking revealed gaps in information, including the frequency of on-site spills, but did point out potential vulnerabilities to water sources such as inadequate well casings and spills of fracking wastewater.

"The BLM's new fracking rule includes important changes to protect water quality, such as robust well-casing standards and the requirement that wastewater be stored in tanks rather than pits, which are more vulnerable to leaks and spills," Fisher said. "These changes help address potential impacts to water resources on public lands. The EPA study makes clear the science hasn't kept pace with the scale and scope of hydraulic fracturing. More study is needed, additional monitoring is necessary, and documented impacts necessitate a cautious approach and risk management that emphasizes avoiding impacts altogether."

The BLM has said that where rules are at least as strong as the federal regulations, states can request a variance and companies can carry on as they have. The rule also applies to tribal lands. However, the fracking

rule is on hold as a federal judge considers a challenge to the rule by the states of Colorado, Wyoming, North Dakota, Utah and trade associations.

"The SFRED coalition appreciates that some of the biggest oil- and gas-producing states have taken steps to strengthen their rules and that many companies are responsible operators. However, it takes just one bad operator to seriously damage an aquifer or foul waterways that are vital to wildlife and communities," said Ed Arnett senior scientist for the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership. "The federal fracking rule is a crucial safeguard in states without their own rules—about half the 32 states with drilling on public lands, according to the BLM. It is important that we have a minimum national standard for lands that are managed for multiple purposes and are, in fact, owned by all Americans."

Sportsmen for Responsible Energy Development is a coalition of more than 1500 businesses, organizations and individuals dedicated to conserving irreplaceable habitats so future generations can hunt and fish on public lands. The coalition is led by Trout Unlimited, the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership and the National Wildlife Federation.

POWER

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carbon pollution, the Environmental Protection Agency recently finalized a new rule restoring Clean Water Act protections to at least 60 percent of America's streams and 20 million acres of wetlands nationwide.

The National Wildlife Federation has issued a series of detailed reports on how climate change is hurting America's wildlife and outdoor heritage:

- *Wildlife in a Warming World: Confronting the Climate Crisis*
- *Shifting Skies: Migratory Birds in a Warming World*
- *Swimming Upstream: Freshwater Fish in a Warming World*
- *Nowhere to Run: Big Game Wildlife in a Warming World*
- *Wildlife Legacy: Climate Change and the Next Generation of Wildlife*
- *Ticked Off: America's Outdoor Experience and Climate Change*

Read the full report at NWF.org/WildlifeInHotWater and visit the National Wildlife Federation media center at NWF.org/News.

TREESTAND

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lessons is to "plan for the hunt and hunt with a plan." That doesn't just mean arranging the plane ticket or making sure you have the right camo! That also means you have to plan to be safe; safety isn't an accident.

Let someone know where you are going, what time to expect your return, take along emergency notification devices (cell phone, PLB, radios) in case you encounter have a problem. Plan a "practice" day with your buddies where you get out the type of stands you will be hunting from. With assistance close by, practice at ground level all the techniques you will be using in the woods including putting on that harness! This way there won't be any surprises when you are 12 feet in the air not wearing your harness or you discover the top and bottom of your climber isn't attached to one another!

Being an elevated stand accident statistic is not cool. All accidents reflect poorly on our sport as well as on your better judgment. Do yourself, your sport and your buddies a favor this year: Hunt Smart and Hunt Safe.

Kansans can help grow butterfly-friendly plants in pollination project

By Kelly Meyerhofer
The Wichita Eagle

The White House's pollination project, which will cover 200 miles from northern Minnesota to Texas with native plants to help monarch butterflies, will include large parts of Kansas, said Orley "Chip" Taylor, a professor of ecology and evolutionary biology at the University of Kansas.

Kansans can help by growing a variety of pollinator-friendly plants that bloom at different times of the year. Scott Vogt, executive director of Dyck Arboretum of the Plains in Hesston, recommended liatris and black-eyed susans for the summer and asters in the fall.

Milkweed plants are by far the best option for monarch conversation, though

some gardeners shy away from the aggressive plant.

There are a few types, like butterfly milkweed, that do not form colonies and can be incorporated into a formal bed. This type of milkweed can serve as a food source for an adult monarch.

But the more aggressive varieties of milkweed – Common, Sullivan's and Showy – grow wider leaves that caterpillars prefer to munch. Vogt advises people to plant these in an informal area of the yard where "they can do their own thing."

Milkweed planting season is over right now, but begins again in early September. Fall planting actually gives milkweed a jump, Vogt said. Milkweed planted in the spring can struggle from a barely established root system, he said.

The plant is seasonally sold at some

garden stores, including Dyck Arboretum, for \$3 to \$5 depending on the size of the pot.

Monarch Watch – a national conservation group headed by Taylor, the KU butterfly biologist – is offering free milkweed plants for people willing to cover the cost of shipping. Monsanto is funding the cost of 100,000 plants this summer and another 100,000 next summer.

"We are looking for people who are interested in restoring the habitat," Taylor said. "Not for your garden, not for retail, but for restoration."

A minimum order is a flat with 32 plugs. A shipment of 50 plugs is estimated to cost between \$10 and \$15.

To learn more, visit www.monarchwatch.org or call 785-864-4441.

Monarch Butterflies Migrating Now Aren't the Ones You Saw Last Spring

By eNature

Fall is just around the corner throughout most of North America.

You've probably noticed that your local birds are preparing for it — and so are many of our butterflies.

Monarch butterflies are famous for their annual migrations. Some of these insects travel thousands of miles each fall — an astonishing distance for such fragile creatures.

Yet few people realize that the Monarchs we see in the spring are not necessarily the same ones that fluttered past in the fall.

Beginning in late September, the skies along the Gulf Coast of Texas slowly become filled with meandering groups of Monarchs. Their flight, while not hurried, is purposeful, moving southwest toward a small forest in the highlands of Central Mexico. These butterflies travel from southern Canada and the northern United States at a rate of approximately 50 miles per day. They'll spend the winter in a few small groves of evergreen trees, with each grove containing as many as 20 million butterflies. Sheltered from the wind and snow, the butterflies conserve energy, for they still have a lot of work ahead of them.

The Monarchs become active again in February. Mating begins, and the air fills



Monarch butterflies overwinter in several isolated mountain forests in central Mexico. Some accounts describe so many Monarchs that observers can actually hear the sound of their wings moving. © Derek Ramsey, CCL

with swirling masses of copulating pairs. The first warm days of late March trigger their northward flight. A close look at these butterflies, now eight months old, reveals that their wings are faded and tattered. Still, the Monarchs fan out across the southern United States, looking for Milkweed plants on which to deposit their eggs.

Four days later, the eggs hatch, producing small caterpillars that immediately begin to feed on the Milkweed leaves. Ten



Common Milkweed. © Kevin Adams

to fifteen days later, each caterpillar stops feeding and forms its chrysalis — a beautiful soft green jewel flecked with gold. In another ten to fifteen days the chrysalis splits open, and a new Monarch emerges.

This generation of butterflies mates, lays eggs, and dies within the span of a

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Federal pollinator plan needs 1 billion milkweed plants for monarch butterflies

By Josephine Marcotty
Minneapolis Star Tribune

Starting as soon as this fall, America's midsection could begin to look strikingly different to a monarch butterfly fluttering south for the winter.

Oceans of corn would be dotted with islands of native plants. Homeowners would have fewer lawns – and a lot less mowing. Roadsides would grow thick with grasses and flowers. And more than a billion unruly milkweed plants would pop up along a 200-mile-wide corridor along I-35 from Minnesota to Kansas to Texas.

That's the ambitious vision buried in a national pollinator plan released by the White House – an epic attempt to save the gaudy symbol of the prairie from its steady slide toward the Endangered Species list. The key is milkweed, the one and only food source for monarch caterpillars, which has all but disappeared from Midwestern landscapes, thanks largely to GMO crops and the widespread use of Roundup.

But if it succeeds, the plan would rescue pollinators considered vital to a healthy environment, and in five years the number of monarchs that travel 3,000 miles every year from the Midwest to the mountains of Mexico and then back again, would increase by nearly tenfold.

"We are going to get the most bang for our buck by concentrating on the prairie corridor," said Karen Oberhauser, a University of Minnesota professor and one of two key scientists advising federal agencies on the monarch plan.

And monarchs won't be the only ones to benefit.

"It's a flagship species for a lot of other critters that will enjoy that habitat," said Tom Melius, director of the Midwest region for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service,

which is leading the monarch restoration plan. That includes grassland birds, which are also disappearing from the landscape, and pollinators of all kinds, he said.

Monarchs earned a place in the White House pollinator plan in part because they are wildly popular, and because they have an extraordinary migration that makes it easy to measure their shocking decline.

In January this year, monarchs covered about 2.8 acres of trees in Mexico, their primary overwintering site, where they droop from the branches in great fluttering clusters through the cold months.

That's better than the all-time low of 33 million butterflies spread over 1.6 acres, in 2014. But their numbers have crashed since the mid-1990s, when they covered 30 to 40 acres of acres of trees every winter.

The trend is so alarming that last year a number of environmental groups petitioned the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to put the butterfly on the federal Endangered Species list, which the agency is now considering.

Scientists have cited a number of reasons for the decline. For a time, logging in and around Mexico's mountain forests deprived them of critical winter protection, but that's been largely stopped. Now their numbers are so low that there's room to spare in the mountains.

Climate change and the severe weather events it brings, like drought and flooding, can wipe out the milkweed plants that monarchs need to lay their eggs and the flowers they need for nectar throughout their migration route.

Pesticides may also play a part – chief among them a class known as neonicotinoids that are now embedded in virtually all row crops planted across millions of acres. A recent study by the U.S. Department of Agriculture found that milkweed growing near farm fields absorbed the pesticide, most

likely from the soil. And 50 to 80 percent of the monarch eggs on contaminated plants died before or soon after hatching.

But the biggest reason, scientists say, is that between Duluth and Texas there's just not much milkweed anymore.

Farmers used to pull the plant out with machines when they cultivated the rows, and year after year it would simply grow back. But in the 1990s, Monsanto revolutionized Midwestern agriculture with seeds resistant to the herbicide Roundup, and now the widespread use of that combination means that most row crops are, for the most part, completely bare of all weeds.

A 2012 study by Oberhauser and John Pleasants, a scientist at Iowa State University, showed the consequences for monarchs: Half the milkweed in the corn belt disappeared between 1999 and 2010.

The number of eggs that monarchs produce took an even greater hit, declining 81 percent during that same period. Turns out, the milkweed plants inside farm fields were more important to the butterflies than those outside.

The monarchs laid four times as many eggs on milkweed plants in farm field plants than on those growing in pastures or roadsides. The scientists weren't sure why – maybe the eggs were better protected from predators, or perhaps the farm fertilizers made the plants more nutritious.

Since then, the loss of milkweed has only accelerated as row crop agriculture has continued to expand across the country. Between 2008 and 2012, another 5.7 million acres of grasslands were converted to row crops, primarily corn, according to a University of Wisconsin study published earlier this year.

And that, said Pleasants, means the loss of about another 53 million milkweed plants per year.

MONARCHS

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few weeks. During this time it moves north, following the progress of spring and the emergence of Milkweed.

By the end of summer, two more of these short-lived generations will have repeated the process, ultimately coming to inhabit the Milkweed patches in the far north latitudes.

Thus the Monarchs born in the North-

east and Canada in September are the great great grandchildren of the last Monarchs to inhabit the area. These are the ones that will head to Mexico. They're significantly larger than the three generations that preceded them and still sexually immature. Rather than mate and lay eggs, they seek out nectar-producing flowers. The nectar serves two purposes: some of it fuels the southward migration and some of it is converted to fat reserves that sustain the butterflies through the winter.

This incredible annual cycle applies

to all Monarchs east of the Rockies. The populations in the West follow a similar pattern, though their migratory path is westward, from the Great Basin to overwintering sites along the Pacific Coast.

Since 1992 MonarchWatch has been carefully tracking Monarch Butterflies as they migrate. Much of their data comes from the work of volunteers who tag and track the butterflies. They can always use more helpers....

Are you seeing butterflies in your neighborhood?

Six ways you can help the pollinators

By **Scott Vogt**
Dyck Arboretum

Did you know that National Pollinator Week was June 15 – June 21? Whether it is with bees, butterflies, birds or beetles, pollinators are extremely important and provide valuable services.

Three-fourths of the world's flowering plants depend on pollinators to reproduce. Think of all the food crop production that would not be possible without the help of pollinators. We rely on these small, seemingly insignificant pollinators for the food we eat. If they are so valuable, then they are certainly worth recognizing and saving.

Here are six ways you can help increase declining populations of pollinators, including bees and monarchs:

1. Plant Pollinator-Friendly Plants

Certainly, milkweeds are the best wildflowers for attracting monarchs to your yard. We saw it this morning as we walked the arboretum – we found three caterpillars munching on the milkweed leaves. Not only that, but every blooming wildflower was covered with a host of insects. The wildflowers are the buffet. (Peruse our native plant list and sample landscape

designs for some inspiration.)

2. Plant for a Succession of Bloom

I recommend planting wildflowers that bloom at different times of the year. A mixture of wildflowers coming into bloom and going out of bloom throughout the year provides a ready food source. This approach mimics the natural prairie and the changing seasons.

3. Provide Habitat

Layer trees and shrubs along with wildflowers and grasses. These plants provide shelter from the wind along with nesting sites and food for birds, butterflies and bees. Even a small garden can have a tremendous impact.

4. Provide Water

We all need water for survival. Pollinators need it too. A clean source of water such as a birdbath, basin, or hollow stone is enough water for pollinators. These features also provide landing spots so that pollinators have a perch. Here are some great plants to complement your water feature.

5. Reduce Chemicals

There is growing research on the detrimental effects chemicals have on pollinators. Any time we can reduce or eliminate

the use of chemicals in the landscape, we are impacting wildlife in a positive way. Allow insects to control unwanted pests. Be willing to accept a few damaged plants, knowing that by not spraying you are saving much more in the long run.

6. Learn About the Plight of Endangered Pollinators

There is so much to learn about each type of pollinator. What do they need? When are they out in the garden? What do they need to complete their lifecycle? Where do they migrate or how do they overwinter? We have so much to learn about these important insects. (One good resource for this is this book, by Heather Holm, which we often carry in our gift shop. And, of course, MonarchWatch.org is a great resource.)

When it comes to supporting the life cycle of pollinators, you can be part of the solution. Native wildflowers are the best option to help them prosper. You will be amazed when you introduce just a handful of wildflowers to your landscape. If you plant them, pollinators will come.

See more at: <http://dyckarboretum.org/six-ways-can-help-pollinators/#sthash.IuSooNMB.dpuf>

KID'S WILDLIFE FRIENDS

How does climate change impact migration and hibernation?

From Earth Gauge

Different climatic seasons are experienced throughout the year because the amount of sunlight changes as the Earth revolves around the Sun. Animals and plants have adapted their life cycles (birth, growth, reproduction, etc.) to the seasons and resource availability. Some animals have developed behaviors to cope with winter conditions, conserve energy and deal with food scarcity by migrating to a warmer climate or hibernating. Both migration and hibernation are sensitive to weather and climate, and climate change poses a challenge to migratory and hibernating species.

Climate change can alter the length of climatic seasons, which affects resource availability (food, shelter, etc.) and the amount of time animals have to prepare for subsequent seasons and life stages.

Climate change can alter the cues used by species to regulate their behavior.



Yellow-bellied marmot, courtesy of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

For example, yellow-bellied marmots rely on air temperature as a cue to come out from hibernation. With warming temperatures, they are emerging earlier than usual.

Climate change can disrupt the timing and synchrony between animal behaviors or life cycles and resource availability.

For example, warmer sea temperatures affect the life cycle of small animals and plants that live in the ocean and are eaten by fish. This creates a mismatch between Atlantic cod migration and food availability. Food scarcity when cod arrive at specific spawning sites has lowered the number of cod reaching adulthood.

Climate change can affect the distribution of species due to warming temperatures. Analyses performed by the National Audubon Society have shown that over the last four decades, 58 percent of birds have shifted their distribution northward into higher latitudes.

Migration usually occurs between breeding and non-breeding areas, utilizing a network of habitats to travel back and forth. Migrating species need to prepare to cross ecological barriers such as deserts, mountains and oceans, which requires high amounts of quality food in

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Senator Jerry Moran requests Lesser Prairie-chicken be removed from 'threatened' list

Congressional delegation has tried several times to end listing

By Justin Wingerter
Topeka Capitol-Journal

Kansas politicians have tried several legislative tactics to end the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's listing of the lesser prairie-chicken as "threatened."

On Tuesday, August 4, Sen. Jerry Moran tried asking nicely.

In a letter to USFWS Director Dan Ashe, the freshman Republican senator asked that the bird be removed from its listing under the Endangered Species Act in the wake of a recent report suggesting the species is rebounding.

A recent aerial survey by the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Association found an estimated 29,162 lesser prairie-chickens, an increase from 19,643 in 2013 and 23,363 in 2014. The Fish and Wildlife Service has said the "threatened" listing last year was the result of a steep decline in the bird's population in recent years. Five states are home to the lesser

prairie-chicken: Kansas, Colorado, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas.

"Strong evidence exists indicating the dramatic rise in the lesser prairie-chicken's population can primarily be accounted for by increased rainfall in the habitat area," Moran wrote.

Moran also touted conservation efforts by local officials in the lesser prairie-chicken's habitat area for the population rebound.

"These locally driven plans were put in place with landowner input to help conserve the bird in a sensible, voluntary manner," the senator wrote. "Unfortunately, the plans were not given the opportunity to prove effectiveness because the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service stepped in to list the bird as a threatened species."

Moran asked Ashe whether the USFWS intends to reconsider its listing of the lesser prairie-chicken after seeing the improved population figures. He also asked if the agency recognizes the role the drought of

2013 and 2014 had on the bird's population.

The Kansas congressional delegation has tried several times to pass amendments or bills barring enforcement of the "threatened" listing.

Most recently, the state's U.S. House delegation helped pass an amendment to the Department of the Interior, Environment and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, H.R. 2822, on July 7. That bill could be voted on after Congress returns from its August recess in early September.

In June the Senate Appropriations Committee approved a Moran amendment that would bar enforcement of the listing, attaching it to a \$30 billion measure to fund the Department of the Interior and Environmental Protection Agency.

A similar amendment offered by Moran was rejected in January when the senator attempted to attach it to legislation to expedite construction of the Keystone XL pipeline.

Butterfly Garden Basics

From Nebraska Wildlife Federation

Butterflies are fun visitors to any backyard wildlife area, and with a few simple measures just about everyone can provide a place for them in their yard or patio.

An ideal location would be a sunny spot protected from strong winds by shrubs, evergreens or buildings, but other locations will also work.

Food: Butterflies generally love to drink nectar, so plant plenty of plants with nectar-rich flowers. Plant flowers that bloom at various times throughout the growing season. Different species prefer different flower colors, so plant a mixture.

For example, mixing Blue Wild Indigo (blue, spring blooms), Wild Bergamot (lavender, summer blooms), Stiff Goldenrod (yellow, late summer blooms), Partridge Pea (yellow, summer-fall blooms) and Dotted Gayfeather (purple, fall blooms) will provide a mix of nectar and colors throughout the growing season.

In their caterpillar stage, butterflies often need a specific kind of host plant for food.

Monarch butterflies lay their eggs on milkweed plants. Three native Kansas milkweeds are Common Milkweed, Butterfly Milkweed and Swamp Milkweed, and all three also provide nectar. Be sure to include them in your planting.

Violets provide a host plant for some

fritillary butterflies. Purple and Pale Coneflowers and Purple Prairie Clover are all host plants and nectar sources.

If you have an herb garden, plant extras for butterfly caterpillars. Dill, chive, mint, parsley, and fennel all serve as host to some butterflies.

Water: Butterflies prefer mud flats to open water. Provide a mud flat of fill a low dish with soil and sand and keep it wet to provide water for many kinds of butterflies.

Management: Pesticides and herbicides can kill butterflies at any stage of their life. Don't use garden chemicals in your butterfly garden or yard, and avoid natural pesticides like Bt. Butterflies and other pollinators will thank you!

CLIMATE

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a short period of time. If they are not able to prepare, they may arrive in poor physical condition, affecting their survival and ability to reproduce. Climate change is

changing weather factors such as temperature and precipitation, and increasing the frequency of some extreme weather events. This increases the risk for migratory species that depend on food availability and suitable habitats in multiple locations. Hibernating species are being affected by warming temperatures to the extent that some species are spending

less time hibernating by delaying the onset of hibernation or emerging earlier; being abnormally active can force them to use stored energy before they can replace it. In other cases, species such as the Columbian ground squirrel delayed emergence from hibernation due to late spring snow falls, reducing the time they have to prepare for the next winter.

Lesser Prairie-chicken numbers increase again

The Lesser Prairie-chicken population increased approximately 25 percent from 2014 to 2015, according to the recent range-wide aerial survey. Wildlife biologists with the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (WAFWA) attribute the increase to abundant spring rainfall and ongoing efforts associated with the Lesser Prairie-chicken Range-wide Conservation Plan.

Increases were observed in three of the four ecoregions across five states – Colorado, Kansas, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas – where the species exists. The Sand-sage Prairie Region of southeast Colorado showed the biggest gain – approximately 75 percent from a year ago. The Mixed Grass Prairie Region of the northeast Panhandle of Texas, northwest Oklahoma and southcentral Kansas showed an increase of approximately 30 percent, and the population in the Shortgrass Prairie Region of northwest Kansas grew by about 27 percent.

“An overall 25 percent increase in the Lesser Prairie-chicken population across its five-state range is welcome news,” said Ross Melinchuk, chairman of WAFWA’s Lesser Prairie-chicken Initiative Council.

“This year’s increase, on the heels of last year’s 20 percent increase, is evidence of the species’ ability to rapidly recover from downturns resulting from drought and poor range condition. With continued improvement in nesting and brood-rearing habitat associated with abundant rainfall and private landowner actions to conserve and restore their habitat, we are optimistic the species will recover to historic population levels.”

The only ecoregion with a continued downward population trend is the Shinnery Oak ecoregion of eastern New Mexico and western Texas. This ecoregion is still recovering from a prolonged period of drought. However, recent roadside surveys indicate Lesser Prairie-chickens in this area are starting to respond to rainfall that occurred in late 2014 and early 2015.

The nonprofit WAFWA is coordinating efforts established under the Lesser Prairie-chicken Range-wide Conservation Plan, which is an initiative designed to engage private landowners and industry to conserve Lesser Prairie-chicken habitat and minimize impacts to the species. To date, industry partners have committed \$46 million in

enrollment fees to pay for mitigation actions, and landowners across the range have agreed to conserve nearly 100,000 acres of habitat through 10-year and permanent conservation agreements. About 180 oil, gas, wind, electric and pipeline companies have enrolled about 11 million acres across the five states. Enrollment fees are deposited with WAFWA and administered to fund conservation efforts by private landowners to benefit the Lesser Prairie-chicken.

The Lesser Prairie-chicken was listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act in May 2014. The final listing rule allowed private industry to develop and impact habitat if enrolled and participating in WAFWA’s range-wide plan, and it also provided various options that landowners can use to receive similar coverage. The range-wide plan provides incentives for landowners and industry to protect and restore habitat, which is important because they control much of the species’ range.

More information, including the range-wide plan, is available on the WAFWA website at www.wafwa.org.

KID'S WILDLIFE FRIENDS

Watching hawks makes for a perfect fall day— and here's where to see them

By eNature

Every fall, millions of birds fly south to spend the winter in sunny places with mild climates and plentiful food.

Most smaller birds migrate under the cover of darkness, stopping to fuel up on insects or seeds by day and using the stars to guide them at night.

Hawks, by contrast, are diurnal migrants; they depend on currents of rising warm air to lift them to high altitudes where they glide on their broad wings without flapping, thereby conserving energy.

During these flights, hawks use their keen eyesight to recognize landmarks, follow landforms that provide rising thermals, and steer a course to their ancestral wintering grounds. In some places these migrating hawks gather in huge numbers, and people gather to watch them with binoculars and data sheets in the phenomenon known as the hawkwatch.

A Special Kind of Bird Watching

Counting hawks during migration is more than a competitive pursuit for list-oriented birders. The data collected at hawkwatches



Cooper's Hawk

helps experts monitor the health of various ecosystems. Because hawks are top predators—that is, they occupy the top of the food chain—they're very sensitive to changes that affect prey species. Comparing hawk



Northern Goshawk

numbers from year to year reveals trends that offer insight into the well-being of the

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By the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition

This month brought increased attention to the Clean Water Act (“the Act”), with a court decision on information collection and large animal feeding operations, which are regulated under the Act, as well as a Senate subcommittee hearing on the Act’s “waters of the U.S.” finalized rule, which went into effect at the end of August.

The Act prohibits the discharge of any pollutants, including dredged or fill material, into “navigable waters” unless the activity is done in compliance with an authorized permitting scheme. In an attempt to limit these pollutants, the Act authorizes two permitting programs: the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permitting program, which is particularly relevant, though unfortunately not well enforced, for concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs), and the Section 404 permitting program, which allows the discharge of dredge and fill material into waters, if done as part of certain permitted activities. EPA and the Army Corps of Engineers (the Corps) collaboratively carry out the Section 404 permitting program.

While this week’s Senate hearing addressed the revised rule that only recently went into effect, the court decision on CAFO reporting returns our attention to a proposed rule that the EPA withdrew over three years ago.

Court Backs EPA Decision on CAFO Reporting

On Wednesday, September 30, a federal court backed the EPA’s decision to withdraw a rule that would have required concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs) to report the discharge of manure and other pollutants to the EPA. This basic information is necessary for the EPA to ensure that CAFOs properly handle their waste and avoid water pollution.

When Congress enacted the Clean Water Act in 1972, it included CAFOs as point sources of pollution subject to EPA regulation. CAFO waste contains high nutrient levels, as well as heavy metals, antibiotics, pathogens, and growth hormones. However, the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) found that no federal agency, including the EPA, has consistent, reliable data on CAFOs, thus presenting an inherent challenge for efforts to regulate and minimize pollution from CAFO waste.

Despite such a clear need for increased data collection, the EPA withdrew the reporting rule in 2012 and concluded that it could simply rely on information on CAFOs from the states and other sources. Several environmental groups filed a lawsuit against the EPA after it withdrew

Clean Water Act

the rule, and they argued that the agency was obligated to issue the measure.

In its opinion this week, the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia found that the EPA’s decision to withdraw the rule and instead collect information on CAFOs from publicly available sources did not violate the Administrative Procedure Act. The court said that existing sources yield “much” of the information that the EPA needs.

The proposed reporting rules would have provided the benefit of collecting data from unpermitted CAFOs, which present an even more difficult challenge when tracking and monitoring water pollution with existing data sources.

Many CAFOs not only operate “under the radar” without sufficient data collection in place, but they may also receive cost share assistance from the taxpayer through the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)’s Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS)’s Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) for animal waste storage and treatment facilities.

The National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition (NSAC) continues to advocate that EPA and USDA both have critical roles to play in limiting CAFO pollution, but current policies in both agencies fall far short of the mark.

Senate Hearing Ignores Clean Water Act Improvements

While Wednesday’s ruling further complicates pollutant regulation under the Clean Water Act, the newly revised definition of “waters of the U.S.” aims to clarify previous confusion regarding which waterways are considered jurisdictional, and which activities are consequently subject to EPA and the Corps’ permitting requirements.

Many members of Congress, as well as some agricultural groups, have voiced strong opposition to the revised definition throughout the rulemaking process, and although the new rule is now finalized and in effect, this week’s Senate Environment and Public Works subcommittee hearing brought much of the same vocal opposition that we have heard for the past few years.

As of late August, the new rules are in effect in the 37 states, while 13 states were granted a temporary injunction by a federal district court in North Dakota. The Clean Water Act still applies in the 13 injunction states, but for now the older, murkier definition of “waters of the U.S.” applies for permitting in these states.

On Wednesday, September 30, Assistant Secretary of the Army, Jo-Ellen Darcy, defended her decision to approve the rule at a Fisheries, Water, and Wildlife Subcommittee hearing, entitled “Oversight of the Army Corps of Engineers’ Participation in the Development

of the New Regulatory Definition of ‘Waters of the United States.’” The bulk of the hearing not only failed to acknowledge the clarity the new rule provides, but it also ignored the process through which the Agencies listened to the concerns of the public, especially the agricultural community, and responded with significant improvements to the rule.

In her opening statement, Assistant Secretary Darcy referred to these improvements, as she explained that “the final rule reflects many changes as a result of listening to the public and carefully considering the interests of all Americans, including America’s farmers and ranchers.”

Senator Whitehouse (D-RI), ranking member of the Fisheries, Water, and Wildlife Subcommittee pointed to the absurdity of his colleagues’ continued attacks on the rule, asserting that the Clean Water Act and the Waters of the U.S. rule have been absolutely essential.

“And while there can be argument over the scope and the details of the rule, that hasn’t been what has been the issue. There’s been just a full on, party-wide, absolute attack on this rule, and I think it’s been very regrettable.. So if my colleagues want to address technical improvements we think we should make, of course, I’m always open to that, but the conversation around this has been largely preposterous.. You hear this extreme rhetoric about a rule whose purpose is to keep our waters clean.”

NSAC hopes that conversations around the Clean Water Act will turn to implementation of the finalized waters of the U.S. rule. Legislators should refocus their attention on opportunities for the agricultural community to engage and benefit from increased clarity in the rule and in the water.

HAWKS

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environment in both the breeding and wintering areas.

But more than simply counting hawks, there’s the spectacle of it all. Standing atop a ridge on a crisp autumn day while hundreds of hawks circle and stream past is an unforgettable experience, which helps explain why people return to these sites day after day and Hawkwatch programs across the country attract volunteers by the dozens.

Visit any Hawkwatch site, and you’ll find people who came one day out of curiosity and soon became regulars.

Have you noticed migrating raptors in your neck of the woods? Or any place else?

We always enjoy your stories!

Why are autumn's leaves so colorful?

By eNature

Sometime between now and the middle of November, the trees in North America's eastern broadleaf forests will reach their full fall glory.

From Vermont's Northeast Kingdom and New Hampshire's White Mountains to the Shenandoah Valley and beyond, leaf peepers will bring traffic to a standstill on beautiful fall weekends. By the carful and busload, they'll come to gawk at the beautiful countryside.

But what will they be seeing? How do leaves end up in such spectacular colors?

Hidden Colors

Leaf color arises from various chemicals within trees. It's the strength as well as the presence or absence of compounds like tannins, xanthophylls and carotenes that determines fall hues in the scores of tree species found in the East.

Back in the spring and summer, when the millions of trees in these same woodlands were busily growing and producing food, their leaves were chock full of chlorophyll and it was the chlorophyll that colored the forests varying shades of green. But chlorophyll is a mask, and once trees sense the change in the weather and start to stop chlorophyll production, the mask drops and the other colors of the leaves come to the forefront.

A Color for Every Tree

The fall colors can be so distinctive in some tree species that it's possible to identify these trees from a distance merely by noting their hues. The brilliant red leaves belong to the Red Maple, American Mountain Ash and Black Tupelo, plus sumacs, blueberries and Virginia Creeper in the understory. Richer red foliage is typical of Red Oak, Scarlet Oak and White Oak. Birches and beeches sparkle with bright

yellow foliage, while Witch Hazel and Striped Maple are a less intense yellow and walnuts, hickories and aspens attain a truly golden glow.

Of course, not all trees settle on a single color. Sugar Maples, for example, blaze in green, yellow, orange and startling red and Sassafras comes in various shades of red, orange, yellow and purple.

If you want to enjoy the fall colors yourself, plan ahead and, if possible, venture out during the week as opposed to on a crowded weekend.

No matter when you go, though, spend a little time outside your car. The trees are even prettier close-up, along a quiet trail or down a less traveled side road.

Have you had time to enjoy fall's colors this year?

We always enjoy hearing about your experiences.

Scott State Park Historic Preservation Committee formed

Governor Sam Brownback and Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism (KDWP) Secretary Robin Jennison announced the formation of the Scott State Park Historic Preservation and Development Committee at a ceremony today at Lake Scott State Park. The focus of the committee is to raise funds to preserve, interpret and develop the unique historic features of the park and the surrounding area. Lake Scott State Park is about 12 miles north of Scott City and is situated along the Western Vistas Historic Byway.

The remains of the northernmost Native American pueblo, El Cuartelejo, are a defining feature of the park. Built in the late 1600s and occupied until the early 1700s, the pueblo was used by Taos Pueblo, Plains Apache and Picuris Pueblo tribes for most of its history. The park and portions of the area around it comprise the El Cuartelejo Archeological District National Historic Landmark.

"Lake Scott State Park and the surrounding area are among the most historic and beautiful places in Kansas," said Governor Brownback. "We are especially honored to have C.A. Tsosie, a Picuris Pueblo tribal

elder and his wife, Harriet, travel here from New Mexico to bless El Cuartelejo and perform a drum ceremony."

In announcing the committee's formation, Secretary Jennison, whose family history is deeply rooted in the Healy area a few miles from the park, noted the importance of community involvement in preserving the historic features of the park.

"The history of this area is a source of pride for western Kansans," he said. "We deeply appreciate the willingness of community leaders to join together to help us preserve and interpret not only El Cuartelejo, but other nearby sites that make this region a historic treasure for our state."

The committee will be headed by Jerry Thomas, renowned Kansas western and wildlife artist whose works are displayed at the Jerry Thomas Gallery and Collection adjacent to the El Cuartelejo Museum in Scott City. Funding challenges have constrained efforts to preserve and interpret El Cuartelejo. One of the goals of the committee will be to raise funds to build an interpretive center over the ruins to help preserve them.

Other Notable Historic Features

The Steele Home, situated a few hundred

feet south of the ruins, was built in 1894 by Herbert and Eliza Steele. They owned the land and brought the possible existence of pueblo ruins to the attention of science in the late 1890s. In 1925, they deeded five acres of the property encompassing El Cuartelejo to the Kansas Daughters of the American Revolution (KSDAR), which erected a monument commemorating the site. The KSDAR transferred title to the land to KDWP in 2012 and the KSDAR monument remains.

Battle Canyon is one mile south of the park and is the site of the last Indian battle in Kansas, (between Northern Cheyenne and the U.S. Cavalry in 1878).

About Lake Scott State Park

The park is nestled in a scenic canyon in northern Scott County and is widely considered one of Kansas' most beautiful state parks. It was listed in National Geographic Traveler magazine as one of the 50 must-see state parks in the U.S. The Kansas Sampler Foundation also listed the park as a finalist for the 8 Wonders of Kansas designation. It was included on a list of 36 Stunning U.S. State Parks by The Active Times website.

Over 100 organizations deliver letter opposing cuts to conservation

On Thursday, September 17, more than 100 organizations from around the country delivered a letter urging the House and Senate Appropriations Committees to “protect mandatory funding for farm bill conservation programs, support robust discretionary funding for Conservation Technical Assistance, and reject any attempt to undermine highly erodible land and wetland conservation compliance” in fiscal year (FY) 2016 appropriations legislation. A broad range of groups joined NSAC to send the letter, including the National Farmers Union, National Wildlife Federation, Kansas Rural Center, Chesapeake Bay Foundation, League of Women Voters, and many others.

Congressional appropriators are currently negotiating final appropriations legislation for FY 2016. In previous years, appropriators have used a back-door budget gimmick called “Changes in Mandatory Program Spending” (CHIMPS) to cut farm bill direct spending, which is under the jurisdiction of the Agriculture Committees, not the Appropriations Committees. For example, the FY 2015 Appropriations Act cut the 2014 Farm Bill’s funding for conservation by

over \$650 million.

In June and July, the House and Senate Appropriations Committees passed FY 2016 agriculture appropriations bills that cut hundreds of millions of dollars from the farm bill Conservation Title, on top of the dramatic reduction in conservation spending already made by the 2014 Farm Bill and sequestration. The proposed FY 2016 cuts would further reduce conservation enrollments by millions of acres and hamper efforts by farmers, ranchers, and foresters to conserve water, maintain their soil, and prepare for extreme weather events.

In addition to opposing cuts to mandatory spending for conservation programs, the letter urges appropriators to adopt the Senate funding level of \$855 million for discretionary Conservation Operations, which includes Conservation Technical Assistance (CTA). USDA’s ability to deliver conservation programs to farmers and ranchers depends heavily on on-the-ground technical assistance. “We must not hamstring our investment in conservation by under-funding technical assistance,” the letter states.

Finally, the letter urges congressional

negotiators to reject a controversial policy rider included in the House bill. The rider would delay by one year the implementation of basic soil and water conservation requirements established by the 2014 Farm Bill. When the rider was initially added to the House bill last spring, there was concern that a significant number of producers had missed a June 1 deadline to self-certify compliance with conservation requirements. In the months that followed, USDA took extraordinary steps to address the problem by working with each and every one of the two percent of producers who did not file their self-certification forms on time. In most cases, USDA found that forms were not filed because the producer on record was no longer farming. Among the tiny fraction of active operations that did not initially self-certify, nearly every one has now done so, securing eligibility for taxpayer-funded crop insurance premium assistance.

“We believe that the concerns that prompted the policy rider have been addressed administratively and do not require any legislative action,” the letter states.

USDA announces conservation incentives for working grass, range and pasture lands

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced that beginning Sept. 1, farmers and ranchers can apply for financial assistance to help conserve working grasslands, rangeland and pastureland while maintaining the areas as livestock grazing lands.

The initiative is part of the voluntary Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), a federally funded program that for 30 years has assisted agricultural producers with the cost of restoring, enhancing and protecting certain grasses, shrubs and trees to improve water quality, prevent soil erosion and reduce loss of wildlife habitat. In return, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) provides participants with rental payments and cost-share assistance. CRP has helped farmers and ranchers prevent more than 8 billion tons of soil from eroding, reduce nitrogen and phosphorous runoff relative to cropland by 95 and 85 percent respectively, and even sequester

43 million tons of greenhouse gases annually, equal to taking 8 million cars off the road.

“A record 400 million acres and 600,000 producers and landowners are currently enrolled in USDA’s conservation programs. The Conservation Reserve Program has been one of the most successful conservation programs in the history of the country, and we are pleased to begin these grasslands incentives as we celebrate the program’s 30th year,” said Vilsack. “This is another great example of how agricultural production can work hand in hand with efforts to improve the environment and increase wildlife habitat.”

The CRP-Grasslands initiative will provide participants who establish long-term, resource-conserving covers with annual rental payments up to 75 percent of the grazing value of the land. Cost-share assistance also is available for up to 50 percent of the covers and other practices,

such as cross fencing to support rotational grazing or improving pasture cover to benefit pollinators or other wildlife. Participants may still conduct common grazing practices, produce hay, mow, or harvest for seed production, conduct fire rehabilitation, and construct firebreaks and fences.

With the publication of the CRP regulation today, the Farm Service Agency will accept applications on an ongoing basis beginning Sept. 1, 2015, with those applications scored against published ranking criteria, and approved based on the competitiveness of the offer. The ranking period will occur at least once per year and be announced at least 30 days prior to its start. The end of the first ranking period will be Nov. 20, 2015.

To learn more about participating in CRP-Grasslands or SAFE, visit www.fsa.usda.gov/crp or consult with the local Farm Service Agency county office.

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

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

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

How You Can Help:

- * **Youth Membership:** As a Youth member (for ages 8-17 as of January 1), your \$10 dues provide you with 6 electronic issues of the KWF newsletter, a personalized KWF Youth membership card and access to KWF Youth social media site (no voting privileges regarding regular membership matters).
- * **Basic Membership:** As a Basic member, for \$30 you'll receive 6 issues of the KWF newsletter packed with the latest information on wildlife resources, events and issues around the state. You also have voting privileges at the KWF Annual Meeting.
- * **Expanded Membership:** When you send in your Expanded member dues of \$75, you receive the basic membership benefits and a complimentary ticket to the KWF Annual Meeting and CAP banquet.
- * **Kansan:** For an annual fee of \$150, you receive all the benefits listed above plus an additional complimentary ticket to the KWF Annual Meeting and CAP banquet.

Here's How to Join:

Complete the form on Page 16 and mail with your membership fee to:
Kansas Wildlife Federation, P.O. Box 771282, Wichita, KS 67277-1282