



The Voice of Outdoor Kansas

September-
October 2011

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

Hunters & Habitats

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

Program Area: Breaking News

Heroes of Conservation

A *Field & Stream* Hero of Conservation is someone who spends his or her own time working to create, improve, or restore fish and wildlife or habitat. A Hero is dedicated to the spirit of conservation volunteerism and stands out among other volunteers. Some heroes are members of conservation organizations involved with dedicated efforts to benefit a particular species or area. Others are simply individuals who take it upon themselves to improve habitat where they live. No project is too small, but the public should be able to benefit from the endeavor, and there should be a clear tie to hunting and/or fishing. If you know of a potential Hero or are one yourself, you can nominate someone by going to www.fieldandstream.com/heroes.

2011 marks the sixth year of the annual Heroes of Conservation program. Last year, Gale Dupree, of California took top honors as the 2010 Hero of The Year for his work to help the sage grouse. Three to four Heroes are recognized in the *Field & Stream* magazine on a monthly basis and six finalists are chosen for the year. Those 6 finalists will be featured

again in the October issue of the magazine and will be featured in a 10 to 15 minute video explaining their conservation efforts. You'll be able watch videos of this year's finalists at www.fieldandstream.com/heroes in early October. All finalists are eligible for the grand prize – a Toyota Tundra and \$5,000 – and runner up prizes of \$5,000 each, which are announced each fall. Those Heroes featured in the *Field & Stream* magazine receive \$500 for their conservation project.

Kansans Tommie and Theresa Berger of Sylvan Grove were featured in the May 2011 issue of the magazine, mainly for their work with the Kansas Wildlife Federation's Outdoor Adventure Camp, as well as all their educational efforts with youngsters and conservation. They were also chosen as one of the 6 finalists for the 2010/2011 program year and have been invited to the big Gala Event which will be held in Washington, D.C. on October 12. They will be attending the event along with their son Fritz and would certainly love to be driving home in

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Protecting the Land...
Passing on Our Traditions

KANSAS WILDLIFE
FEDERATION
The voice of outdoor Kansas



KANSAS WILDLIFE FEDERATION

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

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Program Area: Hunters & Habitats

Kansas Hunting Regulations Summary essential tool

Publication online; printed copies available
in early September

Printed copies of the *2011 Kansas Hunting & Furharvesting Regulations Summary* will be available at Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism (KDWPT) offices and license vendors around the state about Sept. 1, but hunters can view or download the summary at the KDWPT website, www.kdwpt.state.ks.us. Type "Hunting Regulations" in the search box at the department's homepage or click on "Hunting," then "Hunting Regulations."

As always, this year's booklet contains several new regulations. In addition to changes in season dates, significant new regulations include the following:

- elk units are now described by highway boundaries rather than counties;
- any person who lawfully possesses a firearm suppressing device

may use that device in conjunction with lawful hunting and furharvesting;

- resident youth 16 through 20 years old may purchase multi-year licenses valid through the end of the calendar year in which they turn 21. Hunt, fish, and combination licenses are available. Resident youth will save \$62.50 if they purchase the multi-year fishing or hunting license when they turn 16. A 16-year-old will save \$122.50 if they buy the multi-year combination license; and
- otters may be trapped Nov. 16-March 31, 2012, or until the statewide trapping mortality quota of 100 otters is met. Only two otters per trapper will be allowed for the entire season. Each individual who has trapped an otter must contact designated KDWPT staff within 24 hours of take.

2011 Kansas Hunting Atlas available online

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

Want hunting access to one million acres of private land? The Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism (KDWPT) provides just that and more in the *2011 Kansas Hunting Atlas*. This essential hunting tool includes maps showing locations of Walk-In Hunting Access (WIHA) areas and public wildlife areas and is available online at the KDWPT website, www.kdwpt.state.ks.us. Click "Hunting/Where to Hunt in Kansas" to find a link to the document. Printed copies of the atlas are available at KDWPT offices and hunting license vendors around the

state.

The atlas provides dozens of full-page maps covering the entire state. Online visitors can view and print the complete atlas or select specific maps. Hunters can also download maps to GPS units for easy navigation. Each map includes an index listing the game species most likely to occur on properties listed.

For information on hunting seasons and regulations, copies of the *2011 Kansas Hunting & Furharvesting Regulations Summary* will be available at KDWPT offices and license vendors the first week in September.

**Officers and
Board of Directors**

KDWPT offers own Internet-assisted hunter education course

Improved course offers access
from KDWPT's website

For several years, the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism (KDWPT) Hunter Education Program has offered a two-part alternative to the all-classroom hunter education course, called an "Internet-assisted" course. The course has used the International Hunter Education Association's Internet program for the first portion of the class — the online portion — but now the agency has replaced this with its own internet-assisted portion of the class.

For Internet-assisted courses, all students must complete an online course before they can attend a field day and testing session, which is the second portion of the course. To begin, go to the Internet assisted field day and testing schedule link found on the KDWPT website, www.kdwpt.ks.us under "Other Services/Education/Hunter/Internet-assisted Course." Then click the buffalo logo to find contact information for a field day that fits the student's schedule. After registering for the field day and testing session of choice, the student is ready to begin the course.

Within 90 days of the chosen session, students log onto the KDWPT website listed above. Students need access to a printer to work through this course. As each chapter is completed, students answer the review questions for that chapter and print the page with answers. These must be brought to the second portion of the course, the field day and testing session.

The end of the online portion of the course features a course completion test. This test is impor-

tant because students see the same material covered on the pretest required to continue the course with the field day and testing session. Students cannot access the completion test until they have completed all the chapter review questions. They must present these chapter review pages and the course completion test to the instructor to get into the field day and testing session. The whole process takes a few hours, from the comfort of home.

The next step is to show up at the designated field day and final testing site. First, students hand in their online tests and take a 25-question quiz to show that they have completed the online work. To continue with the course, students must correctly answer 22 of 25 questions, an easy task for anyone who has gone through the online material. Following the short quiz, students will spend a short time in the classroom discussing hunter ethics, laws, and game identification. Then it's outside for the rest of the day as they participate in a simulated hunting trail walk, firearm handling, and live fire. The trail walk and live fire shotgun training are required.

The Internet-assisted course format is designed to meet the needs of those individuals with conflicting schedules. Like the traditional course, there is no required fee to take the KDWPT online course. KDWPT does accept two alternative Internet-assisted portions of the course, both of which charge a fee and may be linked to from the KDWPT Hunter Education page online.

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Program Area: Natural Resource Management

The Budgets of Discontent

By Steve Williams, President
Wildlife Management Institute

Based on their words and actions, it is quite clear that some members of the U.S. House of Representatives do not share our concern about conservation. The proposed Fiscal Year 2011 Continuing Resolution (CR) would have eliminated or reduced funding for some of the most effective conservation grant programs run by the federal government. For example, the proposal would have had severe repercussions on the North American Wetlands Conservation Fund, State and Tribal Wildlife Grants, Forest Legacy Program, National Wildlife Refuge System, and the National Fish Habitat Action Plan.

Many of these grant programs leverage non-federal dollars on the scale of three to four times more than the appropriated federal dollars. As it finally played out, Congress did not make the draconian cuts that some desired. That is the good news for conservation now. However, as Congress debates the Fiscal Year 2012 federal budget, it is certain that conservation programs will not fare as well.

Without a doubt, the nation is facing severe financial problems. The size of the federal budget, budget deficits, the debt ceiling, and debt payments must be addressed. However, the recent focus on making these cuts almost entirely from discretionary funding is shortsighted, disingenuous, and ineffective. The federal budget is approximately \$3.5 trillion. The budget deficit is estimated at \$1.4 trillion. Discretionary funding constitutes about 39 percent (or just over \$1.3 trillion) of the entire federal budget. We cannot erase the budget deficit until the nation solves the future of entitlement programs (\$2.1 trillion and growing). Within that 39 percent of discretionary funding, federal spending for land and water programs constitutes only about 0.5 percent of the entire federal budget. I am not advocating for a complete pardon from budget cuts

to conservation programs, but let us recognize their size relative to the entire budget and the programs' importance to the nation.

It appeared that the budget cuts offered in the last CR were decided by a weird Chinese menu approach—reduce this from column A, and eliminate that from column B. There was no logic to the process; rather, it reflected staff work which must have been directed to grab a spreadsheet of federal conservation programs and don't stop cutting until they reached a magic and arbitrary dollar amount. We should expect more from a Congress that publicly declares its thoughtful and deliberative budget development process. The proposed reductions and elimination of federal conservation programs would have halted—and may still halt—years of hard work by Congress and American citizens to improve conservation in this nation. Further, they would have tarnished the nation's conservation legacy that the Boone and Crockett Club so proudly and rightfully proclaims. Remember, those budget cuts were offered when Congress was looking for \$100 billion in cuts for the FY 2011 budget. Current figures vary but I have seen demands for cuts totaling \$381 billion for the FY 2012 budget. This is a desperate and critical time for conservation in the United States.

I hope, and we should demand, that Congress considers the economic impact associated with fish and wildlife conservation when making decisions that affect funding for the programs that make that economic impact possible. According to the *2006 National Survey on Hunting, Fishing, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation and Hunting in America/Fishing in America: An Economic Engine and Conservation Powerhouse* report, there were more than 34 million Americans who engaged in hunting and fishing. Hunters and anglers provided license revenues

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Last child on the prairie:

A directory for parents and teachers for returning children to the outdoors

The last 20 years have seen a dramatic shift in children's experiences. Unlike their parents and grandparents who were more likely to have grown up with empty lots or nearby fields to play in, most of today's children are isolated from nature experiences. One-third of families lived on farms before World War II; today our road signs rightly attest to one Kansas farmer feeding 129 other people.

Children who grow up in non-rural areas are often further constrained from nature experiences by community covenants, societal constraints and other legal restrictions. This has been brought to the public's attention by Richard Louv's best selling *Last Child in the Woods*.

Many children no longer play in their front or back yards and are oblivious to the squirrels, trees and dandelions. Upon arriving home, they dash inside to get online, watch television, or use cell phones and other electronics. The time spent on electronic media by American children has grown to

10 hours and 45 minutes daily according to a survey released January 20, 2010 by the Kaiser Family Foundation: "American children in the 8-to-18-year-old category spend 4 hours and 29 minutes on TV each day..." and over six more hours on other devices.

For parents and teachers interested in getting children involved in outdoor activities and experiences, the *Last Child on the Prairie* has been published in the *Kansas School Naturalist* at Emporia State University. This directory provides contact information of governmental agencies, conservation organizations and businesses that can provide outdoor experiential opportunities in Kansas.

Some students could eventually become game wardens, botanists, aquatic biologists or ecologists. The previous professional generations of field scientists always trace their initial interest to field experiences. We cannot predict who among our students will become fascinated. All children deserve field experiences so some who get "caught"

in those experiences can know what vocation or avocation to pursue.

Publication of the *Last Child on the Prairie* was made possible by a National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Award to Phil Taunton, and directed by Phil to underwrite publication of this *Kansas School Naturalist*. Concepts for the publication came from Phil Taunton, Southeast District Director for the Kansas Wildlife Federation from Emporia, Steve Bender, Regional Representative of the National Wildlife Federation in Austin, TX, and John Richard Schrock of Emporia.

The *Kansas School Naturalist* is sent free of charge and upon request to teachers, school administrators, public and school librarians, youth leaders, conservationists, and others interested in natural history and nature education. To order a copy of *Last Child on the Prairie*, contact Emporia State University, Kansas School Naturalist, Box 4050 1200 Commercial St. Emporia, KS 66801-5087 or go to <http://www.emporia.edu/ksn/>.

WILLIAMS

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of \$1.3 billion and excise taxes of \$880 million for state fish and wildlife conservation programs. Retail sales of hunting and fishing equipment totaled \$70 billion. State and local sales taxes associated with hunting and fishing purchases provided \$11.5 billion to those entities. Federal taxes collected from these activities were \$14 billion. That amount exceeded the budget for the Department of Interior. Who would dare say that hunters and anglers do not pay their way and provide the lion's share of funding for conservation? Who would dare say that these citizens' interests were unimportant? **Apparently some members of Congress are perfectly, if not deliber-**

ately, willing to target the interests of American hunters and anglers. If you are not insulted by their actions, you should be. And you should start thinking about what this nation will become without continued investments in our natural resources. You might also ponder the future for your children and grandchildren.

Conservation funding for programs that protect wetlands, acquire, and/or place easements on river bottoms that would restrict infrastructure development and allow rivers and streams to follow natural courses, now appear to be pretty cost effective when the country is besieged by flooding in the lower Mississippi and upper Missouri Rivers. Imagine the cost savings associated with conserving wetlands and floodplains rather than the expense of flood insurance payments to rebuild flooded

structures for the second or third time. The agricultural and conservation lands downstream of the levees in Louisiana certainly have proven to be cost-effective because they absorbed flood waters and protected the cities of Baton Rouge and New Orleans. Imagine the real value of these lands if the marketplace rewarded conservation efforts, rather than development, in the historical Mississippi River floodplain. The ill-fated efforts to tame the Mississippi and Missouri rivers should provide a valuable lesson that conservation pays, protects lifestyles, and protects the economy. If only Congress could see past their green and misaligned eyeshades.

Reprinted from the Summer 2011 issue of Fair Chase: The Official Publication of the Boone and Crockett Club, www.booneandcrockettclub.com.

Kansas Wildlife Federation proposed affiliation changes

The Board of Directors of the Kansas Wildlife Federation is considering changes in the Affiliation Organization requirements of our By-Laws. With changes in the media options available, we are looking for ways to provide affiliates with the same services we provide now but at a substantial reduction in price.

In discussions with our current and past affiliates, it is a well-known fact that the current economic situation is having a significant impact on affiliate organizations. The extra expense of KWF affiliation on a per capita basis, while well worth the price, has made it difficult for potential affiliate organizations to meet their responsibilities to their constituents.

We are considering changing the per capita dues requirement to a single dues payment. As an affiliate, we would mail 5 copies of each issue of the KWF newsletter to a single mailing location. Any member of the affiliate that has individual e-mail addresses would receive an electronic copy of the newsletter also. Affiliate fees would be set at \$50 or \$75 per year, which could vary due to affiliate size.

Voting privileges of Affiliates is currently based on their membership, according to our By-Laws: *Two (2) Delegates for each fifty (50) members and one (1) Delegate for each additional fifty (50) members or portions thereof.* This

will probably remain the same.

At its October 15 meeting in Pratt, the Board of Directors will vote to add the following italicized changes to the Bylaws. KWF members can attend the BOD meeting or send their comments regarding the proposed change to info@kswildlife.com.

Proposed KWF BYLAWS Changes (changes are in **bold**):

ARTICLE VII

Categories of Membership

Section 1. Affiliate Organization.

Affiliate Organization membership shall consist of clubs, associations, or organizations that have requested to affiliate in writing to the KWF Board, have a current set of by-laws which states one of the organization's principle purposes is the conservation of our natural resources, have principle residency within the State of Kansas, a board of directors, and have a total membership of at least ten (10). The organization must meet regularly. Membership in an Affiliate Organization gives affiliate membership in the KWF to an individual only if included in an official roster to the KWF.

An Affiliate Organization may select one of two categories, Affiliate I and Affiliate II, both of which are considered Affiliates of the KWF.

1) Affiliate I organizations shall provide the KWF with a list of their members and pay per capita dues on its entire membership within sixty (60) days after said affiliation anniversary date. Each Affiliate I member shall receive a mailed copy of the KWF publication.

2) Affiliate II organizations shall provide the KWF with a list of their members and an annual dues within sixty (60) days after said affiliation anniversary date. The Affiliate shall receive a set number of KWF publications mailed to a single address. Each Affiliate II member with an e-mail address shall receive an electronic copy of the KWF publication.

Individual Affiliate members may hold any KWF office, may attend all meetings and functions of KWF, but are not afforded voting privileges except as provided under Article IX; Section 7. Organizations which have by-law prohibitions against affiliation shall not be recruited or accepted by KWF as an Affiliate Organization but may be accepted as a sustaining member.

ARTICLE VIII

Annual Dues

Section 1. Affiliate Organization shall pay ~~per capita~~ membership dues as established by the Board.

Kansas Wildlife Federation updates its website

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

This site isn't just about telling you all about KWF and what we're doing – the site exists to give you news and information about what's happening that affects the Kansas outdoors. When you visit, you'll see regularly updated

content that will keep you informed on events, pending legislation, federal news, as well as fishing forecasts and hunting tips.

Because we keep the site updated regularly and because the updates are right at the front of the website, this gives you the chance to participate in making our website a great place to visit.

New sections will include an opportunity for users to post their photos of Kansas natural resources and recreation

activities. Or you can look in the recipe section to find a new way to utilize your recently harvested critters.

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

Look for the new website to be up and operating by mid-September.

Calendar of events

- Sept. 9-10** Bluestem Wildlife Appreciation & Conservation Days, Emporia
Sept. 17-18 NWTF Kansas State JAKES Camp, Camp Alexander, Emporia
Sept. 24 National Hunting & Fishing Day celebration
Sept. 24 Beau Arndt Outdoor Appreciation Day, Camp Alexander, Emporia
Sept. 26 Keystone XL pipeline public hearing, Expo Center, Topeka
Oct. 15 KWF Board of Director's Meeting, Pratt
Nov. 4-6 Kansas Speleological Society Fall Meeting, Barber Co, KS
Nov. 4-5 Kansas Assn. for Conservation & Environmental Education annual mtg, Great Bend, KS
Nov. 4-6 Kansas Herpetological Society annual meeting, Great Plains Nature Center, Wichita, KS
Jan. 26-27 Kansas Natural Resources Conference_combined meeting –Airport Hilton, Wichita KS
1. Great Plains Society of American Forestry
2. Kansas Alliance for Wetlands and Streams
3. Kansas Chapter: American Fisheries Society
4. Kansas Chapter: Soil and Water Conservation Society
5. Kansas Chapter: The Wildlife Society
6. Kansas Section: Society for Range Management
Jan. 27-29 Monster Buck Classic, Topeka
February Kansas Wildlife Federation Annual Meeting
March 3-4 Flint Hills Mall Hunting & Fishing Expo, Emporia
March 10-11 3rd Annual Kansas Hunting & Fishing Expo, Emporia
March 19-23 Spring Break for KS Regents Schools
April 1-4 Playa Symposium, Lubbock, TX
April 27-29 Kansas Birding Festival, Wakefield, KS
June 9 Symphony in the Flint Hills, Place TBA



Winner of the Ruger

Pictured on the left is Larry Biles, Manhattan, who is the winner of the Ruger Model 10/22 Carbine offered by the Kansas Wildlife Federation. Presenting him with the rifle is Troy Schroeder, KWF Administrative Vice President. Troy donated the gun to KWF to use as a fundraiser.

Dove Hunting 101

By James Altiere

Dove hunting is a great way to introduce young people to the outdoors and the activity of hunting. Most beginning hunters and young people thoroughly enjoy the fast-paced shooting and excitement of a good dove hunt. It challenges the hunter's shooting ability much more than his or her hunting skills. The challenge of shooting and hitting a fast-moving target provides fun and excitement for the hunter.

A dove shoot usually takes place on a large open field or a combination of smaller fields in a common area. The shoot is a social event that provides an opportunity for a large number of hunters to participate. It is also a way to bring friends and family together. While this type of hunting provides social interaction and fun, it also has to be regulated and done in a safe manner.

By law, shooting doves must be done with a shotgun, 10 gauge or smaller, plugged, and incapable of holding more than three shot shells. Dove hunters usually gather in a common area then select a location on the field. All guns should be unloaded with the action

open and safety on when traveling to the selected spot on the field. Once the hunters have spread out on the field it becomes a game of waiting and watching. Shotguns are only loaded when on the stand and ready to hunt. Be sure to wear eye and ear protection once you enter the field.

During this time of watching and waiting, the hunter must practice the most important firearms handling rule - keep the gun pointed in a safe direction at all times. A hunter should always know where his or her gun is pointed. On a dove field the hunters surround the field being hunted, watch for doves that fly over and shoot at the doves that are in shotgun range. Hunters are usually very near other hunters.

Dove hunters must practice another cardinal rule of firearms safety as they raise their gun and shoot at a dove: know what the target is and what is beyond it. If a dove comes into the field then drops down low across the field, the hunters on the field should shout "low bird!" When this happens no one should attempt a shot at that low bird.

On a good dove shoot there are a large number of birds flying into the

field. The doves come in from different directions and at various altitudes. The action gets fast and furious and the shooting is fast as well as the reloading. At this point, the hunter must concentrate on safe shooting and reloading procedures. If hunting with another hunter who is shooting a different gauge shotgun, caution must be taken so the different gauge shot shells don't get mixed. A 20-gauge shot shell can mistakenly be loaded into a 12-gauge shotgun and end up lodged halfway down the barrel. Not only does the hunter have a gun with an obstructed barrel, it is obstructed with a live round. The hunter should also be careful not to get any dirt in the barrel that creates an unsafe situation.

In conclusion, if invited to a dove shoot, GO. Dove shooting is extremely fun and exhilarating. Be courteous and handle your firearm safely. Safety is attitude, so go to the dove shoot with the right attitude.

James Altiere is a Regional Hunting Education Coordinator with the Alabama Division of Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries.

New books highlight Kansas wildlife

From amphibians and reptiles to birds and bats, new books reveal nature's secrets

There is an incredible treasure of Kansas natural history books and guides, and several recent publications have added to this body of work.

Amphibians, Reptiles, and Turtles in Kansas, by Joseph T. and Suzanne L. Collins and Travis W. Taggart, is an excellent guide, available through Eagle Mountain Publishing (eagle-mountainpublishing.com) for \$30. The book displays the herpetofauna of Kansas in vivid color through the

lens-craft of co-author Suzanne L. Collins. With more than 1,700 entries, the bibliography in this book is the most complete ever assembled for a state field guide. Color range maps show specific locations where each species has been sighted, and text describes the latest information on them. Phone 801-789-4149 for more information.

Amphibians, Reptiles, and Turtles of the Cimarron National Grassland, Kansas Second (Revised) Edition - by

Joseph T. Collins, Suzanne L. Collins & Travis W. Taggart - single copies are available free by simply sending a self-addressed manila envelope (7 x 10 inches or larger) to Cimarron National Grassland U.S. Forest Service P. O. Box J Elkhart, Kansas 67950 No postage needed. This book covers the 32 species of amphibians, reptiles, and turtles found on the Cimarron

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National Hunting and Fishing Day September 24

National Hunting and Fishing Day is the perfect opportunity to celebrate the conservation efforts of outdoorsman across the nation. Always the fourth Saturday in September, NHF Day 2011 will be Sept. 24.

Help us celebrate this special annual "holiday" established by Congress (in 1972) to recognize hunters, anglers and recreational shooters for their leadership and contributions to conservation in America. Through dues and contributions to conservation organizations, hunters give an additional \$280 million annually for wildlife and habitat.

Nobody does more for fish, wildlife and habitat than traditional sports-

men and women. Communicating this message is a daily goal for all of us at Wonders of Wildlife museum-the official home of NHF Day-in Springfield, Mo.

National Hunting and Fishing Day is one of the easiest ways to recognize the conservation efforts of hunters and fishermen across the nation. It is also a great way to get youth involved in our great heritage.

This year, T. Boone Pickens is the honorary chair for National Hunting and Fishing Day. Pickens is one of America's most prominent and influential businessmen. He is a top authority on world energy issues, president and CEO of the investment firm BP Capital Management

and founder of Mesa Petroleum.

Help continue the growing heritage of maintaining our conservation efforts with T. Boone Pickens and countless sportsmen and celebrate on September 24, 2011.

Sponsors for NHF Day 2011 includes Wonders of Wildlife, NSSF, Bass Pro Shops, Smith & Wesson, Sportsman's Channel, Realtree, Cabela's, GunBroker.com, Yamaha, Academy Sports + Outdoors, Izaak Walton League of America and Pope and Young Club.

For more information about NHF Day and events that are taking place near you, visit www.nhfd.org or check out their Facebook page.

Taunton brings outdoors to KVOE listeners on air, online

By Chuck Samples

Traditional outdoors activities are in abundance as summer transitions to fall, and KVOE in Emporia will keep you abreast of all the activities on air and online.

On Friday, August 26 KVOE debuted What's In Outdoors with Phil Taunton during the Morning Show

with Ron Thomas. Taunton started with the dove hunting season, which began Sept. 1. He says you can do some legwork early to save yourself some hassles when you actually hunt.

Taunton also said the outdoors can soothe the soul and it doesn't matter which activity you enjoy or what age you may be.

What's In Outdoors airs every Fri-

day at 8:15 a.m. on 1400 KVOE and KVOE.com.

Also, go to <http://www.kvoe.com/outdoors.htm> for the What's In Outdoors page, featuring a wealth of information like events, pictures, recipes and links to local and state wildlife groups. If you have questions you want answered, email outdoors@kvoe.com.

BOOKS

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National Grassland in southwestern Kansas, illustrated with exquisite images and precise up-to-date range dot maps, all in color. In this guide, the authors reveal the abundant herpetofauna of the Cimarron National Grassland, with information on size, description, habits, and habitat in each species account.

Bats of Kansas — by Dale W. Sparks, Curtis J. Schmidt, and Jerry R. Choate — is an 8 ½- by 11-inch heavy-duty paperback available from the Sternberg Museum of Natural History (sternberg.fhsu.edu) and the

Kansas Wetlands Education Center (wetlandscenter.fhsu.edu) for only \$8 per copy. Bat enthusiasts and anyone wanting to know more about these mysterious creatures will welcome this new book as the finest resource for the general public on the ecology of bats in Kansas. Beneficial to humans in many ways, from seed dispersal and pollination to insect predation, bats are the only flying mammal and the only flying animal that preys on insects at night. For more information or to order, phone the Sternberg Museum at 785-628-5569 or the Kansas Wetlands Education Center at 620-786-7456.

Birds of Kansas — by Max C. Thompson, Charles A. Ely, Bob

Gress, Chuck Otte, Sebastian T. Patti, David Seibel, and Eugene A. Young — is available through the University Press of Kansas (kansaspress.ku.edu). This respected team of authors, all recognized avian authorities, has created a beautiful, large-format volume highlighted with professional-quality color photographs and maps. The first such survey in 20 years, this remarkable book depicts every one of the state's now-documented 473 species. It's available for \$39.95. Order online or phone 785-864-4155.

Kansans interested in learning more about these diverse residents of the Sunflower State should order these new books. They are also excellent resources for teachers.

Hunters, anglers share traditions with youth

In recent surveys conducted on HunterSurvey.com, ShooterSurvey.com and AnglerSurvey.com, responses revealed sportsmen overwhelmingly take the time to introduce kids to the joys of hunting and fishing. Asked if in the past 12 months they had taken a child hunting or fishing, just over 45 percent of hunters said they had taken a son, daughter, nephew, niece or other young person hunting, while a whopping 61 percent of fishermen said they had taken a child fishing.

While the relation of the child to the angler would be assumed to most

often be a son or a daughter that is the case only half of the time. The survey revealed 30 percent were nephews, nieces or another young relative; 15 percent were an unrelated child and 4 percent was as part of an outing with a Boy Scout troop, church group or other youth organization.

Where hunting was concerned, the relation of the child to the hunter was a son or a daughter 54 percent of the time. The survey revealed 29 percent were nephews, nieces or another young relative; 14 percent were an unrelated child and 4 percent were as part of an

outing with a Boy Scout troop, church group or other youth organization.

“These numbers certainly boost the future of hunting, fishing and conservation as more young people are introduced to and learn the joys of these sports,” said Rob Southwick, president of Southwick Associates, which designs and conducts the surveys at HunterSurvey.com, ShooterSurvey.com and AnglerSurvey.com. “While every child taken hunting or fishing may not continue doing so as an adult, it’s expected a good number of them will.”

Program Anglers & Habitats

Higher ethanol gasoline a problem for boat motors, small engines

From The Outdoor Wire

Most recreational boats in the US are “trailer” boats. Stored in the backyard or driveway, they are trailered to the water and enjoyed for the day. They are also refueled at your local gas station or minimart, which may soon offer a fuel, E15 (or 15% ethanol), that is prohibited by the federal government for use in boat motors and violates engine manufacturer warranties. That has the nation’s largest recreational boat owners group, BoatUS, concerned over the potential for accidental misfueling.

EPA’s debut in late June of it’s proposed solution - a small, orange label affixed to the gas pump titled “Attention” - has only heightened the need for boaters to be vigilant, said the Alexandria, Virginia based association.

“As this new fuel starts appearing at the local fuel pump, we see the

real likelihood of putting the wrong fuel in your boat,” said BoatUS Vice President of Government Affairs Margaret Podlich. “It could lead to costly engine or fuel system damage, and potentially leave you stranded out on the water with a disabled vessel, compromising your family’s safety. When a boat’s engine stops running, you can’t pull over to the side of the road,” added Podlich.

Earlier this year, the EPA authorized the use of E15 in 2001 model year and newer motor vehicles. However, the agency did not authorize its use in marine engines or a range of off-road vehicles, tools and equipment. Currently, most boaters in the US have transitioned to E10 (10% ethanol), the maximum percentage of ethanol permitted in gasoline before most engine manufacturer warranties are voided. However, many boaters still go out of their way to find ethanol-free fuel.

BoatUS believes it will be hard for consumers to recognize when or where E-15 is being rolled out to their local gas stations or fuel sellers. “Most likely consumers will encounter E-15 for the first time at their local gas station with little or no fanfare, and may be attracted to its price. This means we have to be alert now - it’s really a situation of buyer beware,” said Podlich.

The boater’s group also said the issue goes far beyond gas-powered boat engines. “I encourage anyone fueling - whether it’s for your boat, car, motorcycle, generator or six-gallon portable tank for your lawnmower or leaf-blower, to absolutely know what type of gas is going into that tank,” said Podlich. “Unless you have a 2001 or new motor vehicle, the gasoline-powered engines you own were not built for E15. Now is the time to start knowing which gas stations offer you safe fuel.”

The Nature Conservancy Kansas Chapter names new state director

Rob Manes spent nearly 20 years with Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) has named Rob Manes the new Kansas state director of the conservation organization. Before attaining this position, Manes spent six years as TNC's director of conservation for Kansas, where he was responsible for establishing conservation easements with private landowners, overseeing management of all TNC-owned properties in Kansas, ecological planning for all Kansas priority regions, and leading collaborative efforts for renewable energy and agricultural conservation issues.

Manes brings extensive experience in natural resource management, having spent nearly 20 years with the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks and five years with the Wildlife Management Institute in a variety of leadership positions. He is originally from Pratt and received his bachelor of science with a biology emphasis from Kansas State University in 1982 and master of environmental science from Friends Univer-

sity in 1991.

"The wild resources of Kansas are both rich and deep and, in many cases, threatened," Manes notes. "Effectively conserving the state's natural landscapes, waters, and wildlife is a costly, long-term challenge, but The Nature Conservancy has proven its ability to deliver lasting, large-scale results. My commitment to the Conservancy's mission is founded on the firm belief that these resources are inherently worth saving, but equally important, conserving wild resources benefits people, economies, and cultures."

Former state director Alan Pollom assumed a new role with TNC as senior conservation specialist for Kansas and the Central U.S. Division. In his new position, Pollom will focus on cross-border conservation planning and strategy relating to preservation of the Flint Hills tallgrass region, as well as representing TNC as a major stakeholder in wind energy issues.

Pollom opened the Kansas office in 1989, and during his tenure, he led the chapter through several acquisitions, including the Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve and three successful capital campaigns that raised nearly \$30 million for conservation efforts in Kansas.

"The Kansas Chapter Board of Trustees is especially pleased that we can look forward to continuing exceptional leadership from the state director position," says Bill Riley, chairman of the TNC Kansas Chapter Board of Trustees. "We all recognize the outstanding credentials Rob Manes brings to our conservation efforts in Kansas, including his recent years of outstanding service as the Kansas director of conservation. His appointment as state director promises to continue our upward trajectory as the largest and most effective conservation nonprofit organization in the state."

For more information, email Shelby Stacy at [sstacy@tnc.org](mailto:ssstacy@tnc.org) or phone 785-233-4400.

Expectant woman has baby during fishing trip

Lorraina Fortine didn't need any bait to catch this one. She's returning from a weekend fishing trip with a new baby. She had been scheduled for a C-section delivery Tuesday,

July 19. But her doctor cleared her to go on a family fishing trip to Cheney Lake for the weekend.

Fortine told KWCH-TV she woke up Saturday morning in labor and

gave birth within minutes. She also has a three-year-old son. The Fortines have picked an appropriate name for their new daughter, Summer.

Youth Pheasant Hunt

The Geary County Fish and Game Association and Pheasants Forever are sponsoring a Youth Pheasant Hunt Saturday, October 29 at the GCF&GA Sportsman's Acres Range at Milford Reservoir. The hunt will run from 8 am to 5 pm.

Boys and girls aged 12-15, especially first-time hunters, are encour-

aged to participate. Hunters must have a Hunter Education certificate and present it at the hunt. Parents are welcome to assist with hunters and to attend the wild game luncheon.

The number of hunters will be limited to twenty. The first 20 applications received will be called to participate. Applications are avail-

able after September 1.

A drawing will be held for a lifetime Kansas hunting license. The winner must be a Kansas resident for at least the last year.

For more information regarding the hunt, contact Bill Ahlers at 785-238-8163.

10 ways to protect America's hunting heritage

Surveys show that three of every four Americans approve of legal hunting, and support is trending upwards. As long as the majority of citizens continue to see this sporting tradition as fair, safe and meaningful, hunting will remain a privilege of citizenship—as well as a boon to conservation.

For hunters headed afield this fall, the Boone and Crockett Club offers 10 ways to help keep the public on our side.

“Modern society has high expectations of hunters,” said Ben Wallace, president of the Club. “In a changing culture with ever more scrutiny of all things related to the environment, our behavior toward animals, the land, firearms and even each other is more important today than anytime in our history.”

Here’s how to do your part:

1. Hunting is allowed today because the vast majority of hunters through the ages have respectfully followed laws, regulations, safety rules and high ethi-

cal standards known as fair chase—the sporting pursuit and taking of native free-ranging game species in a manner that does not give the hunter improper advantage. Continue the tradition.

2. Remember: Any animal taken in fair chase is a trophy.

3. America’s system of conservation and wildlife management is the most successful ever developed. It works only because of funding from hunters. Spread the word.

4. Respect the customs of the local area where you’re hunting, including the beliefs and values of those who do not hunt.

5. This season, make every attempt to take a youngster hunting. If you already hunt with your son or daughter, invite one of their friends to come along.

6. Technology is a wonderful thing until it replaces the skills necessary to be a complete hunter. If it seems gratuitous, leave it at home.

7. Always ask permission before

hunting private land. Respect landowners.

8. Tread lightly, especially on public land. ATVs have their place—on roads and trails. If you pack it in, pack it out.

9. Sportsmen have always been instrumental in managing big game herds. If antlerless harvest is encouraged in your area and you have the opportunity, take a doe or cow.

10. Remember: The reason for a hunt is intrinsically about the experience. A kill is a justifiable outcome but not the only definition of a successful hunt.

Theodore Roosevelt founded the Boone and Crockett Club in 1887 to help uphold sporting values and promote science-based conservation and wildlife management.

Surveys by research firm Responsive Management showed that 73 percent of Americans approved of hunting in 1995. Support had grown to 75 percent by 2003, and to 78 percent by 2006.

Kansas records 17 hunting incidents in 2010

Total an increase of five over 2009; one fatal; all avoidable

The Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks (KDWP) reports there were 17 hunting incidents in Kansas in 2010, five more than the record low of 12 in 2009. One of the accidents was fatal.

The one fatal accident occurred in Dickinson County when two turkey hunters had finished hunting for the day and were walking across a plowed field to their vehicle. The shooter stated that he was carrying his 20-gauge shotgun in the high ready position when he heard a turkey gobble behind him. He turned to his left, toward the victim, and the shotgun discharged, striking the victim in the side of the neck. The victim died at the scene.

In an average year, about 50 percent of Kansas hunting accidents involve swinging on game while hunting upland birds. That figure held true

last year, when eight of the 17 cases involved swinging on game. Although the single fatality involved careless gun handling, 2010 showed a drop in the number of careless handling incidents, a point stressed in KDWP’s hunter education courses.

“We place great emphasis on gun handling skills in our courses — always controlling the muzzle, keeping the finger out of the trigger guard and off the trigger, as well as the other rules of safe gun handling,” says Kent Barrett, statewide Hunter Education Program coordinator for KDWP. “We can only hope to prevent these unfortunate incidents from occurring in the future. In fact, they were all preventable. All of our instruction and our entire hunter education course activities included in our field days emphasize this point and

constantly promote safe gun handling practices.”

Although there was an increase in 2010, the number of accidents is still very small compared to the number of hunters and hours spent afield. According to the latest available statistics in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s *2006 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation*, 271,000 hunters spent more than 3 million man-days hunting in Kansas.

In addition to the official hunting incidents reported, three bowhunters fell from treestands, one fatally. In none of these incidents was the hunter wearing a restraint harness, as is taught in hunter education and bowhunter education courses.

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Guide to going gutless

Eviscerating an elk or deer can be an unpleasant part of a hunt; the prelude to hard, heavy work packing out quarters. But the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation is offering insights to a lesser-known, long-proven alternative. Gutless field dressing can save you time, weight and handling of entrails with no significant loss of meat.

This method also allows hunters to skip the traditional step of splitting and handling the spine, which can contain fluids associated with chronic wasting disease.

Here's how:

1. With the animal lying on its side,

begin working on the side facing up. Cut off the lower front leg at the knee joint and the lower hind leg at the hock.

2. Separate the front leg from the ribcage and the hind leg from the pelvis at the ball joint. Many hunters do not skin the legs. Leaving the hide on helps keep meat clean.

3. Skin the side of the animal and remove the backstrap.

4. Strip as much meat from the flank, brisket, ribcage, spine and neck as you can, keeping the strips as large as possible. Remember, large pieces are easier to handle and keep clean than small ones.

5. Turn the carcass over and repeat the above steps.

6. Make an incision between the ribcage and pelvis to reach the tenderloins lying along the underside of the spine and any internal organs you wish to keep.

To reduce weight, bone out the legs by flaying them open lengthwise on the inner side and removing the bones. When cool, sack or wrap the meat in clean heavyweight cotton.

For an excellent video on gutless field dressing, contact longtime Wyoming outfitter and RMEF supporter Ron Dube at 307-527-7815.

Boaters stand to lose critical GPS navigational aid

As a result of a proposal by a private company to use radio frequency bandwidth right next to the existing GPS radio bandwidth, the future reliability of the GPS system across the United States is now in question. The nation's largest recreational boaters group, BoatUS, says boaters could have a hard time avoiding treacherous shoals or simply finding their way home if GPS signals are interfered with, and is urging boaters to speak out during a 30-day comment period.

"This is a remarkably short comment period for an issue that has such dire consequences for America's boaters and every other GPS user in the country," said BoatUS Vice President of Government Affairs Margaret Podlich.

At issue is an unusual conditional waiver granted in January by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to a broadband wireless com-

munications provider, LightSquared, to permit the dramatic expansion of land-based use of mobile satellite spectrum. This spectrum, or frequency bandwidth, is directly adjacent to the frequencies used for Global Positioning System (GPS) communications.

The company has proposed to build 40,000 ground stations. LightSquared's high-powered ground-based transmissions from these stations have shown to cause interference in hundreds of millions of GPS receivers across a wide range of uses, including aviation, marine, emergency response and industrial users such as delivery and trucking companies. A new report requested by the FCC says, "all phases of the LightSquared deployment plan will result in widespread harmful interference to GPS signals and service and that mitigation is not possible."

Recreational boaters lost their

only other viable navigation system, LORAN, when the Department of Homeland Security shut the system down last year. At that time the US Coast Guard urged mariners to shift to GPS-based navigation systems. Boaters rely on GPS-enabled chartplotters to steer clear of navigation hazards, keep them in the safety of deep-water channels, or even get them home when storms shut down visibility. "They are a critical piece of safety gear," said Podlich. "What will boaters do if they are unreliable, and how will the US Coast Guard's new emergency search and rescue system that stands watch over 36,985 miles of coastline, Rescue 21, remain effective, since it relies on GPS?"

Boaters and other GPS users are urged to speak up now by going to www.BoatUS.com/gov to send their comments to the FCC and their members of Congress.

Making a big splash

Fishing expenditures total more than \$42 Billion (yes, that's a B) annually in the US, according to the US Fish and Wildlife Service. In those expenditures, anglers opened their wallets wide and dropped nearly \$19 billion on equipment and nearly \$18 billion on trips. The average freshwater angler spent 17 days chasing fish. It is obvious that fishing is big business.

Fishing also generates income another route, through taxes on purchases of fishing gear. Those tax dollars are collected by the IRS and then deposited into the Sport Fishing Restoration Fund. Next, the USFWS distributes the dollars to the state fish and wildlife agencies based on a formula. In the Federal Fiscal Year 2011, Kansas received \$5,050,738. Finally,

the dollars come back to anglers via fish stockings, boat ramp building, public piers, and other programs and projects. Today this program is the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program.

In case you are wondering what is taxed to create those dollars, the list reads like nearly anything you place in your hand to catch a fish, plus more. Rods and reels are a given, as are line, leaders and swivels, hooks, baits and bobbers. Nets, fishing vests, and fish fighting chairs also generate taxes for fisheries. Electric outboard boat motors also are taxed. These taxes range from 3.7% to 9.2%. The idea to let users support the program through excise taxes is unheard of in government where most taxes go to special Congress-approved projects and salaries.

The Dingell-Johnson Sport Fish Restoration Act passed in 1950 and was amended in 1984 to include the federal fuel tax on fuels pumped into boats. All of these dollars are restricted, and the projects and programs have strict guidelines that must be followed. States wanting to raid the bank of funds to balance budgets or pay for other programs, like law enforcement, are met with a stern no—or make that NO WAY!!

The sad news is that the general public never knows or realizes how these funds and projects provide better stewardship of our nation's natural resources. The next time you drink a glass of clean water, thank an angler for their self-imposed taxes and its funding of wetland restoration and improvements to water quality.

INCIDENTS

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“The simple use of a fall restraint system would have prevented these incidents from occurring,” Barrett notes. “Bowhunters need to remind themselves to use these safety devices.

“But the take away message from 2010 is that hunting is still incredibly

safe,” he continues. “Studies consistently show that hunting is one of the safest outdoor activities, with only five injuries per 100,000 participants. With more 19 million hunters in the U.S., our volunteer hunter education instructors should rightfully feel pride in their efforts to educate students. They must be listening.”

As in past years, young hunters were involved in fewer incidents than more seasoned hunters; the average age of

shooters involved in these incidents was 37.

Hunting is indeed safe. According to the National Safety Council, *Injury Facts 2008 Edition*, hunting is by far the safest sport. Figures show that while football players suffer 2,585 injuries per 100,000 participants, baseball players suffer 1,122 injuries per 100,000, and even billiards players suffer 15 injuries per 100,000 participants.

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Failed corn crop manipulation may make fields off-limits to waterfowl hunting

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service issues guidelines, warning

With the recent failed corn crops in Kansas due to this year's drought, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) reminds all hunters and landowners of federal waterfowl hunting regulations concerning crop manipulation (baiting). Farm producers who use their land for hunting or lease the hunting rights on their land need to make sure they are following federal waterfowl hunting regulations concerning baiting.

"With the drought and heat conditions in Kansas this year and the failed corn crops in parts of Kansas, farmers are looking to manipulate some crops to prepare the fields for next year," says Kenny Kessler, USFWS special agent.

"As a waterfowl hunter or land manager, it is your responsibility to know and obey all federal and state laws that govern the sport. While it is permissible

to manipulate a crop for dove hunting, the only legal hunting that can occur for waterfowl is if, under these circumstances, the crop is 'normally' harvested," Kessler explains. "Rotary mowing of a corn crop, for example, would not be a 'normal' harvest, and therefore, hunting waterfowl would not be allowed on or near the areas manipulated."

Hunters should avoid hunting waterfowl over unharvested crops that have been trampled by livestock or subjected to other types of manipulations, such as disking down crops where grain has better scattered or exposed. Areas where grain is present and stored, such as grain elevators and grain bins, are illegal to hunt waterfowl over, as are areas where grain is present for the purpose of feeding livestock. Additionally, hunting over freshly planted wildlife food plots that contain

exposed grain is illegal. Finally, it's illegal to hunt croplands where a crop has been harvested and the removed grain is redistributed or "added back" onto the area where grown.

On the other hand, waterfowl hunting is allowed in fields of unharvested standing crops, including over standing crops that have been flooded. It's also permissible to flood fields after crops are harvested and use these areas for waterfowl hunting. It's advisable for landowners to follow normal harvesting timelines if corn fields are planned to be used for hunting waterfowl.

For additional information, see Waterfowl Hunting and Baiting, and Dove Hunting and Baiting on the USFWS website, www.fws.gov or contact Kessler at 785-232-5149 or Wichita, KS, at 316-788-4474.

KDWPT finds Lesser Prairie-chickens outside current range

Computer modeling system reveals previously unknown breeding grounds

The Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism (KDWPT) recently used Maximum Entropy (MaxEnt) modeling software to target searches for lesser prairie-chicken leks (breeding grounds) outside their current range in northwest Kansas. MaxEnt modeling can identify areas with a high probability of lek occurrence by analyzing presence-only data (not absence data), making it an ideal method for analyzing lek survey data.

"We used MaxEnt to identify areas that had a relatively high probability of occurrence outside the lesser's known range and targeted those areas to survey," says Jim Pitman, small game coordinator for KDWPT. "Finding chickens outside the known range allows us to more accurately delineate the range and better target conserva-

tion programs to ensure they are being implemented in areas where chickens have the best chance to benefit."

The targeted surveys were successful in locating new lek sites and resulted in KDWPT extending the historic lesser prairie-chicken range 30 miles north. Despite high winds making it difficult to detect leks, the biologists found both lesser and greater prairie-chickens and greater/lesser prairie-chicken hybrids, called "guessers," present on 11 leks well outside the current known range of the species. They also located 23 leks occupied solely by greater prairie-chickens and three leks in which species composition could not be identified.

To determine the probability of lek occurrence, the MaxEnt model compares a given set of landscape characteristics at known lek sites to areas where

lek occurrence is unknown. The landscape characteristics include features that could influence lek site selection by the lesser prairie-chicken, such as vegetation type, anthropogenic features, and elevation. The results showed that both biological type — such as vegetation — and anthropogenic features — such as highways — were important in predicting where leks occur.

To identify areas for new lek surveys, the MaxEnt results were filtered to include only areas with a high probability of lek occurrence that overlapped native grassland or CRP in Ellis, Trego, Graham, Sheridan, Rawlins, and Thomas counties. These high-probability areas were then connected creating 15- to 20-mile routes that biologists

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Finding fall turkeys

By Steve Hickoff

The autumn turkey season may be weeks away where you live and hunt, but you can start scouting in late summer. Family flocks with birds of the year, gobbler gangs and broodless hen groups are established in areas now. They stay there or move, conditions depending.

Some fairly predictable seasonal changes follow here.

Late Aug.-Oct. 1: Around the country right now turkey flocks are feeding on insects and loafing in the shade. Ranges might be as large as 1,000 acres—or more. You'll see them one day and not the next. Watch them frequently though as seasons approach and you may establish a pattern. Listen for late-summer and early-fall flocks on the roost, just before daybreak and the phase of time right after. It's then you'll hear the most flock talk. After

fly-down, they may grow silent. Check for the usual telltale evidence in tracks, molted feathers and dusting areas as well. Plot your hunt to come.

Oct. 1-Nov. 15: This is the heart of fall turkey hunting around the country. Many flocks will still hold in their established patterns of movement and feeding. Now's the time to make good on all that planning. It's time to take a bird for your Thanksgiving table. As hunting fall turkeys goes, you can scatter gregarious birds before trying to call them back to the gun or bow. You can simply wait on patterned turkeys. Before leaf drop, flock members you scatter may simply sit in trees until visual evidence in the form of another turkey walks up beneath their limb. They may not call much. After leaf drop, they will call and move through the woods and fields, visually keying on the area they last saw their group. Chances are it's near a favored food

site.

Nov. 15-Dec. 15: This phase signals a shift in food sources. Up north, birds may transition from fields where they've bugged to the woods for hard and soft mast (acorns, berries, etc.). You may think they've disappeared. Nope, they've just shifted preferred feeding zones. If you still have a tag and the seasons are open, get on them. Winter's coming. Birds of the year are much bigger.

Dec. 15-New Year's Day: If a turkey season is still open where you hunt now, look for fall jake (juvenile gobbler) groups that have moved away from family flocks. They're fun to hunt, call a lot and even gobble a bit. Food sources might be concentrated, and you'll find a lot of turkeys there if so. If nuts are widely dispersed, birds might be harder to find right now. As they say, that's why they call it hunting.

Pheasants Forever names Jacobs new representative for western Kansas

Pheasants Forever has named Tony Jacobs of Wichita, Kansas, as the organization's new Regional Representative for western Kansas. Jacobs will work at raising and expending funds on wildlife habitat and conservation education, and also with local, state and federal natural resources agencies on behalf of Kansas Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever chapters.

Jacobs looks to grow Pheasants Forever's presence in Kansas, which is currently home to more than 50 Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever chapters and nearly 7,000 Pheasants Forever and/or Quail Forever members.

Due in part to strides made by Pheasants Forever, Quail Forever and partners, Kansas is recognized

as a national leader in upland hunting opportunities. Jacobs, a lifelong pheasant hunter, wants to continue this upward upland trend by working with regional and national partners in improving and increasing the amount of quality of habitat for both upland birds and upland hunters.

"Kansas has been historically viewed as a model of upland habitat and conservation, and I want to further that image," says Jacobs, "The state has such a great hunting tradition and heritage that, at this point, it is critical that we get out on the ground and provide the quality habitat pheasant and quail need for populations to increase and sustain."

"It's an uphill battle in a lot of the country, but here in Kansas we have

the opportunity to showcase what is possible when time, talent and resources are dedicated to wildlife and habitat conservation. I am very proud to be a part of the nation's leading upland conservation organization, and I am looking forward to fostering, promoting and growing the Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever mission," added Jacobs.

A native of Wichita, Kansas, Jacobs earned a B.S. in Hospitality Management from Kansas State University and a Master's Degree in Business Administration from Friends University. He will work out of his office in Ellis, Kansas and can be reached at (785) 764-6240 or Email Tony at tjacobs@pheasantsforever.org.

Proposed legislation could affect Migratory Bird Treaty Act

Measure could change activities in lands within 100 miles of coasts and national borders

The U.S. House of Representatives held a hearing in July on legislation (H.R. 1505) sponsored by Rep. Rob Bishop (Utah) and 39 others that would allow the Department of Homeland Security to waive a wide variety of conservation and environmental laws on federal lands located within 100 miles of the U.S. coastline and national borders. The intention of the bill is to prevent illegal immigration and drug smuggling. While the goal of the bill is to strengthen national security, experts testified it could have much broader implications on the ability to manage federal lands for wildlife and for water quality due to legislative provisions that would affect the ability of the Department of the Interior and the U.S. Department of Agriculture to carry out environmental laws and policies.

During recent congressional tes-

timony, Professor John D. Leshy from U.C. Hastings College of Law recognized the importance and challenges of keeping our borders secure, but expressed concern that H.R. 1505 “would put a cloud over every action every federal land manager might think proper to carry out his or her responsibilities under federal law to protect the lands and fish and wildlife and other resources.”

Under the bill, DHS could specifically allow the exemption of these lands from the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (and a host of other laws) making it unclear how that could affect management activities, including hunting on federal lands in the designated areas. The Migratory Bird Treaty Act implements the 1916 Migratory Bird Treaty between Canada and the United States, which outlines the process for setting waterfowl hunting seasons and

managing the waterfowl resource. Typically, hunting seasons are closed unless specifically opened. Exempting significant areas of the United States from the MBTA could prevent certain lands from being opened for the hunting of waterfowl. The lands of seven states, including Florida, could be impacted along with significant portions of other areas including California, southern Louisiana, Texas, Chesapeake Bay and the Great Lakes region.

“Keeping our nation secure is an important issue,” DU Director of Governmental Affairs Scott Sutherland said. “However, it seems unlikely we should have to choose between protecting the country’s border and conserving and hunting waterfowl. DU will monitor progress of the legislation and, if the bill progresses, work to ensure important conservation efforts and hunting are not negatively impacted.”

State sales tax does not apply to Kansas hunt fees

Kansas hunting guides and non-guided hunt fees are not subject to state sales tax, the Kansas Department of Revenue determined in August.

“This decision will help Kansas hunting guides keep their prices competitive and encourage more people to take advantage of Kansas’ outdoor hunting and fishing opportunities,”

said Revenue Secretary Nick Jordan. “Gov. Sam Brownback is promoting our state’s world-class outdoor tourism opportunities, and this will keep these activities more affordable.”

There had been a question for a number of years about whether hunting guide fees should be considered a taxable charge for participation in sport-

ing or recreational activity or a charge for a nontaxable service.

The ruling also determined that game birds purchased by a controlled shooting area operator from a bird breeder for release at a controlled shooting area would be considered a retail sale and the retail sales tax would apply to the transaction.

CHICKENS

Continued from Page 15

could search.

Historically, the lesser prairie-chicken was found throughout western Kansas, but over time its range receded due to habitat loss and degradation. The federal Conservation Reserve Program is given much credit for the species’

apparent stability in western Kansas, and the new software model is helping identify the extent of that stability, or perhaps even growth.

“MaxEnt is working really well, and we feel comfortable that this model is doing a good job of predicting where lessers occur,” Pitman explains. “Since we don’t have the manpower to survey every square inch of potential range, MaxEnt will be very useful for target-

ing our surveys, and most importantly, conservation programs in the future.”

Because of the success of the KDWP MaxEnt model, the Western Governors Association (WGA) is supporting state wildlife agencies from Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, New Mexico, and Colorado in developing a range-wide lesser prairie-chicken support system that incorporates MaxEnt modeling results, along with other products.

Quivira National Wildlife Refuge begins restoring 760 acres of wetland habitat

This year, with help from a \$25,000 PLJV ConocoPhillips grant, Quivira National Wildlife Refuge embarked on a project to restore and enhance 760 acres of wetland habitat. The first unit of 34 acres was completed in February; restoration work is scheduled to resume in August or September and continue through the fall.

The refuge, located in south central Kansas, is a sand prairie-wetland complex with various types of wetlands supporting a diversity of wildlife, including migrating waterfowl and shorebirds. It is one of the few migration “stepping stones” in the southern Great Plains and is recognized as an Audubon Important Bird Area and a site of importance to shorebirds by the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network, as well as a Ramsar wetland of international importance. Many of these birds—such as the Northern Pintail, Mallard, Greater White-fronted Goose, Snowy Plover, American Avocet, Long-billed Dowitcher, Whooping and Sandhill Cranes, and American White Pelican—are PLJV priority species.

Decades ago, soils were moved to form dikes and ditches leaving many narrow, deep open water sites, called borrow areas, which cannot be completely drained except by evaporation. These borrow areas and other cattail-choked sites are being transformed into moist-soil habitat that can be more efficiently drained and flooded to encourage annual plant and invertebrate production and increase the availability of food for shorebirds and waterfowl.

“When we recontour the wetland basins, we can manage them more effectively and efficiently,” says Refuge Manager Dan Severson. “In a normal year, our goal is to be able to flood those units at a more optimum level with less water.”

In addition to the borrow areas, the wetlands have been negatively impacted by the depletion of the Ogallala Aquifer due to pumping for irrigation of agricultural crops, water development projects, and urbanization. The restoration project is only one of the ways Quivira National Wildlife Refuge is dealing with a declining water table. According to Severson,

“Other management practices—such as controlling salt cedar, Russian olive, and cottonwood trees growing in the prairie uplands—also help us cope with the fact that less water is getting into the refuge.”

Based on an assessment of the impacts of climate change in the playa lakes region by the World Wildlife Fund, *Anthropogenic Climate Change in the Playa Lakes Joint Venture Region*, the complex of wetland habitats occurring in and around Quivira National Wildlife Refuge may become even more critical to wetland-dependent species over time. The assessment predicts drier conditions in the south and southwest, which is likely to shift bird migrations to the east and range distributions to the north, making the wetlands at Quivira National Wildlife Refuge even more important in the future.

The restoration project at Quivira National Wildlife Refuge is made possible by funds from Ducks Unlimited, US Fish and Wildlife Service, George Stumps Wetland Trust and Playa Lakes Joint Venture.

Sportsmen oppose bill to open public-lands backcountry to development

Sportsmen-focused groups and businesses are urging Congress to reject wrongheaded legislation that would open tens of millions of acres of backcountry fish and wildlife habitat to development, the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership announced August 12.

“Banking on the Backcountry,” signed by 270 businesses and organizations from across the country, urges the federal government to “maintain maximum roadless acreages” and “support sustainable, backcountry-dependent economies.”

American sportsmen are uniting in support of roadless backcountry conservation during a time of public debate

over the controversial H.R. 1581, the Wilderness and Roadless Area Release Act. This legislation would effectively overturn the 2001 Roadless Rule, a multiple-use management plan for 49 million acres of backcountry national forest lands in 37 states.

“Most people acquire hunting books because they plan to go hunting themselves,” said Dale Burk, owner and publisher of Stoneydale Press Publishing Co. in Stevensville, Mont., and a supporter of “Banking on the Backcountry.” “Developing our nation’s backcountry public lands will result in fewer opportunities for Americans to hunt and fish. We need to conserve backcountry lands

not only for the future of our Western heritage but to uphold the well-being of many businesses, large and small, that rely on sportsmen revenue to stay in business.”

H.R. 1581 also calls into question the future of state-specific roadless rules for Colorado and Idaho. While the Colorado rule has not been finalized, the Idaho rule provides strong safeguards for national forest roadless areas in the state and benefits fish, wildlife and sportsmen. Hunters and anglers are working to achieve a similar conservation success in Colorado.

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Vanishing Paradise praises senators for cosponsoring restoration bill

Vanishing Paradise - a joint effort of National Wildlife Federation (NWF) and Ducks Unlimited (DU) - thanked a bipartisan coalition of Gulf Senators July 21 for cosponsoring the RESTORE Gulf Coast Act. The legislation allocates funds equally to the five Gulf Coast states for ecological and economic recovery, and establishes the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council to develop and fund a comprehensive plan for the ecological recovery and resiliency of the Gulf Coast. The oil spill compounded already degraded habitats that support many species of fish, waterfowl and other wildlife.

Senators Mary Landrieu (D-LA) and Richard Shelby (R-AL) are the original cosponsors of the bill, and are now joined by Senators David Vitter, (R-LA), Jeff Sessions (R-AL), Thad Cochran, (R-MS), Roger Wicker (R-MS), Bill Nelson (D-FL), Marco Rubio, (R-FL) and Kay Bailey-Hutchison (R-TX).

Sen. Barbara Boxer (D-CA), Chair of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, who was instrumental in securing the agreement among the senators, has pledged to consider this bill in her committee quickly.

“The Gulf region has suffered from years of degradation, and the oil spill added insult to injury,” Land Tawney, NWF’s Senior Manager for Sportsmen Leadership, said. “We look forward to working with the Gulf delegation, other members of Congress and the administration on passage of a bill that makes this critical ecosystem whole again. The Mississippi River Delta is a national treasure, important to hunters and anglers from all corners of our country. We applaud the efforts led by Senators Landrieu and Shelby to restore this ‘Sportsman’s Paradise.’”

A bipartisan poll this spring showed that 83 percent of voters nationwide support - and 69 percent strongly support - dedicating the Gulf oil spill

penalties to restoring the Mississippi River Delta and Gulf Coast. The poll also showed that an overwhelming majority of conservative voters favor this proposal, including 76 percent of Republicans and 78 percent of voters who agree with the Tea Party movement.

Nearly 500 miles - almost half - of the coastline in Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama and Florida that was contaminated by the Gulf oil spill remain oiled one year later, according to the National Atmospheric and Oceanic Administration.

“Coastal Louisiana is one of the most significant wintering areas for waterfowl in North America and plays an important role in our nation’s rich waterfowling tradition,” DU’s Director of Public Policy Barton James said. “Hunting and fishing are vital streams of revenue for our nation’s economy. By investing in coastal wetlands, we are also investing in our economy.”

Nunavut shorebird flies through Hurricane Irene — and survives

Chinquapin headed south Aug. 22 from Southampton Island

From the Nunatsiaq News

A plucky shorebird on its way south from Nunavut’s Southampton Island made headlines this week in the United States when it survived a flight through Hurricane Irene, the same storm that caused New York City to shut down for a day.

Whimbrels are long-beaked brown shorebirds, which spend their summers in Nunavut where they seek out wet lowlands and shores.

On Aug. 22 a whimbrel – dubbed Chinquapin by the team that tagged the bird in 2010 — started off on his annual, 4,000-plus kilometre journey to the mouth of the Amazon in Brazil, traveling at speeds of up to 80 km an hour.

Chinquapin’s travels have been tracked since May, 2010, when researchers in the southern U.S. fitted him with a tiny radio transmitter.

Since then, biologists at the Center for Conservation Biology in Virginia have been following Chinquapin’s path — and they were nervous last Wednesday when the bird flew right through the dangerous northeast section of the hurricane.

But on Saturday, their tracking showed Chinquapin was resting on Eleuthera Island in the Caribbean.

Whimbrels are “capable of really amazing migration flights” of up to 5,600 km without a rest, according to Bryan Watts, director of the College of William and Mary’s Center for Conservation Biology.

“[But] it’s sort of bad to hit a big storm at the end of a flight that long,” Watts told *USA Today*.

Before Chinquapin set off from Nunavut, he had likely doubled his weight, which helped provide him with enough energy to fly through the hurricane.

But it’s still a mystery to biologists how Chinquapin managed to stay his course: other migratory birds have been known to die or lose their way when traveling through a storm like Hurricane Irene, with its winds of 175 km/h.

In 2010 this same bird flew around Tropical Storm Colin while a second bird flew into the storm and did not survive.

New study confirms significant land loss along Louisiana coast

Coastal Louisiana has lost more than 1.2 million acres in the past 78 years, according to a new study by the U.S. Geological Survey National Wetlands Research Center. The study analyzed wetland changes from 1932 to 2010 and provides a more accurate picture than previously available.

"This more detailed analysis provides vital information for conservation planning," Bob Dew, DU manager of conservation programs in Louisiana, said. "We have a clearer picture of which areas are in greatest need of restoration efforts, and which areas are most likely to contribute to future land gains."

Ducks Unlimited's coastal habitat programs have restored more than 100,000 acres in Louisiana, including marshes in areas like the Barataria and Terrebonne basins - two of the areas undergoing the greatest wetland loss, according to the study.

"By understanding land change on the Louisiana coast, decision makers

can make informed choices about how to actively manage the land to help reduce future loss," Phil Turnipseed, USGS National Wetlands Research Center director, said. "We can't manage what we don't measure."

Louisiana land loss accounts for nearly 90 percent of the total coastal marsh loss in the contiguous U.S. Much of the land loss is caused by depriving the marshes within the Mississippi River Delta of sediment. Dams, levees and channels along the Mississippi River and its tributaries have cut off the source of land-building sediment responsible for forming and sustaining coastal marshes.

But there is hope.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers diverts 30 percent of the Mississippi River through the Atchafalaya River system, and its delta is growing.

The Atchafalaya and Wax Lake Deltas have grown significantly since the 1970s proving land building is still possible when freshwater and sedi-

ments are allowed to flow into adjacent wetlands.

"Ducks Unlimited has long advocated for sustainable ecosystem restoration of the Mississippi River Delta by reconnecting the river to its marshes," Dew said. "This study further demonstrates the strength of that solution."

The Gulf Coast winters 40 percent of the continent's waterfowl population and boasts some of the best waterfowl hunting in the country. For that reason, coastal restoration is a top priority for Ducks Unlimited.

"We know we've already lost 1.2 million acres of this important area, which is home to the largest population of wintering waterfowl in North America. We have a duty to address this national scale catastrophe, a duty to our children and their children," Dew said. "The loss of Gulf Coast habitat is one of the most significant threats to waterfowl on the continent, and everyone has a stake in the outcome."

LWCF funding widely supported by the public

In mid-July, two polling firms - one Democratic, one Republican - partnered to complete a national survey of voters to measure public support for the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). LWCF, using a portion of revenue from offshore oil and gas drilling fees, has traditionally been used to conserve land for parks, wildlife refuges, forests, rivers, trails, and other important federal, state, and local public lands, many of which are vital bird habitats.

The July polling showed over-

whelming support for LWCF, support that cuts across party and demographic lines, despite deep voter anxiety about the economy and federal budget. Here are some findings of note:

- 85% of Americans support full funding (\$900 million per year) for LWCF.
- 88% of Americans oppose future diversions of funding that has been committed to LWCF.
- 60% of Americans agree that money diverted from LWCF in the past should be repaid over time.

Among those in support of contin-

ued funding were:

- 93% of Democrats, 87% of Independents, and 83% of Republicans.
- 95% of Latinos, 88% of Whites, and 85% of African Americans.

For more details, see: <http://lwcf-coalition.org/files/LWCF%20Press%20Release%20National%20Poll.pdf>.

LWCF is one of the programs on the chopping block in budget deficit reduction legislation. Concerned conservationists should contact their senators and representative and let them know how they feel about LWCF.

U.S. Forest Service finds global forests absorb one-third of carbon emissions annually

Forests play a more significant role in removing carbon from the atmosphere than first reported by absorbing one-third of carbon emissions annually, a new U.S. Forest Service study says.

“Forests provide us with abundant clean air,” said U.S. Forest Service Chief Tom Tidwell. “This study shows the important role global forests play in keeping the air clean and it also broadens our understanding of how climate change relates to forest management in today’s world.”

Forests absorb carbon like a giant sponge into what scientists call a carbon sink. Oceans serve as the only other natural source for absorption of significant amounts of carbon. Until these new findings, many experts said forests played a less important role in removing carbon from the air we breathe. Today’s report indicates otherwise.

The study, conducted by the U.S. Forest Service’s Northern Research

Station and a team of scientists from around the world, was recently published in the journal *Science* online, at the Science Express website, an online publication of the nonprofit American Association for the Advancement of Science.

One of the key findings in the study is that global forests have annually removed 2.4 billion tons of carbon and absorbed 8.8 billion tons of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, or about one-third of fossil fuel emissions annually from the period of 1990-2007.

“The new information suggests forests alone account for the most significant terrestrial carbon sink, and that non-forest lands collectively cannot be considered a major carbon absorption sink,” said Dr. Yude Pan, a U.S. Forest Service scientist and a lead author of the study.

The study reveals the dominant role of tropical forests. Tropical forests that have not suffered from deforestation

absorb enormous amounts of carbon, more than all other northern hemisphere forests combined. The analysis also identified an additional large carbon uptake of 1.6 billion tons per year in tropical re-growth forests that are recovering from deforestation and logging, which partially compensates for a large carbon source from tropical deforestation.

The study also highlights the risk of passively relying on forests to continue to remove carbon from the atmosphere. Such carbon sequestration is reversible through increased drought, wildfire and forest degradation.

The study is an important example of the use of monitoring data on the state and change of forests around the world, and of the need for global cooperation among the scientific community to address the impacts of human activities on the earth system. For a copy of the study, e-mail scipak@aaas.org.

BILL

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“Coloradans have spent the past five years working together to strengthen and improve the Colorado roadless rule for the benefit of state’s outdoor heritage,” said Suzanne O’Neill, executive direc-

tor of the Colorado Wildlife Federation. “This bill would effectively obliterate those efforts. We oppose this top-down legislation that threatens 4.2 million acres of public-lands backcountry in Colorado.”

“This legislation works against decades of peer-reviewed science and the interests of hunters and anglers,” said Joel Webster, director of the TRCP Cen-

ter for Western Lands. “State fish and wildlife agencies in Montana, Colorado and New Mexico have developed reports strongly recommending that roadless areas be conserved for the benefit of big game, wild fisheries and sportsmen. The habitat security provided by roadless areas must be sustained in order to uphold maximum hunting and angling opportunities on public land.”

HEROES

Continued from Page 1

a new Toyota Tundra truck! The \$500 from the initial nomination was placed in the KWF account to offset expenses for the OAC last June. The \$5,000 that will be received as a yearly finalist will be used to purchase additional materials and supplies for OAC, as well as

4-H Sportfishing and Shooting Sports/ Archery programs that Tommie and Theresa are involved with in Lincoln County and statewide.

“We are humbled by the recognition and excited that some have noticed what we do for the kids,” said Theresa Berger, Outdoor Adventure Camp Coordinator. “We believe that what we do and teach will make Kansas youngsters better stewards of the environment and better conservation leaders of tomor-

row. We are honored to be recognized and are looking forward to our trip to Washington, DC in October.”

“The Kansas Wildlife Federation is proud of the recognition that Tommie and Theresa have received for their efforts involved with the Outdoor Adventure Camp,” said Don Snider, KWF President. “Their contribution of time and expertise has contributed greatly to the success of the OAC over the last 23 years.”

National fish habitat legislation introduced in Senate

On June 15th Senator Joe Lieberman (ID-CT) announced the introduction of the National Fish Habitat Conservation Act. This legislation, which would significantly advance ongoing efforts to restore and protect fish habitats, improves the health of America's waterways and ensures that the United States has robust fish populations well into the future. The legislation would establish the most comprehensive effort ever attempted to treat the causes of fish habitat decline.

"Healthy waterways and robust fish populations are vital to the well-being of our society and are essential in many communities throughout the United States," said Lieberman. "This bill will

help provide clean water and sustainable fisheries in this country and provide recreational value to those who fish, whether it is in wild waters or canoeing through peaceful streams. I look forward to working with my colleagues to pass this important legislation and reverse the decline of our ailing waterways and fisheries."

The National Fish Habitat Conservation Act authorizes assistance grants for fish habitat projects that are supported by pre-existing regional Fish Habitat Partnerships. Based on the highly successful North American Wetlands Conservation Act model, the bill establishes a multi-stakeholder National Fish Habi-

tat Board to recommend science-based conservation projects to the Secretary of Interior for assistance. Regional partners will then work to implement those conservation projects to protect, restore and enhance fish habitats and fish populations.

The bill is co-sponsored by Senators Mike Crapo (R-ID), Jon Tester (D-MT), Jeff Bingaman (D-NM), Lisa Murkowski (R-AK), Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI), Mark Begich (D-AK), Ben Cardin (D-MD), Mark Udall (D-CO) and Amy Klobuchar (D-MN).

To read the text of the legislation, go to <http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/z?c112:S.1201>:

CRP habitat loss major contributor to decline in SD pheasant numbers

South Dakota's annual pheasant brood survey results are in, revealing a 46 percent decrease in the pheasants-per-mile index from last year. While the hard winter of 2010-2011 didn't do ringnecks any favors, Pheasants Forever says the more troubling statistic is the 25 percent loss in Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acreage in the state since 2007, a loss that finally appears to be catching up to the state's overall pheasant population.

CRP grassland habitat is essential for pheasant production, and enrollment in South Dakota has declined from 1.56 million acres in 2007 to the current 1.17 million acres. According to the South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks Department, that reduction equates to more than 600 square miles of grassland habitat. Comparatively, pheasant numbers in the state are now 41 percent lower than the average of the past 10 years, a period that represented a modern historical high.

"Even South Dakota, the crown jewel of pheasant habitat and pheasant hunting, is not immune to the devastating ef-

fects of large-scale upland habitat loss," says Dave Nomsen, Pheasants Forever's Vice President of Government Affairs and a lifelong pheasant hunter who visits South Dakota each autumn. "We knew this day was coming when important pheasant habitats provided by the cover in Conservation Reserve Program fields were lost," Jeff Vonk, Secretary of the South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks Department, said in his agency's 2011 Pheasant Outlook.

With an additional 500,000-plus acres of South Dakota CRP land slated to expire in the next five years, Nomsen says it's imperative pheasant hunters and conservationists speak up in support of the heralded land conservation program in the upcoming federal Farm Bill debate. "Right now, the landscape of South Dakota is ground zero for conservation. Anyone who's enjoyed the phenomenal pheasant hunting in South Dakota the last decade can thank the Conservation Reserve Program. Now it's time to give back and let federal policy makers know how strongly we feel about protecting upland habitat."

Nomsen added, "Additionally, the use of targeted CRP SAFE acres is part of the solution right now, but unfortunately USDA has not addressed this need in South Dakota by allocating additional acres even when the state's landowners have shown continued demand for the practice."

Despite a steep decline in this year's index, South Dakota still boasts the highest pheasant population in the country. "A poor year by South Dakota standards is an excellent year anywhere else, so pheasant hunters do need to put these percentages in perspective," Nomsen said. "All things considered, pheasant numbers in much of the traditional pheasant range of the state are still good despite the declines in the counts," Vonk said, "Much of South Dakota will continue to provide a premier opportunity to hunt pheasants." Even with extremely unfavorable weather conditions and loss of CRP lands, South Dakota's pheasant abundance is still comparable to levels of the 1990s-early 2000s when the overall pheasant harvest averaged a respectable 1.2 million birds annually.

NSSF offers colleges \$300,000 in grants for shooting programs

In just two years, the Collegiate Shooting Sports Initiative (CSSI) developed by the National Shooting Sports Foundation has awarded more than \$300,000 to 40 colleges to help establish, expand and sustain shooting clubs and teams. NSSF wants to add to that support. This school year NSSF will make a total of \$300,000 in funding available to colleges.

“We’re seeing that college students are eager to participate in the shooting sports if given the opportunity,” said Zach Snow, NSSF manager of shooting promotions. “NSSF grants are stimulating interest in collegiate target shooting and firearms safety programs across the country.”

Schools that have received CSSI grants include Harvard, Yale, Clemson, Colorado State, University of Arkansas-Fort Smith, Fort Hays State and the University of Vermont.

CSSI grant-supported programs have helped double participation at the ACUI Intercollegiate Clay

Target Championship over the last three years. The 2011 championships featured 439 students representing 50 schools.

These are avid competitive target shooters. The majority of participants shoot three or more events, with 88 percent taking aim in trapshooting, the tournament’s top event. Participation in sporting clays, another shotgun clay target sport, rose by 42 percent over last year. Snow reports that the ACUI office receives an average of ten inquiries per month from parents, students and coaches asking how to start a college team and get involved with the ACUI tournament.

While competition attracts one type of student, recreational target shooting draws students who want an introduction to the shooting sports and firearms safety. NSSF grants are helping to establish these campus-organized clubs. Such widespread interest prompted NSSF to develop its “How to Start a Club” resource guide. The document

is filled with helpful advice on starting both competitive teams and recreational shooting clubs, and includes samples of membership forms and club bylaws.

NSSF’s Collegiate Shooting Sports Initiative is closely allied with the Scholastic Clay Target Program that was founded by NSSF and is now administered by the Scholastic Shooting Sports Foundation. SCTP is a nationwide program for youth target shooters that provides competition, championships and scholarship opportunities. SCTP, a feeder program for many college shooting teams, recently added a collegiate division.

“Students coming out of SCTP and other youth programs want to continue participating when they get to college and also share these lifelong sports with their new friends,” said Snow.

Anyone interested in starting or strengthening a college shotgun, rifle or pistol team or club can find resources and grant opportunities at www.nssf.org/college.

A runaway train in the making: The exotic amphibian, reptiles and crocodilians of Florida

By Walter E. Meshaka, Jr.

As of 2004, 40 exotic species of herpetofauna occurred in established populations in Florida (Meshaka et al. 2004a), and two years later, Meshaka (2006) reviewed the inclusion of six more species. Yet another species appeared as established in 2007. In light of a wealth of new published information since Meshaka et al. (2004a) went to press and a continuing accumulation of new exotic species and colonies of existing exotic

species, it became apparent that an update of Meshaka et al. (2004a) was warranted.

Thus, this new edition is both a snapshot in time and a progress report, providing a summary of Florida’s exotic herpetofaunal phenomenon. Its goal remains unchanged: to convey to an audience of budding naturalists, land managers, professional biologists, and those at regulatory institutions what is currently known and unknown about the established ecology and colonization

dynamics of each established species. This will better enable interested individuals to understand the colonization process and will provide them useful information with which to make wise management decisions.

A pdf of this 2011 Herpetological Conservation and Biology 6 (Monograph 1): 1-101 is available from the Herpetological Conservation and Biology website at http://herpconbio.org/Volume_6/Monograph_1/Meshaka_2011.pdf.

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

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

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

How You Can Help:

- * **Basic Membership:** As a Basic member, for 30 you'll receive 6 issues of the KWF newsletter packed with the latest information on wildlife resources, events and issues around the state. You also have voting privileges at the KWF Annual Meeting.
- * **Expanded Membership:** When you send in your Expanded member dues of \$75, you receive the basic membership benefits, and, as a bonus, a free copy of *Watching Kansas Wildlife: A Guide to 101 Sites* and a complimentary ticket to the KWF Annual Meeting
- * **Kansan:** For an annual fee of \$125, you receive all the benefits listed above plus a copy of the book *Kansas Wildlife*.

Here's How to Join:

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

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