



Planning *the* Future

STRATEGIC PLAN ACCOMPLISHMENTS

2014-2015





Strategic Planning Goals

GOAL 1: TO CONSERVE AND ENHANCE FISH AND WILDLIFE POPULATIONS AND THEIR HABITATS.

GOAL 2: TO INCREASE OPPORTUNITY FOR, AND SAFE PARTICIPATION IN HUNTING, FISHING, TRAPPING, BOATING AND OTHER WILDLIFE-RELATED ACTIVITIES.

GOAL 3: TO FOSTER A MORE INFORMED AND INVOLVED PUBLIC.

GOAL 4: TO EXPAND AND DIVERSIFY OUR USER BASE.

GOAL 5: TO CREATE A MORE DIVERSE, EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT ORGANIZATION.

Wild turkey in spring }

THIS OVERVIEW OF accomplishments, activities and advances in wildlife-associated conservation and recreation represents just a portion of the work carried out by the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources in 2014-15. On many fronts, these activities are on-going and designed to provide state residents with continuous opportunities to benefit from well-managed wildlife and fisheries resources within the Commonwealth.



The millions of residents and non-residents who engage in wildlife associated recreation in the Bluegrass State, and who generate a total of almost six billion dollars within the economy, signifies the importance Kentuckians place on the kind of work the agency conducts. It is the mission of the KDFWR to maintain, improve and perpetuate the state's game and nongame resources for the enjoyment of all its citizens today, tomorrow and beyond.

Economic Impact Data

Anglers, Hunters, Boaters, and other wildlife-related users

WILDLIFE-ASSOCIATED RECREATION IN KENTUCKY

ACTIVITY	PARTICIPANTS	TOTAL ECONOMIC IMPACT
<i>Fishing</i>	554,000	\$1.2 Billion
<i>Hunting</i>	347,000	\$1.5 Billion
<i>Wildlife Watching</i>	1,319,000	\$1.3 Billion
<i>Boating</i>	1,200,000	\$1.94 Billion
	3,420,000	\$5.94 Billion

Total Economic Impact
\$5.94 Billion



License Sales:

For the third year running, the agency experienced a record volume of license and permit sales, totaling 1.03 Million units.

Photo by OBIE WILLIAMS

Administration



Commissioner:

In May 2014, Gregory K. Johnson was appointed as Commissioner of the Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Department. Within months of Commissioner Johnson taking the helm, numerous internal advances in employee training were initiated, as were steps to re-focus the agency on improved service and attention to the needs of sportsmen and women throughout the Commonwealth.



Engaging Constituents:

KDFWR exhibited in outdoor shows, ranging from regional boat shows in Louisville and Lexington to the Kentucky Deer and Turkey Expo to the Kentucky State Fair.



Elk Success:

Elk hunt applications totaled over 70,000 despite a 10% reduction in the number of available permits. KDFWR was also honored with the 2014 RMEF Conservationist of the Year award by the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation .

Connecting through Social Media:



We continued to grow social media impact, reaching 100,000 Facebook fans and building engagement in our twitter accounts that provide timely information on programs from the Department, our Wildlife Education Center, and Fisheries Districts, respectively. One Facebook post reached nearly 450,000 people. We enjoy over 12,000 Followers on Twitter. The Public Affairs Division received a KAGC Award of Excellence in "Social Media" in 2015.



Appointments and Promotions:

Dr. Karen Waldrop was promoted to Deputy Commissioner and Steve Beam promoted to Wildlife Director. Joe West was appointed Director of Law Enforcement, Billye Haslett was appointed as Division of Administrative Services Director, and Charles O. Bush to Deputy Commissioner, as well.

Information and Education



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Kentucky Afield Television:

Kentucky Afield YouTube Channel has had 24,539,000 views to date. For fiscal year 2014 (June 30, 2013 – July 1, 2014) the show was viewed 3,930,597 times. In 2014 the entire *Kentucky Afield* crew received Emmy Awards for their work on the Carp Madness video. In addition, Tim Farmer received a second Emmy Award for his role as host of *Kentucky Afield*. In all, the show's staff has won 14 Emmy's in the last 10 years.



Facilities:

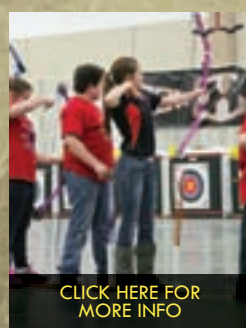
Construction of a new dining hall at Camp Currie was identified as an agency priority. Funding has been earmarked for the project and a consultant has been hired to help select a design. Construction is projected to begin fall of 2016.



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BOW:

In 2014 and 2015, more than 250 women attended one or more Becoming an Outdoors-Woman workshops to learn outdoor skills associated with the hunting, fishing and boating sports. BOW workshops are coordinated and chiefly taught by volunteer instructors who give their time to promote recreational activities that financially support conservation to non-traditional female audiences.



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National Archery in the Schools Program (NASP):

The Kentucky Archery in the Schools program (the most successful in the nation) had 110,000 school children at 532 schools participating in 2014. The Kentucky State Championship Archery in the Schools Tournament set a new record with 180 teams and 4,230 students competing.



Conservation Education:

Conservation education programs were presented to 66,494, 4th, 5th, and 6th grade students at 639 different schools in 2014.



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Salato Wildlife Education Center:

The Salato Wildlife Education Center had a total attendance of 53,004 in 2014. Kentucky's schools extensively use Salato for outdoor and science education.



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Hunter Education:

In 2014 the 15,262 students earned their hunter education certification cards in courses taught by the Hunter Education Program.



Conservation Camps:

During the 2014 season 4,981 children attended the department's 3 residential summer camps. A special Venture Camp week was held for 7th & 8th grade students. Venture Camp was designed to deliver advanced programs for children that had previously attended camp and exceeded the age limit to attend traditional camps. Also, a special camp was held for Girls Inc. that focused on girls and young women from challenging backgrounds.

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Fisheries Division



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Resource Improvements:

The Department has added a new research branch, Critical Species Investigations; dedicated to investigating fish that are listed as species of concern in Kentucky (such as paddlefish) and to invasive species control including Asian carp. Among the southern states, Kentucky has taken a leadership role in the effort to control and reduce threats imposed by Asian carp. We are currently working with many state and federal agencies to research and reduce Asian carp throughout the Ohio River and in Kentucky and Barkley lakes.



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Creating Habitat:

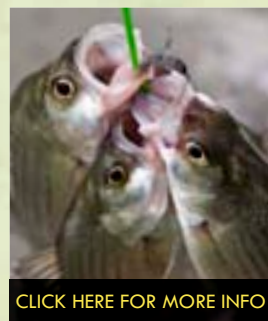
The Fees-in-lieu Of (FILO) program completed six miles of stream restoration and gained approval to begin work on 70 more miles of streams in the Commonwealth. More than half of the Hatchery Creek restoration project below Wolf Creek Dam on Lake Cumberland was completed, and will create new trout fishing opportunities in a very high-use area when opened in early summer 2016.



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Better Fishing Opportunities:

Approximately two miles of shoreline at Cave Run Lake was enhanced with 1,000 habitat structures in 2014, and a Reservoir Habitat Improvement grant received by the agency for \$10,000 to continue work into 2015.



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Raising Quality Fish:

Department hatcheries produced over 7 million fish, including 18 species and hybrids, while crews logged over 140,000 miles across the state stocking fish in an abundance of waterways.

Easy Access:

Expanded the Fishing-in-Neighborhoods (FINs) Program to 40 lakes, which influenced 31% of those fishing in those waters to purchase a fishing license and enjoy the fishing experience. More than 140,000 rainbow trout, 100,000 channel and blue catfish and 64,000 hybrid sunfish were released in FINs lakes in 2014.

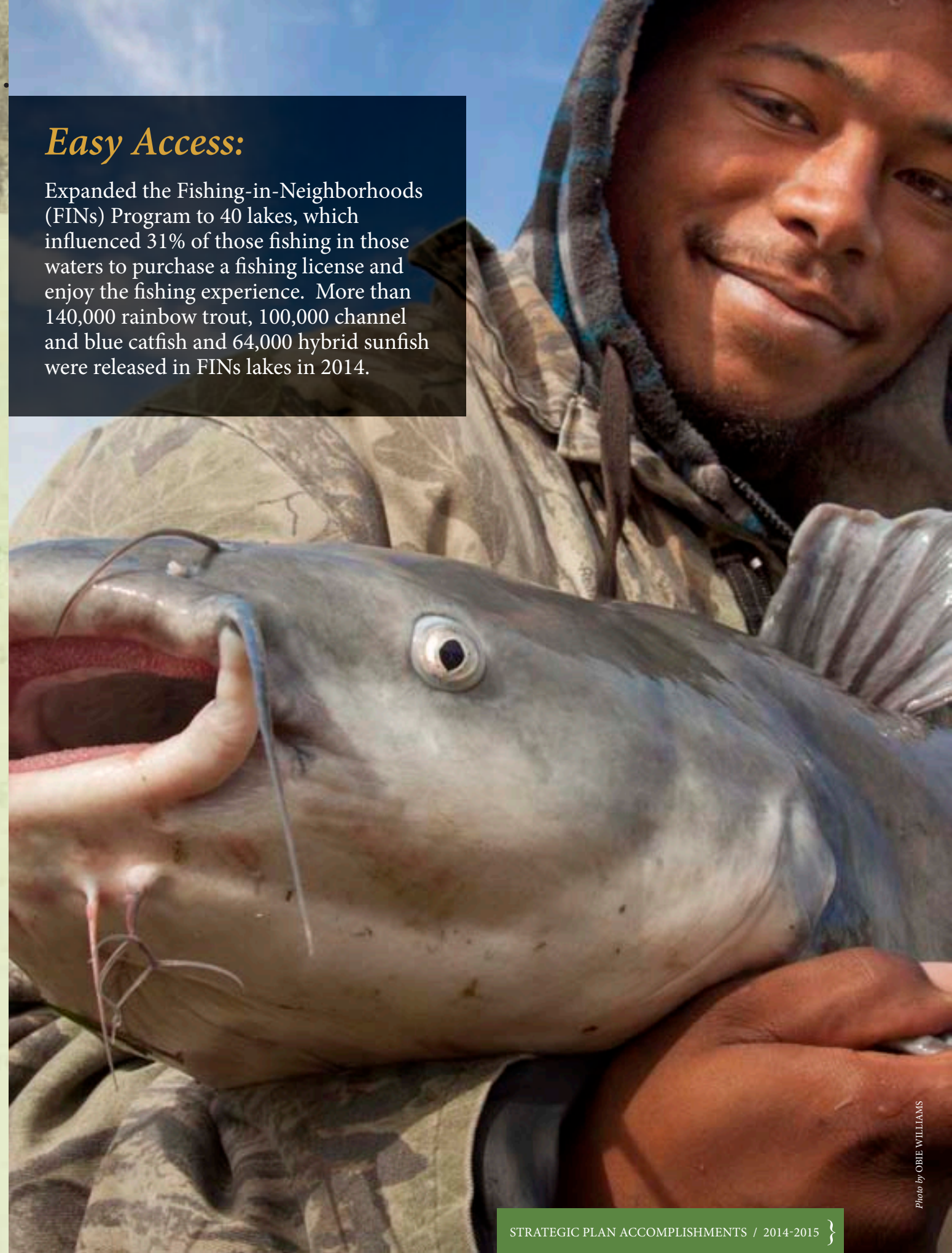


Photo by OBIE WILLIAMS



Wildlife Division

Grouse Initiative:

Conducted three public meetings in Eastern Kentucky to discuss grouse management effort and gain public input on future grouse restoration plans in that region.

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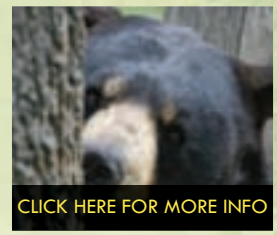
Conservation:

The agency entered a cooperative partnership with wildlife managers in Wisconsin to begin trapping and shipping 150 elk for restoration there. In return, KDFWR will receive \$450,000 in funding for forest management efforts aimed at benefitting woodland species, including grouse, in eastern Kentucky.



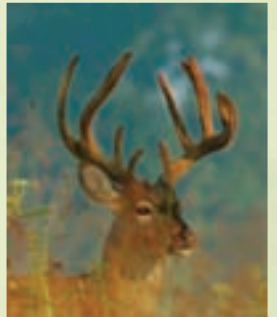
Forest Management:

Obtained three skid steers for use in forest management work – two donated by the League of Kentucky Sportsmen and one purchased.



Back The B.E.A.R.S.:

Agency biologists joined with numerous partners from Kentucky, Tennessee and Virginia at Cumberland Gap National Park for a two-day “Back The B.E.A.R.S. (Be Educated And Responsible Stewards) event that informed more than 1,500 students and area residents about how to co-exist with black bears in their communities.



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Hunting Experience:

Kentucky is the top state in the nation for quality deer hunting experiences.



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Quail Restoration:

A 5-year benchmark report on quail restoration efforts within the Commonwealth was published. Kentucky hosted biologists from 14 states for habitat assessment training as part of a 25 state National Bobwhite Conservation Initiative event aimed at restoring huntable bobwhite quail numbers range wide.



Animal Health:

Filled a vacant wildlife veterinarian position which greatly increased ability to monitor wildlife disease potential.

Nongame

Migratory Birds:

The Migratory Bird Program reported 2014 as one of the most successful nesting years in 10 years for endangered interior least terns. Birds monitored and banded by KDFWR staff represent 10 percent of the world's population which nest on sandbar islands in the Mississippi River.

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Mollusk Conservation:

KDFWR's Center for Mollusk Conservation was awarded \$400,000 to support a regional effort to increase mussel populations by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Along with partners Thomas More College, Tennessee Wildlife Resource Agency, Ohio Division of Natural Resources and West Virginia Division of Natural Resources, KDFWR can accomplish much to prevent extinction of federally-endangered species in multiple states.



Golden Eagle:

Researchers captured their first golden eagle since surveying the species in Kentucky began in 2012. The bird was banded, sexed, aged and custom-fitted with a solar powered satellite transmitter to track its movements. This male was encountered on Bernheim Forest lands outside Louisville.

Law Enforcement



Honoring the Fallen:

A memorial was erected in 2014 by the Kentucky Conservation Officers Association on the KDFWR headquarter grounds to honor conservation officers that gave their lives in the line of duty.

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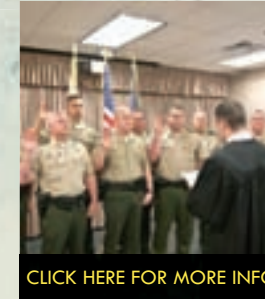


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Training:

The Division now has an in-house training section for conservation officer in-service training, statute and regulation updates, and proficiency training.

A Recruit Conservation Officer Training Class began in August 2015.



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Staffing:

To focus on improved customer service and law enforcement partnerships coordination a reorganization of the Law Enforcement Division is in the implementation stage. This will provide improved coordination and service for sportsmen and boaters across the state. Each of the nine Commission Districts would be commanded by a Captain and have a Lieutenant as the Assistant District Commander.



Program Implementation:

The Kentucky State Police provides all dispatch support to our Conservation Officers.

After initial testing at Lake Cumberland, the Division issued on-body cameras to each conservation officer.

A "Boat Safe Kentucky" app has been developed for use by smart phone users. Among the safety information on the app is a safety equipment check list, a float plan, and information showing the nearest marina to a user's location.



Partnering for the Future:

State conservation officers partnered and assisted with numerous fishing and hunting related events for youngsters across the Commonwealth. Some of those included the 38th annual Special Fishing Olympics in Campbell County, Dad's Day Out at Carr Creek Lake in the Seventh District in conjunction with the Knott County Drug Abuse Council, and the Anderson County Youth Turkey Hunt held in the Sixth District sponsored by the Anderson County Sportsman's Club.

Officers assisted with the Annual Catch-a-Rainbow fishing derby at Wolf Creek National Hatchery that attracted 3,000 people, conducted many school-related and sportsman's clubs programs, the Becoming an Outdoors- Woman Program and supported local tourism efforts in their communities.

Engineering



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Boater Access Improvements:

KDFWR Engineering Division personnel rebuilt and improved existing boat launching ramps during 2014-15 on the Kentucky River in Owen County, Kentucky Lake in Calloway County, Ohio River at Lewisport in Hancock County, and two accesses on Kingfisher Lake in Daviess County. Access for boaters was increased with a new ramp constructed near Pinckneyville in Livingston County on the Cumberland River.



Employee ACCOMPLISHMENTS *and* ACHIEVEMENTS

Kentucky Fish and Wildlife employees were recognized for a vast array of achievements in 2014-15.

Will Bowling, elk biologist was nominated for the prestigious Leopold Conservation Award for his personal land ethic in farm management.

Zach Campbell was named Boating Educator of the Year in the Southern Region by the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators. Campbell and Charlie Baglan produced radio advertising spots on water safety that took first place at the International Boating and Water Safety Summit for the third time in 2015 in four years.

Tom Edwards, Nathan Gregory, Philip Sharp and Eric Williams of the Wildlife Division were recognized with National Fire Bird Conservation Awards for their prescribed burn and other habitat creation efforts in bobwhite focal areas by the National Bobwhite Conservation Initiative.



Photo by JOHN WILLIAMS

Osprey fishes for trout at Brickyard Pond }



Photo by JOE LACEFIELD

Whitetail buck }



MISSION STATEMENT

TO CONSERVE AND ENHANCE FISH AND WILDLIFE
RESOURCES AND PROVIDE OPPORTUNITY FOR HUNTING,
FISHING, TRAPPING, BOATING AND OTHER WILDLIFE
RELATED ACTIVITIES.

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