



Carp removal
Page 4

Remembering Dr. James R. Rich, longest-serving Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Commission member

Retired family medical practitioner Dr. James R. Rich, the longest-serving member of the Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Commission, died Monday, Feb. 17. He was 92.

Eight successive governors appointed Rich to represent the 5th Wildlife District in northern Kentucky during a 36-year span that started in 1976. In 2012, then-Kentucky Gov. Steve Beshear created the honorary position of Commission Member Emeritus and gave Rich a lifetime appointment.

Nicknamed “Doc,” Rich was widely regarded for his sportsmanship and love of the outdoors. He continued fishing and waterfowl hunting past his 90th birthday.

“We are deeply saddened by Doc’s passing,” Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources Commissioner Rich Storm said. “His decades of service on the Commission spanned a critical period of restoration, growth and management at the department. Doc’s support helped make possible the return of Kentucky’s elk, wild turkey and native walleye. He also played a role in the transition of a federally owned hatchery in Franklin County to the department.



“Doc’s many years of service to the Commission and his commitment to the conservation of Kentucky’s fish and wildlife resources endeared him to many, myself included. He will be missed.”

Tim Slone, who retired after more than 30 years with the department, said

some of Rich’s exploits were the stuff of legends.

“Doc was an avid outdoorsman all his life,” he said. “One time he was on a bear hunt out west. The horse he was on bucked and Doc wound up breaking his jaw. But Doc wasn’t going to quit the hunt. So he went to a hardware store and got some stainless steel wire, then wired his own jaw shut. And he wound up harvesting a bear.”

Benjy Kinman, who served nearly 40 years in the department’s Fisheries Division, said Rich maintained a diplomatic role on the Commission. His lengthy tenure on the board gave him the perspective to avoid repeating some issues with regulations.

“Doc was an ‘If it ain’t broke, don’t fix it’ kind of person,” Kinman said. “If something was working, he didn’t see the need to tinker with it.”

Rich graduated from Georgetown College and the University of Louisville School of Medicine. He opened a family medical practice in Taylor Mill in 1955, maintaining it for 56 years before his retirement.

In 1998, Kentucky Fish and Wildlife named a 2,273-acre wildlife management area in Owen County in Rich’s honor.

INSIDE:



3 Lifetime award



7 New grads



8 Eagle watches



Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Commission outlines new procedures for quarterly meetings

The Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Commission in March will implement new procedures for its quarterly Commission meetings to improve efficiency, increase public input and reduce costs.

The Commission is a nine-member board nominated by licensed hunters and anglers, appointed by the governor and confirmed by the Kentucky Senate. The Commission recommends hunting, fishing and boating regulations on behalf of the sportspersons of the Commonwealth.

The Commission discussed the change at a Jan. 31 meeting.

“We are not changing the business we do here, just how we do it,” Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources Commissioner Rich Storm said. “We will be more efficient.”

Commission members, Kentucky Fish and Wildlife staff and the public will continue to propose administrative regulations or statutes related to fish and wildlife or boating.

Proposals slated for action by the Commission will typically have undergone a multi-step review and public involvement process that will allow at least six months from the time a proposal is introduced to the time of Commission action.

“We will replace committee meetings with less formal working groups, and use them to establish a more deliberate vetting process to improve efficiency,” Storm said. “We will also slow down the process to allow more time for research and public input, thus fostering more fully informed decisions.”

Proposals will be vetted by working groups comprised of Commission members, agency staff and in many cases external stakeholders before being proposed in a Commission meeting.

Previously proposed new business items will be discussed at the subsequent meeting for possible action at the next quarterly meeting. Finally, action items will be presented as motions and voted on

by the Commission at the next meeting.

By law, the Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Commission must meet in Frankfort at least four times each year. Each meeting will include a public comment period.

The new meeting structure allows for greater transparency, as Commission meeting agendas will be posted well in advance. The new format will also save money on travel costs for Commission members, staff and stakeholders.

More information about the changes will be available online at fw.ky.gov. Video of the Jan. 31 meeting is available on the department’s website via the “Commission and Committee Meeting Archive” [link](#).

The next Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Commission meeting will be March 20.

For more information about hunting and fishing regulations or general inquiries, contact the Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Information Center at 1-800-858-1549 or by email at Info.Center@ky.gov.



COMMISSIONER PRESENTS AT KENTUCKY ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE

Commissioner Rich Storm gave a presentation about Kentucky Fish and Wildlife at the Kentucky Environmental Health Association’s annual conference on Feb. 12 in Erlanger. Pictured (left to right): Kentucky Department for Public Health Commissioner Dr. Steven Stack, Wedco District Health Department Director Crystal Caudill Miller, Storm and Kentucky Environmental Health Association president Gene Thomas.

MacGregor presented lifetime achievement award

In February, Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources herpetologist John MacGregor joined select company at the Southeastern Bat Diversity Network's annual meeting when he became one of only a few noted biologists and naturalists ever to be honored with its Lifetime Achievement Award.

MacGregor was presented the award by Kentucky Bat Working Group president James Kiser.

An Ohio native, MacGregor came to Kentucky in 1972 and attended the University of Kentucky as a student in the Masters of Science program. He had the opportunity to work under early pioneers in bat research, Dr. Roger Barbour and Dr. Wayne Davis. MacGregor began his career at Kentucky Fish and Wildlife in 1981, when he became the department's first nongame biologist and Endangered Species Program leader. He continued in that role until 1990 when he began work with the U.S. Forest Service.

MacGregor made a landmark impact on the U.S. Forest Service Daniel Boone National Forest with the development and implementation of the Cliffline Policy. This policy alone has promoted responsible management of more than 3,700 miles of cliff line or around 111,200 acres, which benefits both rare flora and fauna, particularly rare bat species such as the Virginia big-eared bat.

MacGregor also spent an extensive amount of time capturing and tracking



Indiana bats. His observations greatly broadened our understanding of the life history and habitat needs of this federally endangered species. MacGregor was a critical partner with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and other noted professionals in the development of the Draft

Indiana Bat Recovery Plan. This document helped shape the management and protection of thousands of acres of habitat throughout the species' range.

Because of his extensive knowledge of both the flora and fauna of Kentucky and the eastern United States, MacGregor is often sought as a species expert and one who can answer difficult natural history questions.

He returned to Kentucky Fish and Wildlife in 2003. Currently, he serves as the state herpetologist for the department. His work on amphibian and reptile life history and distribution throughout the state has resulted in tens of thousands of well documented records and the most comprehensive effort spent on these species in Kentucky to date. This work is a result of the State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP) and the need that was identified in the original 2005 SWAP. Due to his diligent effort, the SWAP revision that is now underway will present a much more comprehensive and meaningful look into these valuable state resources.

Finally, MacGregor is known to be kind, an excellent mentor to biologists and those with a general interest in natural history, and tireless in his work. His major work at this time is the completion of the Amphibians and Reptiles of Kentucky book, along with Dr. Stephen Price and Dr. Steven Richter.

MacGregor's knowledge and photography skills will be highlighted in this publication. His contributions to individuals' careers, natural history and policy are unmatched. MacGregor is truly an asset to not only the department but also the Commonwealth as a whole.



Officials get up-close look at experimental Asian carp removal effort at Kentucky Lake

National, state and local officials gathered Feb. 17 at Kentucky Lake to observe an experimental new method to rid the waterways of large numbers of invasive Asian carp.

The Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources along with the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Forest Service, Tennessee Valley Authority and other partners participated in the more than two-week-long project, which focused on two embayments at Kentucky Lake.

Kentucky Gov. Andy Beshear joined U.S. Sen. Mitch McConnell, U.S. Rep. James Comer, U.S.G.S. Director Dr. Jim Reilly, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Great Lakes Regional Director Charlie Wooley, Kentucky Tourism, Arts and Heritage Cabinet Secretary Mike Berry, Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Commissioner Rich Storm, Lyon County Judge-Executive Wade White and other officials at Pisgah Bay.

Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Conservation Officers assisted U.S. Capitol Police with event security and patrolled the bay by boat.

Research fisheries biologists with the USGS developed the “modified unified method” as a twist on a traditional fishing technique used in China, where the carp are a sought-after native species.



Chase Winger photo

On Kentucky Lake, crews harvested Asian carp by using underwater speakers and electrofishing gear to drive the fish into successively smaller areas for harvesting. Native sport fish tend to hide from the disturbance rather than flee it, and were less likely to end up in the nets with the Asian carp. The few native sport fish

caught were immediately released back into the water.

The modified unified method has been successful at removing large numbers of Asian carp from waters in Illinois and Missouri. The effort at Kentucky Lake was on a much larger scale and represented the first test of the method on a U.S. reservoir larger than 500 acres.

The Kentucky Lake test started Feb. 3 at Smith Bay and ended less than three weeks later at Pisgah Bay. Tens of thousands of pounds of Asian carp were removed from the bays. Fish harvested as part of the effort were processed to test a compost product.

Crews encountered challenges, particularly early in the effort, but made some adjustments at Pisgah Bay to improve the results there. The contour of the lake bottom, underwater structures and warmer water temperatures heightened the challenge during the seine hauls. Unseasonably warm water temperatures caused the silver carp to be more active.

Overall, officials involved with the project were encouraged about the method’s potential and have left open the possibility that it would be tried again next year.



Photo submitted by Lt. Dustin Mullins



Lee McClellan photo



Left: Kentucky Conservation Officers Cody Berry and Jonathan Barks conducted waterfowl compliance checks in one scenario of the training opportunity. *Photos provided by Lt. Dustin Mullins*

Officers train for waterfowl, migratory bird seasons

Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Conservation Officers joined officers from West Virginia and Delaware for a training opportunity Feb. 3-7 at Camp John Currie

and Ballard Wildlife Management Area. The training opportunity focused on waterfowl and migratory bird identification and enforcement techniques. Kentucky

Conservation Officers Capt. Tony Dunker, Lt. Scott McIntosh, Lt. Dustin Mullins, Randy Conway and Kyle Webb led the seminars.



TRAINING SESSION HITS BULLSEYE FOR INFORMATION CENTER STAFF

The Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources' Information Center staff on Feb. 20 participated in an all-day training session. One of the presentations for the day centered on the department's R3 (Recruitment, Retention, Reactivation) branch. Branch Manager Brent McCarty and Aquatic Education Specialist Andrew Wooldridge set up a friendly crossbow competition for the group after an overview of the branch. Following a lesson about the safe handling of a crossbow and a quick coaching session, each member of the group took their turn at hitting the bullseye. Tia Edwards won the competition. Pictured are, from left, Chace Wallen, Tia Edwards, Phillip Williams, Bo Spencer, Bruce Armstrong and Lisa Tolliver.



Kentucky chapter of The Wildlife Society discusses emerging disease threats

Wildlife professionals from the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources, other state and federal agencies, academic institutions, non-governmental conservation organizations and private industries attended the annual Kentucky Chapter of The Wildlife Society (KYCTWS) meeting Feb. 20-21 at Lake Cumberland State Resort Park. More than 100 wildlife students and professionals attended and discussed emerging disease threats to people and wildlife in the state and across the region.

The Kentucky chapter of The Wildlife Society is a non-profit organization concerned with excellence in wildlife stewardship using science and education.

This year's meeting was well-timed, as threats like fungal diseases in snakes and amphibians and tick-borne illnesses emerge in Kentucky. Dr. Chrissy Casey, wildlife veterinarian for Kentucky Fish and Wildlife, presented about wildlife disease management using chronic wasting disease (CWD) as an example. Other speakers covered a wide range of zoonotic and infectious disease issues wildlife



managers are facing in the state. Many of the attendees were students from in-state universities. Students presented findings of research they are conducting in posters and presentations over the two-day conference.

The Wildlife Society is the professional society for wildlife biologists and many Kentucky Fish and Wildlife staff are active members. Terri Brunjes, Kentucky

Fish and Wildlife biologist and president of the Kentucky Chapter of The Wildlife Society said it is, "an excellent opportunity for wildlife professionals to gain knowledge on specific wildlife topics, share research, network, create new partnerships, and support our next generation of wildlife professionals. The Chapter extends an invitation to the annual conferences to all Kentucky Fish and Wildlife employees."



CONSERVATION EDUCATORS PARTICIPATE IN BEAR DEN RESEARCH

Conservation educator Jasmine Johnson (right) hands a cub to fellow educator Jamie Alton while participating in the department's annual bear den research. Biologists remove cubs from the den while the mother bear is sedated to prevent accidental harm to the young bears. Department staff take turns holding cubs to help keep them warm while they are separated from their mother.

Conservation Officer recruits complete basic training at DOCJT

A group of Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Conservation Officer recruits graduated Feb. 27 from basic training at the state Department of Criminal Justice Training in Richmond.

James Brace, Robin Martinez, James Neyhouse, Tory Parrish, Miranda Perry, Michael Pritchard, Glen Shortt, Mason Stamm, Gabriel Suthoff and Nathan Wildharber were part of Class 508 and completed 20 weeks of basic law enforcement officer training in firearms, defensive tactics, search and seizure and arrest.

Neyhouse, Pritchard and Stamm were recognized as Recruits of Distinction. Neyhouse also received the Academic Achievement Award and was class adjutant. Stamm received the Firearms



Kevin Kelly photo

Proficiency Award.

Pritchard and Martinez were squad leaders in Class 508. As class leader, Brace delivered remarks during the graduation ceremony.

“We are soon to be great protectors of the Commonwealth,” he said. “It has been a long, challenging 20 weeks and I would not trade this experience for anything. We had our successes and challenges but like all things important in life, things will

happen. You must tell yourself to keep pushing forward and enjoy the process. It’s been a privilege and blessing to work with each and every one of you and an absolute honor to serve as your class leader.”

The 10 recruits and one other member of Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Recruit Class 23 are scheduled to graduate from Kentucky Fish and Wildlife’s academy at 2 p.m. on Wednesday, April 15 at Buck Run Baptist Church at 1950 Leestown Rd. in Frankfort.

Madison County elementary school students show kindness for campers

Kirksville Elementary in Richmond, Kentucky hosted a Kindness Camp on Feb. 11 and collected supplies as a way to extend kindness to an organization, fourth-grade educator Rebecca Reister said.

This year, Kirksville Elementary decided to support Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources conservation camps, as dozens of students from the



school have attended Camp Earl Wallace within the past several summers.

Through Kindness Camp, the school collected a table full of soap, shampoo, socks and other items that campers

frequently forget to pack for their week at a conservation camp. They also collected stuffed animals that help campers who may be feeling a little homesick. Furthermore, students had decorated rocks with phrases to encourage those that are homesick.

There is overwhelming support for conservation education at Kirksville Elementary. Students are always excited and engaged during conservation class.

This school year, the fourth grade class at Kirksville has learned about Kentucky fishes, firearm safety, black bears and conservation camps with a class on restoration of elk in Kentucky yet to come in March.



Eagle Watch Weekends return in 2020

Eagle Watch Weekends, hosted annually in western Kentucky by the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources and Kentucky State Parks, saw new and repeat faces in 2020.

Kentuckians and visitors gathered on the CQ Princess yacht in the hopes of seeing the feathered national emblem as it perched high above sea level. Some on Kentucky Lake in early February even had the chance to view a rarely seen occurrence: a mature bald eagle carrying nesting material back to its nest just off the shoreline near Kenlake State Resort Park.

Notably, the department signed up 47 new members for [Kentucky Wild](#) during the three Eagle Watch Weekends offered in January and February at Kentucky Dam Village State Resort Park, Kenlake State Resort Park and Lake Barkley State Resort Park.

The number of bald eagle nests in Kentucky has tripled since 2010 to nearly



Eagle Watch Weekend staff, left to right: KDFWR Laura Burford, CQ Princess Captain Paul Masterson, KYParks Erin Lambirth, KYParks David Kem, KYParks Jesse Sirls, KYParks Carey Ruff, KDFWR Rachel Young. *Photo provided by Rachel Young*

190 nests. Kentucky now claims more resident eagles than during Daniel Boone's day.

Because of the population's consistent growth, Kentuckians anywhere in the state can catch a glimpse of bald eagles on the move or taking a rest, though their preferred daily habitat consists of forested bodies of water. This makes western Kentucky's lakes and rivers a desirable nesting location.

Rachel Young, a conservation educa-

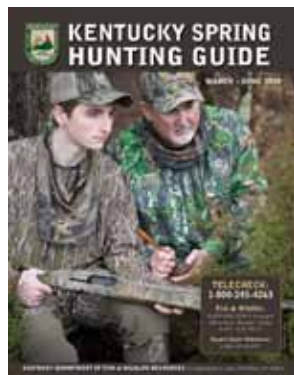
tor with Kentucky Fish and Wildlife, knows well the excitement of spotting an eagle, as one of the Eagle Watch Weekends' annual staff.

"We have multiple people on the tours every year that have never seen a bald eagle in the wild," Young said. "When those people see their first wild bald eagle in Kentucky, that is the absolute best part of Eagle Weekends."

New spring hunting guide features Harold Knight, legendary turkey call maker and hunter on cover

Turkey hunters will spot a familiar face on the cover of the 2020 spring hunting guide: it's none other than Harold Knight, co-founder of Knight and Hale Game Calls.

Knight is helping the department in its efforts to recruit more hunters and encourage parents to send their kids to summer conservation camp. It's for all the right reasons: Knight



went to summer conservation camp himself, and has sent several family members there as well.

On a cold rainy day in early February, Knight sat down in one of his hunting lodges in western Kentucky with department videographer Todd Cremeans and talked about participating in the state's first modern-day turkey

hunt, when he was all of 16 years old. Knight also recorded a promotional video

on behalf of the department's summer camps.

Later in the day, Knight joined Dylan Hale Edmonson, grandson of business partner David Hale, for a photo shoot for the cover of the spring hunting guide.

Look for Knight and Edmonson in future ads to promote mentoring to new hunters.

The 2020 Kentucky Spring Hunting Guide will be available on the department's website at fw.ky.gov and wherever licenses and permits are sold.