



Girls Inc.  
at Currie  
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## Recent fish habitat work at Guist Creek Lake is the focus of a new research project

The reservoir construction era of the 1950-1970's resulted in the development of the vast majority of the multi-purpose man-made lakes throughout the United States.

Originally constructed to primarily serve for navigation, flood control, and power generation, state fish and wildlife agencies quickly helped develop these resources into world-class recreational sport fisheries for a variety of species, including striped bass, white/black crappie, large-mouth/smallmouth bass, and blue/flat-head/channel catfish.

Initially, these man-made reservoirs contained plentiful habitat for sport fish populations. Over the years, these reservoirs have aged substantially (some reservoirs are now over 70 years old) and habitat for fish species has significantly declined or disappeared altogether as part of the aging process. Scientific studies have documented a strong relationship between fish habitat and the abundance of sport fish species.

Over the past several years, the Fisheries Division has attempted to negate this loss of habitat by implementing large scale fish habitat improvement projects at Lake Cumberland, Green River Lake, and No-



Above: Fisheries staff place cedar tree units in one of three study areas at Guist Creek Lake. Below: Adding habitat to once barren banks in an attempt to increase sport fish abundance and reproduction. *Chris Hickey photos*



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## WE GET MAIL

### *Letters to the Commissioner's Office*

We received the following letter from Sharon Vance with the Double Eagle Chapter of the NWTf. She wrote, "For over 19 years now, our National Wild Turkey Federation-Double Eagle Chapter of Georgetown, has held an annual Jakes Day for kids. We would like to THANK YOU and everyone responsible for allowing us to have it at the Veterans Memorial Wildlife Management Area on August 3. It is a beautiful piece of property and a wonderful place for our outdoor youth event!"

We would like to give Special Thanks to Public Lands Biologist **Dave Frederick** who was very helpful with the planning process and accommodating our special needs. Also, we really appreciated all of the hard work and nice job that the WMA technicians, Mr. **Sandy Wilson** and Mr. **Keith Clifton**, did in mowing and preparing the site for us.

We ask that you please extend our Many Thanks to Private Lands Biologist **Clay Smitson**, and Law Enforcement Officer **Matthew Hartley** for being at our event. They did an outstanding job sharing their wealth of knowledge and expertise with the kids and adults, too!

This year, we had 195 kids who participated in our JAKES DAY and over 175 adults who attended. We greatly appreciate all of you for helping us to give kids this opportunity to experience and enjoy the Great Outdoors!"

This letter came addressed to Commissioner Gassett from Julie A. McDonald, who is the Parks Program Services Supervisor at the John James Audubon State Park. She wrote, "Since 2006, John James Audubon State Park has featured a weekly fishing program from Memorial Day through Labor Day. We started out small - just a few rods and reels and some tackle.



Stephanie Brandt and Matt Thomas at Kentucky River Day.

Thanks to the efforts of **Marc Johnson**, we have grown to having up to 25 or 30 kids fishing each week! We have enough rods and reels and tackle to support that many kids, plus we can offer all newcomers the Basic Fishing book and a Kentucky Fish poster.

The generous support of Kentucky Fish & Wildlife helps with the prizes that we give to our nine or more winners in our annual John James Audubon Annual Fishing Derby. We usually have between 40 and 50 children participate in the Derby.

The kids who join us fishing are from all socio-economic backgrounds, but the smiles on their faces are all the same. We certainly appreciate the many ways that Kentucky Fish & Wildlife has helped to make this program possible!"

**Jason Nally** (Wildlife), together with **Geoff Roberts** (I&E) and **Joanne Cushard** (volunteer) from the Salato Wildlife Center, recently represented the Department at the opening of a new municipal park in Louisville. We received via Facebook this note of appreciation for their presence: "Thanks so much for sending your team and their critters out to help us open up The Parklands of Floyds Fork in Jefferson County! It's a blast to watch kids react to a

live owl or snake in person.

– Scott Martin, park manager, Parklands of Floyds Fork

During a recent sampling trip to the Green River in search of collecting data pertaining to the Diamond Darter, KDFWR Fisheries Division staff **Matt Thomas**, **Stephanie Brandt** and

**David Baker** were approached by Nan Montgomery of the Green River Historical Society who took interest in their work. Following their survey efforts, the Department received a letter on behalf of Ms. Montgomery saying, "Many, many thanks for all that you are doing to take care of our beautiful river and her critters."

At the recent Kentucky River Day, sponsored by the Owen County Historical Society and Kentucky-American Water Company, KDFWR Fisheries Division staff **Matt Thomas** and **Stephanie Brandt** engaged the public with a display of fish, crayfish and mussels found in the Kentucky River. The River Day highlighted the Kentucky River's impact on regional culture, transportation and history.

The event was held at the Owen County Historical Museum in Owenton on August 17 and was open to the public. Following the event, the Department received an email from Bonnie Strassell of the Owen County Historical Society stating, "Hi Matt and Stephanie. Thank you so much for the wonderful fish display and for bringing the turtles to our Kentucky River Day. You both were a hit. Thank you again for giving up your Saturday to visit with us."

## Northern, McQueary take 2nd in DOCJT competition

Conservation officers **Jarad Northern** and **Sgt. Jeremy McQueary** took second place in the 2013 Department of Criminal Justice Training team pistol competition August 13.

This fundraising event raised money for the Kentucky Law Enforcement Memorial Foundation.

Participants included active duty officers, as well as retired officers, from across the Commonwealth. The team competition consisted of a 30-round course of fire that called for two-person teams to shoot from a variety of distances and shoot-



ing positions, all while under a time constraint.

After completion of the course, team member's scores were combined to determine their placement(s).

This event was not only a time for officers from around the state to put their shooting skills to the test, against each other, but more importantly to raise money to support law enforcement officers throughout Kentucky.

Jeremy McQueary and Jarad Northern with their awards from the DOCJT pistol competition.

## New Employees

The Sloughs Wildlife Management Area welcomes a new employee; **Greg Buckert** has accepted the position of Game Management Foreman. Greg has a degree in Wildlife and Fisheries Management; he attended Minot State University in Bottineau, ND and South Dakota State University.

Greg worked for North Dakota Fish

and Game as a seasonal for 3 years and as an Assistant Biologist for 1.5 years. Greg is originally from Centralia, Missouri. Greg's hobbies include hunting/fishing, building ice fishing rods and watching the St. Louis Cardinals.

On August 16, the Information and Education Division welcomed **Max 'Lee'**

**Roush** as a Carpenter I at Camp Robert C. Webb in Grayson. Lee brings 19 years of experience in the construction and carpentry field. He resides in Greenup County and enjoys hunting, fishing, and woodworking. We are pleased to have Lee on board as a permanent employee of the Camp Webb team.

## KECC campaign underway, popular events scheduled

The Kentucky Employees Charitable Campaign (KECC) raises funds for state-approved charities including: Christian Appalachian Project, Cardinal Hill Easter Seals, March of Dimes, United Way of Kentucky, Community Health Charities, Prevent Child Abuse Kentucky, and WHAS Crusade for Children.

This campaign eliminates multiple charities soliciting donations year-round and allows employees to participate through payroll deduction or a one-time

cash donation. These charities rely on us! To make your pledge, please provide your completed pledge form to Dawn Welch, Tanya Wilson or Pat Barnard. Deductions begin with your first paycheck received in January of 2014 and will continue through the end of the year.

Stay tuned for upcoming KDFWR events for the benefit of KECC, including 'Food in the Foyer' (hot breakfast sandwiches in the AMB lobby), a return of the ever-popular 'Bring Your Dog to Work

Day,' Penny Wars and the annual 'Chili/Soup Cook Off and Costume Party' already scheduled for Thursday, October 31 (on Halloween!).

Additionally, for those who are new or missed the last opportunity, the KDFWR 'Tried and True Recipes That Measure Up' Employee Cookbook is on sale for \$5.00, all of which goes to KECC.

Making a donation may help your friends, neighbors or coworkers. Please show you care.

## Salato's first ever Wildlife Olympics

**O**n August 17, Salato Wildlife Education Center held its first ever Wildlife Olympics.

Children ages 3 - 16 competed in five events throughout the day. The biggest event of the day, however, was archery.

Children, many of whom had never shot before, learned how to handle a bow and competed in the archery challenge.

Visitors also tested their strength with a dynamometer, seeing how they measured up to a Bald Eagle. They ran like crazy in the deer dash event. They tried to jump as far as a bobcat in the standing long jump competition.

The kids had a blast learning how to properly cast in our casting challenge. An awards ceremony was held in the center following the events, complete with torch and flying paper doves. First, second and third place winners in each age group won certificates, buttons, and ribbons.



## Mentored dove hunts a great way to start

*Aquatics Education coordinator Marc Johnson took son Zach on his first dove hunt this month at the mentored hunt on the T.N. Sullivan Wildlife Management Area in Franklin County and later compiled the notes below.*

**Z**ach has wanted to hunt since I began teaching him to shoot two years ago but we had never had the opportunity. The mentored youth hunt was great because we had the benefit of fields prepared on the T.N. Sullivan WMA by **Scott Ferrell and his crew**, and the presence of **Jamie Cook and his volunteers** for guidance.

We used department-issued New England Firearms single shot 20-gauge shotguns. Although he's not new to shotguns and has shot clay targets before, I chose this particular shotgun for its simplicity. Zach could focus on each individual shot and not worry about the safety, tube plugs, etc. and it was a great choice!

The night before the hunt we discussed our expectations and reviewed them again on the day of the hunt. They were to be safe, have fun, learn all we could and to kill one dove. We surpassed our goal of one bird but more importantly, we got lots of practice shooting at moving targets.

More importantly, we had an experience together that neither of us will forget. It was our first hunt. After the shoot we learned how to clean the doves



so we also have some dove breasts in the refrigerator.

As lifestyles shift away from outdoor pursuits there can be no substitute for putting firearms and fishing poles into the hands of children and adults inside of structured hunting and fishing experiences such as the mentored youth hunts.

For example, we had trouble finding Zach's first bird and got frustrated looking for it. But **Nick Raley** (Salato volunteer and hunter education instructor) told us to look for feathers and we'd find the bird. Sure enough, we had no trouble locating our birds in the tall vegetation after that. It makes perfect sense, but that's something an experienced dove hunter would take for granted and we as beginners didn't think of.

Now we know! I feel totally confident taking him again on my own as a result of this hands-on hunting experience.

## BALLARD, SLOUGHS WOOD DUCK BANDING



The rocket net fires capturing more than 200 wood ducks at the Ballard Wildlife Management Area. At right, Mike Morton (R) and Michael "Catfish" Hutchinson band a pair of adult female wood ducks at the Sloughs WMA. Below right, Curt Devine coaches his son Coy as he releases a wood duck at the Sloughs WMA. Below left, Glen Bowman (L) Constance Powell and Gerald Burnett (R) work to get wood ducks out from under the net. *John Brunjes photos*





**CAMP CURRIE  
AND GIRLS INC.**



Girls Inc., of Daviess County, rolled into Camp Currie for the 12th straight year last month and put its facilities to great use. 68 girls from challenged circumstances or backgrounds attended this year, and for many, it was their first opportunity to catch a fish, ride in a boat or shoot a bow.



## Northern Kentucky mentored squirrel and dove hunts prove successful

**M**any of the 56 youth who turned out for the mentored squirrel hunt were first-time hunters.

The August 30-31 ventures, organized by Lloyd WMA staff, Fifth District conservation officers, KD-FWR hunter recruitment personnel and partners from United Trappers, NWTf, Fifth District League of Kentucky Sportsmen and others, were huge hits with youth and parents. Despite area storms, the youth bagged about 40 squirrels.

All hunters were paired with mentors and used both private and public land in the northern Kentucky area.

Thanks to a donation by Charles Dailey on behalf of the department and NWTf, one youth took home a new 20 gauge to use in future hunts.

A lot of interest was generated with parents who saw their kids excitement



during the event and inquired about use of public land to get back out in the woods and try their luck again. Kentucky Afield also shot a segment for the show.

We had 36 mentors take a kid hunting in our youth fields on Sunday. The

birds seemed to favor the youth field as shooting seemed non-stop for much of the afternoon. Several kids bagged their first dove and many parents learned that one box of shells is not enough to carry in a dove field.

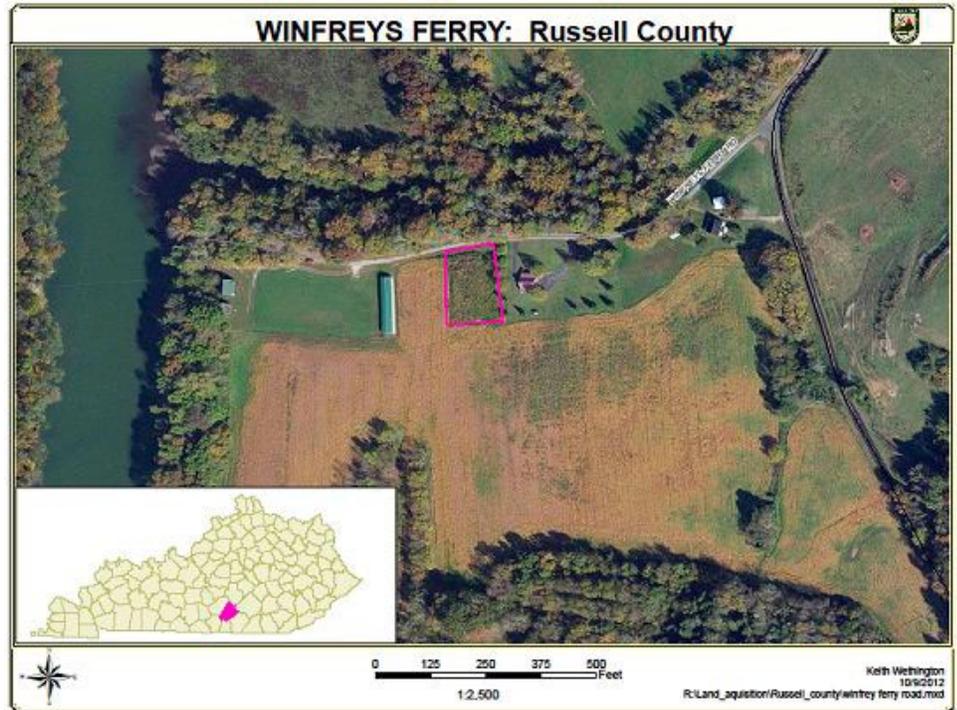
## Parking area added at Winfrey's Landing

The Fisheries Division announces that the Department has recently completed the acquisition of a small parking lot at the existing Winfrey's Landing boat ramp on the Lake Cumberland Tailwater.

Located in Russell County, this is arguably the most utilized boat ramp on the upper section of the tailwater and provides anglers ideal access to some of the best trout fishing areas throughout the entire Cumberland Tailwater.

Limited parking at this ramp often resulted in anglers and boaters having to park along the sides of the road in the vicinity of the ramp. The acquisition and development of this parking lot will help to accommodate the demand at this access location.

Fisheries Division thanks **Tony Wheatley** and the staff at Kentucky Real Properties Division for assistance and coordination in completing this acquisition. The site was acquired with Fish and Game Funds.



## Kentucky's elk, hunting heritage to benefit from RMEF grants

Funding research to monitor the health, survival and recruitment of elk, as well as providing sponsorship of multiple hunting heritage events are the focus of grants from the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation for the state of Kentucky.

The RMEF grants total \$87,600 and directly affect 22 counties: Anderson, Bell, Breckinridge, Breathitt, Bullitt, Carter, Daviess, Fayette, Franklin, Jefferson, Knott, Laurel, Letcher, Madison, Meade, Mercer, Oldham, Perry, Scott, Shelby, Spencer and Woodford. RMEF also provided funding for several programs of statewide and national benefit.

"Kentucky is a shining example as one of the nation's most successful elk reintroductions. It is imperative we continue to

monitor the health and behavior of this thriving elk population, and that's exactly what this RMEF funding will do," said David Allen, RMEF president and CEO. "We are also pleased to sponsor a variety of activities that will enrich Kentucky's hunting tradition."

Since 1995, RMEF and its partners completed 100 conservation and hunting heritage outreach projects in Kentucky with a combined value of more than \$6.7 million.

"We have more than 1,500 RMEF members in Kentucky. We thank them and our dedicated volunteers who raised the money for these projects thanks to their banquet fundraising and membership drive efforts," added Allen.

Allen also thanked RMEF chapters and volunteers around the nation for their dedication to conservation all across elk country.

RMEF grants will help fund the following 2013 projects, listed by county:

- **Breckinridge County:** Provide funding to purchase archery equipment for the National Archery in the Schools Program (NASP) at Saint Romuald School (also affects Meade County).
- **Bullitt County:** Provide funding for Zoneton Middle School to establish a NASP program for boys and girls in grades six through eight. Students will have the opportunity to practice, refine

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## 2013 Ronnie Rich Memorial Wounded Warriors Dove Hunt

A partnership between the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife, Riverbend Whitetails and Wild Wing Lodge helped dreams become realities at the 2013 Ronnie Rich Memorial Wounded Warriors Dove Hunt on the season's opening weekend.

What started as an idea between the late **Ronnie Rich** (retired Conservation Officer) and **Curt Divine** (Game Management Foreman at Higginson-Henry WMA) to host a hunt for wounded soldiers came to fruition when five Fort Campbell soldiers arrived at the Wild Wing Lodge on August 31 for a combination dove hunt and fishing trip.

The first afternoon revolved around gun safety and trap shooting basics. They went pond fishing for bass later that evening and the next morning. Then they headed to the Lovers Lane dove field on Big Rivers WMA/SF. For some it was their first time hunting. Needless to say all of them had a great time and were able to see that there are public areas (WMAs) where everyone has access to a place to hunt.

They worked in a hunt on a private field the next morning. To say that they were getting the swing of dove hunting



would have been an understatement. The afternoon required a brief nap and then more fishing ensued.

As shooting time arrived on the final morning the soldiers were scattered about at another private field. All took their limits as a result of ample shot opportunities and numerous doves. As the group was cleaning their doves one was overheard saying, "This has been an American experience."

Donations from local businesses covered all costs and included a full set of camo, gun cases, stools and dove decoys for each hunter. The outpouring of support

for this event was larger than imagined and the result was an event that surpassed the expectations of the hosts.

This event was an excellent way to honor the memory of one of our own, honor our service men, showcase the wildlife management area and work jointly with outfitters in our area. The soldiers welcomed the much-needed change of pace.

When we left the event there was no doubt in any one's mind that this event had made a difference in the lives of the soldiers and those who make the event possible!

### "Grants," continued

- and develop archery skills, and compete in local meets.
- **Carter County:** Provide funding to help purchase equipment for the East Carter High School NASP archery team.
- **Daviess County:** Provide funding to purchase air rifles and equipment to enhance the Daviess County High School National Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps program.

- **Fayette County:** Provide funding to repair equipment and purchase supplies for the Tates Creek High School archery team.
- **Franklin County:** Provide sponsorship of an archery camp at Frankfort's Cove Spring Park for youth ages 8-18 following the NASP format (also affects Anderson, Mercer, Scott, Shelby and Woodford counties); and provide funding to help purchase more equipment for Capital Day School to expand NASP to

more students.

- **Jefferson County:** Provide funding to offset the cost of purchasing bows and targets for Valor Traditional Academy to form an archery team which will compete in NASP and Scholastic 3D sanctioned tournaments (also affects Bullitt County); and co-sponsor an event aimed at introducing women to shooting sports including archery, rifle,

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**“Grants,” continued**

shotgun and handgun skills at the Fern Creek Sportsman’s Club (also affects Fayette, Franklin, Letcher, Oldham and Spencer counties).

- **Knott County:** Provide funding for an elk collaring and tracking study to reassess cow elk survival and cause-specific mortality in the 16-county elk zone of southeastern Kentucky. The project will also assess the survival and recruitment of elk calves to provide data to best manage the herd of 10,000-plus through the next decade (also affects Bell, Breathitt and Perry counties).
- **Laurel County:** Provide funding to purchase equipment for the expanding NASP program at Wyan Pine Grove Elementary School, which now offers

after-school service.

- **Letcher County:** Provide funding for Letcher County Kids Day, which features games, entertainment and food for the entire family.
- **Madison County:** Provide funding to help Foley Middle School promote proper land and wildlife conservation by purchasing equipment for underprivileged children to participate in the NASP and 3D shooting programs.
- **Statewide:** Provide funding to cover the cost of monitoring for Chronic Wasting Disease of Kentucky’s elk herd, previously paid for by federal funding; co-sponsor the 10th Annual NASP National Tournament held in Louisville; provide partial scholarships for 30 disadvantaged youth to attend a Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife

Resources Conservation Camp; provide funding to offset expenses and purchase supplies for two wounded warrior hunts for injured servicemen and women (also has nationwide benefits); and provide funding for the Kentucky Chapter’s annual gathering of The Wildlife Society.

Conservation projects are selected for grants using science-based criteria and a committee of RMEF volunteers and staff along with representatives from partnering agencies. RMEF staff and volunteers select education projects to receive grants. RMEF volunteers and staff select hunting heritage projects to be funded.

Partners for 2013 Kentucky projects include the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources, University of Kentucky, and other wildlife, volunteer and business organizations.



**DUCKS’ VIEW**

Pat Hahs and his Murray staff caught this interesting perspective of this waterfowl cannon net in flight while trapping wood ducks for banding. Pat and crew have been videoing some of the net flights in the last couple years to see how the rockets were flying once ignited. Not something you get to see in a photo every day.



Clockwise from top left: Concrete stakebeds are another form of fish habitat. Spawning barrels can help to improve sport fish reproduction in areas that make suitable spawning habitat. Jason McDowell, Fisheries Foreman, carefully places one of many spawning barrels at Guist Creek Lake. *Chris Hickey photos*

concrete block) along barren shorelines in each of three study sites for a total of 120 units. Additionally, each study site was further enhanced with 12 spawning barrels and 50 con-

creted stakebeds. The spawning barrels were placed in close proximity to the cedar tree units, while the stakebeds were placed in deeper water (8-12 ft), out in front of spawning barrels.

By the time it was all done, 120 cedar tree units, 36 spawning barrels, and 150

concreted stakebeds were placed at Guist Creek Lake and will be sampled and monitored over the next several years to document sport fish utilization and presence of young-of-the-year fish.

Research staff will compare relative abundance of both adult and young sport fish at each study site to those of control sites at Guist Creek Lake in order to document the overall impact such habitat has on the sport fish community.

While this study is initially focused on the effects on largemouth bass, it is conceivable that other sport fish

species such as channel catfish, white crappie, and bluegill sunfish may also benefit from these types of activities.

The Fisheries Division acknowledges the efforts of the **staff at the Forks of Elkhorn Fish Transportation Section**, as well as the **Fisheries Technicians and Fisheries Research staff at the Fishlab** for all their hard work and effort in both the construction and development of the various types of fish habitat, as well as their efforts in deploying such habitat. For more information on this project, contact Chris Hickey at the Fishlab at 502-564-3400 extension 4467.

## “Habitat,” continued

lin River Lake.

These projects, mirrored after the highly successful habitat improvement program at Kentucky and Barkley lakes, have provided positive public relations between anglers and Department staff. Yet, despite such massive efforts, little scientific data exists pertaining to the impacts such large scale habitat improvement projects actually have on increasing sport fish populations.

In an attempt to gather such data, fisheries research biologists recently initiated a study at Guist Creek Lake with the goal to more concretely understand the relationship between habitat improvement projects and any corresponding increase in sport fish populations.

In early August, fisheries staff distributed 40 cedar tree units (each unit comprised of two cedar trees anchored to a



A completed study site at Guist Creek Lake showing cedar tree units, spawning barrels, and concreted stakebeds (underwater).