

May 2014

—VOL. 9 NO. 5—



BIOBLITZ
event
Page 10

Gregory Johnson takes over as new Kentucky Fish and Wildlife commissioner

Gregory K. Johnson of Lexington is the new commissioner of the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources.

Johnson, 58, began work Friday, May 16.

A lifetime hunter, angler and outdoorsman, he is only the eighth commissioner in the Department's 70-year history.

The Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Commission unanimously selected the retired Natural Resources Conservation Service executive at a special called meeting May 2 at Fish and Wildlife Headquarters in Frankfort.

Johnson is a 1979 graduate of Eastern Kentucky University (EKU) with a Bachelor of Science Degree in wildlife management and minors in fisheries biology and chemistry.

He retired in 2011 after more than 30 years with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) – Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). NRCS assists farmers and other land owners, including governments and other federal agencies, in maintaining healthy and productive working landscapes.

Fish and Wildlife Commission Chairman Stuart Ray said the Commission was extremely pleased to get a person



of Johnson's experience and caliber.

"The Commission conducted an exhaustive and thorough six-month-long nationwide search to find the right person to head one of this country's premier fish and wildlife agencies," said Ray. "And that is precisely what we accomplished.

"Greg comes to us with a unique combination of a solid resource professional background, years of successful executive leadership experience, and is a

lifetime hunter, angler and outdoorsman," Ray said.

Johnson grew up farming in the northern Illinois community of Wasco. He graduated St. Charles High School and became a fishing guide in northern Wisconsin helping clients pursue northern pike and walleye. A client from Eastern Kentucky University suggested Johnson come to Kentucky to pursue his education.

He began his career with the U.S. Forest Service research station in Berea working with Kentucky and Appalachia coal companies researching effective and efficient methods of reclaiming strip mines.

He soon moved to the USDA's Soil Conservation Service, the predecessor to today's NRCS, as district conservationist for Wayne, McCreary and Russell counties. In 1990, he assumed area conservationist duties for 28 counties and administrative responsibilities for 27 field offices. He supervised a diverse staff of program and technical experts, and 17 district conservationists. Subsequently, he would serve as the NRCS State Resource Specialist for Kentucky and then another eight years in the same capacity for the eight-state

[See "Johnson," page 2](#)

INSIDE:



3 Memorial dedicated



8 Carp die-off



11 Top lakes

WE GET MAIL

Letters to the Commissioner's Office

The following comments came from Sula Jacobs, Superintendent of the Cumberland Gap National Historical Park. "Cumberland Gap Park greatly appreciates **Steven Dobey's** assistance on April 28 and 29 working on multiple bear education opportunities.

We are committed to "spreading the word" in the local communities about how to properly live adjacent to or in bear habitat. Mr. Dobey provided expertise and knowledge about bears and living in bear country, including helping the park make an educational video. We are grateful for Mr. Dobey's assistance in conveying this message in a very clear and concise manner. He also helped in meeting with park neighbors about specific issues and

provided excellent suggestions on how to avoid conflicts with bears in the future.

We look forward to continuing cooperation with Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources in the efforts to protect black bears in this region."

This note came to Laura Burford. Palmer Wilson wrote, "I had a great time at the **Camp Earl Wallace** Fishing Adventure. I am so glad I got picked. I got some good fishing tips and I liked the food there (tell **the cooks**)."

This email came through Derek Beard regarding Private Lands Biologist **Chris Grasch**. "Dear Mr. Beard, You probably know this, but Chris Grasch is personable,

candid, knowledgeable, and professional (perhaps "cool" is a better word - he did not laugh at any of our questions, but did laugh at most of my lame jokes). He met promptly with me and some relatives a few weeks ago at our 49-acre tract in Owen County prior to preparing a comprehensive (and comprehensible) habitat improvement plan, which arrived in today's mail. We read about this wonderful service in Kentucky Afield. We plan to implement some if not all of his recommendations, even though we are as green at farming/hunting as that hated Kentucky 31 Fescue. "Fescue!" has become a socially acceptable curse word around our house.

Thanks!"

"Johnson," continued

Midwest region.

His selection to USDA's Senior Executive Development Program took him to Washington D.C. in 2004. There he served in multiple USDA-NRCS Conservation, Technical, and Financial senior executive level director positions until he retired in 2011.

As director of the Financial Assistance Program Division, he was responsible for an annual appropriation in excess of \$1 billion, helping farmers and ranchers across the country plan and implement conservation practices.

"Kentucky's hunting and fishing heritage is among the richest anywhere," said Johnson. "I am excited to become a part of that. This agency's wildlife and fisheries successes are well recognized among professionals everywhere, and I am looking



forward to continuing and building upon those traditions.

"This is not just work or a job for me," he said. "Fish and wildlife conservation is what I have been committed to my whole life. It is what I do. It is who I am."

Johnson lives in Lexington with his

wife, Melynda. His daughter, Kendra, is a Tate's Creek Middle School teacher and girls basketball coach. His son, Ryan, is completing the Kentucky Department of Criminal Justice Training Academy to become a University of Kentucky police officer.



KENTUCKY FALLEN OFFICER MEMORIAL



Retired Sgt. Rex Burkhead sang the National Anthem and "My Old Kentucky" home to begin the ceremony. Sherry Bryant, widow of Officer Doug Bryant, accepted a flag from Law Enforcement Director Hank Patton. Below, Linda Tabor, widow of Officer Denver Tabor, and Pam Banker, widow of Officer Bob Banker, touched images of their husbands etched in stone pedestals. Participants and on-lookers watched an Honor Guard salute.
Kevin Kelly photos



KCOA Kentucky Fallen Officer Memorial dedicated

Denver Tabor was active with the Boy Scouts, cared for the elderly and was quick to help the less fortunate.

More than once the Kentucky conservation officer surprised his wife, Linda, by coming home with a stranger in need of a home-cooked meal or a hot shower.

Stacy Tabor Hardin grew to know her father from such stories.

"Mom has told me that he was the kind of person that if he gave a ticket sometimes people would thank him before it was over," she said.

Denver Tabor gave his life in 1973 trying to rescue a boy who had tumbled overboard from a boat on the Ohio River, and is one of six Kentucky conservation officers killed in the line of duty since 1918.

The Kentucky Fallen Officers Memorial honoring their sacrifice was dedicated in Frankfort Saturday afternoon, May 17.

"To know that this will be here forever and appreciated by future generations is so humbling," Linda Tabor said. "Denver would be so thankful, and proud."

Located on the campus of the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources, the centerpiece of the keyhole-shaped memorial designed by Kentucky Fish and Wildlife graphic artist **Obie Williams** and constructed by Searcy Monument Company of Carrollton is a bronze statue of a

Linda Tabor, widow of Officer Denver Tabor, dabs a tear while viewing a pedestal dedicated to her husband. Daughter Stacy Tabor Hardin, son Steve Tabor (left) and her grandson joined her for the dedication.



Kentucky Conservation Officers Honor Guard prepares to raise the flags over the Kentucky Fallen Officer Memorial.

saluting officer by Indiana sculptor David Kocka. Benches placed around the statue represent the state's nine law enforcement districts.

Images of conservation officers **Elijah Roberts, James R. Claxton, John C. Martin, Tabor, Robert C. Banker and Douglas W. Bryant** are etched on stone tablets atop stone pedestals lining either side of a brick pathway leading to the statue.

The Kentucky Conservation Officers' Association (KCOA) led the drive for the memorial and financed its construction through sponsorships and other fundraising activities.

Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Conservation **Sgt. Scott Herndon** chaired

the group's memorial committee and said Saturday there are plans to establish a Kentucky Fallen Officers Memorial Scholarship Fund.

"This memorial honors the six officers who gave the ultimate sacrifice," Herndon said, "but also the conservation officers who worked before us and those who are going to work here in the future."

Saturday's ceremony featured the Louisville Police Pipes and Drums, a rifle salute by representatives of the Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Honor Guard, the playing of taps by Anderson County Middle School student Noah Medley and flag presentations to family members or representatives of the fallen officers.

Kentucky Fish and Wildlife conservation officers and Kentucky State Police assembled in rows, shoulder to shoulder behind the families during the ceremony.

The six officers now forever memorialized serve to remind the public of the dangers Kentucky conservation officers face every day, said Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Commissioner **Gregory Johnson**.

"They make all of our lives better by protecting our fish and wildlife resources that richen the landscape



See "Memorial," page 5

Slone, McQueary graduate DOCJT's APS Academy

Two Kentucky Conservation Officers graduated Friday, May 23 from the Kentucky Department of Criminal Justice Training's Academy of Police Supervision.

Sgt. Jason Slone and **Sgt. Jeremy McQueary** joined law enforcement officers from 18 agencies across the commonwealth who were recognized at a graduation ceremony in Richmond.

APS, also called the sergeant's academy, is a three-week, 120-hour training program targeted for newly promoted sergeants or officers who are on their agency's promotion list to become sergeants.

Slone is from the Seventh District, and McQueary from the Fourth.

While in APS, students participate in



classes focusing on the role of a supervisor, as well as leadership, resolving conflict, managing diversity, monitoring officer performance, professional image, legal issues for supervisors, ethics, interpersonal communication, effective written

communication, making decisions, solving problems, managing critical incidents, public speaking, emotional survival, budgeting, media relations and others.

The graduating class is the 55th to complete APS since the program began in 2003.

Covington Police Lt. Col. Bryan Carter served as guest speaker.

Madison County Sheriff's Sgt. Christopher Sizemore served as class speaker.

APS is a stepping stone to DOCJT's Kentucky Leadership Institute, which consists of a series of three progressive leadership courses aimed at developing and shaping future and current leaders in law enforcement agencies across the commonwealth.

"Memorial," continued

and the quality of our life in this great Commonwealth," he said. "This memorial should always remind us of those who picked up the standard from their fallen comrades and carried on those tasks.

"Our fish and wildlife family recognizes the impossibility of ever repaying our debt to these six men. As humans, we strive to express our gratitude to them."

Following the ceremony, Sherry Bryant clutched the flag given to her and made her way to the pedestal honoring her late husband.

Douglas Bryant was killed in May 2003 when his patrol truck was intentionally struck by the car of a man he was pursuing on Interstate 71/75 in Fort Mitchell.

"The people that will come through here now will ensure these officers will not be forgotten," she said. "You continue through life and you move on, but something nobody will ever take away is the memories. They'll live forever."



CHECKED

Kentucky Afield Magazine writer Lee McClellan spent a day in a kayak fishing on Beaver Lake in Anderson County recently. Conservation officer David Goodlett was on the lake that day as well checking fishing licenses.

New Hires

The Law Enforcement Division recently selected **Rachel Conyers** to fill the Boating Safety and Education Administrative Assistant position within the division. Rachel currently resides in Lawrenceburg with her husband and three children.

She was born in Marion, Ohio, graduated high school in Lawton, Oklahoma and received an Associate of Science degree from National College. She enjoys traveling, fishing and watching baseball. Rachel has previously done work helping deployed soldiers and their families and has spent the previous nine months

serving as the agency's procurement card administrator. She will be an asset to the division focusing on the administrative duties associated with boating law enforcement.

William (Willie) Clifton, was hired as an interim for the Engineering Division in 2013. On April 16, 2014 he was hired as a full-time employee for the department in the Engineering Division, his position will be in the "Bank Access Section." Willie has been a great asset to the department and will continue to grow in this position. His background includes construction, farming and heavy equipment.



Herpetology Weekend: a multi-agency partnership

May 9-10 marked the 23rd year for Herpetology Weekend at Natural Bridge State Resort Park.

This event is a collaborative effort between Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources, Kentucky State Parks, U.S. Forest Service, Kentucky Reptile Zoo, Kentucky Herpetological Society, Copperhead Consulting, and the Greater Cincinnati Herpetological Society.

The main goal of this event is to educate children and adults about the value of reptiles, amphibians, and their habitats (like wetlands).

Despite wet weather, the event this year was a huge success, with more than 100 people attending.



SGT. MICK CRAIG RECOGNIZED

The Mississippi Flyway Council Law Enforcement Committee recognized Sgt. Mick Craig for his many years of dedicated service to the committee. Lt. Brett Zalla, right, presented a custom Rich-N-Tone duck call to Craig from the Committee. The call is engraved with the MFC LE Committee logo along with the names of the seventeen states and provinces represented.



Dr. Tina Brunjes
with RMEF Director
of Science Planning
Tom Toman

RMEF recognizes Tina Brunjes for her elk restoration efforts

range in the eastern part of the United States,” said Blake Henning, RMEF vice president of Lands and Conservation. “Not only was she very active and supportive of elk restoration in Kentucky, but she offered her expertise to other eastern states that also reestablished elk herds.”

Brunjes has been responsible for all aspects of deer and elk management statewide for the last eight and a half years.

Brunjes received the award at the 19th Annual Eastern Elk Management Workshop that took place April 27-30 in Breaks, VA.

“Just two decades ago, there were no elk in Kentucky but the estimated population of today’s herd is more than 10,000. That is a credit to a cooperative effort between Dr. Brunjes, Kentucky Fish and Wildlife and the RMEF,” added Henning.

To date, RMEF contributed \$1.4 million to assist with Kentucky’s elk restoration program. The state held its first elk hunt in 150

years in 2001 and now boasts the largest wild elk herd east of the Rocky Mountains.

Kentucky provided elk as a source herd for successful reintroduction efforts in Missouri and Virginia. Elk from Kentucky also have crossed the border into West Virginia where a wild herd numbering approximately 60 now live.



The Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation recently recognized **Dr. Tina Brunjes** for her leadership and long-standing commitment to Kentucky’s elk restoration efforts.

Brunjes, Kentucky’s Deer and Elk Program Coordinator for more than eight years, recently announced that she has accepted a position with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources Wildlife Resources Division. Her last day at KDFWR was May 16.

“Dr. Brunjes has been and remains a strong advocate for elk on their native



SONGBIRD RESEARCH AT BGAD

Bluegrass Army Depot (BGAD) played host to 12 University of Tennessee student interns being trained by Dr. Chris Lituma to conduct songbird and vegetation surveys. The students will be assigned to a number of research areas in Kentucky and Tennessee during the next three months. This research is part of the Conservation Innovation Grant studying songbird (and bobwhite quail in particular) response to native grassland patch-burn-grazing treatments. Two or three of these students will reside at BGAD and conduct research through mid-summer.

Fisheries Division investigating silver carp die-off below Barkley Dam

Anytime you see hundreds of thousands of dead or dying Asian carp in one place it becomes big news.

The fisheries and political community has worked for years on ways to slow the spread of these invasive species and to say the least, interests are peaked when something causes a lot of them to die at one time.

This was the case in late April on the Cumberland River below Barkley Dam.

The Fisheries Division was notified on April 24 of a large cluster of dead silver carp floating below Barkley Dam. **Paul Rister, Neal Jackson** and **Jon Tubbs** from the Western Fishery District were the first to investigate the kill.



Dead and dying silver carp below Lake Barkley Dam. *Paul Rister photo*

They estimated that up to a half million of these fish were dead or dying along the entire stretch of the Cumberland River from the dam downstream to its confluence with the Ohio River.

After contacting the U.S. Fish and

Wildlife Service (USFWS), Illinois Department of Natural Resources, and Kentucky State University, they decided to send specimens to Kentucky State University, Purdue University, and the USFWS Warm Springs Fish Lab located in Arkansas.

Early analysis by Kentucky State University found gas bubbles present in the gills of the fish, in addition to bacterial infections. There were also questions as to whether some kind of virus may have also played a role in the death of these fish as several smaller fish kills in other states were often associated with a virus found in the brain of Asian Carp.

While the Purdue University and Warm Springs labs have been analyzing samples from the initial kill, other possible scenarios have also been discussed. One that holds some merit traces the fate of these fish back to the harsh winter we experienced this past year.

Extended cold winters can take a toll on fish and can weaken their immune systems to the point that they are vulnerable to disease and bacterial outbreaks. As



Becky Patton, Fisheries Division seasonal intern, assists individuals with the USFWS by performing a necropsy analysis of recently expired silver carp below Kentucky Lake dam. *Paul Wilkes photo*

See "Carp," page 9

Fish and Wildlife Commission Selection meetings scheduled

Meetings to nominate candidates for the Eighth, Second and Third Fish and Wildlife District representatives on the Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Commission have been scheduled.

Residents of the districts who, for the past two consecutive years, have either: purchased a Kentucky hunting or fishing license; or hunted or fished in Kentucky, but were not required to purchase a license, may participate in the nomination process.

The Eighth District selection meeting is scheduled for 7:30 p.m. (Eastern time) Thursday, June 12, at the Carl D. Perkins Community Center in Morehead.

The Eighth Wildlife District includes Bath, Bourbon, Boyd, Carter, Elliott, Fleming, Greenup, Lewis, Mason, Menifee, Montgomery, Morgan, Nicholas, Rowan and Wolfe counties.

The Second District selection meeting is scheduled for 7:30 p.m. (Central time) Tuesday, June 10, at the Ballard Convention Center in Madisonville.

The Second Wildlife District includes Allen, Butler, Daviess, Hancock, Henderson, Hopkins, Logan, McLean, Muhlenberg, Ohio, Simpson, Todd, Union, Warren and Webster counties.

The Third District selection meeting is scheduled for 7:30 p.m., Tuesday,

June 17, at the Sawyer Hayes Community Center at E.P. "Tom" Sawyer State Park in Louisville.

The Third Wildlife District includes Breckinridge, Bullitt, Jefferson, Meade, Oldham, Shelby and Spencer counties.

The names of up to five nominees chosen at each of the meetings will be submitted to Gov. Steve Beshear, who will appoint one of the nominees from each meeting to a four-year term on the Commission, subject to state Senate confirmation.

Doors will open at 6 p.m. local time at each location. Selection business will begin promptly at 7:30 p.m. local time.

"Carp," continued

the fish came out of the winter, they immediately began their spawning runs including a big push up the Cumberland River, further stressing the fish.

Upon reaching Barkley Dam, numbers of Asian Carp may have increased dramatically within the close confines helping to spread any potential bacterial or viral pathogen. Combine this with gas supersaturation conditions immediately below the dam, and you have the makings for a major fish kill.

Although the large majority of the kill occurred in late April, dead and dying fish were still being observed below both Barkley and Kentucky Dams well into the second week of May.

This peaked further interest from several state and federal agencies as well as **Paul Wilkes**, Fisheries Division Aquatic Nuisance Species Biologist. Paul organized another data gathering session on May 9



Some silver carp showed external signs of lesions and possible bacterial infections, while other silver carp failed to exhibit similar signs. Samples have been sent to several prominent laboratories for a detailed analysis to identify the causative agent of the recent fish kill below Kentucky and Barkley dams.

Paul Wilkes photo

in which more samples were taken and the reproductive state of both healthy and dying fish were examined and analyzed.

Although it will be some time before a full analysis is available, several things stood out during this second investigation. Many of the fish had air bubbles in their gills and potentially other damage from supersaturation related hemorrhaging. Abnormalities were also found in the brain cavities and the reproductive organs.

The death of so many Asian Carp at one time has brought together many of the top Asian Carp biologists and fish disease experts. What will this fish kill teach us about potential vulnerabilities within this species? Stay tuned...

For more information on Asian Carp, please feel free to contact either Ron Brooks (Fisheries Division Director) or Paul Wilkes (Fisheries Aquatic Nuisance Species Biologist).

*John Yeiser photo*

Green River Region hosts inaugural KDFWR BIOBLITZ event

Program and Regional Wildlife staff came together to coordinate KDFWR's first-ever BioBlitz event at Big Rivers Wildlife Management Area and State Forest.

A BioBlitz is an event where biologists join forces to conduct a biological inventory within a specific amount of time.

On May 7 and 8, dozens of KDFWR staff, and one U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service staff inventoried this important 6,732-acre area, one of KDFWR's newest land acquisitions. The ultimate goal of this event was to document biodiversity.

The event was a huge success, with more than 400 species documented during a 21 hour time-frame. The dedicated team who won the competition for "most species documented" was comprised of **Eric Williams, Ben Robinson, Scott Harp, Tom Burberry and Scott Buser.**

In addition to the collection of species inventory data used by KDFWR to manage train and learn from other agency biologists.

Fisheries division employees **Matt Thomas** and **Stephanie Brandt** hosted a

fisheries training event, KDFWR malacologist **Monte McGregor** hosted a mussel training event, and KDFWR bat biologist **Brooke Hines** hosted a bat training event with assistance from KDFWR technician

Larisa Bishop-Boros.

We hope to continue to inventory Kentucky's public lands and provide staff training opportunities in the future with annual BioBlitz events.

*Andy Radomski (USFWS) photo*

BASS ranks 3 Kentucky lakes in top 100 bass lakes for 2014

The Bass Anglers Sportsmen's Society (BASS) recently published its annual list of the top 100 bass lakes in the U.S. Three of Kentucky's most notable bass fisheries made the cut and are included as part of the top 100 bass lakes for 2014.

Kentucky and Barkley Lakes in western Kentucky ranked as #18. Both of these lakes combine to offer over 215,000 acres of bass heaven for anglers who enjoy flipping and pitching bushes and laydowns in the spring and casting deep diving crankbaits and football jigs along the immeasurable miles of river channel ledges during the summer and fall.

Green River Lake in central Kentucky ranked as #92 and was noted as one of the strongest "up and comers" for its largemouth bass population.

For the past several years, Green River Lake been considered by many Kentucky bass anglers as one of the hottest bass fisheries in the state. Spring tournaments regularly report that a five fish limit of largemouth bass in the 22-26 lb range is what is required to win.

Green River Lake has become a popular destination for most Kentucky bass tournament clubs and organizations.

Lastly, Barren River Lake in southwestern Kentucky ranked as #98. This 10,000-acre Army Corps of Engineers flood control reservoir has historically been considered as one of Kentucky's top bass fisheries, behind Kentucky/Barkley Lakes.

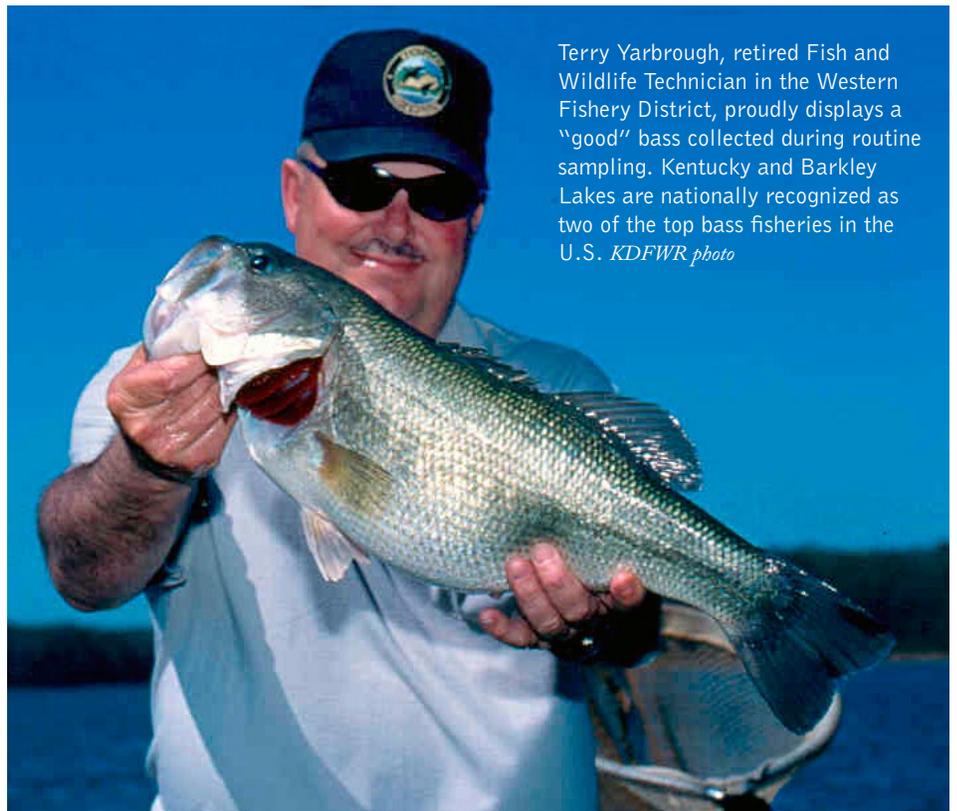
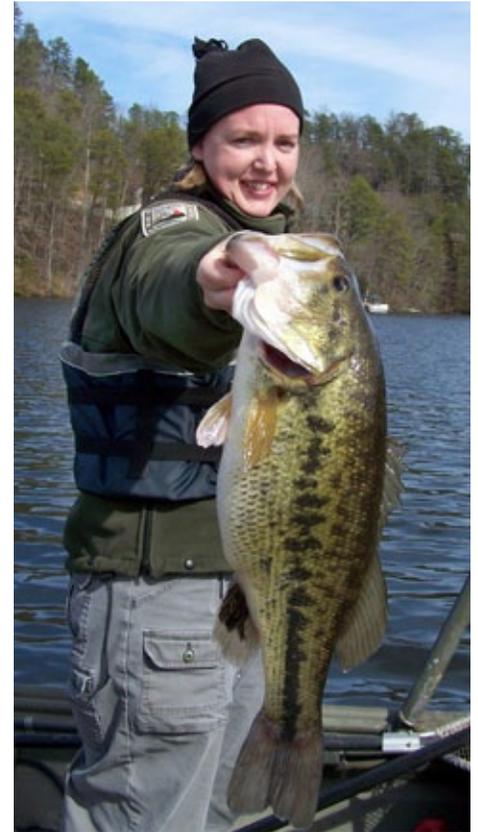
Barren River Lake is gaining national attention as a top bass fishing destination. The lake is well known as being a top jig fishing lake during any season of the year. Barren River Lake also boasts a very healthy spotted bass population, with a reasonable expectation for trophy fish potential.

Fisheries Division is pleased to see

that several of Kentucky's fisheries are making the national spotlight. This helps to emphasize the hard work and dedication that staff put into sampling and managing these resources for a variety of users. It also helps highlight the partnerships that go into managing these multi-use resources.

We hope 2015 will see the addition of several additional bass fisheries onto the top 100 list for the upcoming years.

Right: Southeastern Fishery District Biologist Marcy Anderson hoists a quality largemouth bass collected from Wood Creek Lake during sampling. While only three lakes made the top 100, most of Kentucky's other lakes also offer outstanding recreational fishing opportunities for largemouth bass. *John Williams photo*



Terry Yarbrough, retired Fish and Wildlife Technician in the Western Fishery District, proudly displays a "good" bass collected during routine sampling. Kentucky and Barkley Lakes are nationally recognized as two of the top bass fisheries in the U.S. *KDFWR photo*

KDFWR's CWD surveillance now at more than 24,000 samples

The KDFWR has wrapped up the 2013 surveillance effort for chronic wasting disease (CWD).

Annually, wildlife biologists, technicians, and law enforcement officers around the state collect hundreds of samples from hunter-killed and road-killed deer and elk to test for CWD. They work with dozens of meat processors and taxidermists in their effort to collect samples.

They also respond to calls throughout the year from landowners reporting sick or strange-acting deer on their properties.

Surveillance for CWD has become an excellent example of staff around the state working together in a joint effort toward a common goal.

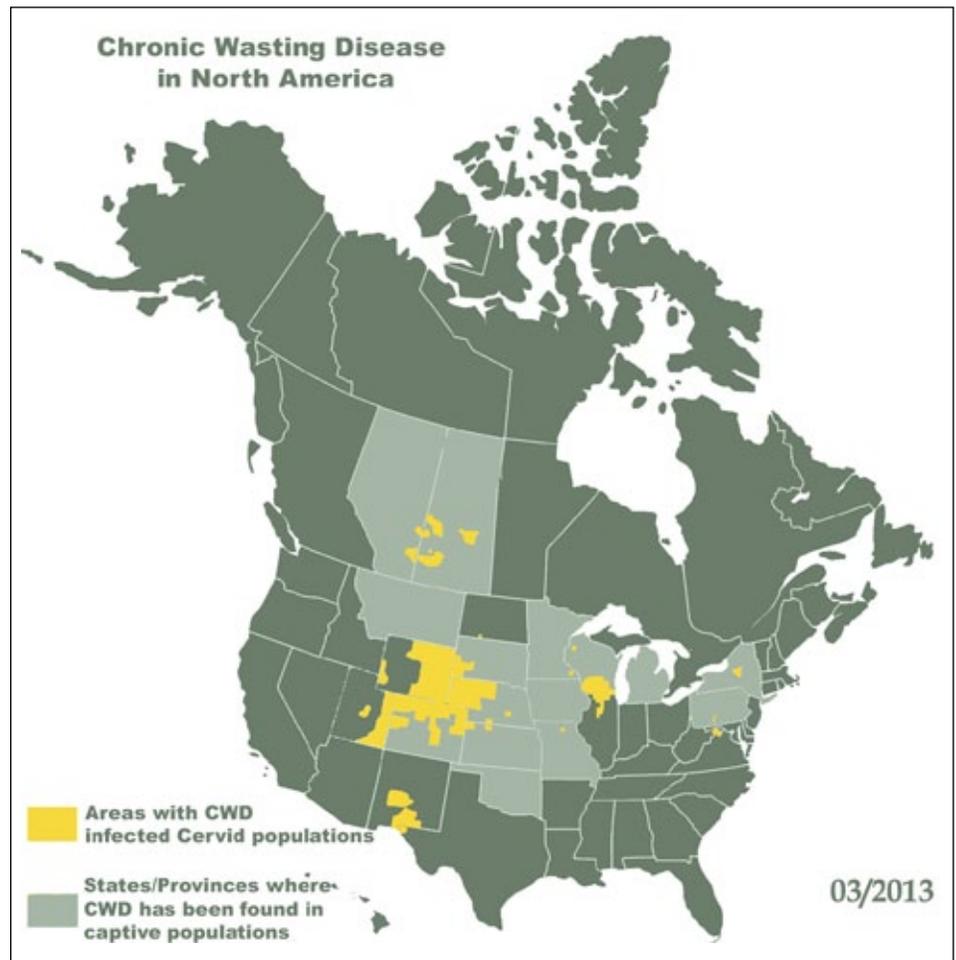
In 2013, nearly 1,100 samples were collected and analyzed, bringing the statewide total to over 24,000 samples collected from free-ranging deer and elk since surveillance began in 2002. Captive cervids in Kentucky are also tested for CWD upon death.

CWD has not been found in Kentucky.

Chronic wasting disease is a neurologic disease of deer, elk, and moose. To date, it has been documented in 22 states and two Canadian provinces. It has been found in free-ranging deer in four states bordering Kentucky: Missouri, Illinois, West Virginia, and Virginia.

It is spread by direct contact from animal to animal, or from living in a contaminated environment. There is no treatment or cure for CWD, and it is always fatal (although it may take years for an animal to show symptoms).

In areas of the eastern United States, it affects up to 35% of the deer, which is why the KDFWR makes such an effort



to conduct surveillance for this disease. By performing annual surveillance, the KDFWR hopes to catch the disease in the early stages (should it ever occur here), giving us the best opportunity to slow its spread through the population.

CWD has not been shown to affect people. However, the Center for Disease Control recommends that people not eat the brain, spinal cord, or lymph tissue from animals that come from

CWD-endemic areas.

For more information about CWD and a map of its current distribution in North America, please visit www.cwd-info.org.



Former KDFWR wildlife biologist Jen Taimi collected CWD samples in this 2006 photo.

Life Adventure Center still hosting Wounded Warrior hunts

Life Adventure Center of the Bluegrass (LACBG) along with partners and support from Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources (including staff from the Bluegrass Wildlife Region and Conservation Officers from the 6th District) and Kentucky Hunters for the Hungry has been hosting Wounded Warrior hunts near Versailles since 2012.

The events are offered free to charge to wounded soldiers from the Ft. Knox and Ft. Campbell Warrior Transition Units as well as other parts of Kentucky and other states.

Life Adventure Center's Warrior Adventure Program helps disabled veterans, service members, and families strengthen relationships, re-learn to interact as a part of a healthy community, and develop coping skills through guided outdoor experiences.

Byron Marlow, Program Director for LACBG, also an Iraq combat veteran, understands the struggles wounded warriors face. As a testimonial to the importance of this program and how it can change the lives of soldiers is one provided by Corporal Steven McCain.

McCain served five years as a sniper in the 170th Infantry Brigade. Injured in Afghanistan, he lost his memory, the ability to walk and even the capacity for speech. Returning home, Steven underwent extensive medical treatments at Ft. Knox's Warrior Transition Battalion. Re-learning how to walk and talk, his voice now speaks for Life Adventure Center's program:

"I was in a dark place

when I attended the first Warrior Adventure deer hunt in 2012. I immediately found a common bond with the guys at this event. This program saves a bunch of us because it gives us outlets to deal with our various issues. You come to these events, talk about your issues, and these guys understand...we can all relate.

"This program put me on a better path and helped me look forward to things in my life as opposed to feeling down about myself and the things that I couldn't do because of my injuries...

"These events helped me to build a



support system. Me and the guys in the program have become close friends and spend time together with our families on a regular basis. We take care of each other and watch everyone's back.

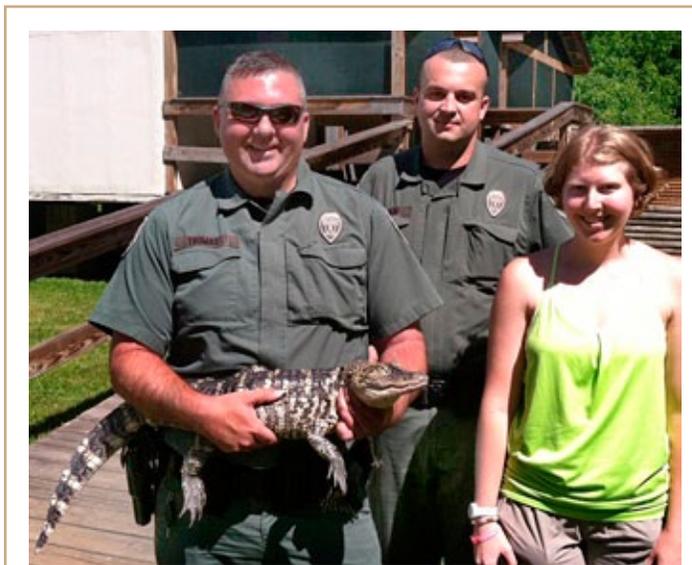
"This program can save you mentally. Many of us come to these events feeling down about ourselves and our injuries, but are encouraged by being able to ...re-build the brotherhood that many of us lost...

"I would like to see this program grow and serve more veterans. I want to see this program save many more soldiers in the years to come and I am committed to doing everything in my power to help Life Adventure Center expand this program."

Joining other program alumni, McCain will make good on this promise by serving as a volunteer mentor to new participants. Medically retired from the military, he plans to attend culinary school and open his own restaurant.

Another recent wounded warrior participant said it best: "your program is literally saving lives."

Thank you LACBG for allowing us to be a small part of your Warrior Adventure Program!



ALL IN A DAY'S WORK

Conservation Officer Eric Thomas, with officer Robbie Spears and a Reptile Zoo staff member, holds the nearly four-foot long alligator they seized last week that had been residing in a fish tank in a private residence. Alligators are considered inherently dangerous wildlife in Kentucky and private ownership or possession is prohibited. The gator was placed at the Reptile Zoo in Slade.