



Habitat project
Page 4

Fisheries staff honored by Governor Matt Bevin

A team of employees in the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources Fisheries Division recently received high accolades from Gov. Matt Bevin and Kentucky's Personnel Cabinet. They were presented the Governor's Ambassador Award for Teamwork. These staff members were nominated for exemplary work to help the Fisheries Division address an increased workload in the face of staff shortages. This teamwork ensured that scheduled deliveries of fish stockings were completed, thus providing outstanding public fishing opportunities on time to hundreds of thousands of Kentuckians and visitors to the Commonwealth. The award was presented at a recent ceremony recognizing winners in several categories of outstanding public service.

Two state fish hatcheries (owned by Kentucky Fish and Wildlife) and the Wolf Creek National Fish Hatchery (owned by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service) pro-



Pictured (from left) are award recipients Graham Howell, Adam Cecil, Andrew Redden, Noah Nelson, John Mitchell, Tyler Fitzgerald, Josh Pennington, Gov. Matt Bevin, Josh Bishop, Jarrod Chappell, and Personnel Secretary Thomas Stephens. Not pictured: Danny Thornton. *Marvin Bright/Kentucky Personnel Cabinet photo*

vide fish for all of Kentucky's stocked lakes and streams. The hatcheries raise fish that are stocked in public waters to promote sustainable fisheries for anglers and to enhance the health of aquatic ecosystems. Staff of the former Fish Transportation Branch were recently reassigned to the department's two state hatcheries in a reorganization that provides workload

diversity to hatchery employees, including those who have been at the hatchery and those who were previously in the discontinued branch. The reorganization allows traditional drivers the option to share driving responsibilities with a larger pool of potential drivers, thereby reducing

[See 'Fisheries,' page 2](#)

INSIDE:



3 Service awards



5 Biologists visit



6 Cook Wild

WE GET MAIL

Letters to the Commissioner's Office

This letter came from James O. Deaton: "My wife and I would like to tell you how much we appreciated the ceremony recently presented at the Fallen Officers Memorial. The memorial in itself was impressive and quite moving as was the ceremony indicating that your officers lost in the line of duty, former officers and those presently serving are of great value and importance to your organization.

We were especially touched by the professionalism of your officers' actions and their attitudes concerning the purpose of the ceremony. They were, also, most courteous toward those attending the service, politely directing those attending and making arrangements for the

family of the fallen officer. My wife was in a wheelchair and to her surprise and mine was escorted to the front row by Maj. Larry Estes. A chair was pulled up for me to sit beside her. Your officers were ever watchful, carefully attending to the needs of others.

Following the ceremony the sidewalk was full of officers but an especially observant one gave a prompt and the dark green seas of officers parted allowing my surprised but broadly smiling and thankful wife a clear path to our car.

Again I thank you so very much and thanks to your officers, especially Officer Estes. I only knew Officer Steve Combs but I feel that I knew all of the officers."

"Fisheries," continued

their need to be on the road every week. Hatchery staff who obtain commercial driving licenses paid for by Kentucky Fish and Wildlife now have the opportunity to drive fish trucks, which will provide another work option for those technicians. All of the hatchery personnel with proper driving credentials will have the opportunity to not only rear the fish, but also take them to their stocking location, which will foster more effort towards optimal care of the stocked fish. The new system will also lower fish transportation costs.

Understandably, not all Transportation Branch drivers wanted the position changes, and in recent months, several employees took other positions. As of the initial spring stocking period, two of six open positions had been re-filled. To fill those six vacant positions, two staff volunteered to obtain their commercial drivers' licenses in a two-week period, two hatchery employees volunteered to haul fish (adding duties to their position descriptions), and one employee volunteered to be transferred to a hatchery and change his position description to haul fish and work at the hatchery. This team made sacrifices to work longer hours and voluntarily take on new duties. We applaud their example as employees to step up and agree to change their positions' duties and help Kentucky Fish and Wildlife in this transition. Their service provides a tremendous benefit to the people and resources of our Commonwealth.

It is also important to note that Assistant Fisheries Director, Dave Dreves, provided extraordinary leadership in this entire transition process including orchestrating the reorganization, speaking with potential new driver technicians, and spending many long days coordinating driving routes with the hatcheries' managers. This entire effort was truly a recognition of the definition of teamwork at all levels.



LEAGUE of KENTUCKY SPORTSMEN CONVENTION

A group led by Commissioner Rich Storm represented the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources at the League of Kentucky Sportsmen's convention June 8 at the Cave City Convention Center. Attending the event on behalf of the department were (from left to right) Acting Information and Education Division Assistant Director Brent McCarty, Fourth District Commission member Kenny Knott, Storm, Fisheries Division Assistant Director Paul Wilkes and Kentucky conservation officers Jason Wells and Lt. Damon Foster.



From left to right: Deputy Commissioner Karen Waldrop, Commissioner Rich Storm, Lori Shoup, Nathan Brooks, Megan Bagby, Bill Fannin, Dawn Welch, John Gutzeit, Dave Frederick, Chief of Staff Brian Clark.

The following employees were recognized at the meeting:

Administrative Services

- Megan Bagby, 5 years

Commissioner's Office

- Dawn Welch, 20 years (12 with Kentucky Fish and Wildlife)

Fisheries

- Chad Nickell, 20 years
- Jason Russell, 20 years
- Adam Martin, 5 years
- Noah Nelson, 5 years

Information and Education

- Will Connelly, 30 years
- Bill Fannin, 30 years
- Nathan Brooks, 5 years
- John Gutzeit, 5 years
- Lori Shoup, 5 years

Law Enforcement

- Lt. Pat Brannen, 20 years
- Officer Lucas Tucker, 20 years (5 with Kentucky Fish and Wildlife)

Wildlife

- Robert Colvis, 20 years
- Dave Frederick, 20 years
- Carrie Blake, 10 years
- Wesley McFaddin, 10 years
- Greg Buckert, 5 years

Employee service recognition

Almost 20 employees were honored at the June meeting of the Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Commission for achieving years-of-service milestones. These public recognitions will continue at upcoming quarterly Commission meetings.

At the June 7 meeting, Commissioner Rich Storm presented service pins and certificates to employees for their continued dedication and service to the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources and the Commonwealth.

Donan Jenkins scholar begins veterinary practice in Lexington

Alexa Ferrell, daughter of Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources wildlife management area foreman Scott Ferrell, recently began practicing at Fayette Veterinary Hospital, after completing her Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degree at



Auburn University's College of Veterinary Medicine in May. She received her Bachelor of Science degree in agriculture from Eastern Kentucky University and built an impressive work history at a variety of veterinary and

wildlife-related organizations, including the Center for the Rehabilitation of Wildlife (Sanibel Island, Florida), Australia Zoo Wildlife Hospital, Columbus Zoo and Aquarium, the Denver Zoo, and

Kentucky Fish and Wildlife's own Salato Wildlife Education Center.

Dr. Ferrell was a recipient of a Donan Jenkins Scholarship as a high school senior. Her scholarship and numerous others like it were made possible through an endowment from the family of retired Conservation Officer Jenkins, a career Kentucky Fish and Wildlife employee in Union County. They set up the scholarship fund in honor of Jenkins and to help make higher education possible for children of Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources staff.

Major fish habitat restoration project on Barren River Lake



Obie Williams photos

Extensive fish-attracting habitat was recently placed in the Peter Creek arm of Barren River Lake this past week, thanks to a collaborative effort between the Fisheries Division of the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources, public volunteers and other agency partners.

“This is part of our ongoing effort to restore fish habitat in our larger reservoirs,” said Ron Brooks, director of Fisheries for Kentucky Fish and Wildlife. “This is the first year of a three-year large-scale habitat restoration project on Barren River Lake.”

Crews placed trees, wooden pallets

with tree branches attached, large artificial trees constructed to withstand weathering and rot and commercially made fish habitat in Barren River Lake.

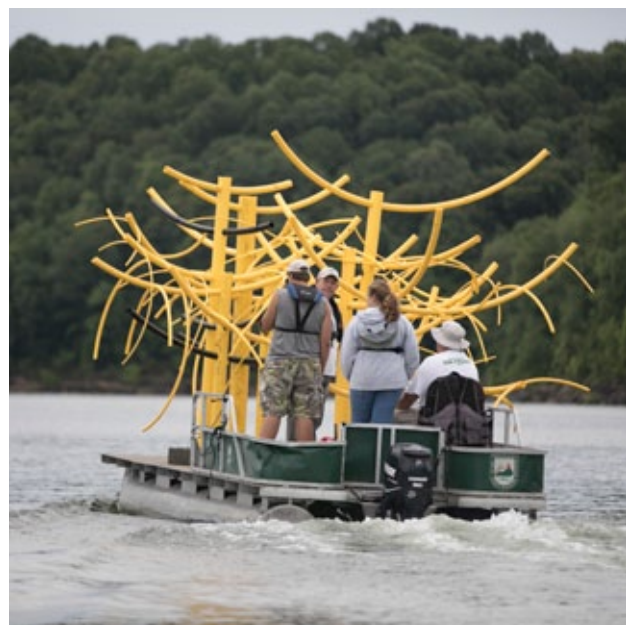
A committee formed from user groups picked the depths and the areas for the placement of the fish habitat.

“This project gives us a chance to allow the public to be part of the resource improvement effort,” Brooks said. “They get to be part of the solution and have a sense of ownership as well.”

Brooks said fish habitat restoration is a major priority for Kentucky Fish and Wildlife. “I consider this really important in Kentucky,” he said. “As our reservoirs age, they lose fish habitat. That is why I really like fish habitat restoration. We can see the benefits. It is amazing how fast fish populate those habitat structures after we put them in the lake.”

Brooks commended the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for its help in the Barren River Lake fish habitat restoration.

“They are a big partner in this effort,” Brooks said. “We could not do this without their help.”



Pennsylvania biologists visit Kentucky Quail Focus Areas

The northern bobwhite historically ranged from Maine to New Mexico in the United States. This range has drastically reduced over time and today many states are experiencing precipitous declines, with some states in the historic range void of quail all together. In 2014, biologists in Pennsylvania declared the northern bobwhite extirpated from the state. This declaration did not spell the end of quail in Pennsylvania however, as scientists are mounting a huge effort in the state to bring bobwhite back from the abyss.

In Kentucky, the small game program has increased quail numbers on six Quail Focus Areas across the state through its 10-year Road to Recovery plan, which comes to an end this year. This was no small effort, with many successes and failures, and there is much still to learn on how best to save quail in the Commonwealth from extirpation.

The quail plan in Kentucky has garnered national recognition over the years with biologists from the Midwest and Southeast visiting our state to see the management our field staff are implement-



Tom Keller, Pennsylvania Game Commission photo

ing on the ground to benefit quail, along with many other species. Biologists from Pennsylvania visited two Quail Focus Areas, Shaker Village and Clay WMA, in June 2019 to learn first-hand the successes and failures of high quality, targeted quail management.

The Pennsylvania biologists are tasked with creating the highest quality quail habitat on an Army Depot in southwest

Pennsylvania. Already well on their way to this goal, the biologists observed quality open lands management at Shaker Village and high quality open and forestland management on Clay WMA. The trip ended on an excellent note, as the Pennsylvania biologists heard and saw bobwhite at Clay WMA and returned home with information from managers on what it takes to create and maintain high quality quail habitat.

Kentucky's crossbow deer season extended

Kentucky deer hunters will have a longer period in the field with their crossbows, after a proposal to expand the season went into effect May 31.

The new crossbow season will open the third Saturday in September and close the third Monday in January. This year that timeframe begins Sept. 21, 2019, and continues through Jan. 20, 2020.

The proposal to lengthen the season went through the legislative process earlier this year after being approved by the Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Commission (board) late last year.

The extension of the crossbow season

is a way to tap into the popularity crossbow hunting has gained in recent years. Expanding the season provides additional opportunities, keeps hunters afield longer and helps manage the state's deer herd. With bag limits for deer in place, overharvest is not a concern. Biologists monitor deer harvest numbers annually to ensure the herd remains in good shape. The public may review up-to-date Telecheck harvest results anytime at fw.ky.gov.

This new regulation also allows all youth hunters - those ages 15 and younger - to hunt deer with a crossbow during the entire archery season. This mimics what

the department already has in place for Kentucky residents who are age 65 and older. The archery season for deer opens the first Saturday in September and closes the third Monday in January.

For new hunters, youths and people with physical limitations, crossbows can be less intimidating than other methods in terms of getting started, considering such factors as equipment costs and up-front preparation time. This expanded crossbow season will create more opportunities for hunters to enjoy Kentucky's outstanding deer herd.

Partnership with UK Cooperative Extension will reach more food-motivated people

The Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources has partnered with the University of Kentucky's Cooperative Extension program to reach more people who have interest in eating healthier by making available nutritional and cooking information about wild sources of protein. "Cook Wild Kentucky" will feature print and online recipe cards featuring a variety of Kentucky fish and game species. Kentucky Fish and Wildlife staff have already provided recipes for several dishes for the first round of recipe cards.

The working group recently met at the Salato Wildlife Education Center to discuss progress on development of the recipe cards to highlight the health and culinary benefits of game and fish. The group also discussed how training could be offered to UK Cooperative Extension agents so they can offer Field to Fork- and Hook and Cook-related programming in their counties. At the conclusion of the meeting, Kentucky Fish and Wildlife conservation educator Geoff Roberts provided an interpretive demonstration with an American Kestrel and led a tour of the Salato Wildlife Education Center.



Pictured, left to right: Marisa Aull, Assistant Director, Nutritional Education Program (NEP); Jackie Walters, Senior Extension Specialist, NEP; Heather Graham, Agriculture and Natural Resource Agent; Jan Knappage, Food System Specialist, NEP; Denise Rennekamp, NEP Staff; Becky Wallen, Kentucky Fish and Wildlife conservation educator; Debra Cotterill, Director, NEP; Elizabeth Coots, Family and Consumer Science Extension Agent; Andrew Wooldridge, Kentucky Fish and Wildlife conservation educator; Marlee Kelly, graduate research assistant; Dr. Gregg Rentfrow, Associate Extension Professor of Meat Science; Rachel Young, Kentucky Fish and Wildlife conservation educator. Below: Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Conservation Educator Geoff Roberts led a tour of the Salato Center, beginning with a kestrel demonstration.

