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Happy Anniversary: Kentucky elk restoration turns 20 this month

Twenty years ago this month Gov. Paul Patton flung open the gate of a cattle trailer on reclaimed mine land just outside of Hazard and allowed seven elk from Kansas to become the first free-ranging elk in Kentucky in 150 years.

They were the first of 1,549 elk relocated to Kentucky over the next five years from six western states.

Kentucky Afield TV celebrated the 20th anniversary of that historic day by chatting with some of those who help make wildlife restoration history.

Panel members from 20 years ago included Fish and Wildlife Commission Member Doug Hensley whose idea of bringing elk back to Kentucky became reality, Department Commissioner Tom Bennett who guided the agency through the mammoth effort, Wildlife Division Director Roy Grimes who assembled much of the logistics and monitored the biology, and wildlife biologist Dan Crank who spent countless months across five years trapping, disease-



testing, and transporting animals across the country.

Their efforts helped the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife build the nation's largest elk herd east of the Rocky Mountains.

They joined *Kentucky Afield TV* host Chad Miles at Pine Mountain State Resort Park and recalled stories from about one of most incredible and successful wildlife restoration efforts ever.



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Humble recognized with Governor's Award

Law Enforcement Division Director Col. Rodney Coffey joins Kentucky Conservation Officer Tim Humble after Humble received the Governor's Impaired Boating Enforcement Award recently at the Governor's Impaired Driving Awards Banquet.

Humble works out of Trigg County in the Department's First District.



The banquet and awards recognize officers from across the state that help keep Kentucky roadways and waterways safe from impaired operators.



Phillips is new Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky Port Security Committee vice president

Indiana Department of Natural Resources nominated Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Captain Charles Phillips last month to become the new Vice President over the Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky Port Security Committee for Homeland Security.

This Port, consisting of the Ohio River from Meldahl Dam



to the Oldham County line, is the nation's second busiest inland port.

Other partners include the maritime security committee, barge companies, Cincinnati Fire, Cincinnati Police, FBI, Air Marshalls, Northern Kentucky Police Agencies, Ohio

DNR, Ohio Watercraft, the U. S Fish and Wildlife Service, U. S. Attorney's Office and the United States Coast Guard.

Captain Phillips will be assisting Port President Indiana Conservation Lt. Bill Bevillet. They have worked together as District Commanders and have great working and personal relationships. Together they will lead the Port Security Committee into the future and face any challenges that may come before them.

New hires

Please welcome **Lanny Claxon** as a wildlife technician II for the wildlife division in the Bluegrass Region assigned to the Kleber, Rich, Kentucky River, Twin Eagle, and TN Sullivan WMAs.

Lanny started October 23rd full time, but is not new to the department. The previous five years he has been an interim wildlife technician at Kleber WMA, and has worked for the fisheries division as a creel survey clerk prior to coming to the wildlife division.

Lanny's dedication and commitment to the resource along with his farming background and previous wildlife technician experience make him a valuable asset to the department.

Welcome **Eric Smith** as our new WMA Manager stationed at Lloyd WMA. He also is responsible for Adair, Mullins, Stephens Creek, Griffith Woods, and Veterans Memorial WMAs.

Eric graduated from Eastern Ken-

tucky University, receiving a Bachelor's degree in Wildlife Management and a Master's degree in Aquatic Ecology.

Eric previously worked with the Department as a seasonal technician on several Wildlife Management Areas in the Bluegrass Region.

Eric is married to Jaspreet Chahal and has a beautiful two-year-old daughter, Sameena, and another daughter, Alahana, currently serving in the Air Force.

Retirement is next story for voice of Kentucky Afield Radio, TV

The long-time host of *Kentucky Afield Radio* and the voice heard on the opening tease of every *Kentucky Afield Television* show is hanging up the headphones at year's end.

After 27 years of "helping to tell the stories of Kentucky's wildlife and wild places," Charlie Baglan is retiring.

"It has been a dream come true," says Baglan. "Elk restoration, the birth of the National Archery in the Schools Program, the recovery of the Bald Eagle and more, it's been an exciting time to be a broadcast journalist."

Kentucky Afield Radio will leave the airwaves of stations now carrying the



Kentucky Department of Fish & Wildlife.

Baglan joined the department in 1991. He was instrumental with the famed KET television program and hosted "Kentucky Afield for Kids" which aired in

program and plans to emerge soon as a podcast.

It is a move to reach the younger, more mobile listeners who are the next generation of caretakers of our great outdoors.

Kentucky Afield Radio actually launched the television program, both beginning in 1953

and produced by the

schools on KET's Star Channel. In 1997, he revived the radio program, which had been silent since 1987, and never looked back.

"I can't thank the listeners enough. In three decades, I've worked with some talented people with these shows. Nature is for everybody. I've always tried to steer my stories with that in mind. Often, that meant stopping to define terms and translate biology into English," he said. "The experts in the conservation field have been fascinating to interview and I applaud their tireless work."

Along the way, the Emmy-winning Baglan has amassed accolades for helping to promote boating safety, Nature's Finest license plates and an audio tour for the Salato Wildlife Education Center.

Baglan's good-bye broadcast will be New Year's weekend.

Lisa Tolliver named to KAGC Board of Directors

Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Information Center Supervisor Lisa Tolliver has been named to the Kentucky Association of Government Communicators (KAGC) Board of Directors.

Tolliver joins Jim Isman of the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet, Regina Stratton of the Kentucky Retirement Systems, and Officer Tim Brown of Lexington Fayette Urban County Government as new KAGC directors.

As the Department's information



center supervisor, Tolliver and her staff relay and explain Fish and Wildlife's rules and regulations to the public.

Prior to her employment at Fish and Wildlife, she worked in the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet's Office of Public Affairs as a Public Information Officer. Before her career with the state, she worked in newspapers serving as reporter,

photographer and eventually an editor. She graduated from Western Kentucky Uni-

versity with a degree in print journalism.

KAGC also named Rebecca Mullins Hanchett as its new president, Carrie Searcy, VP of Administration and President-Elect, Zach Morgan, VP of Programs, Beth Fisher as Treasurer, and Lanny Brannock, Secretary. Kelly May is past president.

KAGC brings together professionals whose primary jobs involve communicating with media, the public, legislatures, stakeholders and other entities. Its goal is to improve and enhance its members' expertise, and the public image, morale, effectiveness, and work of its members' federal, state and local government employing agencies.

Fisheries CSI catches Black Carp in Lake Barkley

The Critical Species Investigations branch of the KDFWR Fisheries Division captured the first ever-documented Black Carp in Lake Barkley recently.

KDFWR staff were working with a commercial fisherman targeting Silver Carp in Lake Barkley with gill nets when they captured the Black Carp.

Black Carp are native to eastern Asia and listed as an invasive species along with the other Asian carps including Silver Carp, Bighead Carp, and Grass Carp.

Fish farmers seeking another food fish and to control yellow grub brought Black Carp to the United States in the 1980's. However, they escaped captivity through flood events. They recently have been found in the main channel and backwaters of the Mississippi, Illinois, and lower Ohio Rivers.

Prior to this Black Carp captured in Lake Barkley, the furthest upstream capture of a Black Carp was in the Ohio River near Brookport, Illinois.

Black Carp are similar in appearance to Grass Carp with long cylindrical bodies and large scales. However, Black Carp are darker in appearance, usually a black or blue-gray color, and generally have a more cone shaped head than Grass Carp.

Unlike Grass Carp, which feed on plankton and aquatic plants, Black Carp are molluscivores, which feed on mussels and snails. That makes Black Carp a species of particular interest because they have the potential to negatively impact already threatened or endangered mollusk species and other organisms that rely on mollusks as a food source.

If you capture a Black Carp, please keep the fish on ice and call a KDFWR Fisheries Biologist at (270) 759-5295.



Kentucky, Tennessee biologists studying Asian carp movements

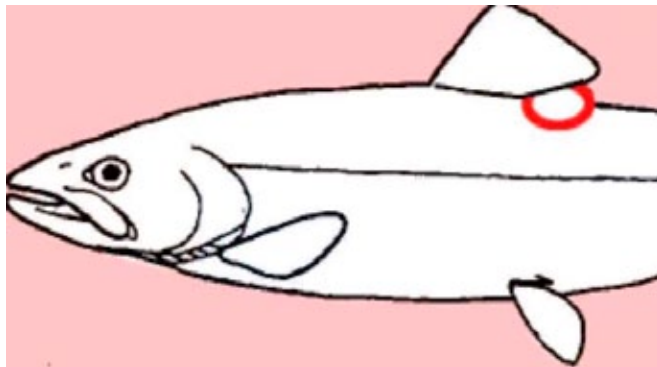
Asian carp research team is assisting the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency and Tennessee Tech University in capturing silver carp.

The joint effort used electro-fishing and gill nets to accumulate 33 silver carp. They tagged the fish with an ultrasonic telemetry tag that emits a signal that can be picked up by specialized receivers. Then they released them.

The agencies also deployed stationary receivers throughout Kentucky and Barkley lakes and in the lock chambers at Kentucky, Barkley and Pickwick dams that can detect the signals.

The study helps us better understand silver carp habitat use, movement, and define behavior patterns.

The tagged silver carp also were marked with a silver jaw tag or an orange loop tag behind the dorsal fin. If you find a fish with these markings please keep the fish and contact KDFWR at (270) 759-5295.





New fish habitat, plantings will help Beaver Lake fishing

The new telehandler (fork truck) donated by the League of Kentucky Sportsmen has allowed us to use larger materials to create more substantial fish attractors for Kentucky anglers.

Staff put 80 large hardwood trees to create three large brush piles at Beaver Lake in Anderson County this fall. They lowered the lake as part of an intensive project to improve fish populations through habitat work.

They placed the large brush piles in 15-16 feet of water to provide deep-water habitat effort in Phase 1 of the project with more habitat work to be completed through the winter months.

The work also includes placement of pallet stacks, brush piles, PVC habitat structures and stake beds in the lake. Staff planted winter rye on the newly exposed mud flats. "This will release nutrients back into the lake after it returns to normal level and the rye decomposes," Fisheries biologist David Baker said.

The drawdown will bring largemouth bass in closer proximity to bluegill and redear sunfish, improving the fishing for all three species.

"By crowding them together a bit, the largemouth bass will eat more of the sunfish, improving the quality of their populations by reducing overcrowding,"

Baker said. "The largemouth bass will also improve their body condition with this extra food source."

The drawdown, the first on the lake since 1998, will last throughout the winter. "We will start refilling the lake in March," Baker said. "We hope to get it finished by April. We want the lake back full for fishing season next spring."

Waypoints of these sites and all upcoming habitat work are available at <https://www.google.com/maps/d/viewer?mid=1FSj26PqziaAMIT7biXLj9et-x6E&ll=37.97005185163314%2C-85.01787345000002&z=15>.





Lake Sturgeon monitoring update

Fisheries Division research staff used trotlines to sample for Lake Sturgeon in the Cumberland River (Lake Cumberland) below the mouth of Laurel River and in the Big South Fork from Alum Ford to Turkey Creek during the first week of December.

They caught 55 sturgeon in the Cumberland River and 17 from Big South Fork. The fish ranged in size from 17 to 48 inches total length (0.5 to 18.2 pounds), representing nearly every age class stocked since 2009.

These results, along with a continued increase in angler capture reports, suggest that survivorship and growth of Lake Sturgeon has been excellent so far.

During the next 10 years, as the oldest fish become sexually mature, the ultimate measure of successful restoration will be reproduction in the wild.



Clockwise from above left: Jay Herrala, Dirk Bradley and Stephanie Brandt.





Leary Lake gets new fishing pier

Engineering, Infrastructure and Technology Division and constructed a new fishing pier at Leary Lake on the Curtis Gates Lloyd Wildlife Management Area in Grant County.

The new T-shaped floating fishing pier replaced one that had fallen into severe disrepair. Staff started working on the project in the middle of October and completed it November 9.

Bank Access Section Superintendent David Bond and operator William Clifton led the project. Other crewmembers that helped with the project were Rodney Smith, Joe Cook, Richard Cook, Johnny Bohannon and Paul Brewer.



Dining hall walls up on new Camp Currie dining hall

Construction progress continues on Camp John Currie's new dining hall and kitchen replacement.

Demolition began immediately after the close of this past camp season. Walls and roof trusses are going up, and construction will continue throughout winter and spring.

Completion target date on the new nearly \$3.5 million facility is mid-May, prior to staff and campers returning for the 2018 summer camp season.

The Kentucky Fish & Wildlife Foundation is providing a significant portion of the dining hall's construction costs.



Sixth Annual Warrior Adventure Hunt is memorable



– Story and photos by hunt organizer
Joe Lacefield

Twenty hunters and mentors took 31 deer during the Sixth Annual Warrior Adventure Hunt November 18-19.

The hunters and mentors arrived in Versailles a day early and were escorted by the Patriot Guard and local law enforcement on a parade through town to lunch at a local restaurant.

They then went to Anderson County Sportsman's Club and zeroed rifles and fulfilled hunter safety requirements. Special thanks to Officers Josh Robinson and Matthew Hartley for officiating the range and their support and assistance for the weekend.

Wildlife biologists led a Friday

evening program that included a catered meal and a hunter orientation slideshow of trail camera photos showing potential bucks in the hunting areas. They discussing Quality Deer Management and determining adult does versus fawns.

Hunters met their "guide" that was familiar with the property they would hunt the next morning. They discussed shot placement and angles to discourage bad hits.

Organizers

raffled a donated DLC Covert trail camera to help encourage antlerless harvest by entering hunters who cleanly harvested adult does. Consequently, hunter took only two button bucks.

Participants hunted at Kentucky Utilities Tyrone plant (retired), Life Adventure Center and on other local private landowners who welcomed the warriors, making about 3,000 total acres available.

The hunters took seven antlered deer. A strong storm front on Saturday with 50 mph wind gusts and 25+ sustained winds held the hunters to 21 harvested deer, but they returned to take another 10 on Sunday morning. They donated 18 deer to Kentucky Hunters for the Hungry, specifically going to needy military families.

Zach Beyer helped collect biological data, and there really was never a down time during this event.

It is always good to increase hunting in areas of high deer densities, but gaining community involvement and giving the injured combat veterans a chance to hunt and experience a distinctive fellowship made this event special.

Life Adventure Center/KU had numerous sponsors to fund this event, including the Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Foundation. We appreciate them very much.

