



LOVEWELL STATE PARK SPRING NEWSLETTER



Welcome to this edition of the Lovewell State Park Spring Newsletter! We hope you enjoy it and will provide us feedback on the format and content.



STATE PARK FEES FOR 2020

Annual Vehicle	\$25.00
Kansas SR/Disabled Annual	\$13.75
Daily Vehicle	\$ 5.00
Kansas SR/Disabled Daily	\$ 3.25
Unconventional Vehicle Permit	\$52.50
Annual Camp	\$202.50 (\$252.50 after March 31)
14 Day Camp	\$112.50
Daily Camp	\$ 10.00
Prime Site (all 50amp sites)	\$ 2.00
Electricity	\$ 9.00
Elect/Water	\$11.00
Elect/Water/Sewer	\$12.00
Seasonal Campsite Elect	\$371.50 per month
Seasonal Campsite Elect/Water	\$431.50 per month
Seasonal Campsite Elect/Water/Sewer	\$491.50 per month
* Transaction Fee of \$3.00 will be added to each campsite transaction TOTAL.	

OFFICE HOURS THRU APRIL ARE 8AM TO 4:30PM MONDAY-FRIDAY.
WEEKEND HOURS WILL BEGIN IN MAY.



Reserve Your Camping Cabin or Utility Campsite Today!
kshunfishcamp.com or reserveamerica.com or call Lovewell State Park!

Reservable Campsites Expanded!!

There has been no change to park permit fees for 2020!! However, there have been significant changes to reservation guidelines. **All utility campsites at Lovewell State Park are now reservable**, except for the designated Seasonal Campsites and Handicapped Only campsites. Also reservable this year are the 24-Hour Generator campsites at Willow Campground. Sites are reservable through Thursday midnight for a Friday arrival date (ie: a 1Day Reservation Window). On Friday, all remaining sites for the weekend become first-come/first-serve sites. All non-designated primitive camping areas are still first-come/first-serve as well. The Annual Camp and 14-Day Camp permit are still available, and provide a \$10/night discount to the permit holder on camping stays. **Purchase the Annual Camp permit before April 1 and save \$50.00!** The 14-Day Camp permit is \$112.50 year-round, and expires after 14 nights have been used.



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Advice from a RACCOON:

- Unmask Your Talents!
- Climb to New Heights!
- Be Curious!
- Look Both Ways Before Crossing The Road!
- Avoid Junk Food!
- Always Wash Your Hands!
- Enjoy The Nightlife!

AmeriCorps Service Opportunity Available!

AmeriCorps is a national service program which allows team members to gain service experience and knowledge through hands-on participation in a variety of projects. The grant is designed for long-term benefit to natural resources, recreational opportunities, and public awareness of the outdoors. Typical projects performed by AmeriCorps members are environmental and outdoor recreation development, renovation of public recreation areas, presentation of environmental and outdoor related programs, and disaster response, as needed. Team Members must be at least 17 years old, have a high school diploma/GED, or agree to obtain one; a citizen of the US or permanent legal resident; pass a background check; and possess a strong desire for community service. Members who complete a 300 hour term are eligible for a \$1252 education award, in addition to the \$305 bi-weekly living allowance. Contact the State Park Office for more information!
Join Our AmeriCorps Team Today!





SPECIAL EVENTS AT LOVELL FOR 2020

Don't miss this year's line-up of Lovell State Park special events! Lovell State Park is excited to be a designated site for this year's Earth Day Cleanup activities sponsored by Kansas Dept of Health and Environment. **Pre-Register for this event on the KDHE Facebook page <https://facebook.com/events/s/earth-day-state-park-cleanup-1/198731747982059/?ti=cl>** then come out on Saturday April 25th at 8am, enjoy a great breakfast, help cleanup an area of the park, and get a free t-shirt! Free Park Entrance Day on May 2nd promotes the "Let's Camp America" campaign. There will be a "Kids to Parks" Day on Saturday May 16th. Park Staff will be offering an Archery Clinic for Kids at 10am, and the staff of Milford Nature Center will be presenting a great Reptile and Amphibian program at 2pm! Kansas Free Fishing Weekend is June 6 and 7. A fishing license is not required to fish any public waters in the State of Kansas on these two days. The Kids Fishing Clinic will be held the following weekend, on June 14 for kids aged 7 to 15. Participants will learn fish identification, rules and regulations, receive fishing technique instruction, and learn how to clean a fish! Next up is "Whatever Floats Your Boat" on June 21. Your team will design, build and decorate a cardboard

boat and bring it to the Southwinds Beach. The goal is to paddle 2 people on the boat through the course without sinking! You could also win a prize for the best decorated vessel! As has been the case for many years, there are no individual July 4th holiday fireworks allowed in Lovell State Park or Lovell Wildlife Area. Again this season, thanks to a Lovell Lake Committee fundraising campaign and special permission from the Bureau of Reclamation, a spectacular July 4th fireworks display is TENTATIVELY set for July 3. The Fireworks Committee appreciates any donations. If you are interested, contact Lovell Marina to make a donation or to request contact information for the Fireworks Committee. Our longest-standing tradition, Lovell Fun Day, will be held on August 1. The day will begin with a Scavenger Hunt and Kayak Cruise. Our popular Co-Ed Mud Volleyball tourney will get underway at 10am. The Kids Sand Treasure Hunt will also be part of the Fun Day activities, at the Pioneer Day Use Area. The Fireworks Committee is sponsoring a cornhole tournament. We are always looking for new activities for our Fun Day, if you have a suggestion! Campground Christmas will be held August 15, with lots of campsite decorations and holiday fun. The final event of the season will be held Sept 13, with the 3D Archery Tournament and Free Park Entrance.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!!

Earth Day Cleanup	April 25
Free Park Entrance	May 2
Kids to Parks Day	May 16
Free Fishing Weekend	June 6/7
Kids Fishing Clinic	June 14
Whatever Floats Your Boat	June 21
Fireworks Display **	July 3
Lovell Fun Day	August 1
Campground Christmas	August 15
3D Archery Shoot	September 13
Free Park Entrance	September 13

** TENTATIVE



Be Sure to Attend Kids to Parks Day for a Great Reptile and Amphibian Program!

Lovell State Park is a popular destination for family reunions, alumni reunions, weddings and company picnics. Reserving a shelter is very economical, at only \$34.00 for the day. Contact us to schedule your own special event today!



Let's Camp America! is an initiative by the National Association of State Park Directors, to showcase the wide array of activities available to campers on an extended trip or close to home. Activities will be promoted all over the United States, including Free Park Entrance at Kansas State Parks on May 2nd! LET'S CAMP AMERICA! is about building outdoor moments with family and friends. America's State Parks are primed and ready to create America's next camping generation.

THREE GIFT CARD STYLES NOW AVAILABLE!



GIFT CARDS for all of your gift giving needs: Campfire, Pheasant and Fish! Birthday, Anniversary, Christmas, or Thank You gifts for the outdoor person in your life just got a whole lot easier, with a gift card for any dollar amount over \$25. The lucky recipient can use their gift card for any type of purchase offered by Kansas Dept of Wildlife Parks and Tourism, at any KDWPT office location, for 5 years from the purchase date!

KDWPT now offers three outdoor-themed styles of

Lovell Marina Set To Open April 1st !

information regarding any changes, upcoming live music, and other offerings throughout the summer. Our hours will be similar to the past, and we will continue to serve three meals a day for most of the season. Fireworks are on the schedule for July 3rd, but donations are needed to ensure the show goes on. Donations should be made to the Lovell Lake Association and dropped off at the marina. Last year made for an interesting lake season, to say the least. We thank you for your continued patronage and look forward to a summer of awesome lake memories!

Lovell Marina will open for the season on Wednesday, April 1, weather permitting. Check our Facebook page (Lovell Marina & Grill) for information





Forgot Your Life Jacket? No Problem!!



*New Life Jacket Loaner Kiosk
Installed Near Lovewell Marina
Boat Ramp*

Since 2008, the Sea Tow Foundation has distributed over 50,000 life jackets to local businesses and organizations across the country. The nearly 600 life jacket loaner stations currently in operation are placed in locations where boaters will have easy access to the life jackets, such as boat ramps, marinas and parks. Boaters may borrow the life jackets at no cost and are asked to return them when they are finished so that they are available for others to use. Kansas State Parks applied to host and maintain Sea Tow Foundation Life Jacket Loaner Stations at all of its State Park locations. The stations are stocked with life jackets in a variety of sizes available for boaters to borrow free of charge for a day out on the water. PLEASE, use this fantastic program as it is intended and return the borrowed life jackets as instructed, so that everyone can benefit from the program. Thanks, and safe boating everyone!



Kansas Residents! Don't forget about the Kansas State Park Passport! Available at the time of your vehicle license registration, only \$15.50 per vehicle!

EXCITING NEW FACILITY PROJECTS!!



*Rose Hill RV Dump/Wash Out
Station Upgraded*

At the beginning of the fiscal year, funds were secured from the Statewide Park Fee Fund to replace the failing septic tank and leech field system at the Rose Hill RV Dump/Wash Out Station located northeast of the Cedar Point Campground. In October, following the 2019 park season, park personnel began the task of removing the old system and installing the new one. It was completed in November 2019, and is ready for use this year!



*New Cedar Point Boat Ramp Rock Jetty Under
Construction*

Thanks to funding from a Motor Boat Access Grant, the area to the west of the Cedar Point Boat Ramp is going through some big changes! Previously, a floating breakwater had been placed in this area to attempt to minimize the wave action and protect the shoreline riprap in this area. After several years, the breakwater began to break apart and had to be removed. This new project involves building a large rock jetty to protect the boat ramp and shoreline from wave action and erosion. Construction on the jetty began in late November 2019, and should be completed by April of 2020. In the meantime, the Cedar Point Boat Ramp is currently closed to public use, since the heavy equipment and rock delivery vehicles need plenty of room to work! The jetty may also reveal a side benefit of fishing opportunities!



*Flood waters of Lovewell Reservoir reach
the road in front of the Pioneer Camping
Cabin, July 2019*

2019 HISTORIC FLOODING IN NEBRASKA AND KANSAS

Lovewell Reservoir was not able to avoid the historic flooding that plagued much of Kansas and Nebraska in the spring of 2019.

Lovewell Reservoir reached its third highest ever elevation of 1593.0 in mid-July. Although we are very thankful that flood waters did not affect many structural facilities at Lovewell State Park, it did cause the closing of several primitive camping areas throughout the state park. Flood waters completely covered, reaching the road's edge, in the Southwinds Day Use Area and primitive camping areas at Pioneer, Cedar Point and Cottonwood, and much of the Willow Primitive Camping Area. As a result, some of these areas may be closed to camping during the initial weeks of the park season as park personnel attempt to re-establish grass in those areas. We ask that our visitors avoid barricaded areas, especially with vehicles and camping equipment, until grass seeding can be done and the grass has a good chance to grow there.



REGULATION REMINDERS

Our state park regulations are not new, but its always good to remind visitors as we look forward to the new park season. **VEHICLE AND CAMPING EXPIRATION TIMES**—All daily vehicle and camping permits expire at 2 pm following the last day purchased. If your vehicle is still in the state park or your camping unit is still in a primitive or utility campsite after 2 pm, another day **MUST** be purchased. **14-DAY STAY LIMIT**—A camping unit is limited to 14 consecutive days in a campsite, **utility and primitive**, with the exception of designated seasonal campsites. Following the 14th day of your stay, you must move your camping unit to another campground, or remove it from the state park area, for at least five days. **GREY WATER DUMPING**—all waste water from camping units (GREY **and** BLACK tanks) must be disposed of at dump stations only. **SPEED LIMIT**—there is a **25 mph speed limit** throughout the entire park. Speed should be reduced even further when entering and driving the individual campground roads. The **UNCONVENTIONAL VEHICLE PERMIT** is still available for golf-cart and UTV type vehicles (no ATV's) but use restrictions and regulations do apply. **PETS**—are allowed at Lovewell State Park, however must be kept on a 10 foot or shorter leash or chain **at all times**. Pets are **not allowed** inside any of the facilities, unless for assistance purposes. This includes all shower and restroom facilities, swimming beach, park office, group shelters, and state park camping cabins. *However*, Pioneer, Pine Ridge, Frontier and Sunrise Camping Cabins are designated as “pet friendly,” with payment of the Pet Fee of \$50 per stay. **WATER USAGE**—Although it is not a statute or regulation, we also want to remind our constituents that due to significant increases in our fees paid for water usage, Lovewell State Park does not allow extra water use for things like waterslides, wading or swimming pools, etc. Please use only the water that is necessary to operate your camper, keep your water hose connections in good operating condition, and notify us as soon as possible of any leaks discovered at your water hookup, or the appearance of an underground water leak near your campsite. **With everyone abiding by state park regulations, we can continue to provide a safe and family-oriented park and enjoyable visits for all!! Thank you!**



Like Us On Facebook!! *Kansas Wildlife, Parks & Tourism—Lovewell State Park*

“Like” us and turn on the push notifications for our page. You will get the latest on upcoming events, past events, information on facilities and lake status, great park photos, anything you want to know!

Now you have the **inside track** on the most up to date information, no need to worry about unsubstantiated rumors! Status updates can also be found at ksoutdoors.com (click on **State Parks**, then **Lovewell**, and **Park News**); or simply call our office during business hours. We will be happy to give you the most accurate, up-to-date information for your planning!

NEW UNIQUE LOGO FOR LOVEWELL STATE PARK



An initiative that began several years ago by the Kansas State Parks Division was to create unique graphic logos for each of the twenty-eight state park locations. Each logo represents something unique about the state park, and we are proud to say that the Lovewell State Park Logo portrays the idea that “Families Gather Here”! Look for the new logo on state park signage (as signs are updated), artwork in our state park facilities, and an eagerly anticipated inventory of souvenirs and merchandise in the near future!



2020 FISHING FORECAST!!

LOVEWELL RESERVOIR - is at 1/2 ft below conservation pool, as of February 2020.

By Scott Waters, Fisheries Biologist

CATFISH - Good. The catfish population will be very good in 2020 with all sizes of channel cats and flatheads available to anglers. Lovewell ranks first in terms of channel catfish density (16”), second for preferred size fish (24”), and third for lunkers (28”). The fall 2019 channel catfish catch rate was much improved for all sizes compared with the 2018 sample with the biggest numbers of fish in the 16 to 20 inch range. The biggest fish weighed 10 pounds with good numbers of fish greater than 5 pounds. Sixty-three percent of the fish were between 16 and 20 inches, 19% were 21-25 inches, 10% were between 13 and 15 inches. Flathead catfish were also sampled this year with 31 fish collected ranging from 9 to 42 inches with the biggest fish weighing 39 pounds. Fish between 13 and 15 inches comprised the biggest portion of the catch, but plenty of trophy flatheads are available to anglers. Channels and flatheads will be vulnerable in all arms of the reservoir as well as up White Rock Creek near the Highway 14 bridge. During irrigation releases, catfish can be caught close to the inlet and outlet structures and are susceptible along the dam and other rocky areas during the spawn. We collected over 200 blue catfish in 2019 using electrofishing, float lines, and fall gill nets. There are now nearly 700 tagged blue cats in the reservoir as we continue to study their movements and growth rates. Fish collected this year ranged from 19-36 inches and weighed up to 22 pounds. Natural reproduction of blue catfish has not been documented recently and will be needed to sustain this population without stocking. For that reason, there is still a 35 inch minimum length limit on blue catfish at Lovewell. **All blue catfish less than 35 inches must be released!**



CRAPPIE - Good. The crappie population remains strong in Lovewell and catch rates reached near all-time highs in 2019. This is partly due to the lower water level during sampling, but primarily due to the strong recruitment in recent years. Lovewell ranks first among the state’s reservoirs in terms of crappie density (8”), preferred size fish (10”), and lunker rating (12”). Density rating was only 2.7 in 2014 but climbed to 19.9 in 2017 and reached 64.5 this past fall. Sixty percent of adult crappie were between 6 and 9 inches, 39% were 10 to 12 inches. Higher water levels in recent years allowed for excellent crappie production with the 2015 to 2017 year classes dominating the population as age-2 to age-4 fish, and these three year classes should produce good fishing in the next few years. Approximately 15% of the adult crappie consisted of black crappie with fish between 3 and 12 inches. Biggest white crappie weighed 1.6 pounds and biggest black crappie weighed 1.2 pounds. These fish all appear to be very healthy with excellent body condition. Several brush piles are maintained to help concentrate fish for anglers, and decent success can be found fishing around the flooded vegetation in Montana Creek and other coves during late April and May when the fish are spawning. We will likely add several hundred more trees to the existing brush piles this year as well as additional Georgia Cubes. **10 inch minimum length limit and 20 per day creel limit on Crappie.**

WALLEYE - Fair. Lovewell Reservoir continues to support a low density walleye population but provides quality size fish for anglers. Poor recruitment from 2013 to 2018 combined with a summer fish kill in 2018 that resulted in extensive walleye mortality has continued to keep numbers lower than desired. The density and preferred ratings improved slightly, but the lunker rating remained unchanged for the second consecutive year. The walleye density ranks 9th among the state’s reservoirs while the preferred rating ranks 8th. This continues a trend of lower catch rates since the 2012 sample, but good size is available. A very nice year class of 2019 walleye was collected in the gill nets with an average of one fish per net. This is the strongest walleye year class produced in the past 12 years. In addition to the first stocking of 6,000 walleye in early October, 3,000 intermediate (8-9 inch) walleye were stocked in late October and will further boost the 2019 year class. Only 15% of the fish in the sample were greater than 18 inches. Overall, 48% were 7 to 10 inches, 37% were 14 to 17 inches, and 15% were 19 to 22 inches. Fish condition was excellent again this year. Fry and fingerling stockings were conducted each of the past three years and young fish were produced, but the numbers were well below the management objective. A combination of fry and intermediates stocked in 2019 appear to have led to increased recruitment. Fishing continues to be good from late April through mid-June with anglers drifting jig/nightcrawler combos having the best success, especially along 2-Mile Road. Trolling a variety of crankbaits in late July and early August around the dam and Walleye Point has yielded good catches of big walleye the past several years. Anglers are encouraged to carefully measure any questionable fish and handle sublegal fish with care. **18 inch minimum length limit in effect.**

WHITE BASS – Good. White bass catch rate and density rating improved significantly with the best catch rate observed at Lovewell since 2011. The white bass population is in good shape and anglers should realize a successful year of white bass angling in 2020. The density rating (9”) reached a low of 2.1 in 2014 and gradually improved to 4.9 in 2018 with the latest sample reaching 7.6 this year which ranks 8th statewide. The preferred rating (12”) improved for the 4th consecutive year from 2.2 to 4.6 and ranks 7th in Kansas. Fish over 14 inches were collected for the first time since 2014 with the biggest fish measuring 15 inches and weighing 1.7 pounds. Overall, 44% of the sample was between 5 and 9 inches, 38% were 10-12 inches, and 18% were 13 to 15 inches. As in the past, the best time to fish for Lovewell whites will be during peak irrigation releases. The inlet and outlet areas historically produce the vast majority of whites harvested while summer topwater activity can also be productive. Night fishing using floating lights can be fair to good and drifting or slabbing over submerged roadbeds and humps throughout the year is also an effective method for hooking into a nice stringer of whites.

WIPERS - Fair. The catch rate of wipers continues to improve following a very strong 2018 year class. These fish are growing well and numbers are very good. The density rating improved from a record low of 0.05 in 2017 to a rating of 2.6 in 2019. This is an improvement from 0.4 in 2018 and is the highest rating since 2008. Fish older than age-2 were not observed in the sample as the recent stockings are contributing to the majority of the population. Lovewell ranks 4th in terms of wiper density among the state’s reservoir, with the biggest fish collected weighing 3.7 pounds. Wiper intermediates and fingerlings were stocked in 2019 and produced a nice year class. Fry and fingerlings have been requested for 2020 as this has provided good results in the past. Similar to white bass, decent numbers of wipers can be caught during the irrigation season as the fish migrate to the inlet and outlet areas. Other anglers report good success for bigger wipers trolling crankbaits and deep-diving rapalas along the north shore and the dam. **Be sure to identify your catch carefully as those young wipers look very similar to white bass. The daily creel limit on wipers is 2 fish!**

**GET THE LATEST WEEKLY FISHING REPORTS FOR ALL AREA RESERVOIRS AT
www.ksoutdoors.com/news/Fishing/Fishing-Reports**



THERE'S AN APP FOR THAT!!

Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism is proud to announce the arrival of its first-ever mobile apps, CampIt KS and HuntFish KS –

making Kansas outdoors more accessible than ever before. The innovative mobile apps allow users to seamlessly reserve campsites and buy licenses – anytime, anywhere, and from any mobile device. Through the CampIt KS mobile app, state park visitors can easily reserve campsites and lodging, and in the future possibly self-pay for an available site. Directions, contact information, and important alerts are also available for each state park, providing visitors with the information they need all in one location. With the new HuntFish KS mobile app, hunters and anglers can purchase their licenses and permits remotely, and store them electronically on their mobile device. Links to current seasons, limits, and regulations are also available, providing outdoor enthusiasts with the most up-to-date information on-the-go.



Download the CampIt KS mobile app to your Android device here: <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.aspiraconnect.ra.ks>

Download the CampIt KS mobile app to your Apple/iOS device here: <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/campit-ks/id1449813035?ls=1>

Download the HuntFishKS mobile app to your Android device here: <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.aspiraconnect.hf.ks>

Download the HuntFishKS mobile app to your Apple/iOS device here: <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/huntfish-ks/id1456586235?ls=1>

Also check out the informational YouTube video for the CampIt KS app!! <https://youtu.be/oxfs2B5kdZU>

JAMESTOWN AND TALMO WILDLIFE AREA UPDATES

JAMESTOWN — Many neighbors, local visitors and hunters noticed all of the big equipment, rock, concrete and dirt that was moving around Gamekeeper Marsh in the last year. The latest renovation project was a slow process to say the least. Like everyone else throughout the state, the extremely wet year created many delays and slowed construction on the Gamekeeper berm and dam construction projects. A wet year in a wetland area makes conditions extremely difficult to get dry to continue working.



However, with great contractors, who refused to let Mother Nature get the best of them, they persevered and both projects were finally complete in the early fall of 2019. The first major project consisted of constructing a 9,500 ft. division berm that split the approximately 700 acre Gamekeeper Marsh into two separate units. Within the berm, a 300 ft. emergency spillway, a 3,500 ft. drainage canal and four water control structures were installed to allow managers to control water throughout the year and give them the ability to manage vegetation to promote plants that are attractive to waterfowl. Controlling the cattails will be paramount when it comes to providing the best conditions for the fall migration and 2020 hunting season. The area received 21 overtopping floods from June 2018 – September 2019. It seemed just as the project was rolling along very well, the area would get hit with a flood, halting progress for several days and in some instances, up to one month. While one contractor was wrapping up the division berm project, a second contractor started the tedious task of adding a one and a half foot concrete cap on the existing Gamekeeper dam. This increase in elevation will compensate for decades of sedimentation that has settled in the marsh. The increase will also inundate approximately 500 acres of moist soil habitat that will be perfect for wetland wildlife. The construction crew drove 18 iron pilings over 60 foot into the ground, filling them with concrete. They then added an extensive amount of rebar, formed around it and poured the wall in 30 ft. sections. This did not come without its major challenges. Again, flooding turned a project that was scheduled to take three weeks into a project that took almost three months to complete. While all of that work was going on, managers worked between floods to provide the best habitat possible for the 2019 season. With hopes of having everything done prior to the waterfowl season starting, it was apparent mid-summer that low water levels in the large marshes were going to be a reflection of what happened in 2017 – 2018. Water was held in Marsh Creek Marsh to allow managers to pump into smaller, off channel storage pools that had excellent moist soil vegetation. Water was pumped, and yes, more flooding changed management plans for the fall. But, the season was not lost and although the early teal season was extremely poor, the regular waterfowl season was close to average. With all of the flooding, managers will have many challenges this summer fixing breached levees, replacing water control structures that were damaged and many other small, however costly and time consuming repairs to get all of the infrastructure back up to acceptable operational standards. The good news is that the big projects are done. If the area can stay somewhat dry for the summer, managers hope to be fully operational in the fall of 2020, looking forward to many visitors who will take advantage of the new work and enjoy their time in the out of doors.

TALMO — Talmo Wildlife Area was popular with waterfowl hunters in the fall of 2019. Since it lies in the Low Plains Late Waterfowl Zone, hunters who hunted the Jamestown duck opener in early October, were fortunate to enjoy the Talmo opener several weeks later. The 167 acres of WRP wetlands provided excellent gunning opportunities throughout the early fall. Hunters that were patient and persistent reaped the rewards of great waterfowl and upland hunting throughout the season. The wet year did not allow managers to lower the water levels that would have allowed some much needed moist soil vegetation to grow, providing excellent food and cover for waterfowl. It did provide enough water to give ducks and geese excellent loafing opportunities and allowed the hunters to spread out on the area. Plans are underway to develop a new wetland unit in the Nutter Tract which lies on the east side of the property. This 100 acre wetland will provide even more opportunities for hunters to enjoy the area. The native warm season grass plantings that were planted in 2018 are starting to fill in around the agricultural fields along the west side of the tract. A viewing area with an information kiosk will be added later this year and a brochure with map will be available within the next few months. Plans for improvements of the wetland complex continue. The cooperative approach has been used as a model to realize the potential the area has by creating an all-encompassing strategy which includes landowners, government agencies and conservation partners.

Visit the Jamestown and Lovewell Wildlife Area News Pages

Visit www.ksoutdoors.com/news/KDWPT-Info/Locations/Wildlife-Areas/Region-1/Jamestown/

OR www.ksoutdoors.com/news/KDWPT-Info/Locations/Wildlife-Areas/Region-1/Lovewell/

for updates on area management and construction progress, upcoming events, and waterfowl migrations.



Rob Unruh, Public Lands Manager

Habitat Work May Look Ugly...so do baby swans

Why are you cutting all the trees down? Fair question. We are not cutting all the trees down. The managers are working on reducing trees that have become weeds, in a sense. I am sure many of you are familiar with the phrase from the 1860's, "Any plant out of place is just a weed". Eastern red cedar and honey locust are the two main tree species we are targeting. Those trees have become out of place and we are removing them from targeted areas. Eastern red cedar, (ERC), is a native conifer, (evergreen needles that remain intact year-round), and as its name describes is more of an eastern tree although it is found throughout the State. An Achilles' heel for ERC is fire and another is the fact that once the top growing point is removed they do not resprout. The ERC has separate male and female trees or are classified as dioecious. The female tree produces prolific, small, blue berries full of seed. The "juniper" berries once eaten by animals is readily spread after passing through its digestive system. The spread of ERC was historically controlled on grasslands by the frequent prairie fires that were caused by lightning or by humans. The humans were the Native Plains Indian tribes and they understood that the green grass that regrew following a fire attracted many grazing animals the tribes relied on for food. After the fire the ERC was now brown and dead. The many grazing animals also trampled any trees the fire missed. As the area was settled, prairies were tilled for cropland, homes, towns and cities were built and fire that kept the grasslands grass was suppressed. The large herds of grazing animals were gone and pastures were enclosed. Not that this is bad or sad but things changed. We even plant ERC to protect our homes and farmsteads from the winter winds and to provide some cover for wildlife although wildlife researchers have found that we probably have planted too many and most native wildlife get along just fine with healthy, vigorous grassland for cover. Honey locust, a non-native, deciduous, (loses it leaves annually in the fall) tree was planted for some of the same reasons as the ERC. Locust tree are monoecious and both male and female parts are found on the same tree. The seeds of the locust are found in a leathery pod, like a pea or bean, hence they are a legume and fix nitrogen from the atmosphere. Unlike ERC, when cut, they are prolific re-sprouters from the roots which makes them even heartier. It too was planted for our use as it is quick growing, drought resistant and provides shade. I believe it is misnamed and should be called "thorny locust" as there is nothing sweet about it except in the spring there is a sweet fragrance wafting from the small flowers blooming on it. Its thorny nature protected it from grazing and could be used for firewood and fencing the grassland pastures. The original wildlife habitat plan for many of our wildlife areas planted shelterbelts list honey locust as a component, along with ERC. Deer have been documented feeding on the locust pods but that benefit is far outweighed by its horrible invasive nature and those thorns can puncture most tires, animals and people! So why are we cutting trees? We cannot roll back time to the 1860's when this area was a native, warm season grassland interspersed with oaks in canyons and cottonwoods and other trees along the streams "where the deer and the buffalo roam". Our goal is to manage the habitat for wildlife species living on the areas today and into the future by providing healthy grasslands and woodlands. To start, managers will be controlling out of place trees in the woodlands and grassland. This will even involve thinning out trees in the woodlands. Even oaks, green ash and hackberry need to be thinned. Some of the shelterbelts planted in the 1960's will be renovated. Firebreaks are being constructed and many will be maintained permanently. Areas will look ugly as the managers will be cutting, piling, mulching, burning and disking. An agreement with Pheasants Forever has allowed us to hire a Habitat Specialist and we hope to have them hired and working by mid-spring. In the Hans Christian Andersen fairy tale the ugly duckling eventually turns into a swan and while we are not promising a swan, the goal is to provide a healthy and sustainable habitat for wildlife.



BEFORE



AFTER

Contact Information:

Kansas Dept of Wildlife, Parks & Tourism
 Lovewell State Park and Wildlife Area
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Lovewell Staff:

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Lisa Boyles	Administrative Specialist
Rob Unruh	Public Lands Manager
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Carli McFarland	Game Warden
Vacant	Wildlife Biologist
Scott Waters	Fisheries Biologist