

**KDWPT Update
To
The Senate Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources**

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Secretary
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Tourism

- 35.6 million visitors traveled to Kansas
- Visitor spending increased by 4.3% for the 9th straight year, to \$7.1 billion
- Tourism spending supports 5% of all Kansas jobs
- Kansas tourism generated \$638 million in state and local taxes

Tourism Division

- Filled key open Tourism positions
- Hired a new advertising agency to market our great state
- Initiating agency support for regional tourism coalitions
- In 2019, we exceeded 400 registered agritourism businesses

Kansas State Parks

- Recently opened Little Jerusalem Badlands State Park in Logan County, Kansas' 28th state park.

2019 Flooding

- State park staff were diligent in making repairs that resulted in many campgrounds and campsites reopening sooner than expected, mitigating impact.
- Cumulatively impact estimated at \$11 million
- Conversely, high water conditions will result in better fishing opportunities in the future.

Wildlife

- Annually, the Walk-in Hunting Access (WIHA) program leases more than 1.2 million acres. Low enrollment in eastern Kansas. Solution – iWIHA.
- Development and implementation of a CWD Management and Communications Plan.
- High-fence operations, including assessing risks to domestic cattle and wild deer herds.

Fisheries

- KDWPT hatcheries produced more than 100 million fish in 2019 for stocking in Kansas waters.
 - Funded through the sale of fishing licenses.
 - Fish have a higher probability of survival because they're larger than wild-spawned fish.
- Continuing to monitor Aquatic Nuisance Species and educate the public on ways to help prevent their spread, while staff explore alternative management methods.

CampIt KS and HuntFish KS

Launched first-ever mobile device apps – CampIt KS, a state park permit and reservation system, and HuntFish KS, which allows hunters and anglers to purchase and store licenses on their mobile devices.

Law Enforcement

- Using technology and social media, Law Enforcement continues to increase public engagement
- Recently implemented a “Text a Tip” program that allows concerned parties to text game wardens when incidents occur.
- KDWPT Law Enforcement has had good success hiring qualified candidates and training them, but retention is a chronic issue.

Recruitment, Retention and Reactivation

Implement strategies to recruit, retain and reactivate hunters, anglers and Kansans who enjoy wildlife and outdoor recreation; developing broader relevance, public engagement and support.

2020 Legislative Initiatives

Increase license and permit fee caps

- Fishing and hunting programs are entirely dependent on license and permit fees
- Fees are infrequently increased, and for residents, they’ve tracked well with CPI changes. Non-residents track demand curves.
- Future price hikes will be infrequent and modest

Dynamic state park cabin and campsite pricing

- The state park system has evolved from SGF dependence to a predominantly user-pay system.
- Allows state parks to benefit from high-demand times, fill more campsites when demand is low.

Affiliate KDWPT’s Law Enforcement Officers with Kansas Police and Fire Retirement

- KPERs transition to KPF cost borne entirely by KDWPT
- Reduces impact to other participants by \$130,000 annually
- Increase recruitment and retention of officers

Byron Walker Wildlife Area Land Acquisition

- Ducks Unlimited acquired land adjoining Byron Walker Wildlife Area in Kingman County hoping for KDWPT to purchase.
- Purchase was proposed in 2018 legislature, but was unsuccessful
- 2019 meetings with neighbors and local legislators has resulted in a win-win plan