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WALK-IN HUNTING AREA PROGRAM IN KANSAS

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WALK-IN HUNTING AREA PROGRAM IN KANSAS

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Abstract: Hunting license sales in Kansas are declining. Hunters often cite the lack of access as a reason for no longer hunting. Some landowners are seeking opportunities to use wildlife and other natural resources as a source of supplemental income. Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks (KDWP) initiated a pilot program to lease land and make it available for public hunting. In 1995 KDWP leased 10,345 acres of land from 46 different landowners at a lease cost of \$20,400. This lease program follows a simple concept by which landowners receive a fee from the Department to allow people to hunt their land. The landowner receives assurances that hunting will be by foot traffic only, that the land will be periodically patrolled by conservation officers, and that they are still immune from normal liability under state law. A telephone survey was conducted of both hunters using the leased lands and the landowners to evaluate the program. The reports are very favorable. Ninety-three percent of the landowners enrolled in the program will continue next year. Of the 925 usable surveys received, 96% of the hunters recommend continuing the Walk-in hunting area program. Because of this response, KDWP plans to lease 100,000 acres for public access in 1996-97.