

2000

Briefing Book Nebraska

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Table of Contents

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

<i>station/office</i>	<i>telephone number</i>
National Wildlife Refuge Offices	
Boyer Chute NWR	712-642-4121
Crescent Lake/North Platte NWR	308-635-7851
Fort Niobrara/Valentine NWR	402-376-3789
Rainwater Basin Wetland Management District	308-236-5015
Partners for Fish and Wildlife Office	
Grand Island	308-382-6468
Ecological Services Field Office	
Grand Island	308-382-6468
Law Enforcement Offices	
North Platte	308-534-0925
Lincoln	402-476-3747
North American Waterfowl Management Plan	303-236-8155x252 308-382-8112
Federal Aid–Sport Fish and Wildlife Restoration	303-236-7392
Migratory Bird Conservation	303-236-8155x259

NEBRASKA

The United States Fish and Wildlife Service's mission is, working with others, to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people.

This book is available on the FWS Mountain-Prairie Region website:
<http://mountain-prairie.fws.gov/reference>

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Presence in Nebraska

Employment

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) employs approximately 64 people in Nebraska.

The FY 2000 Resource Management budget for Service activities in Nebraska totals \$3,722,000.

3,545 hours were donated by 140 volunteers to help with Service projects.

National Wildlife Refuge Facts

Four National Wildlife Refuges.

Wetland Management District

Office located in Kearney.

Volunteer Hours: 5,648

Visitation

298,700 people visited Refuges and Wetland Management Districts in Nebraska in 1999.

Of these:
16,000 people fished on Refuges.

30,000 people hunted on Refuges.

139,000 people visited Refuges to view wildlife.

1,935 school children participated in Service educational programs.

Federal Aid to State Fish and Wildlife Programs

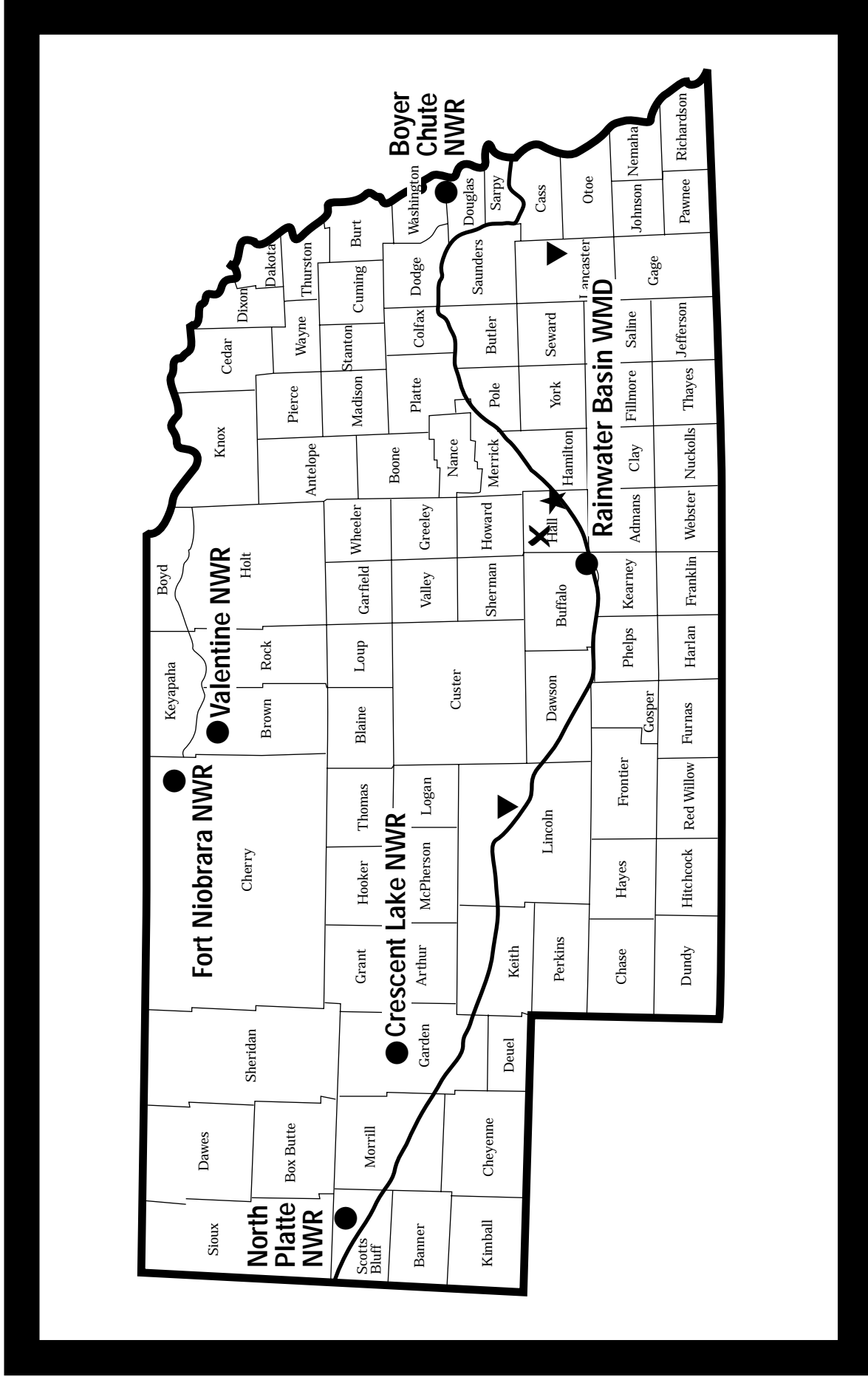
In 2000, Nebraska received: \$3,014,134 for sport fish restoration, and \$3,246,130 for wildlife restoration and hunter education.

Partners for Fish and Wildlife Facts

With State partners, the Service helped private landowners develop or restore 4,600 acres of wetlands and 1,660 acres of upland projects for the benefit of fish, wildlife, and natural resources.

Endangered Species Recovery Program Facts

The Service is a major participant in the Platte River Cooperative Agreement, and is co-lead with the Bureau of Reclamation in developing the Environmental Impact Statement for a Platte River recovery program.



Offices of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

- National Wildlife Refuge / Wetland Management District
- ★ Ecological Services Office
- ▼ Law Enforcement Office
- ✕ Partners for Fish & Wildlife Office

Nebraska

Boyer Chute

National Wildlife Refuge

Contact: Larry Klimek
Refuge Manager (pro tem)
Address: 1434 316th Lane
Missouri Valley, Iowa 51555

Telephone: 712-642-4121
Fax: 712-642-2877
E-mail: larry_klimek@fws.gov

Station Facts

Established: 1995

The Refuge was established to restore and protect fish and wildlife habitat along the Nebraska side of the Missouri River and its floodplain, and to provide public recreation opportunities along the river corridor.

Acres: over 9,200

The Refuge is an integral part of the Back to the River Project which features a hiking/biking trail access for the public.

Station Goals

To preserve, restore, enhance and maintain aquatic habitats for threatened and endangered species, for other fish and migratory birds, and protect the Missouri River floodplain habitats.

Station Fiscal Facts

Staff: 2

Current Budget (FY 00):
\$120,000

- Annual Visitation: 45,000
- Volunteer hours: Volunteer program run by DeSoto NWR, Region 3.

Public Use Opportunities

- Fishing.
- Wildlife observation.
- Photography.
- Nature trail.

Activity Highlights

Fish sampling in the Chute has documented the presence of endangered pallid sturgeon.

Proposal to expand Boyer Chute NWR by 7,912 acres is being reviewed by the public.

Crescent Lake / North Platte

National Wildlife Refuge Complex

Contact: Steve Knode
Project Leader

Address: P.O. Box 1346
Scottsbluff, Nebraska 69361

Telephone: 308-635-7851

Fax: 308-635-7841

E-mail: steve_knode@fws.gov

Website: www.r6.fws.gov/crescentlake

Complex Facts

The Complex consists of Crescent Lake and North Platte NWRs and is administered from the Complex office in Scottsbluff.

Complex Fiscal Facts

Staff: 8

Current Budget (FY 00):
\$405,499

- Annual Visitation: 13,700 including 9,000 at Crescent Lake and 4,700 at North Platte
- Volunteer hours: 163

Crescent Lake NWR

Established in 1931 with 45,849 acres in fee title in Garden County.

Station Objectives

Develop and maintain waterfowl and shorebird habitat.

Provide protection and habitat for endangered species, including bald eagles and blowout penstemon (plant).

North Platte NWR

Established in 1916 with 2,909 acres in 4 units, including Lake Minatare, Winter's Creek Lake, Lake Alice and Stateline Island.

Station Objectives

Develop and maintain waterfowl and shorebird habitat.

Provide protection and habitat for bald eagle and peregrine falcon.

Public Use Opportunities

- Fishing and hunting (hunting at Crescent Lake only).
- Wildlife observation and photography including photography blinds.
- Wildlife hiking trails.
- Environmental education.
- North Platte River island access for wildlife-oriented, non-consumptive uses.

Activity Highlights

Management of nesting and migrating bald eagles and the sandhill prairie ecosystem.

Use of biological control agents on noxious weeds to reduce chemical use.

“Wetland and Prairie Trunks” for use by elementary and secondary teachers.

Work cooperatively with non-governmental organizations and other government agencies on land management programs on public and private land.

Active management and propagation of the blowout penstemon.

Key sponsor of Nebraska's Junior Duck Stamp Artist Workshop.

Provide visitors with the opportunity to enjoy Refuge lands and to learn about plants and animals.

Fort Niobrara / Valentine /John and Louise Seier

National Wildlife Refuge Complex

*Contacts: Royce Huber
Refuge Manager
Address: HC 14 Box 67
Valentine, Nebraska 69201*

*Telephone: 402-376-3789
Fax:: 402-376-3217
E-mail: royce_huber@fws.gov*

Complex Facts

The Complex consists of Fort Niobrara, Valentine, and John and Louise Seier NWRs; Yellowthroat and Holt Creek Wildlife Management Areas (WMA); and four conservation easements.

Fort Niobrara NWR

- Established: 1912
- Acres: 19,131 in fee title

Valentine NWR

- Established: 1935
- Acres: 71,516 in fee title

John and Louise Seier NWR

- Established: 2000
- Acres: 2,400 in fee title

Yellowthroat WMA

(previously called Tower WMA)

- Established: 1991
- Acres: 480 in fee title

Holt Creek WMA

- Established: 1995
- Acres: 180 in fee title

Complex Goals

Preserve, restore, and enhance the diversity of upland and riparian plant communities and water resources representative of the five physiographic regions within the Northern Great Plains; to ensure their richness and

representativeness is sustainable into the future.

Preserve, restore, and enhance the ecological diversity and abundance of migratory and resident wildlife, emphasizing native birds and waterfowl.

Maintain representative breeding herds of nationally significant animals under reasonably natural conditions.

Contribute to the preservation and restoration of endangered and threatened flora and fauna that occur or have historically occurred around Valentine NWR.

Provide the public with quality opportunities to learn about and enjoy the ecological diversity, wildlife, wildlands, and history of the Refuge in a largely natural setting.

Promote partnerships to preserve, restore, and enhance a diverse, healthy and productive ecosystem.

Station Fiscal Facts

Staff: 12

Current Budget (FY 00): \$544,811

- Annual Visitation: 160,000
- Volunteer hours: 3,248

Public Use Opportunities

- ***Fort Niobrara:*** Fishing, visitor center, nature trail, auto tour route, canoeing, tubing, environmental education, wildlife observation.
- ***Valentine:*** Fishing, hunting, wildlife observation, photography.

Complex Highlights

- Annual sale of surplus bison at auctions in October.
- Work with Niobrara Council and National Park Service to manage the Niobrara Scenic River, part of which lies within Refuge boundaries.

Rainwater Basin

Wetland Management District and Sandhills Habitat Office

Contacts: *Gene Mack*
Project Leader

Address: *P.O. Box 1686*
Kearney, Nebraska 68848-1686

Telephone: *308-236-5015*

Fax: *308-237-3899*

E-Mail: *gene_mack@fws.gov*

Station Facts

Established: 1963

Land management of Service-owned lands in 13-county area in southeastern Nebraska.

Technical and financial assistance on private lands include an additional 22,000 square miles of the Nebraska Sandhills.

Waterfowl Production Areas (WPA): 62 fee-owned management units encompassing 24,000 acres.

Conservation Easements: 38 contracts protecting 2,330 acres.

Station Objectives

Enhance wetland habitat for millions of migratory birds which concentrate in south central Nebraska during spring and fall migration.

Reestablish plant abundance and diversity associated with tallgrass and midgrass prairie ecosystems.

Expand wetland restoration and conservation through partnerships with other agencies, private organizations, and landowners.

Provide opportunities for public participation in a wide range of outdoor recreation and interpretation activities.

Station Fiscal Facts

Staff: 7

Current Budget (FY 00):

- Wetland management: \$445,063
- Private Lands Assistance: \$93,000
- Wetland pumping and restoration: \$87,000
- Acquisition: \$650,000

- Annual visitation: 80,000
- Volunteer hours: 2,237

Public Use Opportunities

- Fishing, hunting, and trapping.
- Photography.
- Hiking.
- Wildlife Observation.
- Environmental Education.

Activity Highlights

Leadership role in the Rainwater Basin Joint Venture to restore wetlands and uplands on Service and private lands.

Leadership role in the enhancement of grassland ecosystems within the Sandhills, through a non-profit, landowner-based organization.

Riparian restoration on the Platte River for endangered species and sandhill cranes.

Partners for Fish and Wildlife (PFFW)

*Contacts: Kenny Dinan
Private Lands Coordinator
Kirk Schroeder
Private Lands Biologist*

*Address: 203 West Second Street
Federal Building, Second Floor
Grand Island, Nebraska 68801*

*Telephone: 308-382-6468
Fax: 308-384-8835
E-mail: kenny_dinan@fws.gov
kirk_schroeder@fws.gov*

Program Facts

Since October 1991, the Ecological Services Field Office in Grand Island has been responsible for coordinating the implementation of the Service's Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program (PFFW) in Nebraska with assistance from its Regional Refuge Program counterparts. Implementation of PFFW is also accomplished in close association with the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, Natural Resources Conservation Service, and Natural Resource Districts throughout Nebraska. To learn more about PFFW in Nebraska, refer to the Service's "home page" on the Internet at: <http://www.r6fws.gov/pfw/ne/ne1.htm>.

Program Fiscal Facts

Current Budget (FY 00):
\$400,000

Program Objectives

In coordination with Federal, State, and local government agencies, along with private organizations and the public, the Service's objectives are to:

- a) protect and restore, through cooperative efforts with other governmental agencies and private partnerships, Federal trust species habitats on private lands and easement/transfer properties of the Rural Economic and Community Development Agency;
- b) contribute to the conservation of biological diversity through the careful selection, design, and implementation of habitat restoration projects; and
- c) provide technical assistance to the U.S. Department of Agriculture and private landowners involved in the implementation of key conservation programs (e.g., Wetland Reserve Program, Emergency Wetland Reserve Program, Conservation Reserve Program, Wildlife Habitat Improvement Program).

A high priority is given to projects located in the following geographic focus areas: Rainwater Basin; central Platte River; and Sandhills.

Activity Highlights

Since 1991, the Service has entered into over 200 Wildlife Extension Agreements with private landowners throughout Nebraska resulting in the restoration, creation, protection, and enhancement of more than 22,500 acres of wetland, riparian, and upland habitats. These efforts have benefitted federally listed threatened and endangered species (e.g., whooping crane, least tern, piping plover), migratory waterfowl, shorebirds, and numerous other fish and wildlife resources.

Ecological Services (ES) Field Office

*Contact: Steve Anschutz
Field Supervisor
Address: 203 West Second Street
Federal Building, 2nd Floor
Grand Island, Nebraska 68801*

*Telephone: 308-382-6468 x12
Fax: 308-384-8835
E-mail: steve_anschutz@fws.gov*

Station Facts

Established: 1948

Station Fiscal Facts

Staff: 15 (13 biologists and 2 administrative personnel)

Current Budget (FY 00):
\$1,188,520

Station Objectives

Provide oversight of Endangered Species Act compliance, particularly with regard to Federal action.

Conduct activities necessary for Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act responsibilities.

Participate in the environmental review of federally funded projects that may affect fish and wildlife.

Address potential environmental contaminant impacts on fish and wildlife resources.

Contribute to wetlands conservation through the review of proposed work plans and projects.

Activity Highlights

Responsible for representing Service interests in the tri-State/Department of the Interior effort to develop and implement a Platte River Recovery Implementation Program for the benefit of federally listed species and their associated habitats.

Lead in Nebraska for coordinating the accomplishment of the Service's Private Lands and Partners for Fish and Wildlife Programs, and is actively involved in the Rainwater Basin Joint Venture.

Lead role for the Service in coordinating the tracking of whooping crane migrations throughout the Central Flyway, and maintaining a database on sightings and habitat use by the species during migration.

Law Enforcement

Contact: *Manny Medine, Senior Resident Agent* Telephone: 316-788-4474
(LE Supervisor for Kansas and Nebraska) Fax: 316-788-4910

Contact: *Mikel Damico, Special Agent* Telephone: 308-534-0925
Address: *P.O. Box 1086* Fax: 308-534-0925
North Platte, Nebraska 69103

Contact: *Mark Webb, Special Agent* Telephone: 402-476-3747
Address: *100 Centennial Mall N, Rm 320* Fax: 402-476-3836
Lincoln, Nebraska 68508

What is Wildlife Law Enforcement?

Wildlife law enforcement is one of the basic tools used by FWS to achieve its wildlife management goals. LE personnel assist in controlling human interactions with the wildlife resource. They promote, through outreach and other educational programs, voluntary compliance with Federal wildlife laws. LE personnel apprehend those individuals and organizations who elect to violate the law.

Special Agents are criminal investigators who enforce Federal wildlife laws across the U.S.. Their investigative activities include surveillance, undercover work, developing intelligence on suspected violators, collecting evidence, making arrests, and preparing cases for court. Special Agents often work with other Federal, Tribal, foreign, or State LE agencies, as well as provide training to them about wildlife law enforcement techniques.

Wildlife Inspectors are the

front line defense against the illegal wildlife trade - a criminal enterprise that threatens species worldwide. They are stationed along the Canada border and interior Customs Ports of Entry to inspect wildlife, their parts and products that are being imported into or exported from the U.S. When violations are encountered, they either refuse entry into the U. S., detain the shipment for further inspection, or seize the shipment, either seeking abandonment or referring to a Agent for investigation.

Activity Highlights

- Protect endangered species and their habitats, from illegal take, import/export, and commercialization.
- Investigate illegal take, transportation, and commercialization of big game and other wildlife.
- Ensure compliance with Federal migratory bird hunting regulations.
- Protect bald and golden eagles from being illegally poisoned, trapped, shot, electrocuted, or illegal

commercial activity.

- Ensure wildlife being is legally imported/exported, including being in compliance with international treaties (CITES) and other applicable laws.

- Investigate illegal take of migratory birds associated with environmental hazards such as oil production facilities, exposure to herbicides/pesticides, electrocution on power lines, and primary and secondary poisonings.

- Assist with law enforcement on Service lands, including protection of National Wildlife Refuges, wetland, grass land, and other conservation easements.

Partners

- Nebraska Game and Parks Commission
- Other land management agencies
- Native American Tribes
- U.S. Attorney's Office (DOJ)
- Military installations

North American Waterfowl Management Plan

Regional Contact: Carol A. Lively,
NAWMP Coordinator
Address: P.O. Box 25486, DFC
Denver, Colorado 80225

Telephone: 303-236-8155 x252
Fax: 303-236-8680
E-mail: carol_lively@fws.gov

State Contact: Steve Moran
Rainwater Basin Joint Venture
Coordinator
Address: 2550 North Diers Ave, Suite L
Grand Island, Nebraska 68803

Telephone: 308-382-8112
Fax: 308-382-3688

About the Plan

International agreement signed in 1986.

Goal: Return continental waterfowl populations to levels of mid-1970's.

Achieve population goals by protecting, restoring, and enhancing wetland and grassland habitat.

Includes 12 habitat joint ventures and two species joint ventures in the U.S., Canada, and Mexico.

Partner Involvement

Private landowners

Nonprofit organizations

Corporations

Local/State/Federal Government agencies

Irrigation districts

Nebraska Projects

Rainwater Basin Joint Venture (17 counties) projects include: wetland development on private lands; irrigation water reuse, wetland hydrology; Peterson Basin; SE Rainwater Basin; Browning restoration; and Bunger/Quadhamer wetland protection project.

Over 40 farmers, ranchers and other landowners, irrigation districts, Federal and State agencies, conservation organizations, community groups, and the Nebraska Environmental Trust participate.

Habitat Accomplishments

Over 3,466 acres of wetlands and associated uplands restored, enhanced, or protected through North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) grants.

Financial Contributions to Nebraska

Total NAWCA projects: \$5,288,546

NAWCA contributions: \$1,450,260

Partners contributions: \$3,838,286

Public Benefits

- Broad coalition of partners that support "voluntary" wetland conservation.
- Improved water quality.
- Enhanced floodwater storage.
- Improved community and landowner relations.
- Enhanced wildlife diversity.
- Increased public recreation opportunities.

Nebraska Federal Aid-- Sport Fish and Wildlife Restoration



Contact: Vacant
Chief
Address: P.O. Box 25486, DFC
Denver, Colorado, 80225

Telephone: 303-236-7392
Fax: 303-236-8192
E-mail:

Source of Funding

Federal excise taxes paid by hunters, anglers, and boaters on hunting and fishing equipment; portion of the Federal fuel tax; and import duties on fishing tackle and pleasure boats.

How the Money Can Be Used

Fish and wildlife research; habitat enhancement; technical assistance; environmental review of public projects; land acquisitions, operation and maintenance of areas and facilities; boating and angler access improvements; comprehensive planning for fish and wildlife resources; and hunter and aquatic education.

Federal Aid to Nebraska (FY 00 Apportionments)

- Sport Fish Restoration: \$3 million
- Wildlife Restoration: \$3.2 million

Percent Federal Aid in State Wildlife Budget

28%

Number of Participants and Economic Benefits to Nebraska

Fishing:

- Number of anglers 1997: 211,248
- Economic Impact of Angler Expenditures:* \$236 million

Hunting:

- Number of hunters 1997: 180,684
- Economic Impact of Hunter Expenditures:* \$189 million

Federal Aid Project Types in Nebraska **

Sport Fish Restoration

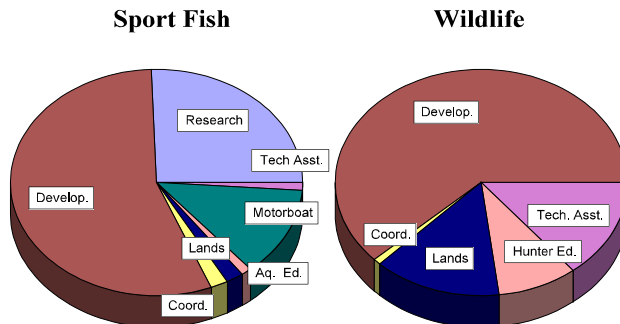
Projects:

- Research: 26%
- Development: 56%
- Coordination: 2%
- Lands: 2%
- Aquatic Education: 1%
- Motorboat Access: 13%
- Technical Assistance: 1%

Wildlife Restoration Projects:

- Lands: 14%
- Coordination: 1%
- Development: 62%
- Hunter Education: 9%
- Technical Assistance: 14%

Percentage of Nebraska Project Types in Federal Aid:



* Based on the "1996 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation."

** Based on approved 1998 Grant obligations (percentages reflect ± 1%). State has five years to obligate Motorboat Access funds.

Migratory Bird Conservation

Contact: *Dr. John E. Cornely*
Migratory Bird Coordinator

Telephone: 303-236-8155 x259
E-mail: john_cornely@fws.gov

Contact: *Stephanie L. Jones*
Nongame Migratory Bird Coordinator
Address: *P.O. Box 25486, DFC*
Denver, Colorado 80225

Telephone: 303-236-8155 x253
Fax: 303-236-8680
E-mail: stephanie_jones@fws.gov

Inventory and Monitoring

Nongame bird monitoring

Spring sandhill crane survey

Mourning dove call count survey

Mid-winter waterfowl survey

Duck banding program

Habitat inventory and monitoring consultation

Research

Biological surveys of migratory birds on National Wildlife Refuges and Waterfowl Production Areas.

Demographic studies of burrowing owls in the panhandle of Nebraska.

Responses of birds and other wildlife to recreation along the Niobrara River, Fort Niobrara NWR.

Management

Migratory bird permit issuance and management

Migratory bird hunting regulations development

Migratory bird population surveys and management

Wildlife habitat management

Grassland/wetland restoration, creation, enhancement, and protection

Partnerships

Nebraska Game and Parks Commission

University of Nebraska

Outreach

International Migratory Bird Day

Biological intern program

Junior Duck Stamp Contest

Student Career Experience Program