1992

1992 Annual Report Nebraska Game and Parks Commission

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Purpose

The Nebraska Game and Parks Commission is charged with managing and controlling the state’s wildlife, parks and outdoor recreational resources in the best long-term interest of the people.

To accomplish that purpose, the Commission plans and implements its policies and programs efficiently and objectively; maintains a rich and diverse environment in Nebraska’s lands and waters; provides outdoor recreation opportunities; manages wildlife resources for the maximum benefit of the people, and attempts to help Nebraskans appreciate their roles in the natural world.

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Complete copies of each division’s annual report may be obtained by contacting the individual division at the Game and Parks Commission, 2200 N. 33rd St., P.O. Box 30370, Lincoln, NE 68503-0370.

Printed on recycled paper with soy ink.
Administration

Administration of the Game and Parks Commission provides support services for all divisions through the following offices and functions: Personnel, Purchasing and Inventory; Internal Audit; In-service Training; Aircraft Operations; Word Processing; Headquarters Maintenance and Telephone Switchboard; and Staff Assistants, Secretarial and Clerical Personnel in the district offices. Liaison with the Legislature and assistance to the Director's Office also are provided.

Personnel

Functions of the Personnel Section include administration of payroll, worker's compensation, retirement, insurance, accident reports, performance evaluations, personnel records and preparation of the personal-services portion of the agency's operational budget.

The labor contract between the state and the Nebraska Association of Public Employees, Local 161, American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees represents 224 agency employees. The labor contract with the State Law Enforcement Bargaining Council represents 51 agency employees. The personnel office acts as liaison to the State Labor Relations Administrator.

There were 16 new permanent employees hired in 1992, and 24 employees were promoted/reclassified to higher positions. Turnover for 1992 was 4% (19 employees).

Many letters on employment possibilities and career information were received and answered. Replies were made to surveys regarding salary, benefits and personnel turnover.

Personnel consulted the Office of Risk Management regarding worker's compensation cases. Worker's compensation claims paid for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1992, totaled $301,216.88.

Game and Parks Commission employees were involved in 25 motor vehicle accidents in 1992.

PAYROLLS

Permanent
Total wages: $11,862,541.35
Average number of employees per month: 443.

Temporary
Total wages: $3,771,558.97
Average number of employees per payroll: 485
Largest payroll: 908 employees
Smallest payroll: 151 employees

In-Service Training
Devoted to bettering performance and preparing employees for positions of higher responsibility, in-service training directs its efforts primarily to meet the specialized needs of individual staff members who enroll in a variety of short courses, seminars and workshops. Broad-based training needs are met through in-house workshops for groups of employees.

Aircraft Operations

The Piper Super Cub was flown a total of 150.1 hours in 1992 on 57 flights. Cost of operation was $29.31 per hour, not including insurance or hangar costs. Deprecation on the aircraft is unknown. The aircraft was used for various surveys, counts, antelope depredation complaints, fish and game, law enforcement and photography.

Purchasing and Inventory

Activities in this area included:

• Keeping up-to-date records on current purchases, and computerizing all equipment purchases prior to 1976.
• Controlling and recording service contracts.
• Streamlining material and supply purchases of less than $300 to expedite field needs and reduce paperwork.
• Reducing the cost of gasoline and diesel fuel purchases in the Lincoln area.
• Increasing the use of contracts developed by the Department of Administrative Services, resulting in monetary savings for items purchased under contract.
• Increasing emphasis on disposal of surplus property.
• Working toward better utilization of vehicles permanently leased from the Transportation Services Bureau.
• Increasing utilization of office supplies from the Department of Administrative Services Central Stores.

![1992 Temporary Employees Chart]
This division has four sections:
1. Permits — including issuing boating certificates, operating the Customer Service Center in the Lincoln headquarters, accounts receivable and permit accounting departments.
2. Fiscal Accounting — prepares agency voucher payments and maintains various files and reports connected with all agency expenditures.
3. Audits and Cost Center Accounting — audits all political subdivisions and maintains Area Cost Center Expenditure Accounting.
4. Budget Section — prepares and maintains the agency’s budget and financial resources.

Major functions include:
- Maintain fiscal records in accord with state and federal laws.
- Maintain area cost accounting on income and expenditures Commission internal control.
- Administer fiscal operation and control of federal programs.
- Administer the fiscal control of issuing State Boating Certificates.
- Issue all hunting and fishing permits to vendor accounts.
- Receive, deposit and maintain records on all the funds received by the Commission.
- Prepare and maintain Commission’s fiscal and operating budgets.
- Perform audits of federal programs relating to participating subdivisions.
- Administer an internal program of forms control, including development and use of forms.
- Perform other administrative functions as assigned by the Board of Commissioners, Director and/or Assistant Directors.

Various 1992 fund totals are given here, with 1991 figures in parentheses.

Special Cash Funds on hand Jan. 1, 1992:
- $23,073,940.14 ($22,432,079.18)
Cash and General Fund Appropriations received during 1992:
- $35,083,899.19 ($35,580,162.89)
Expenditures during 1992:
- $33,634,916.79 ($34,226,979.60)
End of Year Fund Balances for 1992:
- $24,522,922.55 ($23,311,462.39)
Total Cash and Federal Income received during 1992:
- $25,835,276.19 ($25,916,719.81)
Total Operation Costs 1992:
- $30,541,947.58 ($28,929,118.42)
1992 Capital Development:
- $3,092,969.20 ($5,287,861.18)

### Financial Statement

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<th>January 1, 1992, Cash &amp; General Fund Appropriation On Hand</th>
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<td>NORDA Cash (Fund 2338)</td>
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<td>General Fund (Fund 1000)</td>
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<td>Total Cash &amp; General Fund Appropriations</td>
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<td>General Funds</td>
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<td>Total Cash &amp; General Fund Appropriations Received During 1992</td>
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<td>General Funds</td>
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<td>Total Expenditures During 1992</td>
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<td>General Funds</td>
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<td>Total Cash &amp; General Fund Appropriation Balance Remaining On December 31, 1992</td>
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## 1992 Expenditures

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<td>Habitat Cash</td>
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### Program 336 — Wildlife Conservation, Enforcement, Promotion and Development

**Subprogram 01 — Enforcement**

- General Fund: 414,147.26
- Game Cash: 2,160,292.35
- Park Cash: 265,300.64
- Total: 3,041,740.25

**Subprogram 02 — Information and Education**

- Game Cash: 1,714,890.52
- Park Cash: 295,541.35
- Total: 2,010,431.84

**Subprogram 04 — Game**

- Game Cash: 1,016,412.26
- Total: 1,016,412.26

**Subprogram 05 — Fish**

- Game Cash: 2,284,030.82
- Federal: 93,355.41
- Total: 2,377,386.23

**Subprogram 06 — Resource Services**

- Game Cash: 1,813,635.88
- Total: 1,813,635.88

**Subprogram 10 — Outdoor Recreation**

- Game Cash: 324,451.70
- Federal: 71,950.88
- Total: 396,402.58

**Subprogram 15 — Aquarium**

- General Fund: 188,840.99
- Game Cash: 85,290.40
- Total: 274,131.39

**Subprogram 16 — Nongame & Endangered Species**

- General Fund: 291,982.88
- Nongame Cash: 143,173.75
- Total: 435,156.63

### Program 337 — Agency Administration

- General Fund: 894,971.13
- Game Cash: 10,141,003.77
- Federal: 2,225,617.77
- Total: 14,161,691.97

### Program 338 — Management

- General Fund: 575,743.67
- Game Cash: 1,329,869.19
- Park Cash: 348,912.04
- Habitat Cash: 100,731.25
- Total: 2,355,258.05

### Program 549 — Park Administration & Operation

- General Fund: 4,508,691.49
- Park Cash: 5,432,779.15
- NORDA: 780,380.16
- Total: 10,712,850.80

### Program 550 — Federal Aid & Planning

- General Fund: 233,795.19
- Game Cash: 123,152.49
- Total: 356,947.68

### Program 617 — Engineering, Area Maintenance & Snowmobile

- General Fund: 2,225,617.77
- Game Cash: 68,057.95
- Park Cash: 803,709.01
- NORDA Cash: 702,651.85
- Snowmobile Cash: 1,132.60
- Total: 3,821,968.06

### Program 628 — Credit Card Discount

- Game Cash: 1,418.87
- Park Cash: 282,938.81
- Habitat Cash: 0.00
- Total: 30,357.66

**Total Operation Costs for 1992**

- 30,541,947.56

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## 1992 Revenue

### State Game Cash Fund Income

- Hunting Activities (includes lifetime hunt $81,200): 3,950,471.15
- Fishing Activities (includes lifetime fish $44,210): 2,849,106.38

### Federal Reimbursement

- Nebraska Habitat Fund: 3,069,372.44
- NEBRASKAland Magazine: 1,505,955.11
- Advertising: 542,788.60
- Calendars, Books, Slides, etc.: 122,852.58
- Sale of Surplus Property: 161,332.75
- Boating Permits: 423,789.07
- Incidents: 8,666.17
- Liquidated and Property Damage: 47,961.67
- Interest Earned — Investments: 502,685.63
- Cash Gifts: 5,599.38
- Total State Game Cash Fund Income: 11,745,270.87

### State Park Cash Fund Income

- Park Entry Permits: 2,504,289.50
- Ice Fishing Shelters: 20.00
- Property Damage: 1,925.87
- Interest Earned — Investment: 244,718.39
- Fishing Activities (includes lifetime fish $81,200): 3,284,941.32
- Hunting Activities (includes lifetime hunt $81,200): 3,284,941.32
- Rental of Cabins: 2,226,209.31
- Concession Leases and Sales by Lessee: 47,595.45
- Swimming Pool Admission: 147,508.52
- Entrance Admission — Arbor Lodge: 44,014.30
- Rental of Recreation Equipment: 561,008.48
- Concession Sales, Leases and Agency Facilities: 394,474.95
- Cafe — Fort Robinson: 240,824.17
- Cookouts — Chadron: 1,600.24
- Cafe — Platte River: 151,382.93
- Cafe — Mahoney: 1,109,922.61
- Cash Gifts: 4,728.18
- Sale of Surplus Property: 42,990.39
- Incidentals: 5,948.31
- Total State Park Cash Fund Income: 8,855,729.22

### Nebraska Habitat Fund Income

- Habitat Stamps: 1,310,793.95
- Waterfowl Stamps: 106,460.49
- Interest Earned — Investments: 157,747.56
- Federal Reimbursements: 887,160.23
- Incidentals: 10,423.32
- Cash Gifts: 108.03
- Cash Gifts: 108.03
- Sale of Surplus Property: 29,073.74
- Total Nebraska Habitat Fund Income: 2,578,733.22

### Nongame & Endangered Species Cash Fund Income

- Cash Gifts: 270,000.00
- Federal Reimbursements: 1,332,712.10
- Interest Earned — Investments: 2,245.03
- Interest Earned — Investments: 2,442.71
- Incidentals: 115.28
- Total Nongame & Endangered Species Cash Fund Income: 3,069,329.41

### Nebraska Snowmobile Cash Fund Income

- 75% of fee, less issuing fee: 4,258.06
- Interest Earned — Investments: 1,740.71
- Federal Reimbursements: 1,332,712.10
- Total Nebraska Snowmobile Cash Fund Income: 4,015.03

### Trail Development Assistance Cash Fund Income

- Transfers in: 100,000.00
- Total Trail Development Assistance Cash Fund Income: 101,740.71

### NORDA Cash Fund Income

- One Cent Tax on Cigarettes: 1,332,712.10
- Interest Earned — Investments: 29,073.74
- Incidentals: 851.73
- Total NORDA Cash Funds: 1,361,737.57

### Federal Funds

- Land & Water Conservation Fund, Bureau of Reclamation: 1,049,467.28
- Total Cash & Federal Income Received During 1992: 25,035,276.19
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<th>Area of Expenditure</th>
<th>1000 General Fund</th>
<th>2332 Game Cash</th>
<th>2333 Park Cash</th>
<th>2334 Habitat Cash</th>
<th>2338 NORDA</th>
<th>2339 Trail Assistance</th>
<th>4332 Federal Funds</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<td>GRAND TOTAL</td>
<td>259,007.57</td>
<td>853,762.41</td>
<td>637,866.89</td>
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**1992 Hunt-Fish Permit & Stamp Income**

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<tr>
<th>Type of Permit</th>
<th>Number Sold</th>
<th>Amount*</th>
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<tr>
<td>Resident Fish</td>
<td>144,899</td>
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<td>Resident Hunt</td>
<td>68,212</td>
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<td>Res. Fish-Hunt Combo</td>
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<td>Nonresident Hunt</td>
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<td>Nonres. Annual Fish</td>
<td>7,027</td>
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<td>3-Day Res. Fish</td>
<td>2,880</td>
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<tr>
<td>3-Day Nonres. Fish</td>
<td>23,088</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trout Stamp</td>
<td>25,958</td>
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<tr>
<td>Resident Fur Harvest</td>
<td>4,042</td>
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<tr>
<td>Habitat Stamp</td>
<td>144,709</td>
<td>$1,447,090.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Annual Park Permit</td>
<td>169,486</td>
<td>$1,694,860.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Daily Park Permit</td>
<td>221,711</td>
<td>$443,422.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Duplicate Park Permit</td>
<td>48,097</td>
<td>$96,194.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>$8,195,844.00</td>
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*Figures are updated, based on data available as of November 1993.

**1992 Park Permit Income**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Permit Type</th>
<th>Amount*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Habitat Stamp</td>
<td>$1,447,090.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Park Permit</td>
<td>$1,694,860.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Daily Park Permit</td>
<td>$443,422.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Duplicate Park Permit</td>
<td>$96,194.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>$8,195,844.00</td>
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**1992 Deer / Antelope / Turkey Permits**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Permit</th>
<th>Landowner</th>
<th>Nonresident</th>
<th>Resident</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Income</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Archery Antelope</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>381</td>
<td>412</td>
<td>$10,630.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Firearm Antelope</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>656</td>
<td>1,216</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Antelope</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>981</td>
<td>1,068</td>
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<tr>
<td>Archery Deer</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>547</td>
<td>1,565</td>
<td>13,828</td>
<td>$317,200.00</td>
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<td>Firearm Deer</td>
<td>6,661</td>
<td>1,472</td>
<td>50,151</td>
<td>58,284</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Deer</td>
<td>6,773</td>
<td>2,019</td>
<td>63,320</td>
<td>72,112</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fall Turkey -- Archery</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>543</td>
<td>573</td>
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<td>Fall Turkey -- Firearm</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>336</td>
<td>6,382</td>
<td>6,934</td>
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<td>Spring Turkey -- Archery</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>1,565</td>
<td>1,801</td>
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<td>Spring Turkey -- Firearm</td>
<td>332</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>10,747</td>
<td>12,079</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Turkey</td>
<td>565</td>
<td>1,585</td>
<td>19,237</td>
<td>21,387</td>
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<td>Grand Total</td>
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Permit fees: Landowner — Turkey, $7.50; Deer & Antelope, $10; Nonresident — Turkey, $35; Deer & Antelope, $100; Resident — Turkey, $15; Deer & Antelope, $20.
ENGINEERING

The Engineering Division provides architectural and engineering services for the agency, and all its work is performed at the request of other divisions. Services include technical and planning assistance, which includes field data, research, design, contract preparation, bidding, construction administration, inspection and surveying.

The division also works with outside consultants, since state agencies are restricted to designing and bidding projects under $100,000, in most cases. It also communicates with other divisions, administration, federal agencies and other state and local agencies to ensure compliance with codes, requirements, permits and reviews. Drawings, specifications and surveying data have all been incorporated into a computer system in recent years. Five computers are used for drafting, specification and word processing, and records management.

During 1992, the Engineering Division completed 119 projects on 73 state areas. Projects consisted of reports, studies, cost estimates, designs, bidding, surveys, inspections and testing.

PROJECTS
Ak-Sar-Ben Aquarium — Replaced theater carpet.
Alexandria SRA — Completed campground support facilities and installed 41 electrical pedestals.
Arbor Lodge SHP — Installed three heat exchangers; completed designs from office remodeling, and repaired termite damage to gazebo.
Ash Hollow SHP — Hired consultant to assist with design of radon ventilation system for superintendent’s residence and installed that system.
Ballards Marsh WMA — Completed partial boundary survey to establish fence line.
Browning Ranch SHP — Maintenance building designed.
Branched Oak SRA — Survey done to mark corners for club house sites and boat storage building designed. All bids received on the building were rejected.
Brownville SRA — Report on boat ramp improvements submitted; ramp designed, bid and construction started.
Calamus Fish Hatchery — 300-gallon water tank for interior hatch tanks designed by consultant; workshop ceiling installed; electrical outlets installed for interior hatch tanks; ground water supply improvements designed and installed.
Calamus SRA — Road, parking and support facilities completed at Buckshot Bay.
Calamas WMA — 5 fishing access sites designed & built.
Cedar County — Missouri River boat access site surveyed, designed and built with assistance of Cedar County.
Central Office — Recommendations submitted on HVAC system for both buildings.
Chadron State Park — Swimming pool bathhouse renovated; east half of north boundary surveyed; new stable and corral designed.
Cornhusker WMA — Overhead door installed.
Dawes County — Survey land near Whitney Lake to establish property boundaries.
District I Office (Alliance) — Completed design to comply with ADA standards.
District II Office (Bossett) — Shop and storage building repaired; designed completed, bid and built to comply with ADA standards.
District IV Office (North Platte) — Removed and disposed of fuel tank; reports submitted on asphalt resurfacing and proposed installation of 2,000-gallon fuel tank.
Dixon County — Six acres surveyed.
Elwood Reservoir WMA — Cost estimates done for parking lot and fishing cleaning station; Super-deck dock system installed.
Enders SRA — Extended boat ramp at Main area.
Eugene T. Mahoney State Park — Asphalt stripped for accessible parking areas; conservatory parking addition asphalted; consultant designed additional HVAC and remodeling for Riverview Lodge kitchen, bid and completed; 4-bedroom tree-top cabin completed; Kiewit Lodge; wall covering bid and completed for ConAgra Room, kitchen utilities and equipment added, range hood venting improved; lawn sprinkler system designed with help from vendors; US West Lake drop structure completed; parking area lighting designed and bid; shower building floor drain corrected; additional shower building lighting installed; snow-making equipment designed with aid of consultant; more surface parking competed with recreation access funds; pool diving board repaired; pool food service area designed and built; theater sign designed.
Fillmore County — Survey for purchase of Marsh Hawk WMA completed.
Fort Atkinson SHP — Fire protection hydrants developed, bid and completed.
Fort Robinson State Park — Adobe furnace repaired; Post Playhouse HVAC system installed; repairs completed at James Ranch residence; Soldier Creek fessel bid and installed; pool gutters repaired; water tower screen system designed and installed; White River footbridge designed and built; fencing completed; consultant-designed White River bridge bid and built.

Fremont SRA — Emergency water distribution system repaired; shower-latrine building built.

Gilbert-Baker WMA — 3/4-mile barbed wire fence done.

Grove Trout Rearing Station — Water pump rebuilt.

Indian Cave State Park — Stable and corral designed.

Merrick Reservoir SRA — Boat ramp facilities designed, bid and nearly completed.

Missouri River Access — Boat ramp topos completed; ramp designed, bid and built at site near Peru; riprap added to ramp at Old Niobrara Townsite.

Oak Glen WMA — Dam renovation designed, bid and constructed with aid of SCS.

Osage WMA — Erosion-control dam completed with assistance of SCS; two residences' additions designed with estimates.

Pawnee SRA — Maintenance building designed completed.

Pelican Point SRA — Existing boat ramp widened and extended; rigid boat dock installed.

Peterson WMA — Residence and barn painted.

Pibel Lake SRA — Road and cross section surveys done.

Platte River State Park — Preliminary design for addition to assistant's residence completed; swimming pool repaired.

Ponca State Park — Remodeling design for shower rooms done; furnace/AC replaced in superintendent's house.

Ponderosa WMA — Cabin septic system designed and bid.

Prairie Marsh WMA — Boundary survey completed.

Riverview Marina SRA — Emergency repairs to water line completed.

Rock Creek Fish Hatchery — Replaced lean-to roof.

Sacrament-Wilcox WMA — Residence No. 2 carpeted; residence addition designed and estimated.

Salt Creek Access — Fishing access pier and parking designed, bid and built at DOR site near Ashland.

Schramm Park SRA — Pond No. 6 chimney repaired.

Sherman Reservoir WMA — Metal storage shed bid and built; shop utility improvements designed.

Smith Falls State Park — Utility system designed.

Sutherland SRA — Fish cleaning station designed, bid and constructed.

Swan Creek WMA — Terraces and waterways designed and built with help of SCS.

Valentine Fish Hatchery — Two residence doors replaced.

Verdon SRA — Water well replaced.

Walgren Lake SRA — Super-deck fishing pier designed and estimated.

Webster County — 100 acres surveyed.

Wildcat Hills SRA — Preliminary plan for visitor center completed.

Willow Creek SRA — Fish cleaning station designed, bid and constructed.

Miscellaneous Areas — 14 electric grinders installed at various fish cleaning stations; fish cleaning station disposals repaired.
FISHERIES

The Fisheries Division is responsible for maintenance, development and regulations on use of renewable fisheries resources. The broad goal is to manage these resources in the best interest of Nebraskans. The division is organized into five sections: Administration, Management, Production, Research and the Ak-Sar-Ben Aquarium.

Administration Section

Administration Section plans, organizes, directs and controls approved programs, policies and operation procedures of the division.

One function of this section is issuance of special permits, which in 1992 amounted to $20,013. Permits sold included:

- 90 Missouri River Commercial Fishing permits.
- 283 Bait Vendor permits.
- 11 Nonresident Fish Dealer permits.
- 8 Commercial Put-and-Take permits.
- 55 Private Fish Culturist permits.

Research

Eight studies in progress in 1992, included:

- Lake McConaughy predator-prey dynamics.
- Feeding ecology of gizzard shad at Lake McConaughy.
- Missouri River ecology.
- Biological and economic analyses of the fish communities in the Platte River.
- Identification of fish fillets.
- Bibliography of Nebraska fishery publications and reports.
- Instream flows implementation in Nebraska.
- Aquatic education.

One primary goal of the section is to produce information about fishery management problems. Toward that end, as much information as possible is published in technical papers or presented in oral reports. Most technical reports are in the form of final project reports supported by the Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration program.

Resources

Activities during 1992 are summarized in five general categories: Water quality issues; instream flow issues; water development projects; conferences, workshops and educational meetings, and miscellaneous and routine activities. The most time was devoted to instream flow (Platte River) and to water development projects (federal relicensing of Platte River hydropower projects.)

Fish Production

Nebraska operates five fish production stations. A total of 37,833,113 fish were stocked in Nebraska waters in 1992 at a cost of about $1,055,573.

Ak-Sar-Ben Aquarium

Ak-Sar-Ben Aquarium is located along the Platte River at Schramm Park State Recreation Area, 9 miles south of Gretna on Nebr. Hwy.31.

Aquarium display tanks house about 52 species of fish, with 300 specimens on display. Also on display are turtles, crayfish, salamanders and clams. The aquarium is one of the show-places of the Game and Parks Commission system. There are some 15,000 flowers planted and maintained throughout the growing season to add to its appeal.

During 1992 about 90,000 people toured the aquarium, for a daily average of about 293 visitors. An admission fee of 50¢ is charged for youngsters 6-15 years and $1 for adults. Total admission fees collected in 1992 were $21,874.

There is no charge for school groups, other youth groups, church groups, etc., if they make reservations. Large groups of 20 or more are allowed discount rates. In 1992, 454 groups with over 19,577 people toured the facility.

Total revenue from the aquarium, including permits, fees, souvenirs and other miscellaneous materials was over $93,484. The aquarium is also used for workshops, tours and meetings. Aquarium staff also give programs for area groups.

Two Rivers Trout Lake

The Two Rivers Trout Lake was open 214 days during 1992, with a total of 29,538 trout tags sold, generating $73,845 in revenue. Anglers reported harvesting 81,367 trout, while an additional 3,704 were estimated to have been harvested by anglers not reporting.
INFORMATION & EDUCATION

News Program
A vital news program is paramount to the mission of the agency. In 1992 the program continued significant strides toward that end.

An estimated 300 news stories were released during the year. Fisheries and Wildlife topics accounted for 40% of the stories, 20% Parks, 15% Law Enforcement, 15% Information and Education and 10% Resource Services.

News continues to be transmitted electronically to the Associated Press and both daily and weekly newspapers in the state.

Two major media packets were issued during the year. One focused on parks and the other on hunting.

The Outdoor Report was issued weekly during 1992. Law Enforcement and Parks division personnel contributed substantially to the Outdoor Report efforts. Hunting and fishing information, wildlife viewing locations, lodging availability, snow conditions and other information helped make the weekly Outdoor Report more useful and informative to constituents.

Video news continues with stories released about every other week. Subjects in 1992 ranged from women learning outdoor skills to the new Smith Falls State Park. Video news releases are popular with Nebraska television stations, and plans are underway to expand video news in 1993-94.

Outdoor Nebraska, the Commission’s radio program, continued to be strong in 1992. Written, produced and edited by the Information and Education Division, Outdoor Nebraska is aired on nearly 40 stations.

In addition to the regular radio and television news, a television station and several radio stations carry weekly interview segments with Information and Education Division personnel from the Lincoln, Omaha and North Platte offices. These weekly segments allow the Commission to convey timely and informative news to the outdoor enthusiasts across the state.

Multi-Image
In a continuing effort to provide the public with information about the agency, and for various management efforts and public hearings, hundreds of slides were produced using an electronic slide generation system. These slides are used by several divisions, as well as by the agency director at speaking engagements. Topics cover a wide range, including fisheries, wildlife management, parks and many other topics. Many previous slide shows also were updated using the system.

NEBRASKAland Magazine

Photographing Nebraska, the latest in a long series of book-length single-topic special issues, was coordinated by Regional Editor Bob Grier of the Alliance district office. A comprehensive guide for beginning and advanced amateur photographers, the book was well received by Nebraska and national book reviewers, and it received a bronze award in the prestigious National Gold Ink Awards Competition.

Monthly issues included stories and photo essays on a wide range of topics including hunting, fishing, parks, wildlife, wildlife and fish management and habitat, as well as a number of stories on Nebraska history and culture.

Distinguished guest contributors included University of Nebraska at Lincoln ornithologist Paul Johnsgard, National Geographic contract photographer Joel Sartore, Nebraska writers Bob Ross, and photographers Margaret MacKichan, Roy Farris and Monte Hartman.

Four 1992 NEBRASKAland stories were reprinted by nationally distributed publications, and permission to reproduce stories for classroom use was granted to numerous university instructors and public schools.
Innovations in 1992 included the introduction of two new NEBRASKAland Magazine inserts. The first, a tabloid-style newspaper entitled Outdoor Nebraska, sent to subscribers four times each year and provides subscribers with timely information and news features about hunting, fishing, parks and recreation. The second is a series of four-color, gatefold inserts on Nebraska's threatened and endangered species produced jointly with the Wildlife Division. Both inserts have been well received by subscribers, and the threatened and endangered species inserts are under consideration for publication as a book by the University of Nebraska Press.

As in the past, magazine staff members made several public presentations about the magazine and its production to a variety of organizations. Magazine circulation remained fairly stable at about 45,000.

Omaha Office

The public's ability to purchase big-game permits again accounted for significant business in the Omaha Information and Education Office. An all-time high in office sales of $227,447 was recorded, a 15% increase over last year.

The office continued to direct much of its public relations effort at the broadcast media in order to reach large audiences. Weekly radio shows were prepared and broadcast on 12 stations. The office also has increased its contact with print media. In addition, a wide variety of public service announcements were produced. Appearances at civic groups, clubs, youth organizations and the like remained an important function, with 40 presentations made.

The office had an extremely busy year on the outdoor education front. About 1,200 students were certified in 50 hunter education courses. Support is also provided for boater education courses and aquatic education efforts. The office also compiles and posts a weekly fishing/outdoors report for the public.

North Platte

As well as serving as the regional editor for NEBRASKAland Magazine, the District IV public information officer (PIO) is responsible for agency information and education objectives in southwest Nebraska.

The PIO directed the annual National Cornhusker Trapshoot at Doniphan, sponsored by the Commission. It attracted 385 students.

Ongoing programs demanding attention included a weekly television news feature, presentations, seasonal radio shows, and local area news releases. The PIO was also involved in the Outdoor Education portfolio and other divisional support as needed.

Alliance Office

The District I PIO also serves as regional editor for NEBRASKAland Magazine while promulgating information and education programs in the Panhandle.

The PIO was involved in various magazine assignments and public information efforts. Another special activity was the coordination of the annual Nebraska High School .22 Silhouette Championships at Pressey WMA.

Ongoing programs requiring attention include news media releases and contacts on an as-needed basis, presentations to groups, schools and organizations, and involvement with Outdoor Education workshops and courses.

Habitat Stamp Art Contest

Some 2,492 entries were submitted in the annual art contest for the 1993 Nebraska Habitat Stamp. A fox squirrel by Julie Crocker of Chapman was selected from 43 adult entries. In the Youth Division, there were 1,132 entries in the elementary section, which was won by Beth Riley of Big Springs; 1,187 in the junior section, won by Adam Barcus of Grand Island; and 130 in the senior section, won by Dana Kotich of Falls City. The Omaha Fish and Wildlife Club donated $350 in awards to help sponsor the contest.
Publications

The division manages the production and distribution of more than 400 different brochures, publications and forms used by the agency. They ranged from major full-color brochures to short-run technical publication.

I & E staff provides assistance to other divisions to determine the best, most cost-effective and efficient ways to produce the agency's numerous publications and various other printed projects. Work involves jobs bid to commercial vendors, coordination with the DAS Print Shop and those produced in the Commission's own printing facility.

Mail & Shipping

The mail section processes all incoming and outgoing agency mail by the most efficient methods, and in 1992 recorded increases in all categories of mail.

The direct address printer and barcoder acquired in 1991 helped considerably in processing database mail. There were 135,947 pieces identified for presort; 285,391 pieces of regular mail; 223,055 pieces of bulk mail; 15,247 pieces shipped via UPS, and 15,731 information requests filled. Postage and shipping costs for all categories totaled nearly $181,000 for a grand total of 659,640 pieces of mail.

Special Projects

Four tours were conducted, serving 170 participants, during their 14th season of KNOW NEBRASKA TOURS, still co-sponsored with the Omaha World-Herald.

State Fair

The Commission exhibit at the Nebraska State Fair again proved to be one of our best approaches to meeting the general public. The exhibit is one of the best of its type in the nation. Sales totaled $19,695, of which $10,562 was for NEBRASKAland subscriptions. The exhibit featured a souvenir shop with promotional items from parks across the state.

In-House Print Shop

The print shop saw a significant increase in jobs — 986 compared to 624 last year — and exactly doubled paper use to 6.4 million sheets. Numerous negatives and plates were shot for printing various publications, plus all the related tasks of cutting, folding, collating, inventory and maintenance jobs in the print shop.
Nebraska conservation officers enforce laws and regulations pertaining to fishing, hunting, boating, and the state parks system... an important part of wildlife and park management.

Today, effective natural resources law enforcement is divided into three equally important parts. Public education explains the need, intent and purpose for existing laws and regulations; selective law enforcement allows officers to concentrate their efforts in a particular area where specific problems are occurring; and general law enforcement allows officers to prevent and control law violations in their individual patrol areas.

C.O. Duare Arp assists wildlife biologist John Dinan with banding of young eagles, the first documented hatch in Nebraska in this century.

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For 1992, the Law Enforcement Division had a maximum complement of 62 positions, consisting of a division chief, an assistant chief, 6 district supervisors, 51 conservation officers, a boat law administrator, an administrative secretary and a radio operator.

Conservation officers drove 1,573,121 miles while patrolling rural and urban areas, at an average cost of 10.5¢ per mile (averaging 15.22 miles-per-gallon of gas). The total cost includes operating expenses such as gas, oil, tires and repairs. Patrol boats were used 1,467 hours for promotion of boating safety at an average cost of $9.75 per hour. Snowmobiles used for enforcement were driven 33 miles at an average cost of $1.93 per mile.

Contacts

The essence of law enforcement is contact with the public, and conservation officers contacted and checked 27,064 hunters, 57,549 fishermen, 698 trappers, 17,740 boat operators, 56,815 miscellaneous, most of which were park oriented. They investigated 3,367 complaints and logged 672 public appearances.

Arrests & Citations

A total of 3,722 arrests were made during 1992 compared to 3,808 in 1991. Of that total, 3,586 were found guilty by the courts. The conviction rate was 96.3% overall, and 99.7% for arrests actually brought to trial.

Boating Law Administration

A total of 1,920 Nebraska Boating Basics (boater education) course manuals were distributed in 1992, with about half used in the Home Study course.

There were 24 boating accidents reported, resulting in 10 injuries and 4 fatalities.

A total of 45 permits for marine regattas were issued during the year, which was down 13 from the previous year.

All states receive 50-50 matching funds from the Coast Guard to fund boater education programs. During fiscal 1992, Nebraska received about $100,000 in matching money.

Total Offenses

Conservation officers cited a total of 3,722 people for 4,092 offenses in 1992. The most citations, 1,471, were written for violations of park regulations; 1,019 fishing violations; 814 hunting violations; 573 boating violations; 112 fur harvester violations, and 65 miscellaneous other violations.

Of the 1,471 parks violations, 1,045 citations were written to people who entered parks with no park entry permit on their vehicle; 126 were for entering, swimming or driving in an unauthorized area; 74 for minor in possession of alcoholic beverages, and 37 for littering.

Operation Game Thief

Nebraska's Operation Game Thief Program is an opportunity for residents to volunteer infor-
information pertaining to game law violations without actually becoming involved in the case.

Between November 10, 1992, and March 10, 1993, some 22 Operation Game Thief investigations were initiated. Eleven of the investigations resulted in 15 additional cases, with three investigations pending. The additional cases that have been through court resulted in fines and costs of $635 and liquidated damages of $3,600, bringing the Operation Game Thief totals to:

- 532 investigations initiated.
- 202 investigations resulting in arrests.
- 3 investigations pending.
- 321 total arrests involving the these cases:
  - 185 deer, 14 turkey, 28 upland game, 22 fur bearer, 13 waterfowl, 35 fish, 1 bobcat, 1 eagle, 1 hawk, 1 elk, 3 swan and 6 threatened species with 8 cases dismissed, 1 not filed and 2 found not guilty.
- $36,246 in fines and costs and 480 hours of community service assessed.
- $52,460 in liquidated damages returned to the Game Fund.
- 97 percent conviction rate on arrests made.
- 38 percent of investigations initiated resulted in arrests.

Through the program 118 rewards totaling $17,550 have been paid for information resulting in 120 big game cases, 11 small game cases, 6 fish cases, seven furbearer cases, one bobcat case, one eagle case, three swan cases, six threatened species cases and one hawk case.

**Mandatory Road Checks**

Nebraska conservation officers set up nine mandatory road checks during 1992 in which more than 1,800 vehicles were stopped and checked. Those checks resulted in the arrests of 65 people.

**Hunter Education**

Nebraska's corps of 590 volunteer Hunter Education instructors added 6,113 students to the ranks of those certified since 1972, when Hunter Education became available, bringing the total to 140,620 students.

Pre-service instructor-training sessions were conducted throughout the state, and 110 new instructors were certified as a result of 17 workshops. Hunting accidents were again very low in 1992, with no fatalities and 6 non-fatal accidents reported.

Sport shooting activities were held at Pressey and Doniphan. Attendance at the Pressey Silhouette Shoot was up, from 54 shooters in 1990 to 83 in 1991. Attendance at the Cornhusker National Trap Shoot included 22 junior squads and 53 senior, totaling 440 youngsters, also up from the previous year.

Bowhunter Education continues to be a priority program. Five volunteer instructor workshops were conducted and 71 new instructors were certified. Student workshops certified 251.

**Radio Communications System**

The statewide agency radio communications system consists of a network of bases and repeaters which allow radio communications between district offices, from mobile to offices, and from mobile to mobile. The 1992 operating expense was $9,168 with the bulk for installation and removal of radios, scanners, lights and other equipment. The operation expenses do not include costs incurred by individual divisions for operation, maintenance or replacement of mobile or portable radios.
OPERATIONS & CONSTRUCTION

The Operations and Construction Division is responsible for providing personnel and equipment to assist other agency divisions with construction, maintenance, transportation and warehouse services.

The Operations Section provides personnel and equipment for the daily supervision, operation and maintenance of unmanned areas. Responsibilities also include establishing tree nurseries and maintaining a tree transplanting program, assisting with regulation enforcement and public contact relating to unmanned areas. In addition, the section operates an equipment and material supply warehouse for the Parks Division.

The Construction Section provides personnel trained in construction and heavy maintenance skills to supervise and operate heavy equipment and install and maintain utility services. This unit also provides personnel trained in building trades and crafts to supervise and assist with construction, renovation and repair of agency facilities.

During 1992 the Operations and Construction Division had a staff of 32 full-time employees and 78 seasonal, temporary employees, many hired at the job site to reduce travel and lodging costs.

Staff members operate from offices and shops located at headquarters, 3019 Apple St. and 3001 Y St. in Lincoln, and out-state at North Platte, McCook, Fort Robinson and Grand Island. In May 1992 Operations and Construction crews completed the major renovation of the Post Playhouse at Fort Robinson State Park. Carpenter crews from the Salt Valley and other sites. Personnel assist with enforcement of park regulations, install and repair boat docks and ramps, repair wells and water systems, maintain trees and shrubs, supervise and regulate pay campgrounds at Branched Oak, Pawnee and Alexandria, and set up and operate exhibits at the Omaha and Lincoln sport shows and State Fair.

Transport & Equipment

The division provided a wide range of equipment, such as air compressors, water pumps, tree spades, stump cutters, tar kettles, tractors, trucks and loaders, to area superintendents for temporary use. Bulk purchases of maintenance supplies are delivered to the Lincoln Operations Shop, inventoried and transported to the major areas of the park system. Gasoline and diesel fuel are provided for agency vehicles from pumps at Y Street. During 1992, 46,068 gallons of gasohol, 14,433 gallons of diesel fuel, 302 quarts of oil and 278 gallons of antifreeze were dispensed for Game and Parks Commission vehicles.

Equipment purchased during 1992 included: one 2-1/2-yard trackloader, two loader/tractors, a one-ton utility van, straw crimper, 3/4-ton pickup truck with tool body, pedestal grinder, arc welder, floor drill press, hydraulic floor jack, automatic level with tripod, chainsaw, table saw and airless paint sprayer.

Lincoln Maintenance

Provides daily maintenance and supervision of seven Salt Valley areas: Branched Oak, Pawnee, Conestoga, Bluestem, Olive Creek, Stagecoach and Wagon Train, as well as five District V areas: Alexandria, Rockford, Memphis, Blue River and Pioneer.

Crews handle refuse pickup, latrine cleaning and mowing at

Crew plants young trees at Calamus Reservoir.

Lincoln and Fort Robinson rebuilt the building from the ground up, constructing new footings, foundation, floors, walls and stage, and installing new wiring, plumbing and insulation. The heating, air conditioning and re-upholstered seats were completed by contract, making the 178-seat playhouse an outstanding park feature.

During fall and early winter, using funds from the Game and Parks Foundation, the division's heavy equipment and utility crews installed a snow-making system for the sled and toboggan run at Eugene T. Mahoney State Park.

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Road Maintenance

Personnel and equipment, headquartered across the state, provided maintenance on 340 miles of agency non-hard-surfaced roads and parking areas.
The Outdoor Education Division was responsible for three major programs: Project WILD, Aquatic Education and Adult Workshops.

**Project WILD**
Project WILD continues to play a big part in environmental education. As part of the international program, Project WILD in Nebraska has now trained 5,694 teachers in its seventh year. The main focus this year was on schoolyard habitats. Tree/shrub and native wildflower/grass packets were made available for schools. The division also distributed packets consisting of a school site video produced by the Game and Parks Commission, NEBRASKAland Magazine’s Wildlife Habitat Improvement Guide, a “Wild School Sites” booklet, distributed by Project WILD and other backyard wildlife brochures.

An Advanced Project WILD workshop was held at Niobrara State Park in October covering schoolyard habitats and neo-tropical migrants. A 1½-hour workshop session that focused on schoolyard habitats and how to make them happen was transmitted via the NEB*SAT satellite system.

**Aquatic Education**
Nebraska’s Aquatic Education Program is designed to increase awareness and understanding of aquatic environments. Educational materials are targeted at the upper elementary and higher age groups, but are adaptable to other grade levels.

In 1992 the division completed major cleanup of its files. It now has 585 active registered teachers in the program.

The fishing program completed its fourth year with 505 certified volunteer instructors. Six training workshops in 1992 resulted in 84 new instructors. These instructors, along with 62 assistant volunteers, held 49 clinics and worked with 836 young anglers.

A new video, "Grandpa ... Can We Go Fishing?" was produced. About 10,000 youth fishing packets and new knot-tying kits were assembled.

The division participated in eight Water Day Festivals statewide. Some 280 schools participated, with 4,820 fourth through eighth-grade students involved.

**Other Activities**
A variety of other activities involved publications and numerous workshops and programs. Some of the major projects included:

- Management of 20 canoe campsites and information on the Canoe Trails Program;
- Trail Tales, a wildlife education newspaper for fourth graders, is published three times each school year and sent free to all elementary schools in the state;
- Three workshops: Deer Hunting; Waterfowl Hunting, and Schoolyard Habitat were presented, using the Nebraska Educational Telecommunications’ NEB*SAT system. Workshops were broadcast simultaneously to 44 locations across the state.
- Continued production and publication of the wildlife species series.

*Grandpa, Can We Go Fishing?* video was major project for Aquatic Education program during the year.
PARKS

The division is responsible for administration and operation of Nebraska's system of state park areas. The division provides necessary resource protection and enhancement measures to assure quality outdoor recreation experiences for present and future generations of park users. The State Park System includes 16 state parks - Ash Fall, Two Rivers, Pawnee, Ash Hollow, Chadron, Fort Hartsuff, Calamus, Sherman, Summit, and Branched Oak.

The new Smith Falls State Park involved a significant development plan using indigenous grasses, forbs and shrubs to revegetate eroded trails and campsites. Utilizing the production greenhouse at Mahoney State Park and at Branched Oak, many plants were grown and distributed. Included were 2,500 perennial wildflowers, 500 container-grown trees, 600 root-control bag trees and 500 field-grown trees.

Visitation

During 1992, visitation at state parks was estimated to be 9.2 million people, up slightly from 1991. There were 18,314 registrations at the seven parks with cabins, involving 83,628 people staying for 246,017 user-days. Fee camping areas had 87,367 registrations and 273,673 camper-days. Park visitors spent $278,721 to enjoy park trail rides, $1,008,684 on camping fees and $1,043,088 on Park Entry Permits. Revenue collected from all services and facilities at the state parks totaled $7,378,887.

Projects for 1992

New capital construction authority by program for the 1992-93 fiscal year totaled $924,500 with $480,000, allocated for boating improvements at parks areas. Building Renewal Funds (309 projects) totaled $74,621 with all work done at Fort Robinson. Among other projects during the year were:

- 31,000 trees planted by staff and volunteers in burn areas at Fort Robinson plus aerial seeding as part of the 10-year reforestation program.
- Foot and car bridges over the White River at Fort Robinson completed.
- Post Playhouse renovation completed.
- Cleanup and landscaping at Blue River SRA which was devastated by a tornado.
- Six new 2-bedroom cabins and one 4-bedroom cabin opened at Mahoney State Park, and three sled and toboggan runs constructed.
- Ferry Landing SRA was reclassified as a WMA and incorporated into old Niobrara State Park, the old Niobrara town site, Ferry Landing, Bazille Creek and Lewis & Clark Lake.

Horticulture & Landscape Program

During 1992, considerable activity centered around the final phases of development at Eugene T. Mahoney State Park. Major projects included landscaping of day-use shelters, cabins and fish-cleaning station. An arboretum landscape plan was developed for around the conservatory and formal waterway, and plantings were started. An extensive perennial garden of native and introduced flowers was added to the waterway; prairie grasses, wildflowers and turf were planted at the toboggan run, World-Herald cabins, fish-cleaning station and conservatory.

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1992 STATE PARK
CABIN & CAMPING GUESTS

<table>
<thead>
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<th>CABIN REGS</th>
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<td>CABIN GUESTS</td>
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<tr>
<td>NO. CAMPERS</td>
<td>699375</td>
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</table>
PLANNING & PROGRAMMING

Major responsibilities of the Planning and Programming Division include administration of several federal grant programs, comprehensive planning, special studies, local planning review, water resource project monitoring and environmental review of all federally assisted developments in the state.

Land and Water Conservation Fund

The Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965 provides 50% federal grants-in-aid to the various states and their political subdivisions for state comprehensive planning, acquisition and development of public outdoor recreation areas. It is supported by the sale of surplus federal property and revenues from off-shore petroleum leases. About 85% of the fund is derived from off-shore leases.

In fiscal 1992, $215,911 was apportioned to Nebraska. Of these funds, 60% or $129,347 was allocated to eight local, government-sponsored projects. Some 40% or $86,364 was used for two agency-sponsored projects.

During the past 25 years, the federal government, state and local communities have invested more than $75 million in new and improved outdoor recreation facilities under this program in Nebraska.

Federal Aid in Sport Fish and Wildlife Restoration

The Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act of 1937 and the Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Act of 1950 are companion programs that provide financial assistance to states and territories for restoration activities. The programs are administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The Wildlife Restoration Program is funded by an 11% excise tax on arms and ammunition, and a 10% excise tax on handguns and archery equipment. The Sport Fish Restoration Program is funded by a 10% excise tax on fishing rods, creels, reels, baits and lures.

During 1992 these programs made more than $5 million available to Nebraska for fish and wildlife surveys and inventories, research, land acquisition, development and maintenance, technical assistance, hunter education training and aquatic resource education.

Comprehensive Planning

The update of the 1991-1995 SCORP Assessment and Policy Plan involves seeking public and agency input and review. Cooperation continues with the Midwest Regional Office of the National Park Service to assure that project proposals meet SCORP requirements for participation in the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund matching grant program.

The SCORP update highlights the accomplishments of Nebraska's long-term partnership with the U.S. Department of the Interior to expand outdoor recreation and trail opportunities for Nebraskans and their visitors by more than $75 million in LWCF projects.

The 1992 "Quality of Life" survey attempted to quantify Nebraskans' participation in a variety of recreation and trail-related activities.

Resource Monitoring

Game and Parks Commission staff members evaluated potential benefits of project proposals by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Soil Conservation Service, Bureau of Reclamation, Nebraska Natural Resources Commission and Nebraska Department of Roads.

The major review effort in 1992 involved the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission relicensing of hydropower facilities on the Platte River.

Nebraska continues to participate in the Missouri River Mitigation Project Steering Committee with three other states to address environmental concerns surrounding the channelized Missouri River from Sioux City to St. Louis. Corps of Engineers, with assistance from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the four state conservation agencies, evaluate land/water units that may improve habitat for fish, migratory waterfowl, furbearers and other wildlife. Chute restoration, dike modifications and water-level controls are among features under consideration.

Several Soil Conservation Service small watershed projects, Natural Resources District proposals in a number of communities across the state, power-line corridor studies, airport facility development and numerous state/county highway and bridge projects were among ongoing activities requiring Game and Parks participation.
REALTY

The Realty Division was involved in land acquisitions, appraisals, lease renewals, payments and cancellations, appraisal reviews, negotiations and public hearings during 1992.

Activities carried on during the year included:
- Appraisals on 21 tracts with 14 contracted and 7 done by staff. Six of the tracts were purchased during the year, with options to purchase five more. The other tracts are in various stages of negotiation or are no longer being considered for acquisition.
- Twenty tracts taken before the Habitat Committee or Fish Access Committee and Administration have been turned down for acquisition.
- Twenty appraisals were reviewed in 1992; 13 were contracted and 7 done by staff.
- 110 tracts have been purchased and designated wildlife management areas since 1977, when the Habitat Program began. The taxes and in-lieu of taxes paid in 1992 amounted to $70,691 on 22,957 acres.

Leases

The Game and Parks Commission currently leases 75 areas through the Realty Division at a cost of $120,358. A breakdown of those types of leases and their cost in 1992 was:
- Access ways: $420
- 14 canoe campsites: $3,377
- Habitat areas, fisheries, grazing, recreation: $36,941
- Office space in Lincoln, Omaha & Kearney: $6,900
- 19 storage areas: $23,893
- 18 tower leases: $12,775
- Work areas: $35,050
- Hanger space: $660
- Post Office boxes: $340

Acquisitions

In 1992 the Game and Parks Commission acquired title to the following tracts:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>County</th>
<th>Acres</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mahoney Park</td>
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<td>PARK SYSTEM AREAS</td>
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<td>Fillmore</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prairie Wolf</td>
<td>Nance</td>
<td>160.00</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Willow Lake B.C.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parshall Bridge</td>
<td>Boyd</td>
<td>120.85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total WMA Acres Acquired 2,853.47
Primary responsibilities of the Resources Services Division are development, improvement and maintenance of wildlife habitat. This involves lands and facilities on state wildlife management areas and administration of the Nebraska Wildlife Habitat Plan, which involves Game and Parks Commission-controlled lands, private lands, and lands under the control of other governmental agencies. The division is responsible for:

- Management of captive waterfowl and pheasant production flocks.
- Management of elk, buffalo, and bighorn sheep herds.
- Management of controlled hunting areas such as the Sacramento-Wilcox Area, the Clear Creek Area and the Randall W. Schilling Area.
- Nest box management.
- Technical land reconnaissance.
- Providing facilities for sporting dog training and field trials.
- Coordination with and assistance to other governmental agencies and groups.
- Technical assistance to farmers, ranchers, sportsmen groups and individuals.

During 1992, the Resource Services Division was involved in a number of efforts to enhance wildlife habitat through the Nebraska Habitat Program. Among those efforts were:

- Allocation of 45,000 trees to farmers and ranchers for wildlife habitat plantings.
- Distribution of 1,500, 5-pound bags of seed mixtures to be planted as wildlife food plots.
- Distribution of 7,500 pounds of grain sorghum (milo) to be used for planting of food plots for wildlife.

Projects involving public land habitat improvements during 1992 included:

- Providing seed for the County Roadside Seeding Program. The division received requests from 39 counties, and about $26,000 was expended on this practice.
- Continued coordination efforts with the U.S. Forest Service for various habitat developments and protective projects, such as habitat improvement and protection on McKealve, Bessey and the Pine Ridge Forest Service lands. To date, more than $220,269 has been expended on these areas. Habitat development included tree and shrub plantings, grass and legume plantings, oats and sweet clover plantings, and food plot plantings. About $5,000 was expended for those purposes during 1992.
- Again coordinated efforts with U.S. Army Corps of Engineers at Harlan County Reservoir for various habitat projects including several tree and shrub plantings, grass and legume plantings and food plot plantings. Fences also were erected at several locations. About $14,994 was expended in 1992, and the Commission thus far has expended about $920,191 for wildlife habitat improvement on the Harlan area.
- Completed projects on several state wildlife management areas across the state (30,000 acres) including 75 acres of trees and shrubs planted, along with several grass-legume plantings and food plot plantings of corn, milo, soybeans and sunflowers.

The Wetland Initiative Program designed to create, enhance and restore shallow water wetlands, was started in 1992. Due to the logistics of investigating, surveying and designing wetland projects, no development projects were accomplished, however, the division had nearly 100 contacts with private landowners about the program. One Water Bank Incentive Practice was signed in 1992 resulting in a water bank contract protecting 75 acres (15 wetland and 60 adjacent acres).

Wildlife land acquisition is an important part of the Nebraska Wildlife Habitat Plan and each year division personnel conduct several technical land reconnaissances. The information they develop on land is presented to a habitat screening committee, and each area is assigned a priority rating for acquisition.

During 1992, 2,221 acres of land were acquired for the growing list of state Wildlife Management areas.

The division administers all sporting dog training and field trial activities in the state. During 1992 there were 23 organized clubs listed on the state roster, and they conducted 74 trials during the year. Of those, 23 were held at Branched Oak. There were 1,912 dogs entered in the trials, and nearly 6,000 people attended.
WILDLIFE

The Wildlife Division is responsible for developing research and management programs associated with game and nongame mammals and birds of the state, which are categorized as: Big game, upland game, waterfowl, furbearers, and nongame, or threatened and endangered.

Wildlife research studies provide information that assists in development of management programs and to aid Law Enforcement, Resource Services and other divisions.

Management programs attempt to provide maximum hunting, trapping and recreational opportunity for sportsmen and women, and to develop regulations that ensure adequate safeguards for the resource.

Staff collect data to determine populations, productivity, harvest information, conduct banding studies, document habitat changes and impact, develop practices to protect threatened or endangered species, and study non-native species for suitability for introduction. The division is responsible for monitoring private game farm operations, controlled shooting areas, falconry operations and pheasant-rearing programs through the game farm operation at Wilcox and the day-old chick cooperator program.

Research Programs

The Wildlife Forensics Field Manual and a videotape on identification of fish fillets were completed. Work continued on identifying fish fillets once the skin is removed and determining the original length of the fish. A 150 to 200-page Field Manual on the Identification of Selected North American Fish by Fillets and Scales will be published in 1993.

Other activities in law enforcement forensics include identification from meat, blood, bone, feathers, hair and scales; time and cause of death; grouse and pheasant identification; sexing of turkey, pheasant and deer.

The Natural Heritage Database continues to collect, update and provide information on the rare species and natural communities in Nebraska. Currently the database has processed 4,425 species and natural community occurrence records. Records are being collected on about 600 species of plants and animals and 50 natural community types. Several agencies use the data.

Nongame

OTTERS

With the completion of the river otter reintroduction project in 1991, no releases of otter were made in 1992. Sighting reports from the public were sought to attempt to determine the success of the reintroduction project. Efforts were initiated to prevent accidental trapping of otters.

BLACK-FOOTED FERRETS

With the continued success of the ferret captive breeding project and with reintroduction already occurring in Wyoming, efforts were continued to identify reintroduction sites in Nebraska. Prairie dog colony surveys indicate that extensive poisoning in recent years has reduced prairie dog numbers to levels that currently disqualify Nebraska as a site for reintroduction. Future efforts will explore ways to maintain prairie dog colonies, such as landowner incentives, and to propose changes in state law requiring annual extermination of prairie dogs in an attempt to qualify the state for reintroduction.

BALD EAGLE

Two bald eagles fledged from a nest along the Middle Loup River in Sherman County, becoming the first to do so this century. Biologists and conservation officers monitored more than a dozen potential nest sites where bald eagles have shown some degree of nesting or courtship behavior. The 1992 Midwinter Eagle Survey, conducted in January, recorded 1,292 bald eagles along Nebraska's streams, lakes and reservoirs. The 1992 total surpassed the previous high of 1,116 recorded in 1989.

PEREGRINE FALCON

Efforts that began in 1988 were rewarded in 1992 by the first successful nesting of peregrine falcons in Nebraska since the turn of the century. A male falcon that was hacked from the Woodman Tower in Omaha returned in 1989 with his mate, a female originating from a similar restoration project in Des Moines, Iowa, and reared three young.

KESTREL

The Sierra Club of Omaha and the Raptor Recovery Center of Lincoln monitored 36 kestrel nest boxes on the back of Interstate 80 signs between Omaha and Seward. Eleven of the boxes were used by kestrels in 1992, fledging 35 young.

BLUEBIRD

More than 200 Nebraskans monitored 2,435 nest boxes of bluebirds in 53 counties and recorded the fledging of at least 1,751 bluebirds.

LEAST TERN & PIPING PLOVER

A survey of least tern and piping plover nesting colonies was conducted on the Loup, Middle Loup, Elkhorn and Platte rivers, with 770 terns and 296 plovers found.

WHOOPING CRANE

Cranes are monitored each spring and fall migration period, and stopover sites are evaluated. In the spring of 1992, there were 13 confirmed,
three probable and three unconfirmed reports of cranes. In the fall, there were five confirmed, seven probable and three unconfirmed sightings.

**Game**

**FUR BEARERS**

Various projects are under way to gather harvest data, monitor populations, provide trapper education and others.

**WATERFOWL**

Surveys, counts and studies of many types are continuing, including several types of banding. All data collected is used for various management programs, including season recommendations.

**UPLAND GAME**


Work with the pheasant management plan included development of a research study evaluating response of pheasants, insects and plants to discing; coordination with Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality and Quail Unlimited to obtain funding for two proposals for development of a series of Nebguides on wildlife and pesticide use; and coordination of input on the importance of weeds to wildlife for the upcoming new edition of the book entitled, "Nebraska Weeds."

Hungarian (gray) partridge management plan projects included preparation for gray partridge to be trapped in North Dakota and released in the Panhandle. Gray partridge sighting forms were developed and nearly 100 observations were reported in 1992.

Many upland game species had a poor reproductive year due to the wet, cool late spring and summer. Spring surveys showed that breeding prairie grouse numbers were up. However, hunter check station data indicated a decrease in grouse production. Spring and early summer pheasant and quail surveys indicated breeding bird numbers to be only slightly decreased. Data from the quail check station and opening weekend survey cards indicated a decrease in birds bagged per day.

**DEER**

Hunter harvest was basically unchanged from the previous year. Total take was 34,220 deer. Success rates were below desired levels in the northeast and above average in the Panhandle.

**ANTELOPE**

Aerial surveys indicate increased numbers for the fourth consecutive year, with about 5,500 antelope estimated in the Panhandle. Most typical range, however, is only about 64% of capacity. Coyote control was conducted in 1990 and 1991 on a study area in Sioux County, and higher fawn:doe ratios were seen in the study area. With no coyote control in 1992, ratios were no different on the area where coyotes had been killed than in the remainder of the Box Butte unit.

**TURKEY**

Production was poor in 1992, probably due mainly to cool, wet weather. Production was excellent in 1987, but has been below normal since then except for 1991, which was average. Spring hunting success was similar to the past few years, with 42% of gun permittees and 20% of archers successful. Fall success was 46% compared to 58% last year.

Firearm deer hunters que up at the District IV office at North Platte on the first day of over-the-counter permit sales. Since 1987, permit sales at the North Platte office have more than doubled from $62,592.75 to $145,302.01 in 1992.