1989

1989 Annual Report Nebraska Game and Parks Commission

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PURPOSE

The 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 role 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 Game and Parks Commission Headquarters, 2200 N. 33rd, Lincoln, NE 68503.
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. Assistance is also provided to the Director's Office.

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 State of Nebraska entered into its second labor contract in 1989 with the Nebraska Association of Public Employees, Local 161, American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees representing 172 agency employees. The State also entered into its first contract with the State Law Enforcement Bargaining Council which represented 51 agency employees.

The agency hired 31 new permanent employees in 1989 and 30 employees were promoted/reclassified to higher positions. Total turnover for 1989 was 4.9 percent (21 employees).
PAYROLLS:
Permanent—
Total wages paid: $9,747,850.63  
Average number of employees per month: 423
Temporary—
Total wages paid: $2,335,149.39  
Average number of employees per payroll: 323  
Largest payroll: 653 employees  
Smallest payroll: 57 employees

Numerous letters on employment possibilities and career information were received and answered. Replies were made to surveys regarding salary, benefits and personnel turnover. Personnel conferred with the Office of Risk Management regarding worker's compensation cases. Worker's Compensation claims paid for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1989 totalled $166,251.43.

Game and Parks Commission employees were involved in 21 motor vehicle accidents in 1989.

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 168.3 hours in 1989 on 63 flights. Cost of operation was $39.70 per hour, not including insurance or hangar costs. Depreciation 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
The activities of this department during 1989 included:
- keeping up-to-date records on current purchases, and computerization of 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.
The Budget and Fiscal Division includes four sections:

1) Permits, which encompasses the fiscal administration of issuing boating certificates, operating the Customer Service Center in the Lincoln Headquarters, Accounts Receivable, and Permits Accounting Departments.

2) Fiscal Accounting, which prepares all voucher payments for the agency and maintains various files and reports connected with the fiscal accounting of all the agency's expenditures.

3) Audits and Cost Center Accounting, which encompasses audits of all political subdivisions and maintenance of Area Cost Center Expenditure Accounting.

4) Budget Section, which includes preparation and daily maintenance of the agency's budget and financial resources.

Major functions of the Budget and Fiscal Division include:

- maintaining all fiscal records in accordance with state and federal laws.
- maintaining area cost accounting on income and expenditures for internal control of the Commission.
- administering fiscal operation and control of federal programs.
- administering the fiscal control of issuing State Boating Certificates.
- issuing all hunting and fishing permits to account vendor accounts.
- receiving, depositing, and maintaining accounts receivable records on all funds received by the Commission.
- preparing the Commission's budgets.
- preparing and maintaining the Commission's fiscal and operating budgets.
- performing audits of federal programs relating to participating subdivisions.
- administering an internal program of forms control, including development of forms and defining their purpose, use and retention.
- performing other administrative functions as assigned by the Board of Commissioners, Director and/or Assistant Directors.

Division handles all accounting records and budget matters.
SPECIAL CASH FUNDS

NEBRASKA HABITAT CASH FUND
Habitat Stamps 1,112,212.50
Interest Earned—Investments 165,542.34
Federal Reimbursements 637,250.15
Incidentals 3,268.67
Cash Gifts 215.00
Crop/ Pasture 14,556.06
Sale of Surplus Property 1,110.74
Fund Transfers—Worker’s Comp. Claims & Misc. 124,000.00
Total Habitat Cash Fund 1,934,011.46

SPECIAL CASH FUNDS
NEBRASKA HABITAT CASH FUND
Habitat Stamps 2,063,908.39
Interest Earned—Investments 267,559.53
Federal Reimbursements 1,490,260.70
Incidentals 9,041.45
Cash Gifts 295,000.00
Crop/ Pasture 14,556.06
Sale of Surplus Property 1,110.74
Fund Transfers—Worker’s Comp. Claims & Misc. 658,000.00
Total Habitat Cash Fund 2,393,917.74

NONGAME & ENDANGERED SPECIES CASH FUND
Cash Gifts 1,411.31
Federal Reimbursements 638.46
Interest 215.64
Nongame Donations 80,544.51
Incidentals 15.03
Total Nongame & Endangered Species Cash 104,815.85

STATEGAME FUND INCOME
Hunting Activities 3,728,811.41
Fishing Activities 3,001,589.98
Federal Reimbursement 2,391,799.41
Nebraska Land Magazine Subscriptions 625,718.43
Advertising 19,435.22
Calendars, books, slides, etc. 655,153.65
Sale of Surplus Property 124,647.04
Land Lease and Crop Income 47,339.15
Boating Permits 160,148.54
Federal Reimbursements 383,935.55
Incidentals 3,754.27
Liquidated and Property Damage 24,833.10
Interest Earned—Investments 972,187.54
Cash Gifts 424.07
Fund Transfers—Worker’s Comp. Claims & Misc. 66,946.00
Total Game Cash Fund Income 11,461,525.51

STATE PARK CASH FUND INCOME
Park Entry Permits 2,125,275.50
Ice Fishing Shelters 600.00
Property Damage 3200.00
Interest Earned—Investments 263,194.35
Camping Fees, Cabin Lots, etc. 700,987.10
Rental of Cabins 753,689.15
Concession Leases and Sales by Lessee 59,143.16
Swimming Pool Admission 47,177.21
Entrance Admission—Arbor Lodge 36,256.26
Rental of Recreation Equipment—Horses, Bows, etc. 248,183.07
Concession Sales, Leases and Agency Facilities 143,044.31

1989 EXPENDITURES—OPERATIONAL COSTS
PROGRAM: 330—Habitat Development
Habitat Cash 1,045,019.45

PROGRAM: 335—Wildlife Conservation, Enforcement, Promotion, and Development
Subprogram 01—Enforcement
General Fund 618,281.33
Game Cash 1,857,935.14
Park Cash 148,912.40
2,625,128.87

Subprogram 02—Information & Education
Game Cash 1,464,086.33
Park Cash 306,719.73
1,770,806.06

Subprogram 04—Game
Game Cash 922,782.01
922,782.01

Subprogram 05—Fish
Game Cash 2,267,390.95
2,327,697.89

Subprogram 06—Resource Services
Game Cash 1,512,228.62
1,512,228.62

Subprogram 10—Outdoor Recreation
Game Cash 338,600.50
338,600.50

Subprogram 15—Aquarium
General Fund 222,841.96
Game Cash 33,531.28
256,373.24

Subprogram 16—Nongame
& Endangered Species
General Fund 192,833.40
Nongame Cash 102,641.9
Federal 30,000.00
325,474.49

PROGRAM: 336—Summary
General Fund 1,033,556.69
Game Cash 8,396,554.92
Park Cash 455,632.13
Nongame Cash 102,841.09
Federal 90,306.94
10,079,091.77

PROGRAM: 337—Agency Administration
General Fund 672,602.28
Game Cash 937,991.42
Park Cash 295,816.34
Habitat Cash 110,978.13
2,017,388.17

PROGRAM: 549—Park Administration & Operation
General Fund 3,848,376.71
Park Cash 2,057,252.21
NORDA Cash 1,209,787.16
7,115,327.08

PROGRAM: 550—Federal Aid & Planning
General Fund 242,285.51
Game Cash 119,722.67
362,008.18

PROGRAM: 617—Engineering, Area Maintenance & Snowmobile
General Fund 2,114,029.17
Game Cash 23,165.97
Park Cash 635,601.11
NORDA Cash 671,524.92
Snowmobile Cash 8,395.00
3,452,716.17

PROGRAM: 626—Credit Card Discounts
Game Cash 611.84
Park Cash 4,625.90
2,03
5,239.77

TOTAL EXPENDITURES,
OPERATIONAL COSTS—1989
24,076,720.59
**1989 CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AREA OF EXPENDITURE</th>
<th>3000 CAPITAL FUND</th>
<th>2332 CASH PARK</th>
<th>2333 CASH</th>
<th>2334 CASH</th>
<th>3300 SPECIAL CASH</th>
<th>3338 CASH</th>
<th>4332 FEDERAL FUND TOTAL</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nongame &amp; Endangered Species Cash</td>
<td>3,500.00</td>
<td>3,500.00</td>
<td>3,500.00</td>
<td>3,500.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nebraska State Park Special Cash</td>
<td>10,000.00</td>
<td>10,000.00</td>
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<td>10,000.00</td>
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<td>NORTA CA</td>
<td>100,000.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nebraska Snowmobiling Cash (Fund 2337)</td>
<td>1,000.00</td>
<td>1,000.00</td>
<td>1,000.00</td>
<td>1,000.00</td>
<td>1,000.00</td>
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<td>1,000.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Federal Fund 4332; includes Land and Water Conservation Fund, Bureau of Reclamation, Boating, and Historical grants</td>
<td>1,000.00</td>
<td>1,000.00</td>
<td>1,000.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>General Fund</td>
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<tr>
<td>Less Amount Lapse</td>
<td>1,000.00</td>
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<td>1,000.00</td>
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<td>1,000.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cash Construction (Fund 3000)</td>
<td>1,000.00</td>
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<td>1,000.00</td>
<td>1,000.00</td>
<td>1,000.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Less Lapsed</td>
<td>1,000.00</td>
<td>1,000.00</td>
<td>1,000.00</td>
<td>1,000.00</td>
<td>1,000.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Cash &amp; General Fund Appropriations on hand December 31, 1989</td>
<td>21,303,178.66</td>
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<td>Total Expenditure by Fund Type during 1989:</td>
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<td>Game Cash (Fund 2332)</td>
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<tr>
<td>State Park Cash (Fund 2333)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nebraska Habitat Cash (Fund 2334)</td>
<td>1,771,266.90</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nongame &amp; Endangered Species Cash (Fund 2335)</td>
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<td>Nebraska State Park Special Cash (Fund 2336)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nebraska Snowmobiling Cash (Fund 2337)</td>
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<tr>
<td>NORDA Cash (Fund 2338)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Federal Fund 4332; includes Land and Water Conservation Fund, Bureau of Reclamation (1972), Boating, and Historical grants</td>
<td>270,609.98</td>
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<td>General Fund (Fund 1000)</td>
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<td>Less Amount Lapse</td>
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<tr>
<td>Capital Construction (Fund 3000)</td>
<td>4,351,907.06</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**FINANCIAL STATEMENT**

December 31, 1988, Cash & General Fund Appropriation on Hand:
- Game Cash (Fund 2332) $10,112,199.65
- State Park Cash (Fund 2333) $2,154,533.83
- Nebraska Habitat Cash (Fund 2334) $1,771,266.90
- Nongame & Endangered Species Cash (Fund 2335) $2,231,409.93
- Nebraska State Park Special Cash (Fund 2336) $187,314.90
- Nebraska Snowmobiling Cash (Fund 2337) $88,217.27
- NORDA Cash (Fund 2338) $2,153,823.80

**Total Cash & General Fund Appropriations on hand December 31, 1989** $21,303,178.66

All hunting and fishing permits are processed by the Budget and Fiscal Division.

**Total Expenditure During 1989** $28,579,035.31

December 31, 1989, Cash & General Fund Appropriation on Hand:
- Game Cash (Fund 2332) $11,515,346.38
- State Park Cash (Fund 2333) $3,456,351.63
- Nebraska Habitat Cash (Fund 2334) $1,991,801.02
- Nongame & Endangered Species Cash (Fund 2335) $2,035,035.69
- Nebraska State Park Special Cash (Fund 2336) $93,266.61
- Nebraska Snowmobiling Cash Fund (Fund 2337) $4,004,93
- NORDA Cash (Fund 2338) $1,138,394.66
- Federal Fund 4332, includes Land and Water Conservation Fund, Bureau of Reclamation (1972), Boating, and Historical grants $736,792.14
- General Fund (1000) $4,180,230.70
- Capital Construction (Fund 3000) $164,751.06

**Total Cash & General Fund Appropriations on hand December 31, 1989** $23,186,974.82

*This figure includes 553,700 from the sale of lifetime hunting and fishing licenses. This fund may not be expended, but is invested by the State Investment Officer. The resulting interest income accrues to the Game Cash Fund.*
The Engineering Division provides architectural and engineering services to other divisions of the agency, with all its work performed at the request of those 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 as state agencies are restricted to designing and bidding projects under $100,000 in most cases.

A brief summary of 1989 projects in which the Engineering Division was involved divided into in-house, consultant and LB 309 building renewal categories, includes:

**In-house Projects**
- A shop/office complex designed and constructed at Branched Oak Lake, as well as two fish-cleaning stations designed and built;
- Plans prepared, bids let and contract awarded for construction of a superintendent's residence at Calamus Reservoir; to be completed in 1990;
- Electrical outlets designed and installed at Enders Reservoir;
- Planning and development of Eugene T. Mahoney State Park continued, including installation of septic system, additional kitchen equipment, carpeting in park lodge, theater addition built, four cabins completed and 22 under construction for 1990 completion, swimming pool/water slide bathhouse completed, trailer dump station designed and built, park playhouse and golf range tee shack completed, an additional well developed and cased;
- Campground electrical hookups and two fish cleaning stations at Lake Maloney designed, bid and completed;
- New boat ramp, lighting, parking lot and fish cleaning station at Lewis and Clark Lake developed and bid for 1990 completion;
- Missouri River access sites at Verdel and Peru designed and contracts awarded;
- Construction continued at Niobrara State Park with park office and shop/laundry built, water system expanded, activity and residence remodeling plans developed and bids let for 1990 completion, and three buildings moved from the original park to the new land.
- Well drilling was accomplished through a consultant at Calamus Fish Hatchery, and bids let for Phase I construction, to be completed in 1990;
- Water distribution system at Two Rivers was replaced, and shower wall liners installed.
The Fisheries Division assumes responsibility 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**

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

One of the functions of this section is the issuing of special permits, which in 1989 amounted to $23,054. Those permits were:

- **162 Missouri River Commercial Fishing Permits** (151 resident, 11 nonresident). Resident permits are $65, nonresident are $130. Fees collected were $11,579.
- **317 Bait Vendor Permits** (312 resident, 5 nonresident). Resident permits are $25, nonresident are $150. Fees collected were $8,675.
- **15 Non-resident Fish Dealer Permits** at $100 each. Fees collected were $1,500.
- **2 Commercial Put and Take Permits** at $50 each. Fees collected were $100.
- **60 Private Fish Culturist Permits** at $20 each. Fees collected were $1,200.

There were 59 fish kills reported in 1989 involving 132,000 fish. Nine of the kills occurred in lakes and reservoirs, 25 occurred in ponds, 9 in rivers, 14 in streams and 2 in canals. Causes of fish kills ranged from agricultural-related to winter kill.

Big project during 1989 was Calamus Hatchery construction.
RESOURCES

Activities during 1989 fell into five categories: review or preparation of Corps of Engineers 404 permit applications; water project reviews for fisheries impacts; instream flow; threatened and endangered species; conferences, meetings, programs and miscellaneous.

Among instream flow efforts were lengthy hearings to secure an instream flow appropriation on Long Pine Creek;

Instream flow evaluations continued on the Snake River;

Central Platte NRD proposed an instream flow appropriation in the Lexington-to-Chapman reach of the Platte River;

Meetings with the Lower Platte NRD, Papio-Missouri River NRD were attended to discuss Platte River instream flow studies;

A hydraulic model of the Missouri River between Yankton and Ponca is being developed by the technical assistance program of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

RESEARCH

Eight studies were in progress in 1989, including:

- Lake McConaughy predator-prey dynamics;
- Feeding ecology of gizzard shad at McConaughy;
- Missouri River Ecology;
- Evaluation of instream flow for channel catfish, forage species and invertebrates in the lower Platte River;
- Studies on channel catfish in the lower Platte;
- Identification of fish fillets;
- Bibliography of Nebraska fishery publications and reports;
- Instream flows implementation in Nebraska.

One of the primary goals of the section is to produce information applicable to fishery management problems. Toward that end, as much information as possible is published in technical papers or presented in oral reports. There were 14 technical reports published or in progress in 1989.

![Resident Fishing Permits](chart)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Permits</th>
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<td>1985</td>
<td>180,490</td>
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<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>176,535</td>
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<td>1987</td>
<td>168,979</td>
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<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>159,033</td>
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<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>158,211</td>
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![Resident Hunt-Fish Combination Permits](chart)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Permits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>37,084</td>
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<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>38,831</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>40,934</td>
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<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>43,468</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>43,792</td>
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</table>
AK-SAR-BEN AQUARIUM

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

Aquarium display tanks house about 52 species of fish, with 300 specimens on display. Tanks are also used to display 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 1989 approximately 108,000 people visited the Aquarium, a daily average of about 350 people.

An admission fee of $.50 is charged for youngsters 6-15 years, and $1 for adults. Total admission fees for 1989 were $26,117.50. (There is no charge for school groups, Boy Scout, Girl Scout or church groups, etc. if they make reservations. Large groups of 20 or more are allowed discount rates.) In 1989, 385 groups with over 16,000 persons toured, mostly students.

Trout pellets are sold from $.10 vending machines in the canyon ponds so people can feed the ducks and geese. An income of $1,822 was realized from the vending machines during 1989.

Total revenue from the Aquarium, including permits, fees, souvenirs, etc. was over $90,000.

Number of Fish Stocked in Nebraska

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>52,000,000</td>
<td>44,000,000</td>
<td>36,000,000</td>
<td>28,000,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>20,000,000</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
FISH PRODUCTION

Five fish production facilities in the state produce, procure and stock fish in Nebraska's waters as requested by the management and research sections.

During 1989 the five hatcheries reared and stocked 37 million fish ranging in size from eggs and fry to adults. Among those fish were 485,000 brown trout; 11 million northern pike; 480,000 white bass; 108,000 largemouth bass; 1.1 million bluegill; and over 14 million walleye.

In addition, fish were received from other state and federal hatcheries, and Nebraska-produced fish were transferred to other agencies. A total of over 61 million fish were transferred; and over 17 million were received by Nebraska from other sources. These included 2.3 million saugeye hybrids, 12.6 million walleye and 1.4 million northern pike eggs/fry.

TWO RIVERS TROUT LAKE

The Two Rivers Trout Lake was open 214 days during 1989, with a total of 29,621 trout tags sold, generating $74,052.50 in revenue. Anglers reported harvesting 71,751 trout, while an additional 3,452 were estimated to have been harvested by anglers not reporting.

In an attempt to maintain trout water throughout the fishing season, a hypolimnetic aeration system was installed and went into operation May 27. Improvement in water conditions was not immediately apparent, but the system did eventually result in measurable benefits.
District Offices

Omaha Office
The ability to purchase big game permits boosted sales significantly in the Omaha Information Office. Total income topped $189,370, a 36% increase from the previous year. Big game permit sales more than doubled to $98,265 for the year.

The office distributed news releases to about 115 recipients on an as-needed basis. Presentations to civic groups, clubs, youth organizations and the like remained an important function. Much of the public information effort was directed at broadcast media. There were 69 television appearances or news spots produced by the office on local stations. Six weekly radio programs or reports are also handled by the office. Public service announcements were produced for both radio and television.

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, which attracted 375 students. The event is sponsored by the agency.

Ongoing programs requiring 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 the Fort Robinson Fire and resulting magazine 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.
The January/February issue of NEBRASKAland Magazine was an ambitious compilation of all the properties included on the national historic register for Nebraska, entitled “Historic Places.” This project was a joint effort with the Nebraska State Historical Society, which also published it as an issue of Nebraska History magazine.

Ten issues of NEBRASKAland were published during the year. In addition to “Historic Places,” three 16-page center sections were published, which were overrun to provide handout copies. The topics were aquatic resources and education, the Lillian Annette Rowe Sanctuary, and the ring-necked pheasant.

Fourteen historical features were published, many involving hunting and fishing adventures. Photo features included a look at the Fort Robinson forest fire of July 1989, and portraits of the bluebird, swallows, and the endangered whooping cranes. An unusual story illustrated the ambitious project of moving a barn by hand. A good mix of wildlife management, hunting and fishing narratives, Nebraska history and flora and fauna rounded out the magazine.

Circulation remained stable during the year, dropping slightly to around 60,000 copies of each issue, excluding the Jan/Feb special which is overrun for resale purposes.

Advertising revenue totalled $19,435.22, and sales from other publications and goods, principally the NEBRASKAland Calendar of Color, amounted to $124,683.04. With subscription dollars, total income from the magazine and related efforts was $779,836.69, a decline of 3.6 percent from 1988.

The printing section handled 836 jobs requiring 2.6 million sheets of paper. Numerous negatives for printing photographs for publications were produced, as were all cutting, folding, collating, inventory and maintenance jobs in the print shop.

The division continued to manage the production and distribution of over 400 different brochures, publications and forms used by the agency. Select I/E staff serve as liaisons to assigned divisions to facilitate the ongoing process.

The weekly Outdoor Nebraska radio program was produced and distributed to 38 stations throughout Nebraska and eastern Iowa. Production methods were refined to deliver news in the most timely fashion feasible.
Mail

The mail section processes all incoming and outgoing agency mail by the most efficient methods. There were 119,820 pieces identified for presort resulting in a savings of $4,706.62. There were 14,762 pieces shipped via UPS, and 14,501 information requests serviced.

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HABITAT STAMP ART CONTEST

A total of 1,799 entries were submitted in the 12th annual Wildlife Art Contest for the 1990 Nebraska Habitat Stamp.

A pair of pheasants by Robert Klausing of Beatrice was selected from 66 adult entries for the stamp. In the Youth Division there were 644 entries in the elementary section won by Rhea Peters; 922 in the junior section won by Jill Balk; and 167 in the senior section won by Deena Konstantopoulos.

The Omaha Fish and Wildlife Club donated $350 in awards to help sponsor the contest.
News Program
A vital news program is paramount to the mission of the agency. In 1989 the program took significant strides toward that end.

An estimated 252 news stories were released to all Nebraska media from Commission headquarters during the year. Fisheries and wildlife topics accounted for 42% of the stories, with another 17% dedicated to parks information and features.

To maximize coverage the news was transmitted electronically to two wire services and four major daily newspapers in the state.

Two major media packets were issued during the year. One focused on fishing, the other on hunting.

The information base for the weekly Outdoor Report was expanded. Conservation Officers continue to be the primary source of information for this popular update on hunting and fishing conditions throughout the state.

Efforts were also made to effect broadcast media coverage of agency programs. Plans were made to launch a bimonthly video news release to television stations in 1990, and reports were filed with several radio stations on a regular basis.

Although difficult to verify, the efforts appear to have resulted in increased exposure in Nebraska media for Commission policies and programs.

Multi-Image
The division produced five major multi-image presentations, including a new version of “A Stockholder's Report” which is used by the agency director at speaking engagements. Other topics included fisheries management at Lake McConaughy, deer management, setting hunting seasons, and the Platte River.

Special Projects
This was the 11th season for the popular KNOW NEBRASKA TOURS program, sponsored with the Omaha World-Herald. Seven tours were conducted with 215 participants.

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 totalled over $24,356 with 65% in NEBRASKAland subscriptions.

Under a plan to renovate historical park interpretive materials, new displays were designed and produced for Ash Hollow and Champion Mill.

Photo Services
Some 201 rolls of black and white film were processed, adding 3,482 exposures to the file. Another 1,275 rolls of color film were processed, adding 39,142 exposures to the file during the year. Over 1,248 black and white prints in various sizes were produced by Photo Services. The photos and prints illustrate agency publications, slide presentations, and fill non-agency requests.
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.

For 1989, the Law Enforcement Division had a maximum complement of 60 positions, consisting of a division chief, one assistant chief, six supervisors, 50 conservation officers, one Boat Law administrator, one administrative secretary and one radio operator.

Conservation officers drove 1,594,871 miles while patrolling rural and urban areas, at an average cost of 9.83 cents per mile (at an average miles-per-gallon of gas of 13.82). The total cost includes operating expenses such as gas, oil, tires and repairs. Patrol boats were used 1,956 hours for promotion of boating safety at an average cost of $6.63 per hour. Snowmobiles used for enforcement were driven 52 miles at an average cost of $10.75 per mile.

Contacts

The essence of law enforcement is contact with the public, and conservation officers contacted and checked 29,274 hunters, 65,863 fishermen, 540 trappers, 22,764 boat operators, 91,696 miscellaneous, most of which were park oriented.

Checking sportsmen in the field takes a major portion of officers' time.
**Mandatory Road Checks**

Nebraska conservation officers made mandatory road checks at 15 sites during 1989 in which 3,247 vehicles were stopped and checked. In the vehicles stopped, officers contacted 1,393 hunters and 169 fishermen. Those checks resulted in the arrest of 59 people and the confiscation of 63 pheasants, two packages of deer, 6 grouse, 8 ducks, three turkey permits and one deer tag.

**Arrests and Citations**

A total of 3,917 arrests were made during 1989 compared to 4,076 in 1988. Of the total arrests, 3,767 were found guilty by the courts. The conviction rate of total arrests was 96.17 percent, and for the total arrests actually brought to trial, 99.71 percent.

**OPERATION GAME THIEF**

Nebraska's Operation Game Thief Program is an opportunity for citizens to volunteer information pertaining to game law violations without actually becoming involved in the case. During 1989, 31 investigations were initiated, and nine of these resulted in 15 additional cases, with seven still pending. The cases that have been brought to court resulted in fines and costs of $973 and liquidated damages of $2,475, bringing the totals since inception of the O.G.T. program in September of 1982 to:

- 391 investigations initiated
- 146 investigations resulting in arrests
- 7 investigations pending
- 224 total arrests consisting of:
  - 135 deer cases, 7 turkey, 16 upland game, 16 furbearer, 11 waterfowl, 24 fish, 1 bobcat, 1 eagle, 1 hawk, and 1 swan. Also, 8 cases were dismissed, one not filed and two found not guilty.
  - Thus far, 85 rewards totalling $11,850 have been paid on information resulting in 81 big game cases, 6 small game, 6 fish, 4 furbearer, 1 bobcat, 1 eagle, 1 swan and 1 hawk case. Fines and costs assessed total $27,514.42; and $35,820 in liquidated damages have been returned to the Game Fund. Conviction rate on arrests is 95 percent, and 37 percent of investigations have resulted in arrests.
Boating Law Administration

There was a big increase in the number of Nebraska Boating Basics (boating safety) courses given in 1989, with over 4,100 distributed. A new B.W.I. (boating while intoxicated) law became effective in August of 1989.

In 1989, there were 61,781 motorboats registered in Nebraska, compared to 57,865 in 1988. There were 32 accidents reported, which resulted in 16 injuries and two fatalities. A large number of accidents were skiing related.

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. Cost of the communications system during 1989 was $18,410.63. Included in that total was $4,742 for base/repeater repair and maintenance; $527 for tower, antenna and cable repair and maintenance; $1,343 for telephone line rent and electricity to tower sites; $11,696 for tower rental and tower site leases; and $101 in miscellaneous expenses.

The 1989 operating expense was $8,781.69 less than in 1988, primarily due to a reduction on tower and cable repair. However, the system is in need of upgrading and expenses will undoubtedly rise again.

The operation expenses do not include costs incurred by individual divisions for operation, maintenance or replacement of mobile or portable radios. Cost of Law Enforcement mobile equipment repair, maintenance and installation was $7,450.

Total Offenses

Conservation officers cited a total of 3,917 people for various offenses during 1989. The most citations, 1,579, were written for violation of park regulations; 992 were fishing violations; 820 hunting; 690 for boating infractions; 70 were fur harvester; and 106 were miscellaneous violations. Of the 1,579 parks-related violations, 1,171 citations were written to people who entered parks areas with no park entry permit on their vehicles; 96 were for entering, swimming or driving in an unauthorized area; 60 were for minor in possession of alcoholic beverages; and 19 were for littering. While littering violations dropped to less than half of last year (49), minor in possession of alcohol nearly doubled—from 33 in 1988.
The Operations and Construction Division has the responsibility of providing personnel and equipment to assist other agency divisions with engineering, construction, maintenance, and transportation services.

The Engineering Section regularly inspects agency facilities and areas needing improvements or repairs, and provides corrective solutions. It also inspects construction for compliance with planned design, and develops specifications for materials and equipment purchased by the division.

The Construction Section provides personnel trained in engineering and construction skills to supervise and operate heavy equipment and install and maintain utility services. During 1989 personnel assisted with construction, renovation, and repair of several agency facilities.

The Maintenance Section provides personnel and equipment for the supervision, operation and maintenance of unmanned areas. Among responsibilities are establishment of tree nurseries; maintaining the tree transplanting program; assisting with regulation enforcement; maintaining public contact on unmanned areas; and providing and manning equipment and a material supply shop for the Parks Division.

During 1989 the Operations and Construction Division maintained a staff of 34 full-time employees and 66 seasonal, temporary employees, many hired at the job site to reduce travel and lodging costs.

Division staff operates from offices and shops located at headquarters, at 3019 Apple Street and 3001 Y street in Lincoln, and outstate at North Platte, McCook, Fort Robinson, and Grand Island. Temporary crews were located at Fort Atkinson and Fort Robinson.

Construction Section

1989 was a catch-up year, with many small projects from previous years being completed. A significant reduction was made in backlogged and/or delayed projects. Most new construction during 1989 was again at Eugene T. Mahoney State Park, where carpenter crews were constructing the bathhouse for the swimming pool and completing Phase I of the Group Lodge. Grading for the waterway was completed. Renovation of Adobe No. 8 at Fort Robinson was finished in time for use on Memorial Day weekend, and an addition to the office at Ponca State Park was completed.
Lincoln Maintenance
 Provides daily maintenance and supervision of 7 Salt Valley areas: Branched Oak, Pawnee, Conestoga, Bluestem, Olive Creek, Stagecoach and Wagon Train; and 5 district 5 areas: Alexandria, Rockford, Memphis, Blue River and Pioneer. In addition, work is done at other Salt Valley sites, and the pay campgrounds at Branched Oak and Pawnee. Personnel also assist with enforcement of park regulations and set up and operate exhibits at the Omaha and Lincoln sport shows and state fair.
 A new maintenance shop and office was placed in service in 1989 at Branched Oak, and the Pawnee Lake maintenance crew moved a church from Seward to Pawnee Lake and remodeled it into an office and shop.

Transportation and Equipment
 The division provided a wide range of equipment such as air compressors, tractors, trucks and loaders to area superintendents for temporary use. Bulk purchases of maintenance supplies were delivered to the Lincoln maintenance shop, inventoried, and transported to the major areas of the park system. Gasoline and diesel fuel were provided for agency vehicles from pumps at 3001 Y Street. During 1989, 46,483 gallons of gasoline and 19,463 gallons of diesel fuel and 628 quarts of oil were dispensed.
 Equipment purchased during 1989 included: 30-inch tree spade; three ¾-ton pickups; new scarifier for motor grader; two one-ton crew-cab trucks; one truck chassis; two pickup bodies; one all-purpose tractor; seven 72-inch front-deck mowers; one backhoe/loader; two 3-section rotary mowers; one three-point rotary mower; and one used motor grader.

Road Maintenance
 Personnel and equipment headquarter at Lincoln, McCook, North Platte, Fort Robinson, Wildcat Hills, Valentine and Grand Island provided maintenance on 260 miles of agency non-hard-surfaced roads and parking areas. The fire at Fort Robinson caused temporary reassignment of road maintenance personnel and equipment for cleanup, fenceline clearing and ash removal from Crawford Hatchery ponds.
 During 1989 the Division provided a wide variety of equipment to area superintendents to complete numerous projects, including:
 Ak-Sar-Ben Aquarium: Regrade and rock all interior roads and parking lots;
 Branched Oak State Recreation Area: Dredge silt from Liebers Point boat ramp area and install water line to nursery house;
 Bowring Ranch State Historical Park: Regrade and rock portions of entrance road and install septic tank for trailer residence;
 Bassway Strip WMA: Regrade and haul 2800 cubic yards of fill to elevate access and interior roads;
 Gallagher Canyon SRA: Major renovation and relocation of interior roads and parking areas, and resurface with gravel;
 Gifford Tract: Construct entrance parking area and adjacent road, complete with signing, guard posts and fencing, in cooperation with Gifford Farm ESU and Fontenelle Forest;
 Ash Fall State Historical Park: Construct and install protective covers for the archaeological site.
PROJECT WILD 1989

Project WILD continued in 1989 as the most widely used environmental education program for Nebraska teachers and resource workers.

Some 450 teachers and an estimated 40 resource workers were trained in 19 workshops in 1989. Looking back over the now five years that Project WILD has been available in Nebraska, a total of 3,600 teachers and resource workers have been through Project WILD workshops. About 108,000 Nebraska school children are estimated to have become part of Project WILD.

1989 saw Nebraska holding its first advanced Project WILD workshop. Focusing on predators and predation, this winter workshop provided the more in-depth look at wildlife which teachers had requested. Safari Club International's Nebraska Chapter provided 20 partial scholarships for teachers at this workshop.

Another first during 1989 was the facilitator training workshop held at the new Mahoney State Park. Twenty-two new facilitators joined the ranks of the small cadre of active facilitators. This workshop received supplementary funding and support from the Nebraska Chapter of Safari Club International Conservation Fund.

New supporting resource materials were developed and made available to Project WILD teachers during 1989, and include:

- Teachers Desk Planner, highlighting periods of animal activity and suggesting Project WILD programs appropriate to the season.
- Life in the Water — a special publication detailing invertebrates, food chains, and fresh water habitats.

ADULT WORKSHOPS

39 Outdoor Education Workshops were co-sponsored with the Omaha World-Herald, and were presented across the state. Topics ranged from hunting and fishing to game cooking and camping. Some 2,800 people attended these sessions, for an average attendance of 72.

The most popular workshops in 1989 were those presenting information on fishing and family camping. Average attendance at the World-Herald Theater for three fishing workshops was 143, while the Family Camping Workshop attracted 121 participants.
HUNTER EDUCATION

378 classes graduating 5,432 students were held in 1989. These classes were taught by 574 volunteer instructors. Since 1972 when Hunter Education became available, 123,132 students have graduated from classes.

19 instructor workshops were held during the year and brought 155 new volunteers into the program. Four bowhunter education workshops certified 31 new bowhunter education volunteer instructors.

Nine refresher training workshops held in March and April attracted 227 volunteer instructors. These workshops are used to update instructors on new materials and policies, and to address class problems that arise for instructors.

Hunting accidents were down in 1989 with a total of 16 accidents and no fatalities. The 10-through-19-year-old age group continues to be the high-risk age. 1989 was the first year in at least 31 years that Nebraska experienced no firearm hunting fatalities.

Sport shooting is an important part of the Hunter Education Program and support was given to the National Championship Cornhusker Trapshoot at Doniphan and the State High School Silhouette Shoot at Pressey.

AQUATIC EDUCATION

The Aquatic Education Program became available in 1986, using funds derived from an expanded federal excise tax on equipment that didn't exist in the early '50s when the original Dingell-Johnson Act was passed. This user tax now covers nearly all fishing tackle items and is used to improve aquatic resources, fishing opportunity and public education.

The goal of Nebraska's Aquatic Education Program is to create an awareness, appreciation and understanding of fisheries science and aquatic resources. Volunteer instructors and school teachers have been recruited and trained in the use of materials developed for the program.

In 1989, over 14,000 youngsters either visited Aksarben Aquarium, headquarters of the Aquatic Education program, or attended a youth fishing clinic in one of several communities across the state.

Nearly 600 teachers are now registered in the Aquatic Education Program and are using classroom materials developed under the program. 78 trained instructors taught 28 Kids Fishing Clinics in 1989 and 117 volunteer instructors have been certified to teach workshops.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Management of 20 canoe campsites and information on the Nebraska Canoe Trails Program;

TRAIL TALES, a wildlife education newspaper for fourth grade, was started in 1989. It is published three times each school year and sent free to all elementary schools in the state.

Hosting the OUTDOOR NEBRASKA radio program January through July, in cooperation with the I&E Division which handles the program August through December.
Land and Water Conservation Fund

The Land and Water Conservation Fund Act (LWCA) of 1965 provides 50 percent 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 a portion of user fees on federal areas, tax on motor boat fuels, the sale of surplus property, and revenues from off-shore petroleum leases. About 85 percent of the LWCF is derived from off-shore leases.

In fiscal 1989, $197,252 was apportioned to the state. Of these funds, 60 percent or $118,351, plus $9,649 reappropriated funds, was allocated for local, community projects. Forty percent, or $78,900, was used for agency projects.

Over 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.

Handicapped Study

The self-evaluation mandated by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 has been completed. All agency facilities and programs have been evaluated for accessibility and usability by the handicapped. In addition to evaluating use by those with mobility impairments, the study included use by those with vision, hearing and learning impairments. Results were forwarded to appropriate federal agencies for their evaluation. It was determined that a transitional plan will not be required.
Federal Aid for Commercial Fisheries

The Commercial Fisheries Research and Development Act of 1964 is administered by the National Marine Fisheries Service and provides financial assistance to the states for activities designed to monitor or develop commercial fishing. Nebraska annually receives $19,000 from this program.

Comprehensive Planning


Public opinion expressed through the annual “Quality of Life” survey, plus others at State Fair and parks sites, have also been used to evaluate Nebraska’s recreation needs. Surveys show both a real satisfaction with existing opportunities while offering practical suggestions for needed improvements.

Federal Aid in Sport Fish and Wildlife Restoration

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

During 1989 these programs made about $4 million available to Nebraska for fish and wildlife surveys and inventories, research, acquisition, development and maintenance, technical assistance, hunter safety training and aquatic resource education.

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.

Staff members participated in meetings relating to the Prairie Bend Unit study directed by the Bureau of Reclamation, the major water resources planning effort in Nebraska.

The major review effort involved the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission relicensing of hydro power facilities on the Platte River.

Nebraska continues to participate in the Missouri River Coordination Committee with three other states to address environmental concerns pertaining to the channelized Missouri from Sioux City to St. Louis.

Several Soil Conservation Service small watershed projects, Natural Resources District proposals in a number of communities across the state, power-line corridor studies, and numerous state/county highway and bridge projects were among ongoing activities requiring Game and Parks Commission participation.
The Realty Division was involved in land acquisitions, appraisals, lease renewals, payments and cancellations, lease renewals, appraisal reviews, negotiations, and public hearings during 1989.

Among activities carried on during the year were:

• Approximately 120 parcels of land were reviewed, with 47 forwarded to the habitat committee. Of these, 27 were recommended for purchase, and 20 rejected. 24 continued past appraisal and negotiations to purchase were initiated. Seven were acquired, with two more from last year acquired. The remaining parcels will be pursued.

• Three other tracts came to the Commission at no cost. One was a gift and two others came as partial interests in property—one a management agreement with another government agency, the other a conservation easement reserved in deed.

• Funds from the Habitat Program were used to acquire 9 tracts representing 1,386.82 acres at a total cost of $442,478.92.

• The Nebraska Game and Parks Foundation donated a 233.43-acre tract to the Game and Parks Commission designated as Buffalo Bill Ranch State Recreation Area.

• 88 tracts purchased and designated wildlife management areas since 1977 when the Habitat Program began. The in-lieu of taxes paid to 35 counties in 1989 amounted $48,400.24 on 17,212.45 acres.

The Game and Parks Commission currently leases 72 areas through the Realty Division at a cost of $235,537. A breakdown of those types of leases and their cost in 1989 is:

- Accessways: $420
- 14 Canoe Campsites: $2,402
- Habitat Areas, Fisheries, Grazing, Recreation: $27,649
- Office Space in Lincoln, Omaha and Kearney: $134,344
- 18 Storage Areas: $24,056
- 17 Tower Leases: $11,696
- Work Areas: $33,850
- Hanger Space: $660
- Post Office Boxes: $460

Realty Chief Bruce Sackett, Secretary Marilyn Shea, and Appraiser Sally Webster.
The Division of State Parks 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 future generations of park users.

The State Park System is made up of 87 areas with a total of 149,163.44 acres—67,289 acres of land and 81,874.44 acres of marsh or water. Within the system are seven state parks totalling 30,009.65 acres; 69 state recreation areas which encompass 116,644.45 acres; and 11 state historical parks totalling 2,420 acres.

To maintain and operate the park system's 87 areas, the Commission employs a permanent staff of 123 people that is supplemented by another 560 temporary employees. Only 40 of the park areas are staffed by on-site personnel and 82 of the permanent field employees are stationed there. The remaining 27 field positions are assigned to other recreation areas, and seven park maintenance crews maintain and operate 27 other recreation areas.

The 560 temporary employees assisted the parks staff during the recreation season. The summer help was obtained from several federal employment programs, volunteer services of local groups and the military.

**Estimated Park Visits**

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*July 1989 forest fire at Ft. Robinson took heavy toll of park trees.*
During 1989, efforts were concentrated on working with various park superintendents to evaluate parks for new and renovation plantings. As a result, Arbor Lodge, Bowring Ranch, Fort Robinson, Memphis, Johnson Lake, Victoria Springs, Keller Park, and Dead Timber initiated plantings to replace mature trees.

Development at Mahoney State Park continued smoothly, with landscaping for six cabins and swimming pool complex. Both field and container-grown trees from Branched Oak and Ash Hollow nurseries were used at several parks, and extensive trimming of mature trees was done at a dozen other parks areas, using the aerial lift truck.

The container nursery at Fort Kearny State Historical Park provided 2,000 trees and shrubs for Calamus campground plantings. Many areas again benefitted from field and container-grown trees and shrubs from nurseries at Branched Oak Lake. The horticulture staff continues to cooperate with staff at Ash Hollow State Historical Park to produce native junipers for western parks, and many landscape junipers will be available for distribution in the spring of 1989. The horticulture staff also provided tree trimming and removal for various parks as time permits.
Projects for 1989

A total of $2,060,100 was spent on capital improvements for the 1989/90 fiscal year, with the majority, $1,365,000 devoted to state parks, with $400,000 for fish access roads and $160,000 for boating improvements. Building Renewal Funds (309 projects), totaled $130,853 with work done at 13 parks areas. The largest was at Chadron State Park ($35,775) and the smallest at Swanson Reservoir ($2,000). Other areas were Arbor Lodge, Branched Oak, Champion Mill, Johnson Lake, Lake McConaughy, Louisville, Ponca, Red Willow, Rock Creek, Two Rivers and War Axe.

Other individual projects included fish cleaning stations at Sherman Reservoir, with others under construction at Branched Oak, Conestoga, Lewis and Clark, Pawnee and Swanson.

Two boat ramps were replaced at Lake Ogallala, and two are being replaced at Lewis and Clark. Another 32 ramps were widened, extended or repaired at various sites.

Seventy-nine new dock sections and walkways were purchased and distributed to 17 reservoir areas.

A 233-acre tract of land adjacent to Buffalo Bill State Historical Park was purchased by the Game and Parks Foundation and donated to the agency as a state recreation area.

INCOME

The Park System generates revenue for the park cash fund and to help support park programs in several ways. Camping, lodging, swimming and trail rides are typical activities for which fees are charged. Other park income is derived from restaurant and concession sales, leases from cabin sites, conservation practices, and concession leases.

The income generated by resale items, including shirts, caps and other souvenir-type items, totaled $137,893 during 1989; income from food services was $419,131; camping income was $690,520; and the income from cabin rentals totaled $754,040.

Park visitors spent $160,437 to enjoy park trail rides; $87,748 on boat rentals and $705,834 on Park Entry Permits. The total revenue collected in Nebraska's parks was $3,312,825. All figures represent net income with taxes deducted.

Scenery and activities are among attractions of the park system. Major parks include Ponca (above) in the northeast, and Ft. Robinson (opposite) in the far northwest.

Major parks include Ponca (above) in the northeast, and Ft. Robinson (opposite) in the far northwest.
Extensive habitat plantings are made each year.

The 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 control of other governmental agencies.

The division is responsible for:
- management of controlled hunting areas such as the Sacramento-Wilcox Area, the Clear Creek Area, and the Randall W. Schilling Area
- control of fowl cholera
- 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 1989 the Resource Services Division was involved in a number of efforts to enhance wildlife habitat through the Nebraska Habitat Program. Among those efforts were:
- the allocation of 45,000 trees to farmers and ranchers for wildlife habitat plantings
- the distribution of 1,025 5-pound bags of seed mixtures to be planted as wildlife food plots
- the distribution of 9,000 pounds of grain sorghum (milo) to be used for planting of food plots for wildlife.

Among the projects involving public land habitat improvements during
Nesting structures are managed by the division.

1989 were:

• providing seed for the County Roadside Seeding Program.
  The Division received requests from 28 counties, and some $25,000 was expended on this practice.
• provided funding for the Living Snowfence Program along state and county roadsides. $35,000 was requested by 15 counties in 1989, but only $9,000 was actually utilized.
• continued coordination efforts with the U.S. Forest Service for various habitat developments and protective projects, such as habitat improvement and protection on McKelvie, Bessey, and the Pine Ridge Forest Service lands.
  To date, over $190,000 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 $8,000 was expended in 1989.
• again coordinated efforts with U.S. Army Corps of Engineers at Harlan County Reservoir for various habitat projects including numerous tree and shrub plantings, grass and legume plantings and food plot plantings. Fences were also erected at several locations. To date the Commission has expended approximately $866,000 for wildlife habitat improvement on this area.
• completed projects on numerous state wildlife management areas across the state (25,000 acres) including some 65,000 trees and shrubs planted, numerous grass-legume plantings, and food plot plantings.

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

During 1989, 1,302 acres of land were acquired for the growing list of state Wildlife Management areas. Since 1977, the acquisition program has purchased 18,747 acres of land at a cost of $7,827,183.

The Wildlife Habitat Improvement Program (WHIP) is designed to create new wildlife habitat on farms and ranches, and to enhance existing habitat. For this purpose, the Commission provides 75% of the program funds, and the Natural Resources Districts provide the remaining 25%. Currently, some 1,400 cooperators are cooperating in the program. This has enrolled 25,000 acres in various habitat are open to public access.

The division administers all sporting dog training and field trial activities in the state. During 1989 there were 29 organized clubs listed on the state roster, and they conducted a total of 68 trials during the year, with 37% held on state-owned or operated lands. During the year, 17 trials were at Branched Oak; 6 were at Yankee Hill, and 1 at Sherman Reservoir.
The Wildlife Division is responsible for developing research and management programs associated with game and nongame mammals and birds of the state. 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 the maximum hunting, trapping and recreational opportunity for sportsmen and women, and to develop regulations that ensure adequate safeguards for the resource. Division personnel 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.

Whooping cranes, other nongame are managed with game species by Wildlife Division.
RESEARCH PROGRAMS

Two papers, one dealing with lead shot in soil samples from the Rainwater Basin and another studying lead poisoning and fowl cholera, were prepared.

The Habitat Program results have been retabulated and compared and the results being rewritten.

Seeding and management practices on Osage Wildlife Area are being analyzed and written up.

Intensive research was conducted on least tern nesting colonies on the Platte River to develop management recommendations.

Artificial shelter/nest boxes for threatened flying squirrels were monitored to determine their status and distribution.

Nest boxes on signs along I-80 were monitored for use by American kestrels, and the young were banded.

Several hundred consultations with personnel of other agencies were held to ensure their operations would not impact endangered or threatened species.

Studies involving chlorophyll and particulate organic carbon analysis for fishery work at Lake McConaughy was continued.

- Other activities include routine bone, hair and tissue identification; speciation of waterfowl; sexing of pheasants and turkeys; distinguishing wild from domestic fowl; determining time and cause of death for several different species; consulting on forensic problems, wildlife diseases and chemical problems for all our divisions and many outside agencies.

Funds collected from the Income Tax Checkoff totalled $82,000 for use on several projects and studies, including terns and piping plovers on the lower Platte River; 40 captive-bred barn owls released in southeast Nebraska; 20 river otters released on the Platte and 11 more on the Cedar River; funds were provided to Project WILD for school projects; 14 contracts totalling $5,000 were issued to city schools, park and recreation departments and clubs across the state for projects benefitting nongame wildlife.
MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS
- a statewide census of Nebraska's wintering bald eagles was made in early January with 650 bald eagles found in the state.
- barn owl restoration through nest box construction and placement, and release of captive-reared birds was continued.
- Sightings of black-footed ferrets, river otters, whooping cranes and swift fox were recorded and attempts made to verify. Several comprehensive reports documenting sites used by whooping cranes were prepared.
- Bobcat carcasses from legally harvested animals were analyzed for age and reproductive performance.
- twelve falconry and 7 coyote aerial shooting permits were issued.
- information on the status and distribution of over 600 plant and animals species and ecological communities is stored in a computerized data system.
- use and format of the wildlife report cards were revised, with over 100 employees and 80 professional biologists and amateur naturalists solicited to provide information.
- a sedge wren survey was conducted in the Rainwater Basin, with four new locations added.

DEER (Firearm season)
Deer populations remained generally high in 1989 as indicated by good hunting success; the second highest success on record. With one late season and the first statewide muzzleloader season, total firearm harvest was a record high. With inclusion of archery, 38,251.

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DEER (Archery season)
Archers also continued to enjoy good deer hunting in 1989, with 25 percent of the 12,701 permit holders bagging their deer—a harvest of 3,117 deer.

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COTTONTAIL RABBIT
Summer surveys showed a 10 percent decrease in rabbit numbers from 1988. Harvest data shows 112,000 rabbits taken in 1989, the lowest on record due to lack of snow cover.

SQUIRREL
Squirrel numbers remain fairly stable, with harvest about 82,000.

Squirrels

200,000
180,000
160,000
140,000
120,000
100,000
80,000
60,000

Cottontail Rabbit

WATERFOWL

For the 15th consecutive year, avian cholera killed ducks and geese in south-central Nebraska during spring migration. Biologists picked up 1,306 waterfowl carcasses in the Rainwater Basin between March 5 and April 12.

The 1989 duck breeding population in the Sandhills was estimated at about 136,650, an increase of 8 percent from 1988.

Production of Canada geese at Sacramento WMA resulted in the release of 535 goslings in the North Platte Valley in Garden County.

Work was completed on two assessment studies. Final reports will be used by a multi-agency work team for predesignation of Rainwater Basin wetlands as either suitable or unsuitable for fill activities under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act.

1989 marked the start of a new multi-year, multi-agency effort to protect wetland habitat in the Rainwater Basin area. Official joint venture status is anticipated in March 1990, and a broad range of public and private organizations and individuals have been invited to become partners in this initiative.

A $60,000 grant was received from the Environmental Protection Agency to conduct assessment and inventory of eastern Nebraska saline wetlands. Field work began in fall of 1989 with completion scheduled for February 1990.

Efforts continued on regulating the placement of fill in wetlands under Section 404, with over 100 permits reviewed and commented on in 1989, working with the Corps of Engineers, EPA and Fish and Wildlife Service.

ANTELOPE (Firearm season)

Only the North Sioux Unit was open to firearm hunting, with 50 bucks-only permits authorized and 10 additional landowner permits issued; with 55 antelope taken.

ANTELOPE (Archery season)

Archery success was 19 percent, with 33 antelope taken by 170 permittees.
GROUSE

Spring breeding ground survey results showed a 16 percent decrease in grouse from 1988. Prairie chickens showed a 14 percent decrease and sharptails were down 20 percent. The 1989 harvest was about 75,000.

PHEASANT

The summer rural mail carrier survey indicated a 3 percent decrease statewide in the pheasant population. The season was one day shorter than in 1988, closing January 31. Preliminary figures indicate about 540,000 pheasants harvested in 1989.

QUAIL

Summer surveys indicated a 9 percent decrease in the quail population. The season was one day shorter, and preliminary figures show a 1989 harvest of 475,000 birds.

TURKEY (Spring shotgun season)

Turkey populations remain high, particularly in the Verdigre and Niobrara units. Spring harvest was 4,271 birds while the fall harvest was 4,018.

Archery permit sales were 1,560 for the spring season and 868 for the fall. Harvest was 323 gobbler in the spring and 180 birds in the fall.

MOURNING DOVE

The count survey indicated a 2 percent decrease in the dove breeding population from 1988. The hunting season was 60 days long with bag limits of 15 daily and 30 in possession. Estimates indicate a harvest of 615,000 birds.

FURBEARERS

Marked declines were seen in number of fur harvesters (43%), total harvest (51%), and total harvest value (71%) from the previous year. Harvest and value declined for all species.