

Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks
Wildlife Diversity Plan
October 2001

Introduction:

The purpose of this Wildlife Diversity Plan is to set direction and priorities for administration of major, new funding from federal and/or state sources. Implementation of this plan will be the Wildlife Diversity Program. Elements of this program will be consistent with the enabling legislation for new funding along with any existing laws, regulations, policy, and mission statement that the agency must meet. If an institution such as the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks (KDWP) is to administer funds and resources efficiently, it must have a detailed plan of action with input and a general concurrence from all stake-holders. It also must implement programs that address the priorities of the plan. The Kansas Wildlife Diversity Plan (WDP) has been developed and accepted in a manner to maximize consensus by its stakeholders of program development while minimizing administrative inefficiencies. This plan should be revised on a regular review basis to accommodate needs of adaptive management.

The initial elements of this plan were constructed from several sources, including a national model plan prepared through the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies¹, present and past strategic plans of KDWP, administrative guidelines of the KDWP nongame program, and past directives and priorities of the Kansas Nongame Wildlife Advisory Council (KNWAC). This plan is sectionalized to deal with major areas of program administration including features of both program functions and institutional organization. The state will be able to take full

¹Functional Model for an Enhanced Wildlife Conservation, Education, and Recreation Program, International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, September 1999

advantage of federal funds to be allocated providing adequate staffing can be developed to administer this plan and its programs. This plan is considered dynamic, subject to periodic updates and revisions as desirable or dictated by administrative and funding mandates.

Institutional Background

The KDWP has been responsible for overseeing the conservation of game and nongame species in Kansas since passage of its authorizing legislation. While once retaining broad authority over the conservation and regulation of Kansas forests, soil and water, as well as wildlife, the role of the state's wildlife agency has been superceded by the creation of other agencies with more definitive conservation-related responsibilities. In 1987, the Kansas Fish and Game Commission was combined with the Kansas State Park Authority by executive order, resulting in the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks.

The statute mandate of the Department regarding its conservation obligations is contained in K.S.A. 32-702:

It shall be the policy of the state of Kansas to protect, provide and improve outdoor recreation and natural resources in this state and to plan and provide for the wise management and use of the state's natural resources, thus contributing to and benefiting the public's health and its cultural, recreational and economic life. For these purposes, the secretary, the commission and the department are hereby vested with the duties and powers hereinafter set forth.

Additionally, the KDWP Mission Statement is contained in "Focus 2002, Strategic Plan for Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks" and states the agency's broad responsibilities regarding wildlife and recreation:

Conserve and enhance Kansas natural heritage, its wildlife and its habitats--to ensure future generations the benefits of the state's diverse, living resources;

Provide the public with opportunities for the use and appreciation of the natural resources of Kansas, consistent with the conservation of those resources;

Inform the public of the status of the natural resources of Kansas to promote understanding and gain assistance in achieving this mission.

Throughout its history, the Department has developed primary efforts for consumptive users who have provided the majority of funding through license fees. As a result, the agency has focused programs for game species. Nonetheless, this management approach has likely benefited many nongame wildlife through various land and water conservation activities and use regulations. It is recognized that in some situations, specific management actions will have varying impacts on all species. The majority of these conservation activities and regulations have been directed by federal aid rules and regulations of the federal Sport Fish and Wildlife Restoration Program along with obligations towards the primary funding source for programs directed for hunting and fishing. Not until 1975 was specific Kansas legislation adopted to address nongame species through passage of the Nongame and Endangered Species Conservation Act. Largely as a result of national initiatives for endangered species conservation, this Act prompted the designation of a portion of an existing staff position to work on nongame efforts along with efforts towards seeking funding sources for nongame programs.

Nationally, major needs for nongame were recognized by the passage of the Wildlife Conservation Act (WCA) of 1980. While federal funds were never appropriated to meet the needs of nongame, Kansas adopted the Chickadee Checkoff voluntary contribution program in 1980. Chickadee Checkoff, which supports the Kansas Nongame Wildlife Improvement Fund, was established through the impetus of the WCA, federal Endangered Species Act (ESA), and various state wildlife conservation organizations. The checkoff has averaged about \$150,000 income per year with funds being spent on a variety of educational, research, and habitat programs besides some administrative and promotional costs. In 1980, the Kansas Nongame Wildlife Advisory Council (KNWAC)

was organized to help initiate legislation to fund nongame programs and to serve at the pleasure of the Director of the Department to give policy guidance. Currently, KNWAC has fourteen [11 voting and 3 ex-officio] members. The role of KNWAC as embodied in bylaws of the organization is:

It shall be the role of the Kansas Nongame Wildlife Advisory Council to serve as a citizens' advisory group to the Department of Wildlife and Parks by offering advice to the Secretary and the immediate staff on the integration of nongame wildlife efforts into all levels of the department.

Section 2 of Article II of the KNWAC bylaws details other aspects of its advisory role and involves review and recommendations concerning program plans, guidelines for research, and management projects; and in providing expertise, a medium for information exchange, additional ideas for Department considerations, and issues of concern, along with assisting the Department in developing funding sources for nongame wildlife. In addition to its own statutes and regulations, the Department cooperates with other state and federal agencies in fulfilling its mission. These include, most often, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Kansas Biological Survey (KBS), Kansas State Extension Service, Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), State Conservation Commission, Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE), Army Corps of Engineers, Bureau of Reclamation, universities, and many other state, federal, and local institutions. Memoranda of Agreements or Understandings are active with many of these agencies relative to joint interests and programs. Of particular interest and related to this current Wildlife Diversity Plan are agreements with USFWS, NRCS, KDHE, and KBS. (See Appendix A)

Many wildlife and environmental conservation organizations cooperate with the Department and its personnel. These include Audubon of Kansas, Comanche Pool, Ducks Unlimited, Kansas Academy of Science, Kansas Association of Conservation Districts, Kansas Chapter of the American Fisheries Society, Kansas Chapter of The Wildlife Society, Kansas Farm Bureau, Kansas Association for Conservation and Environmental Education, Kansas Herpetological Society, Kansas Livestock Association, Kansas

Ornithological Society, Kansas Trappers Association, Kansas Wetland and Riparian Alliance, Kansas Wildflower Society, Kansas Wildlife Federation, Pheasants Forever, RC&D Councils (e.g. See-KAN RC&D), Flint Hills RC&D, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Quail Unlimited, Sierra Club, Tallgrass Legacy Alliance, The Nature Conservancy, various public area friends groups, and many other city, regional and state organizations.

Kansas Wildlife Resources

Primarily because of traditional contributions of sport fish and wildlife interests towards wildlife conservation in Kansas and elsewhere, wildlife has been generically categorized as “game” and “nongame.” The wildlife agency has no statutory obligations granted towards plants although some activities certainly address plant conservation through biological community associations and management. According to “Focus 2002, A Plan for Kansas Wildlife and Parks,” the Department manages the management of about 759 species of vertebrates. This includes 460 bird species, 87 mammals, 135 fishes, 66 reptiles, and 31 amphibians. Additionally, approximately 24,000 species of invertebrates, including mussels, crustaceans, and insects are under jurisdiction of the Department. There are presently 60 species listed as Threatened or Endangered and an additional 69 species on the Species In Need of Conservation List (SINC). (See Appendix B) This list is reviewed every five years as per amendments to the Nongame and Endangered Species Act of 1975.

PROGRAM FUNCTIONS (General Guidelines)

Planning

Planning for wildlife diversity programs must entail adequate treatment of several aspects of institutional, public, and operational assessments. Perhaps the most important factor in any strategic planning effort is the faith and adherence to which leadership commits itself to the plan and the degree to which the plan drives operational budgets and priorities. Priorities in this plan devised through consensus, majority or expert opinion, should enjoy integration into the operational aspects of the agency. Therefore, a commitment must be made by the administration,

including the Governor and Commission of the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks in order to see success from the major effort involved. Components of the Wildlife Diversity Plan should be equal in importance and complementary with other aspects of fisheries and wildlife management programs.

Customer assessment (humandimensions)

Public surveys should be conducted to help direct program development for the WDP. Additionally, KMWAC can supply a continuous flow for organizational input and influence on policy direction for the agency's WDP effort. The current Kansas Teaming With Wildlife Coalition should be an element and focus group to be used by KDWP and KMWAC in assessing demand and program priorities. Additionally, the Kansas Conservation Network as facilitated through KDWP employees and the Information and Education Section will be instrumental in directing efforts. Past surveys and directives can supply an initial basis for new and existing program development and implementation. Although Kansas surveys related to nongame issues need updating, they have consistently inferred a strong public interest in endangered species conservation efforts, reintroductions, and habitat conservation as key areas for KDWP to address.

Assessing biological diversity

KDWP will continue to coordinate with the KBS and other entities to refine and maintain lists of biological diversity, i.e. species, species groups, and natural communities. This will contribute to helping set priorities and establishing a baseline of information about Kansas' wildlife species. Ongoing and additional efforts of data storage, retrieval and analysis will be sought through coordination with the KBS and other agencies and groups. This will include the state's universities, and will coordinate with existing Geographical Information Systems (GIS) efforts. The WDP will maximize ecosystem-based and multi-species conservation efforts.

Inventory, monitoring and management

The Kansas WDP will structure data gathering to close information gaps.

1. **Research:** Commit resources to accomplishing WDP goals and objectives by gathering detailed information on wildlife diversity elements to clarify life history and management questions, formulate management guidelines, and assess public values, needs, and impacts on natural resources. Research should be driven by management challenges with considerations for required basic informational needs. Recommended application methods and limitations should be included in all reports. Directed projects will address WDP priorities. Guidelines and evaluation processes will be developed and used for unsolicited projects and will correlate to budgets available at lower priority levels than directed efforts. Priorities will be part of this plan and will be periodically updated, most likely during strategic plan revisions.
2. **Natural Resource Management and Conservation:** Maintain programs for habitat, species, and special features management on public and private lands, in both urban and rural settings, using ecosystem approaches where appropriate. Ensure consideration of WDP values in agency land management programs. Use the full spectrum of habitat conservation tools, such as stewardship agreements, private land economic incentives, conservation easements, land acquisition, natural area and nature preserve programs, special use permits, landowner recognition and incentives, and voluntary participation agreements. Emphasize management of wildlife diversity resources as components of natural communities. Integrate WDP efforts fully with existing programs for stewardship of private and public lands. Work with other state and federal agencies to help achieve mutual and beneficial management goals where overlapping responsibilities and conflicting wildlife management programs exist.
3. **Recreation:** Ensure that the WDP advocates for conservation-oriented wildlife recreation. Help identify and meet public needs for facilities, e.g., trails and viewing blinds and opportunities for enjoyment and learning e.g. events and workshops. Direct such activities, and work with communities and nature-based

tourism interests, to ensure compatibility with biological program objectives. Use surveys and other appropriate means to assess program effectiveness.

4. **Public Outreach:** Establish a comprehensive public outreach program that continually informs internal and external customers about the WDP mission, goals, and functions. Promote active public involvement in the WDP. Report accomplishments in a timely manner. Focus outreach efforts on important challenges and incorporate methods to evaluate effectiveness of outreach techniques.
5. **Education:** Establish objectives and enhance environmental literacy among children and adults through education programs that include formal (curriculum-based) and informal (workshops and clinics) approaches. Formal educational assistance includes training linked to existing primary, secondary, or post-secondary education, and for adults. Informal assistance includes efforts outside the classroom or structured school environment. In both approaches, encourage use of nature centers, outdoor classrooms, learning centers, and other outdoor facilities. Ensure that all new activities are appropriately integrated with existing education and conservation programs.
6. **Law Enforcement:** Provide support for law enforcement actions that effectively address specific nongame wildlife, endangered species, and habitat challenges. Measure success as well as effort. Law enforcement staff should receive training in aspects of interagency environmental enforcement issues and procedures.
7. **Training and Human Resources:** Provide training to develop the skills that WDP staff and cooperators need to make the program effective and efficient. Hire employees who are technically competent, skilled at interpersonal relations and teamwork, and who can work well in the agency's culture.
8. **Promotion, Marketing, and Public Relations:** Ensure agency-wide efforts to promote and market WDP as a comprehensive conservation program, to maintain internal and

external support for authorities, actions, and funding. Secure buy-in from employees at various levels to ensure success. Use professional marketing expertise and all available tools, including mass media, internet resources, departmental magazines, news releases, public speaking, professional publications, technical reports, pamphlets, brochures, etc. Assess public interests and demand through surveys, and develop programs and materials to meet customer demands.

PROGRAM ORGANIZATION (General Guidelines)

A particularly important challenge is fitting new programs of the Wildlife Diversity Plan into the agency's structure. This must be addressed forthrightly, to ensure that the program is smoothly integrated into the agency in regard to structure, role, and function. Existing sportfish and game management programs will be challenged to address this broader arena in satisfying wildlife demands from a broader constituent base. Integration of new wildlife diversity projects, staff, and funding as part of this plan will be facilitated by these conditions:

1. Commitment of the KDWP administration, with support of the Governor and the KDWP Commission, to this plan.
2. Acceptance that this plan will formalize the complementary addition of wildlife diversity constituencies to planning, budgeting, and operations of KDWP.
3. Centralized and de-centralized staff should be established as appropriate to address WDP priorities. Centralized staff can provide leadership in statewide program planning, oversight, support, and special technical expertise. De-centralized staff can provide generalist presence in regional program implementation. The relatively small organization model already existing in the Fisheries and Wildlife Division which includes a skeletal staff of central and regional positions is viewed as effective and workable in building additional programs. This is also a model most commonly accepted as most desired in many other states.
4. While the WDP is starting up, provide resources for long-term planning, but also ensure that the program quickly demonstrates its value to internal and external

customers through short-term actions. The immediate need is for high-impact, high-profile actions (projects) that have lasting value, but which can be accomplished quickly to show the program is immediately functional and beneficial. Ensure that staffing occurs at a pace that allows for orderly program development and for the new employees to adjust to the agency culture.

Public Demand Assessment-

Wildlife viewing is among the fastest growing outdoors-recreational pursuits on the continent. According to the National Survey of Fishing, Hunting and Wildlife Associated Recreation² 62,868,000 Americans 16 years of age and older, 31% of the population, viewed, studied, and photographed wildlife in 1996. Just under 61 million (60,751,000), 30% of the population, took a primary interest around their homes while 23,652,000 Americans 16 years and older took trips of more than one mile from their homes for the primary purpose of watching wildlife. This increasing trend has been consistent since earlier surveys indicated similar interests nationally and in Kansas.^{3,4} Fifty-seven percent of Kansas residents age 16 or older participated in wildlife observation activities in 1990.⁵ According to the 1996 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting and Wildlife-Associated Recreation⁶, expenditures in Kansas related to wildlife viewing were \$102,400,000.

²National Survey of Fishing, Hunting and Wildlife Associate Recreation. U.S. Dept. of Interior, 1997.

³Nonconsumptive wildlife-associated recreation in the U.S.: identifying the other constituencies. Forty-seventh N. Am. Wildl. And Nat. Resour. Conf. J.R. Lyons, 1982.

⁴Attitudes towards nongame wildlife; a survey of Kansas residents. Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks. Michael J. Broadway, 1985.

⁵A survey of outdoor activities by Kansas residents. Kansas Dept. of Wildlife and Parks. Mary Mae Hardt, 1990.

⁶1996 National and State Economic Impacts of Wildlife Watching. U.S. Dept. of Interior, 1998.

Public demand for conservation of endangered species and their habitats is strong as well. A survey conducted by Kansas State University indicated very strong support for endangered species programs and protection efforts.⁷ An overwhelming 96.6% of the public supported having a state list of endangered species in Kansas. Eighty nine percent supported restrictions on activities that threatened habitats of endangered species. Eighty five percent of the Kansas public supported efforts to purchase lands that could protect wildlife. This information complements other state and national surveys regarding the public's general interest in supporting endangered species conservation efforts. This includes a 1995 licensed angler survey⁸ showing that 85% of anglers considered management of threatened and endangered species as critically important. Eighty three percent agreed they would be willing to sacrifice some fishing opportunity in order to protect threatened and endangered species.

Since its creation in 1980, the Kansas Nongame Wildlife Advisory Council has supplied guidance to the Department. Some of this guidance has been in the form of priorities for various program activities. Priorities have not changed since the council's review in 1997.

Historical Priorities of the Chickadee Checkoff⁹

Supplied through advice of the Kansas Nongame Wildlife Advisory Council early in its existence in the mid-1980s, priorities included:

Research Emphasis

⁷Survey of Kansans' attitudes regarding threatened and endangered wildlife. Kansas State University. Robert H. Poresky, 1991.

⁸Survey of licensed anglers. Kansas Dept. of Wildlife and Parks, 1995.

⁹ This section is for historical information only so that a perspective may be understood of the development of programs through the Chickadee Checkoff. Therefore, information is presented as originally prepared.

1. Determine the status, distribution, or requirements of endangered species, threatened species, and species in need of conservation (emphasizing studies on gray myotis, blue sucker, sicklefin chub, and pallid sturgeon)
2. Determine habitat alteration effects on nongamespecies.
3. Nongameresearch in Arkansas River lowlands.
4. Determine critical habitat areas for nongamewildlife.
5. Determine the effects of general wildlife management techniques on amphibians, reptiles, and invertebrates.
6. Determine the most appropriate management techniques for amphibians, reptiles, and invertebrates.
7. Determine the status or requirements of nongamewildlife in urban areas.
8. Conduct urban, regional, or statewide habitat inventories.
9. Document nongamewildlife use of different habitat types.
10. Determine dewatering impacts on aquatic nongamewildlife.

Habitat Improvement Emphasis

1. Habitat improvement for endangered species, threatened species, and species in need of conservation.
2. Preservation of critical habitat areas.
3. Development of habitat in urban areas where a large number of people will benefit from associated educational values.

Information and Education Emphasis

1. Development of educational programs or information stressing the importance of nongamehabitat.
2. Development of nature trails.
3. Development of educational programs or information that will enhance the awareness and appreciation of little- known or misunderstood nongamespecies.

In 1983, KMWACranked major ecosystems for research priorities

1. Arkansas River Lowlands
2. Ozark Plateau

3. Urban Areas
4. Major Marsh Areas
5. Cherokee Lowlands
6. Red Hills
7. Sandsage Prairie
8. Major Springs

Updated ecosystems/issues of priority consideration added by KMWAC during preparation of this document:

1. Tallgrass prairie
2. Riverine/riparian and wetland losses and water quality issues
3. Cropland/wildlife relationships
4. Slope/seep wetland areas
5. Cross Timbers

Since 1990, when better direction was desired by KDWP for Chickadee Checkoff programs, most project funding has been directed by program and Department priorities as guided by KMWAC. A major effort was devoted to the Outdoor Wildlife Learning Sites (OWLS) program as an education and conservation program. OWLS has created more than 220 school outdoor laboratories in Kansas. Other major directed funding went to the Kansas Breeding Bird Atlas, the Kansas Amphibian Monitoring Program, and research projects in southeast Kansas for looking at limiting factors in riverine environments and needs of sensitive species in those environs. For the limited funding available in recent years research priorities have been set by the most recent 1997 priorities reviewed and approved by KMWAC as follows:

Chickadee Checkoff Research Priorities

1. Determine population status, critical habitats, and limiting factors of riverine biota of southeast Kansas with emphasis on the Marais des Cygnes, Neosho, Spring, Verdigris, Walnut, and lower Arkansas river basins.
2. Update population status, distribution, and critical habitat requirements of animals on the Kansas Threatened and Endangered Species and the Species in Need of Conservation lists.
3. For Section 6 (Federal Endangered Species Act) funding proposals, emphasis will be given to multi-state and ecosystem-based efforts that address species on the federal threatened and endangered list, and candidate species.

Proposals addressing these priorities were given emphasis, although unsolicited projects were evaluated as to their merit in addressing other needs of the Department and Kansas wildlife. All proposals were to contain a project title, principal investigator's name and qualifications, a summary of the project with objectives, costs, and schedule. (This section is presented only for historical perspective and current procedures could differ.)

Ongoing recovery plan needs and priorities set by the Threatened and Endangered Species Task Force will direct future efforts related to threatened and endangered species and Species in Need of Conservation. This current planning process will supply additional guidance for the broad aspects of wildlife diversity needs.

Additional problems identified in past strategic plans and relating to this Wildlife Diversity Plan are included here for further evaluation and considerations. Much of this material has been updated and refined from the very detailed 1990 strategic planning effort. It was determined that the extensive public involvement in the development of the 1990 strategic plan could be used as a template and that most of the issues and strategies are still relevant. New issues and strategies and their prioritizations have been added through this current planning process.

General Wildlife Diversity Needs

Goal: The goal of this plan is to enhance the appreciation, status and habitats of wildlife; for the benefit of a diverse array of species, including those not hunted or fished, to fulfill unmet needs of wildlife, in recognition of the primary role of the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks to conserve all wildlife.

Objectives: Expand public awareness, appreciation, and conservation of wildlife.
Locate, improve, and conserve habitats where populations are declining or are likely to decline if present trends are unaddressed.
Promote the integration of existing and future fish and wildlife programs for the overall benefit of wildlife and effective use of funds and staff.

Issue: Public information and education programs concerning wildlife and outdoor skills are insufficient.

Strategies

1. Enhance the development of wildlife teaching materials and programs from K-College for administrators, teacher trainers, and teachers that help link environmental literacy components to existing curriculum standards. This would include teacher workshops on wildlife diversity, with credit for re-certification.
2. Expand public outdoor skills workshops similar to the current Becoming an Outdoors Woman. Examples would be a workshop designed for teachers which could rotate among various universities along with specialized workshops for birding and wildlife photography.
3. Supply resources to help expand conservation education workshops for teachers and youth leaders including efforts with Project Wild, Project Aquatic, Project Wet, and Project Learning Tree. Consider week-long workshops for teacher credit.
4. Expand and improve the Outdoor Wildlife Learning Sites (OWLS) Program.

5. Provide “ read-only,” user-friendly electronic access to wildlife viewing areas data layer via a GIS system, and natural history information.
6. Acquire more sites near urban areas to provide additional programs through landowner-friendly methods in accordance with Pittman/Robertson and Dingell/Johnson guidelines.
7. Continue to provide and expand the Wildlife Education Service and Wildlife Reference Center.
8. Provide cost-share grants to communities and organizations for stimulating nature-based tourism consistent with conservation objectives.
9. Develop additional nature trails, viewing blinds, wildlife viewing sites, and support materials on public lands as needs and Pittman/Robertson federal aid rules dictate.
10. Develop more nature, wildlife, and endangered species informational materials and brochures.
11. Develop an effective wildlife viewing and appreciation program consisting of the “ Watching Kansas Wildlife” viewing guide, a signing areas included in the guide, and the promotion of special events, festivals, nature tourism, and citizen science programs.
12. Periodically evaluate all aspects of all our education and wildlife appreciation programs through surveys and self- assessments.
13. Collaborate with Rock Springs 4-H Camp, Outdoor Adventures Camp, and others to enhance and expand outdoor education programs.
14. Develop additional videos for education and appreciation of wildlife; making wildlife and environmental education video programs available to public television and cable/community channels throughout Kansas.
15. Integrate the Wildlife Diversity Plan with more general planning efforts and any agency marketing programs, that emphasize full- service features of the agency.
16. Improve standards and set criteria for wildlife rehabilitation and improve information and guidance for cooperators.
17. Publish periodic wildlife diversity program reports.

18. Ensure that KDWP job descriptions reflect the new components and needs of the Wildlife Diversity Plan and staff accordingly.
19. Target wildlife education and appreciation programs for specific urban audiences such as the Asian community with regard to implications of watercress harvest on Arkansas darter, *Etheostoma cragini*, populations.
20. Reinitiate and expand The Field Glass newsletter.
21. Develop wildlife husbandry and other biological informational brochures to deal with the keeping of native amphibians, reptiles, and fish.
22. Develop additional promotionals of wildlife involving photographic and art contests.
23. Expand workshops for KDWP staff related to all wildlife and their conservation needs.
24. Develop materials and assist universities in the development of curriculum improvements for natural resource professionals. This could consider professional training by universities for wildlife professionals
25. Work with local governments to incorporate wildlife habitat education into existing and new streamway parks, greenways, etc.
26. Fund an all- taxon inventory.
27. Encourage the development of more nature centers and state aquaria.
28. Supply KDWP magazine free of charge and ensure diversity of articles.
29. Develop trading cards, posters and other materials.
30. Continue presentations and exhibits at the state fair, boat shows, garden shows, etc.
31. Market KDWP as a full- service conservation agency.
32. Endorse language that specifically mentions public service messages on various media dealing with wildlife diversity issues.
33. Support Rails to Trails efforts.
34. Develop agreements and capabilities for more canoeing trails.
35. Consider assisting with maintenance of university natural history reservations.
36. Support a fully funded seasonal naturalist program.

Issue: Information on public attitudes towards wildlife, their knowledge of wildlife related issues, and their level of participation in wildlife related activities is needed.

Strategies:

1. Conduct human dimensions surveys to assess the public's attitudes, knowledge, and levels of participation related to wildlife activities.
2. Use existing socioeconomic data to develop a profile of urban wildlife user residents.
3. Implement procedures for documenting routine public comments and inquiries related to wildlife issues.
4. Satisfy multi-cultural informational needs.

Issue: Wildlife populations continue to be adversely impacted due to habitat alterations.

Strategies:

1. Implement tax credit and conservation easement programs.
2. Cooperate with the Kansas Biological Survey and other entities in identifying priorities and opportunities for wildlife conservation. The Nature Conservancy's ecoregional plans, that identify a portfolio of sites most important for conservation of biodiversity (and that were developed with assistance from KBS and many others), should be utilized..
3. Cooperate with land management groups and educate them about wildlife conservation needs and values.
4. Reintroduce certain species if habitat and biological conditions are suitable to permit sustainability and social acceptance is favorable.
5. Promote improved water quality standards and efforts for minimum desirable stream flows.

6. Identify pollution problem areas and improve conditions detrimental to biodiversity and endangered species.
7. Acquire more areas near urban areas to provide additional programs through landowner-friendly methods in accordance with Pittman/Robertson and Dingell/Johnson guidelines.
8. Promote donations of wildlife areas through Wildtrust, Kansas Wildscape Foundation, and other entities.
9. Work with other state agencies to reduce impact to habitat from their programs.
10. Develop a state biodiversity plan to include inventory and monitoring and community restoration strategies.

Issue: Procedures for conserving sensitive habitats and species or species groups need to be enhanced or implemented.

Strategies:

1. Document important wildlife habitats.
2. Produce GIS layers for wetlands, riparian areas, managed areas, and other important or sensitive areas to assist local governments with planning, and with using wildlife diversity program data and GIS information.
3. Develop staffing and strategies to address mushrooming conservation planning needs for multi-state species such as black-tailed prairie dog, swift fox, lesser prairie chicken, and mountain plover and additional species' conservation planning.
4. Work with community-based organizations to foster citizen interest in habitat conservation.
5. Monitor habitat conservation efforts receiving KDWP funds to ensure compliance with appropriate laws, regulations, and wildlife conservation ethics.

6. Develop and implement standard protocol for atlas programs for native aquatic species, amphibians, reptiles, bats, butterflies, shorebirds, colonial nesting waterbirds, small mammals, and grassland birds.
7. Assess habitat fragmentation and its implications to natural community changes through GAP analysis.
8. Supply information to city land use planners and developers related to wildlife values and habitat needs.
9. Continue the Backyard Wildlife Habitat Improvement Program and green space concepts to reduce habitat fragmentation impacts.
10. Expand investigations of illegal commercial trade of wildlife.
11. Utilize fish culture system for recovery projects and activities. Fully assess potential problems with contamination, introduction of exotics, and genetic issues.
12. Survey the flora and fauna of Kansas springs.

Issue: Wildlife damage control may be detrimental to non-target wildlife.

Strategies:

1. Expand cooperative programs that supply technical and direct assistance for nuisance animal control problems and efforts.
2. Promote environmentally safe wildlife control methods.
3. Promote educational information regarding public and private wildlife control efforts.

Specific Wildlife Diversity Needs

Mammals

Goal: To manage habitats in Kansas to support a diversity of mammalian species at population levels consistent with long term stability.

Objectives: Identify essential habitats of mammalian species that need increased conservation, further study, and/or management.
Expand and coordinate data bases concerning mammals and their associated habitat characteristics.
Increase public awareness and appreciation of mammalian resources.
Conserve/manage habitats identified for particular emphasis.

Issue: KDWP should exert strong leadership for mammalian conservation needs.

Strategies:

1. Describe habitat associations with mammalian species and measure the trends in habitat distribution and quality. Coordinate with Central Plains Society of Mammalogists.
2. Monitor distribution and habitat status of mammals through GAP and GIS applications.
3. Develop interpretive guides and informational material to increase awareness and appreciation of all mammals.
4. Develop management plans that meet needs of mammals.
5. Continue to broaden support for federal farm programs, i.e. CRP, Swampbuster, etc.
6. Implement and enforce laws and regulations that prevent over-exploitation of populations or degradation of habitat predisposing a species to significant reductions in their distribution or abundance.
7. Evaluate impacts of exotic introductions, diseases, and parasites of mammals.
8. Enhance bat conservation efforts.
9. Initiate public volunteer monitoring surveys of nongame mammals.
10. Initiate photographic and artwork contests for promoting mammals.

11. Develop contingency plans for managing exotic mammalian wildlife.
12. Assess the range and distribution of particular restricted range species, such as the Southern bog lemming, *Synaptomys cooperi*.
13. Develop effective information and educational materials for the black-tailed prairie dog, *Cynomys ludovicianus*.
14. Develop an on-line adaptation of KSGAP for KDWP personnel and the general public

Birds

Goal: Maintain and enhance habitat diversity to support bird populations at optimum levels, and educate the public concerning their importance in ecology and the recreation and related economic benefits they provide.

Objective: Develop more research, protection, enhancement and educational programs with an emphasis on non-game species and game birds of particular concern.

Issue: Many native habitats required by birds in Kansas have been destroyed or degraded.

Strategies:

1. Protect and restore native habitats.
2. Assess and protect native habitats on public lands.
3. Educate Department staff and the public as to the value of native habitats.

Issue: Public information and education programs concerning non-harvested birds is insufficient to meet demand.

Strategies:

1. Maintain close coordination with the Kansas Ornithological Society and Audubon of Kansas.
2. Become involved directly with the North American Bird Conservation Initiative.
3. Periodically repeat the Kansas Breeding Bird Atlas.
4. Continue public participation programs related to bird watching such as Eagle Days, the Kansas Winter Bird Feeder Survey, International Migratory Bird Day, and other birding events.
5. Encourage and facilitate the development of birding festivals and birding trails in Kansas. Integrate such activities with nature tourism efforts. Create grant program for local governments.
6. Develop a Partners in Flight (Allbirds Conservation) program in Kansas.

7. Increase scope and diversity of avian research in the state, including, but not limited to such innovative programs as isotope tracing to identify exact winter range habitats for species that nest in Kansas.
 8. Place special emphasis on programs to study and protect grassland-nesting birds.
 9. Develop projects to reintroduce previously extirpated species, such as the Black-capped Vireo.
10. Cooperate with Audubon relative to the IBA (Important Birding Areas) program.
11. Assist landowners in identifying areas important to birds.
12. Develop educational materials (videos, posters, trading cards, etc.)
13. Develop more educational training for Department staff for all-bird conservation.

Issue: Insufficient information exists for native bird populations.

Strategies:

1. Repeat state breeding bird atlas at routine intervals.
2. Compare breeding bird survey data to land cover types, incorporating GIS layering.
3. Initiate nongame bird surveys on KDWP public lands.
4. Initiate 5 or 10-year interval distributional surveys of greater and lesser prairie chickens, and other declining bird species.
5. Cooperate with Partners in Flight and national waterbird and shorebird initiatives.

Reptiles and Amphibians

Goal: Protect viable populations of all native amphibians and reptiles.

Objective: Stabilize or increase populations of native amphibians and reptiles.

Issues: There is incomplete knowledge of the distribution, abundance, biology, and ecology of Kansas amphibians, and reptiles.

Strategies:

1. Implement a structured census for reptiles to provide initially a good baseline data set and eventual trend information on populations and ranges.
2. Continue and expand the Kansas Amphibian Monitoring Program.
3. Maintain close coordination with the Kansas Herpetological Society.
4. Investigate contaminant effects on reptilian and amphibian populations.
5. Initiate active participation in the National Amphibian Conservation Program.

6. Continue to assist with the promotion of annual and special counts of herps.
7. Continue participating in the National Amphibian Abnormality Monitoring Program.
8. Inventory all public lands for amphibians and reptiles.
9. Monitor harvests of bullfrogs and snakes more closely.
10. Provide direction so that more positive snake education and appreciation can be realized as a result of existing rattlesnake roundup(s).
11. Develop more research on biology and ecology of herps.

Issue: Kansans should have greater understanding of reptilian and amphibian resources.

Strategies:

1. Improve educational efforts and materials regarding reptiles and amphibians to schools and other groups.
2. Encourage more activities by KDWP with groups such as the Kansas Herpetological Society and zoos.
3. Supply more training to KDWP staff regarding herps and their needs.

Issue: Efforts to promote or enhance reptiles and amphibians as an integral part of Kansas wildlife should be increased.

Strategies:

1. Develop habitat demonstration and viewing areas for reptiles and amphibians on wildlife areas, state parks and visitor centers.
2. Secure, obtain, or lease property in areas of special interest through landowner friendly measures.
3. Supply additional training to KDWP staff related to herp needs.

Native Fishes

Goal: Ensure that viable populations of all native fishes continue to exist and increase in Kansas

Objectives: Expand public awareness, appreciation, and utilization of native fish resources.

Locate, improve, and conserve aquatic habitats for native fishes, especially where populations are declining or deemed in need of conservation.

Issue: Knowledge of the distribution, abundance, systematics, genetics, and ecology of Kansas native fishes is incomplete.

Strategies:

1. Expand use of GIS to assess native fish distribution.
 2. Expand statewide, standardized surveys to update stream assessments and monitoring of Kansas fish populations and their habitats.
 3. Continue to develop a statewide, georeferenced database on fish distribution and abundance, including information on community structure.
 4. Provide economic incentives to landowners for habitat conservation efforts.
 5. Continue standardized population and quantitative habitat evaluation procedures and publish in technical handbook.
 6. Continue to incorporate data into a centralized, computer fish and wildlife information system and train biologists and public on its uses.
 7. Continue to evaluate impacts of various non-native fish introductions on native fishes communities.
 8. Develop better training for fish identification for KDWP staff and others who may be interested in developing better skills.
 9. Cooperate with universities to upgrade fish reference collections.
 10. Survey genetic diversity within species.
 11. Coordinate projects and programs with the Kansas Chapter of American Fisheries Society.
12. Develop more research related to ecology and systematics of fishes.

Issues: There is an inadequate appreciation for native fishes.

Strategies:

1. Support, develop, administer and participate in Pure Water for Kansas and similar “stream team” efforts involving stream naturalist interpretive programs.
2. Expand native fish information inclusion into conservation education workshops for teachers and youth leaders along with KDWP staff.
3. Publish native fishes poster and other informational materials such as trading cards.
4. Develop outreach interpretive programs for Kansas angler organizations, bait dealers, commercial fish growers, county and state engineers, and developers to promote appreciation of native fishes.
5. Register privately-owned stream reaches that provide valuable nongame fishes habitat in a program modeled after the successful Backyard Wildlife Certification Program.
6. Design and fund nongame fishes and stream habitat displays for Kansas zoos and universities.
7. Customize American Fisheries Society’s monetary values for fishes to better reflect the intrinsic and esthetic values of fishes in Kansas with special emphasis for designating added values for threatened and endangered species and Species in Need of Conservation.
8. Promote the use of small fish tanks with native fishes in classroom study of ecology and aquatic ecosystems in schools and other institutions.
9. Encourage construction of fish ladders in rivers with instream structures that obstruct fish migrations and provide opportunities for fish viewing where possible and desirable.
10. Develop urban parks along stream corridors with interpretive signs and naturalists geared towards promoting appreciation of Kansas’s native fisheries.

11. Establish additional public aquaria statewide, particularly in urban areas and in cooperation with businesses and malls in particular.
12. Create fish watching opportunities (snorkeling).

Issue: Stream habitats required by Kansas fishes continue to be degraded.

Strategies:

1. Implement habitat restoration and enhancement programs for public and private lands where possible by using cost-share and incentive programs.
2. Promote strong water quality standards and their enforcement through education and continued coordination with the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, and linkage to stream ratings dependent on the presence of rare fishes, unique assemblages, or high biodiversity.
3. Promote ecologically sound techniques for flood control, erosion control, nonpoint source pollution control, and bank stabilization, which will provide high aquatic habitat diversity and determine engineering techniques for preventing monotypic habitats.
4. Monitor indicator fish species to determine the status of crucial habitat types representative of the different aquatic ecoregions of Kansas.
5. Support university analyses of existing data to determine physical habitat-fish community interactions.
6. Enhance wetlands.
7. Develop riparian buffers.
8. Monitor impacts from feedlots, urban areas, and factories.
9. Provide support for removing low water dams where feasible.

Issue: Some species of nongame fishes are declining.

Strategies:

1. Continue to assess limiting factors of nongame fishes and methods to reduce negative impacts on streams.
2. Evaluate impacts of commercial harvest and dumping of baitfish on native fish populations.
3. Continue to evaluate impacts of exotic species, game fish, and bait stockings on native fish communities to minimize negative impacts.
4. Protect, enhance and increase native fishes in their habitats.
5. Support more research as to the impacts of dams on aquatic ecosystems and fauna.

Invertebrates

Goal: Improve the overall knowledge, appreciation, and status of Kansas invertebrates. The importance of invertebrates in Kansas' ecosystems is underappreciated.

Objectives:

Expand public awareness, use, and appreciation of invertebrate wildlife.
Determine occurrence, population dynamics, and environmental requirements data for
invertebrate wildlife in order to provide for effective conservation.
Locate, improve, and conserve habitats of invertebrate wildlife
populations in decline, or deemed in need of conservation.

Issue: There is a lack of an educational emphasis on the importance of invertebrate wildlife to the welfare of Kansas ecosystems.

Strategies:

1. Improve information related to invertebrates through the Wildlife Education Service, Outdoor Wildlife Learning Sites and other programs such as 4H.
2. Emphasize more butterfly gardens and wetland features at OWS areas and through other programs such as city parks.
3. Participate more directly in the Kansas Butterfly Association and other related groups.
4. Enhance educational efforts and materials for all invertebrate groups including aquatic benthos.
5. Develop additional mussel display and identification kits.
6. Help facilitate the July 4th Butterfly Count.
7. Continue participation in the Monarch Watch program.
8. Work with the Kansas Department of Agriculture on biological controls of pest insects rather than chemical treatment to reduce impacts to non-target invertebrates.
9. Develop an educational web page and other educational materials about Kansas invertebrates.

10. Supply additional training for KDWP staff.

11. Develop more programs for schools.

Issue: The lack of distribution, abundance, and population data restricts effective decision making when developing management programs with emphasis on mussels.

Strategies:

1. Expand statewide assessments of inventory, abundance, species diversity, population data, and environmental requirements for freshwater mussels.
2. Continue to assist with the Kansas Freshwater Mussel Workshop and similar efforts to promote the conservation of the state's aquatic resources.
3. Utilize stream monitoring program to increase distribution knowledge of aquatic mollusks and other invertebrates.
4. Continue long-term sampling of freshwater mussels (at 5-year intervals), and establish new monitoring sites for freshwater mussels.
5. Study other neglected invertebrate groups: insects, crayfish, etc.
6. The Zebra mussel, *Dreissena polymorpha*, poses a threat to aquatic habitats and their inhabitants, particularly in eastern Kansas.
7. Address recovery plan priorities for freshwater mussels.

Dreissena polymorpha, pose a threat to aquatic habitats and their inhabitants, particularly in eastern Kansas.

Strategies:

1. Cooperate with other state and federal agencies towards management activities to avoid unintentional stockings of zebra mussels in lakes and streams of Kansas.
2. Educate the public about zebra mussels and how to prevent their spread into Kansas.
3. Develop contingency plans for coping with and managing zebra mussels if they do become established in Kansas. Eliminate them if possible.
4. Implement a nonindigenous species management plan (NSMP) for Kansas.
5. Develop a risk assessment model for zebra mussels.
6. Develop a protocol for future monitoring of zebra mussels.
7. Assess ecological impacts to stream systems from the recent invasion of the Asian Clam, *Corbicula fluminea*.
8. Supply additional training for KDWP staff.

Issue: Feral hogs are having increasing negative impacts on habitats and domestic livestock.

Strategies:

1. Cooperate with KSU Coop Unit and other entities in assessing the extent and threats of feral hogs in Kansas.
2. Develop a management plan for control and possible elimination of feral hogs.

Issue: Other introductions of exotic wildlife and animals could pose health and genetic risks to endemic populations of native wildlife.

Strategy:

1. Cooperate with the state and federal Department of Agriculture in developing management strategies for coping with potential problems from exotic livestock and wildlife introductions.
2. Supply additional public educational efforts.

Issue: *Sericea lespedeza*, *Lespedeza cuneata*, is rapidly spreading throughout the tallgrass prairie region of eastern Kansas¹¹. This introduced plant poses a serious threat to the biodiversity of Kansas' remaining tallgrass prairie through competitive interaction with native species and from widespread broadcast spraying of herbicides in an effort to control this invader.

Strategies:

1. Promote and fund research to control *Sericea lespedeza* that doesn't sacrifice native plant diversity.
2. Become an active partner with the *Sericea lespedeza* Working Group, a four state alliance (KS, MO, OK, NE), that seeks to curb the spread of *Sericea lespedeza* on native rangeland.
3. Inventory *Sericea lespedeza* on lands owned and managed by KDWP.
4. Implement an aggressive spot spraying program for *Sericea lespedeza* on KDWP lands, with a priority to protect native plant communities.
5. Promote spot-spraying on private lands as a viable method of controlling *Sericea lespedeza*.

10. As of summer 2000, approximately 400,000 acres of native rangeland was estimated to be infested with *Sericea lespedeza*, based on statistics from the Kansas Department of Agriculture.

6. Educate the public about the need to protect native forbs while controlling *Sericea lespedeza*.

Issue: Exotic fish such as Asian carp species, especially bighead carp, *Hypophthalmichthys nobilis*, are increasing in number and biomass within the Missouri River and lower Kansas River drainage. It is suspected that these will compete with native species, especially paddlefish, *Polyodon spathula*, and bigmouth buffalo, *Ictiobus cyprinellus*, for zooplankton. Other species of consideration may include those included in past or present stockings by KDWP.

Strategies:

1. Develop plans to prevent the invasion of other species such as round gobies, *Neogobius melanostomus*, European ruffe, *Gymnocephalus cernuus*, and black carp, *Mylopharyngodon piceus*.
2. Develop management plans for population reduction and control.
3. Determine food habits and if they overlap with those of native species.
4. Assess population of bighead carp.
5. Supply additional training for KDWP staff.
6. Review stocking practices to consider impacts of stocking species outside of native ranges.

Issue: Non-native plants are increasingly used for landscaping and aquatic gardens, while others have been used to stabilize soil. Many of these pose potential problems to native species.

Strategies:

1. Assess exotic plant problem in Kansas including KDWP lands.
2. Develop management plans to reduce problems and prevent further infestation.
3. Develop KDWP guidelines to control the use of non-natives on KDWP managed properties.
4. Cooperate with Department of Agriculture and Cooperative Extension in management and control efforts.
5. Supply additional KDWP training.

Issue: The exotic spiny water flea, *Daphnia lumholtzi*, has been recorded in many Kansas impoundments. This crustacean has the potential to compete with native zooplankton species and thus reduce their numbers. Native fish species have difficulty eating this animal because of its long spines.

Strategies:

1. Determine the effect of the spiny water flea on native zooplankton and fish species.
2. Develop a management and control plan.
3. Assess populations of spiny water fleas in Kansas impoundments.

Guidelines for Project Submission and Review from Requests for Proposals and Unsolicited Projects

For directed projects, state procurement procedures will be followed. Typically, these requests for proposals include the requirements of: title, introduction, objectives, how the project will address the expressed needs, procedures and methods, schedule, budget, and vitae of principal investigator. The candidate list of potential contractors shall include any entity that has conducted projects in the past and any additional institutions or people who wish to be advised of any upcoming "Requests for Proposals." Similar procedures will be followed for "State of Kansas rules. For unsolicited projects, a similar submission template will be prepared. Proposals will be evaluated according to objective scores from developed evaluation criteria and through reviews from the Wildlife Diversity Program staff, the Research Section, field staff from affected project areas and activities, and Environmental Services Section. Evaluations will be based on appropriate criteria. Projects will be assessed as to how well they address priorities of the Wildlife Diversity Plan, the professionalism of their content, the appropriateness of their costs, the abilities of the principal investigator, timetable, and other logical factors typically considered.

Desired Program Option

The Wildlife Diversity Program is the implementation of this plan. The desirable option would be to address all issues and strategies in this plan. However, logic, reality, and actual agency resources to implement this plan will prevent this from occurring. Therefore, it will be the goal to implement the top strategies for each issue in some fashion. This may occur at a project level or through general agency policy and practice. These strategies were primarily set by KDWP. Any other strategies may be continued to be addressed or may be implemented as new projects but it has to be demonstrated that the first-listed strategy for each issue is being addressed. Additional staffing, resources, and state policy will drive the extent to which all strategies may be implemented. The intent, however, is for KDWP to follow this plan as a guideline for implementation of all strategies listed to the extent possible under the limitations stated above.

Statutory Requirements

Nearly all of the statutory requirements already exist to permit full implementation of a Wildlife Diversity Program with possible exception of plant conservation. While KDMP certainly addresses some plant conservation through management of state lands and federally licensed areas, specific legislation granting KDMP full authority for plants is lacking, i.e. state listed threatened and endangered plants. However, aspects of plant conservation are addressed under operations of other state agencies such as the Kansas Biological Survey and the Kansas Department of Agriculture. If KDWP is to address such issues as state/federal threatened and endangered plants formally, then additional legislation will be needed to grant the Department such powers. Currently, the Department conducts educational and conservation efforts for wildflowers, wildlife plantings, and numerous guidelines and recommendations regarding vegetative cover for the benefit of wildlife on public and private lands. However, the agency's empowering legislation and mission statement is sufficient to address any and all aspects of this Wildlife Diversity Plan. This, however, does not prevent the agency from assessing biodiversity needs and planning, which should logically include plant considerations as related to ecosystem and wildlife relationships. Needs of this Wildlife Diversity Plan inherent in existing authorities of the Department include:

- a. Maintenance of state lists of threatened and endangered species and Species in Need of Conservation with additional formal, statute obligations for review and revisions of these lists.
- b. Establishment of civil and criminal penalties for species misuse and statute abilities for permitted uses.
- c. Continuance and refinement of appropriate restrictions for take, possession, importation, exportation, commercialization, captive breeding, pet trade, and/or live release of native and non-native species.
- d. Continuance of existing permitting authority for addressing project impacts on critical habitats of sensitive species.
- e. Continuance of existing statutes granting authority for developing conservation easements with private landowners for wildlife conservation programs.
- f. Continuance of existing statute granting landowners ability to receive tax credits for entering into conservation easement agreements for wildlife conservation efforts.
- g. Continuance of statutory and regulatory provisions for sensitive species designations and processes for review and changes in the lists.

Staffing and Administration of the Wildlife Diversity Program

Staffing will be addressed in later review processes and updates of this plan.

Concurrence and Consensus

This plan is the result of extensive input and review from staff and leaders of the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks, the Kansas Nongame Wildlife Advisory Committee, and countless other wildlife conservationists, both past and present. Much of the basis for this plan originated from the 1990 Strategic Plan for Kansas Wildlife and Parks for the detail in program areas it supplied, at least in draft form, and the most recent 1998 Strategic Plan for Kansas Wildlife and Parks. Division of Fish and Wildlife staff updated and refined specific elements of the earlier strategic plans and used logical judgments to combine and simplify where needed. Additional resources were used from the National Wildlife Diversity Model Plan (2000) available through the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies to supply more complete listings of issues and strategies which should be addressed. These were incorporated as they applied to our specific needs and views for Kansas. Numerous state and national publications and surveys were used in the introductory sections of this plan to help solidify program needs and direction in general areas. Most importantly, this plan has enjoyed many hours of dedicated input from hundreds of people through the past ten years of combined planning efforts. This has resulted in the more recent reviews by environmental and wildlife resource conservation groups in Kansas either through involvement with KMWAC or their respective organizations. All this effort has been designed into this plan so that a general public consensus could be obtained. To perpetuate and honor this work effort and also attain the highest of professional programs and the effective use of funds allocated for wildlife diversity projects, it is desirable to follow this plan as closely as possible, paying particular attention to the priority program areas and the process of project review and evaluation. It is also imperative that decision and policy makers endorse this plan and these efforts and demonstrate their commitment to it through their signatures below which will reflect not only their endorsement but their appreciation to all the publics, both in KDWP, and outside the agency who have given of their time and convictions: