For Nebraska Game and Parks, 2021 was a year for celebration and a year of change.

Our park system celebrated its 100th birthday with events across the state, and we were excited to see our theme — Your Memories. Your Adventures. Your Parks. — in action at each of our 76 parks. Our parks were full of life and laughter, with campers, hikers, anglers, wildlife watchers, boaters and more sharing in Nebraska’s great outdoor spaces. Park guests explored the buttes of Chadron State Park in the west, the woodlands of Platte River State Park in the east, and every place in between.

We celebrated tremendous park usage, with visitation numbers at an all-time high, exceeding our previous record for camping revenue by more than $2 million. We also were excited to see record participation in some of our major management programs, such as the Open Fields and Waters public access program, and public information sessions on our big game and fishing management across the state.

Each of these are the result of the complex work we are tasked with as the state agency responsible for managing our outdoor resources. In each region of the state, the needs of the wildlife, plants and people are diverse. Striking a balance requires collaboration and communication, and in 2021, we met with hunters and anglers, landowners, farmers, ranchers and urban residents, too. Each group values the conservation of our natural resources for the long-term.

The best illustration of this balance was at Lake McConaughy, where, together with the local advisory committee and our partners, we moved to a reservation-only system for peak camping season. We met the goal of creating a safe, family-friendly environment and saw increased weekday traffic, increased lodging and sales taxes in Keith County, and significantly fewer emergency calls. The community shared their satisfaction with the new direction at the state’s largest reservoir.

Throughout the year, we also maintained our focus on providing and creating opportunities. We partnered with many organizations to introduce people to outdoor recreation for the first time; stocked millions of fish across the state; added accessible fishing piers; launched a pilot program to attract novice duck hunters to the sport; and coordinated hundreds of learning events to teach people outdoor skills, such as archery, kayaking, ice fishing, wildlife identification and more.

It is an honor and privilege to lead this agency because of the quality work we accomplish, thanks to our passionate, professional staff and partners who are dedicated to caring for our resources today and helping to ensure they will be there for generations to come.

We are proud to serve you in our mission.

Sincerely,

Timothy McCoy
Director
By the numbers

Nebraska’s state park system is made up of 78 areas encompassing 105,366 acres. The state park system includes:

- 8 state parks, comprising 31,836 acres
- 58 state recreation areas, comprising 66,889 acres
- 10 state historical parks, comprising 2,497 acres
- 2 state recreation trails, comprising 4,144 acres and 324 miles

Additionally, wildlife management areas, as well as private lands enrolled in the Open Fields and Waters program, offer walk-in access for hunting, fishing and trapping.

Economic impact

Outdoor recreation contributes greatly to our quality of life. In Nebraska, hunting, fishing, wildlife viewing and state park visitation supports more than 24,000 jobs and has an economic impact of more than $2.64 billion annually.

- Lands enrolled in Open Fields and Waters: 374,000 land acres, 500 water or wetland acres, and 45 stream miles
- Wildlife management areas: 281 areas encompassing 184,340 acres
Highlight of 2021: Your Nebraska Parks centennial celebration

Nebraska’s state park system celebrated its centennial in 2021. The yearlong celebration included more than 100 events hosted at parks across the state, but three signature events celebrated the state’s first parks of each kind. The Chadron State Park Centennial Birthday Bash (right) in June celebrated Chadron becoming the first state park in 1921. Events in July at Victoria Springs State Recreation Area and October at Arbor Lodge State Historical Park celebrated the state’s first recreation area and first state historical park.

Game and Parks also challenged outdoor enthusiasts to explore the state park system in honor of the centennial through the Your Parks Adventure program. People who visited any state park or recreation area were encouraged to snap a photo at a designated “selfie” station (below).
Those who submitted a photo and their story online were eligible to win prizes from generous sponsors. Only those who visited Chadron State Park, Victoria Springs State Recreation Area (opposite top), Arbor Lodge State Historical Park and Danish Alps SRA were entered for a chance to win the grand prize Forest River RV Patriot camper from AC Nelsen RV World. Kathryn Romine (right, second from left), of Lincoln, won the prize. Monthly prizes and other incentives also were given away.

Additionally, a documentary (below) produced by Game and Parks and Nebraska Public Media, “Adventures in History: Discovering Nebraska’s State Historical Parks,” debuted in May, airing 11 times over the year. The program explored each of the nine state historical parks, revealing the rich and exciting history at some of the most beautiful and storied landscapes in the state.

Other highlights included parks’ centennial merchandise and a 200-page special edition of Nebraskaland (opposite, far right), which told the stories of our parks and its people over the years.
Service

Getting more people outdoors

Game and Parks encourages people to get outdoors — and knows connecting people to resources is important to growing participation in outdoor recreation and funding our conservation efforts. We do that in a variety of ways.

We offer interactive educational events year-round online and in person at our parks and at our education centers across the state. Hundreds of people come to our free community fishing nights, where volunteer instructors introduce them to fishing or advanced fishing techniques. Youth can learn safety and techniques with trained hunting mentors. Special programs are offered just for women so they can participate in a no-pressure environment. We also draw hundreds of participants to our nature learning series, focused on growing people’s understanding of the great fish, wildlife and parks resources Nebraska offers.

The Commission provides skills-based training for those who are ready to learn more — including hunting and fishing workshops, guided hikes and shooting sports activities. Multimedia efforts, such as videos, podcasts and training through social media, are helping provide outdoor knowledge and skills.

For those who are more experienced in the outdoors — we have special challenges. One of our most important efforts has included helping recruit more people to outdoor recreational activities. The Take ‘em Hunting and Take ‘em Fishing programs encourage hunters and anglers to introduce a beginner for the chance to win prizes, and to date, has created more than 10,000 hunting and fishing experiences.

To keep people engaged, we also send timely information with tips for success, ideas of new places to go and seasonal reminders.
Public input key to future planning

Understanding the needs of our customers, partners, landowners and all Nebraskans is an integral part of our mission.

Game and Parks engaged the public across the state in-person and virtually in 2021 on key issues, such as fish and wildlife management and park improvements. In March, virtual public informational sessions — one statewide overview and four others specific to each of Game and Parks’ districts — provided local updates on the fishing outlook and special projects in respective areas. The interactive gatherings provided a chance for questions, dialogue and feedback for those who love to fish.

Special meetings also were held to seek input on big game management across the state, a new plan for the management of elk populations and our planning efforts to improve pheasant habitat.

In an effort to better understand our users and their needs, we also launched two community surveys — one for park guests and one for education. Both were designed to gather input and evaluate our programs so we can better meet our constituents’ needs. We’ll be analyzing the data into 2022.

Additional public engagement sessions were hosted for Dead Timber State Recreation Area, and Fort Kearny and Buffalo Bill Ranch state historical parks to garner feedback on new development concepts, programming and recreational activities. Participants heard about proposed master plans, as well as potential development concept designs, and were able to share what they’d like to see in their parks in the future.

Monthly community advisory and public engagement sessions ongoing at Lake McConaughy and Lake Ogallala state recreation areas were integral to their successful season focused on creating a safer, family-friendly environment at the lakes.

We also gained public feedback through our Board of Commissioners, which generally hosts public information meetings and public business meetings six times a year in different locations across the state. In 2021, the Commissioners had nine meetings, taking place in Lincoln, Norfolk, Kearney, Chadron, Scottsbluff and North Platte.

Working toward diversity, equity and inclusion

Just as diversity is critical to the resiliency and strength of our native ecosystems, Nebraska Game and Parks knows diversity is critical to our mission and success. We are committed to fostering a diverse workforce and creating an environment that is welcoming and inclusive for our staff and constituents. Our actions and programs will reflect this culture of belonging and equity for Nebraska’s communities and visitors.

To achieve this vision, we implemented changes to better meet the needs of all our constituents. In late 2020, Game and Parks established a diversity, equity and inclusion workgroup, which is focused on helping us achieve our goals. It has:

- developed initiatives to guide our efforts;
- conducted a survey focused on our education efforts;
- provided diversity, equity and inclusion professional development for staff; and
- developed and consulted an external advisory group comprised of community organizations that represent Nebraska’s diverse communities.
Getting creative with virtual education

Game and Parks is finding new ways to make learning about the outdoors fun—and convenient. This includes offering virtual educational programs, including Nebraska Nature Nerd Nights and our Science Of series. Nature Nerd Nights invited people to have fun while learning about bees (left), birds, prehistoric creatures, parasites, snakes and more, while the Science Of series explained the “why” behind animal features, such as horns, and other nature-themed topics from migration to fossils to edible plants.

For some of the youngest students, educators read nature-themed books online and did nature-themed crafts. We also hoped to spark an interest in working in conservation with our Conservation Career Chats, or talks with fish and wildlife management professionals.

These valuable educational tools are available online and will continue being offered in the future.

Interactive activities help engage people with nature

How do you grow nature lovers? Make learning about nature fun. Each year, Game and Parks offers fun themes to increase public awareness and interest in Nebraska wildlife.

This year, during May’s Bird Month, Game and Parks and partner organizations hosted 27 events across the state inviting people to learn about the state’s diverse bird species. Hundreds took part in a “bioblitz,” where people observed birds (right) and documented them online; they also took part in counting challenges. This May, observers recorded seeing more than 148 bird species.

A similar challenge was created in June during Pollinator Week. More than 700 insect observations were recorded by people learning about nature, and their observations contributed to pollinator research.

In October, Reptile Awareness Month featured a statewide art contest that drew more than 437 entries from students in kindergarten through 12th grade. Students submitted artwork highlighting Nebraska’s native reptile species, a creative and effective way to educate youth about Nebraska’s lesser-known species.

Students raise trout in the classroom

Trout in the Classroom is an educational program that invites students in grades 2 through 12 to raise trout eggs (above) in their classroom. While youth observe their eggs hatching into fish, they also learn about aquatic ecosystems, life cycles, water quality and conservation.

The program celebrated its seventh year in 2021 and reached its highest level of involvement with 92 schools and more than 4,800 students participating. Support for the program is provided by Game and Parks, the Nebraska Environmental Trust and Nebraska Trout Unlimited Chapter 710.
Support for Nebraska conservation officers

Our conservation officers’ efforts do not go unnoticed, especially when they often are seen helping those in need. Two surveys completed this year revealed strong public support for, and satisfaction with, our conservation officers’ enforcement efforts.

Maintaining adequate staffing levels is important for ensuring public safety, enforcing the rules designed to protect the public and our natural resources, as well as educating people on safe and responsible recreation.

A third survey compared staffing levels to those of surrounding states. Nebraska is staffed by 68 officers. Nebraska would need to add 25 full-time enforcement personnel to equal the next lowest-staffed states, including South Dakota and Wyoming, which have 93 each.

Colorado has 380 officers, Missouri 242, Iowa 123 and Kansas 126. Many of these neighboring states also employ part-time enforcement personnel or have limited duties compared to Nebraska, such as having dedicated enforcement personnel just for parks.

We take great pride in our efforts to keep outdoor recreation a safe activity, serve the public, protect our natural resources and address public concerns around the clock every day of the year.

Public safety comes first

In addition to enforcing parks, wildlife and boating rules, Game and Parks conservation officers act as state peace officers, wearing many “hats” to address a variety of violations. These can include drugs, thefts, trespassing and assaults. Our officers also provide critical emergency response, such as to floods, fires or missing persons, and investigate major crimes. Conservation officers also frequently support other enforcement agencies, particularly in rural areas where assistance can be limited. Officers’ duties are quite diverse; however, public safety always remains their top priority.
Women’s outdoors program turns 30

The Becoming an Outdoors-Woman program turned 30 in 2021, graduating more than 30,000 women since its inception in 1991. The program empowers women just beginning their outdoor journey by offering opportunities to explore outdoors activities in a no-pressure environment. Attendees learn about outdoor cooking, kayaking, wildlife, shooting, hunting and more during three-day workshops at Ponca and Fort Robinson state parks.

In October, every woman who ever participated in the program was invited to a 30th anniversary celebration at Platte River State Park. They had fun outdoors and attended a special recognition ceremony and reception.

After a one-year gap due to the global pandemic, the program also hosted a full BOW Weekend (above) at Fort Robinson State Park in the fall, with 84 women attending. Once women come to the introductory weekend, Beyond BOW offers the opportunity for women to continue developing skills in targeted areas of interest.

Planning for the future of our parks

After years of seeking public input and growing partnerships, Nebraska Game and Parks implemented three plans for Dead Timber State Recreation Area, Fort Kearny state historical and recreation area parks, and Fort Robinson State Park trail system in 2021. Each of the plans built on the collaborations with many partners, including local tourism groups, community members, and park patrons; all were proactive efforts to meet the current and future needs of changing park users.

Though the plans will be executed over the next several years, changes already are happening. Fort Robinson, known for its western heritage and fishing, has an updated user-friendly digital map to help guests explore its fantastic trails: 60 miles of hiking and 20 miles of mountain biking trails across the park; this will be the foundation for future user-friendly trails products for the park. Revitalization work also has started at Dead Timber SRA (below) and at Kearney’s two parks — work that will retain their iconic features and cultural or historical integrity, and will grow recreational opportunity.
Recreation

Park improvements focus on guest experience

In 2021, the Nebraska Legislature extended for five years the Capital Maintenance Fund, a critical source of funding that has allowed Nebraska Game and Parks to launch an aggressive and much-needed capital maintenance plan for our 76 state parks and other amenities.

These dollars, combined with agency, state and federal funds, is being spent on parks, fisheries, roads, trails, facilities and access improvements that will total $76 million by the end of the legislation. Aging infrastructure will be brought up-to-date and up to code, and new or improved opportunities will focus on improving our guests' experiences.

In 2021, more than $8 million was spent on dozens of improvement projects at more than 40 parks across the state, including Chadron State Park, Fort Robinson State Park (below) and Lake McConaughy State Recreation Area.

Among the improvements, Chadron saw the installation of a 3,000-square-foot indoor archery and pellet gun range, fishery improvements and camping upgrades. Fort Robinson received cabin updates in addition to $2.8 million in pond renovations and fishing access improvements — and now the park is being dubbed “Nebraska’s fishing state park” by patrons. Lake McConaughy’s Arthur Bay and Cedar View campgrounds saw electrical and other upgrades to create more opportunities for full-service camping. And the Cowboy Trail saw the addition of new directional signage that also has interpretive information about nature seen along the trail.

The Commission is committed to working with our partners to maintain safe and accessible amenities for our park guests and expanding opportunities to meet the growing demand for quality places to recreate outdoors.
Lake Mac plan and partners improve visitor experience

Positive change came in leaps and bounds at Lake McConaughy and Lake Ogallala state recreation areas as phase two of the 20-year master plan unrolled in 2021, and focused on improving the quality and safety of visitor experiences. To do that, Game and Parks, with local support, moved to a reservations-only system for camping during the peak season at both lakes.

The new system helped control overcrowding and created a more pleasant, safer environment at the lakes. Emergency calls to first responders decreased; conservation officers were able to enforce rules proactively; more fees were collected; numbers were higher at Ogallala and Keith County lodging locations; 15% more lodging taxes were collected; and net taxable sales tax also increased. Because of the reservation system, Game and Parks also gained demographic information about our customers.

These changes built on the $14 million spent on infrastructure improvements, such as campground expansions and upgrades, new lagoons, roads improvements and new entrance kiosks, done at the lakes since 2016. Park guests have expressed their satisfaction with the results of these improvements and the changes at the two recreation areas.

Game and Parks contributes the success of these efforts to our community partners. During monthly and ongoing meetings, the Commission worked with Keith County Tourism on an information campaign about the changes that was extremely successful. Other partners in creating and implementing the 20-year master plan for the two lakes include the Central Nebraska Public Power and Irrigation District, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, concession operators, public safety officials, members of the Nebraska Legislature, the City of Ogallala and Keith County officials.
Banner year for camping

State and national parks saw record levels of visitors in the past few years, with more people investing in recreational vehicles and campers to travel and explore nature. Nebraska was no different, breaking its previous record for camping revenue in 2021. Game and Parks had $9.6 million in total camping revenue, up 34% from the previous record in 2020, which brought in a total of $7.2 million.

Recognizing the increased demand, Game and Parks implemented a five-year plan to develop 500 new camping opportunities and upgrade 1,000 existing campsites and electrical service.

Park usage also was high, drawing in more than $8.7 million in park permit sales, topping 2020. State park permit sales set records for both residents and nonresidents. Guests had the opportunity to explore our 76 state park areas and two recreation trails, places where there is something for everyone, whether you want an adventure or to get away from it all.

Fort Robinson making $2.8 million in pond renovations

Fort Robinson State Park is one of the most popular tourist attractions in the state, and to serve our park guests and those who visit the park to fish, significant improvements were made to create an even better fishing destination. Construction was completed on the first phase of a $2.8 million fishing pond renovation project.

Improvements to the Grabel, Cherry Creek and Ice House ponds included adding fishing piers (above), kayak launches and fish habitat structures, as well as developing access points for anglers. All of the ponds were stocked with a variety of fish, making this one of the best state parks for great fishing.
New Crete Carrier Riverview Lodge at Mahoney SP

The impressive Crete Carrier Riverview Lodge (below) opened at Eugene T. Mahoney State Park in September and is a fantastic venue for group events, including weddings, meetings, family reunions and more. The lodge is an 11,600 square-foot multi-function event space that takes advantage of a stunning hilltop location overlooking the Platte River. The new, $4.4-million facility, built as part of the Nebraska Game and Parks’ innovative public-private Venture Parks Project, replaces the previous, smaller Riverview Lodge on the same site. The event hall can host up to 300 guests. The Acklie Charitable Foundation in Lincoln generously provided a significant contribution to help make the Crete Carrier Riverview Lodge possible.
A safe return to outdoor events

Game and Parks provides fun, family-friendly interactive activities across the state to engage people in the outdoors. After a gap year due to the global pandemic, we planned a safe return to some favorite in-person events.

The Missouri River Outdoor Expo at Ponca State Park welcomed several thousand guests trying more than 80 hands-on activities, such as kayaking, rock climbing, fishing, cooking and more. The first day of the discovery program is dedicated to students in fourth through sixth grades and included activities designed to engage youth in fish, wildlife, natural history and outdoor skills education.

Our Outdoor Encounter exhibit at the Nebraska State Fair Nebraska Building included a 6,000-gallon aquarium filled with fish found in Nebraska waters, kids’ and family activity packets, an Old West shooting range, a diorama of the Niobrara River Valley and waterfall, and a selfie station.

Our Community Fishing Nights (right) also were successful, drawing in hundreds of new anglers across the state. The program expanded in 2021, offering both ice fishing and fly-fishing clinics for anglers interested in branching out from the traditional sport.
Management

New tools for big game management

Bills passed during the 2021 Nebraska Legislative session provided three new big game management tools.

The first expanded special depredation seasons and season extensions to include elk and antelope (below). This helped Game and Parks address depredation issues by deer, elk and antelope at specific locations.

The second allows for a higher percentage of elk and antelope permits to go to landowners, without reducing the permits available to general hunters. This allows landowners to be part of the solution to a problem they disproportionately face in dealing with big game populations.

The third created a new incentive for landowners who allow access for hunters to harvest antlerless elk on their property. After landowners have recorded 10 antlerless harvests on their property by general elk permit hunters, the landowner is eligible for a free elk tag limited in use to their own property.

Game and Parks sees these tools as important in helping manage a quality big game population.
Commission enacts special landowner deer season

Nebraska Game and Parks Commission adopted a Special Landowner Deer Season in January. The Special Landowner Deer Season was created by the passage of LB126 in the Nebraska Legislature’s 2020 session. The season allowed a qualifying landowner up to four permits to designate themselves or immediate family to hunt on his or her property on the Saturday, Sunday and Monday before the opening of the November firearm deer season. No more than two permits could be issued to persons older than age 19 and two permits to persons younger than 19. The bag limit was one whitetail or mule deer of either sex. Only weapons legal for archery and firearm seasons could be used. The Nov. 6-8 season saw the harvest of 898 deer, including 176 mule deer bucks, 22 antlerless mule deer, 597 whitetail bucks, and 101 antlerless whitetails.

New plan for managing elk

After receiving tremendous input from landowners, hunters and the public, the Commission in October approved a plan for managing elk at acceptable population levels, while providing Nebraskans with quality hunting and viewing opportunities.

The elk management plan objectives are to:

- Establish population and demographic objectives in each of the eight management units.
- Minimize depredation issues so most landowners who have elk on their property consider the damage tolerable.
- Continue to provide disease surveillance and monitoring, reporting annually on the overall health of elk populations.
- Annually report on the status of elk populations using harvest data and survey information.
- Continue to work with the Nebraska Department of Agriculture and Captive Cervid Industry.
- Continue to engage stakeholders with elk management in the state.
**Project provides choices for duck hunters**

The Commission in March approved a new five-year pilot project to offer two bag limit options to duck hunters (left). The options were designed to make getting into hunting easier for novice duck hunters and were based on a survey that indicated duck identification skills were a factor preventing potential hunters from joining the sport.

Launched during the 2021-22 season, the bag limit options, or tiers, offered hunters the choice of the current traditional six-duck limit with species and sex restrictions or a three-duck limit with no species or sex restrictions. Approximately 2,975 people signed up for the new program, out of about 29,300 duck hunters. Final counts will come after the season ends in early 2022.

Nebraska was joined by South Dakota for the experimental program.

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**River otter recovery**

The recovery of the river otter is a prime example of conservation success in Nebraska. River otters (right) were extirpated from Nebraska by the early 1900s due to unregulated harvest. From 1986 to 1991, 159 otters were reintroduced into the state’s waters. River otters now can be found nearly statewide with populations in most major river systems. They were delisted from the state threatened list in 2020. In June, the Commission approved the first river otter harvest season in Nebraska. The season, from November through February, or three days after the 75th otter has been harvested in the state, whichever comes first, provides those with a fur harvest permit an opportunity to trap one otter per season. Game and Parks’ goal is to manage and maintain healthy, thriving populations for the long term. A season will provide data about statewide river otter distribution, while continuing to allow the population to expand.

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**Fisheries research continues at Lake McConaughy**

Increasing walleye and white bass populations in Lake McConaughy has been the focus of research in 2021.

The locations and timing of walleye and white bass spawning and the resulting young, as well as prey and potential predators were assessed and compared to previous years when the water levels in the reservoir were higher. The findings will be used to improve survival of future walleye and white bass stocking efforts.

Additional research will focus on growing our understanding of where juvenile fish develop. Sampling the upper reservoir for juvenile fish showed that seining in mid-June to July collected the most white bass and electrofishing in July to August collected the most juvenile walleye.
Open Fields and Water has record participation and enrollment

Gaining access to private lands continues to be one of the biggest challenges facing hunters and anglers in pursuit of their sport. Many hunters and anglers don’t have time to scout or track down landowners to get permission. Likewise, many landowners don’t have the time or ability to manage those accessing their property. Open Fields and Waters helps bridge that gap.

In 2021, more than 850 private landowners were enrolled in the OFW program, providing walk-in access on 374,000 acres during hunting seasons — both all-time highs for the program. OFW also provided fishing opportunities (below) on more than 500 acres of ponds and lakes and more than 45 stream miles.

A three-year grant earned in 2020 from the U.S. Department of Agriculture provided $1 million per year for the continued expansion of the program.

Partners come together to open new area for public hunting: Saline Meadows

The Saline Wetland Conservation Partnership celebrated the dedication of the Saline Meadows addition (above) to the Jack Sinn Wildlife Management Area in Lancaster County. This 77-acre addition to the current 156 acres — owned by Pheasants Forever and managed by Game and Parks — is open to the public for hunting and recreation. The area provides good habitat for waterfowl, upland game birds, shorebirds and pollinators.

A dedication event was Aug. 19. Funding for the parcels was provided by Section 6, Game and Parks habitat cash funds, City of Lincoln, Nebraska Environmental Trust, the Saline Wetlands Conservation Partnership, and a North American Waterfowl Conservation Association grant through Ducks Unlimited, the Pegler Foundation and Pheasants Forever, Inc.
Nearly 48 million fish stocked to create great fishing opportunities

Nebraska Game and Parks’ goal is to maintain great fishing across the state by providing opportunities for beginners and avid anglers to catch many species. Stocking fish is one way we make fishing a great sport in Nebraska.

After a couple of interesting years, starting with the flood in 2019 and followed by the COVID-19 pandemic, Game and Parks began ramping up fish production in 2021, getting back to “normal.” Approximately 47.7 million fish were stocked into 295 waters in 74 counties. These stockings included 22 species, including hybrids. Spring and fall trout stockings continued to be popular with anglers of all ages. More than 273,000 trout (below) were stocked during the year. In support of the Parks Centennial celebration, we also stocked a variety of harvestable-sized fish in state parks and other areas — hot spots for fishing during a big park attendance year.

Game and Parks aims to understand antelope movement, survival

The University of Nebraska and the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission are partnering for the first antelope research in the state in more than 30 years with the goal of understanding antelope movements, habitat use and survival rates.

In February, researchers from both entities, with assistance from a helicopter capture crew (below and right), captured and GPS-collared 80 adult antelope in western Nebraska. Herds along the perimeter of Nebraska’s Sandhills in the Box Butte East and Garden antelope management units and along the Colorado border in the Banner South unit were targeted for collaring.

GPS data showed the antelope around the Sandhills are very mobile, with several covering 70 miles or more between their winter and summer ranges. The Banner South antelope travelled less, but several of them have spent time in Colorado. Preliminary causes of death have been disease, predation and weather. This project will collect another full year of data.
Aquatic Habitat Program receives prestigious American Fisheries Society Award

Game and Parks’ Aquatic Habitat Program was recognized for its excellence, earning the American Fisheries Society Conservation Achievement Award in 2021. The award recognizes significant actions, programs or initiatives of individuals or organizations that contribute substantially to fishery conservation or fishery science.

The Aquatic Habitat Program, celebrating its 25th anniversary in 2022, was recognized for its unique and “first of its kind” vision that continues to push the boundaries of ecosystem restoration. The Aquatic Habitat Program, funded through the purchase of the Aquatic Habitat Stamp, which is included in the price of a fishing permit, has provided a model for many natural resource agencies programs since its implementation in 1997. The program, the first of its type in the nation when created, works to improve conditions for aquatic life through better management or rehabilitation of existing resources.
Historic whooping crane migration

In fall 2021, 105 state and federally endangered whooping cranes (below) were recorded along the central Platte River. This was a record number of whooping cranes using the river habitat during a single migration, and represented approximately 20% of the entire wild population, not including populations reintroduced from captivity.

As many as 46 whooping cranes were observed together at one time — something that likely has not taken place in Nebraska since before European settlement, before whooping crane numbers were reduced to the brink of extinction. The habitat these birds needed during their migration was available thanks to work by Game and Parks and several partners, including the Platte River Implementation Program, Crane Trust, Audubon Nebraska and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

As the whooping crane population continues to grow from about 500, notable migration events may occur more frequently, creating more demand for suitable habitat throughout the central Nebraska migration corridor.
License plates boost conservation dollars

In January 2021, Game and Parks created three new specialty license plates (right) available at the Nebraska Department of Motor Vehicles.

Dollars from the sale of these plates, plus one by Bike/Walk Nebraska, support conservation of Nebraska’s at-risk, threatened and endangered species, trail maintenance in Nebraska’s state parks and youth education programs relating to Nebraska wildlife conservation practices.

Three new plate designs, featuring a bighorn sheep, sandhill crane and ornate box turtle, were a hit, selling more than 6,175 and generating nearly $70,000 in Wildlife Conservation Fund dollars. Bike/Walk Nebraska’s plate, The Good Life is Outside, sold more than 1,740 plates, generating more than $8,500 for Nebraska state parks trails maintenance. And more than 1,950 mountain lion plates were sold, generating more than $9,500 in funding for youth education programs.

These add to the more than 63,000 plates already on Nebraska roads from previous years’ mountain

Caught on camera: Eastern spotted skunks

The critically endangered eastern spotted skunk (right) is smaller and more elusive than the more well-known striped skunk. Prior to the 1940s, spotted skunks were regularly trapped for fur harvest, but in the late 1940s, the population crashed. Fast-forward 80 years, and eastern spotted skunks are being caught on camera. In the past 20 years, only four eastern spotted skunks have been confirmed observed in the state.

With a group of camera traps deployed across the state, Game and Parks and the University of Nebraska hope to uncover some of the mysteries of the eastern spotted skunk, such as what habitat types they use and where they are found. To assist with research, individuals with spotted skunks documented on camera are encouraged to share them, and those interested in reviewing images can help identify populations.
Cool-water stream projects underway in Pine Ridge

Cool-water stream projects are underway on Big Bordeaux Creek (right) and Sowbelly Creek (below) in the Pine Ridge in northwest Nebraska.

Efforts at Big Bordeaux Creek aim to improve floodplain connectivity, repair bank erosion, and enhance habitat structures for aquatic species. Project construction is on an estimated 2.6-mile stretch of stream. Game and Parks is teaming up with local landowners, the U.S. Forest Service, and other community partners to expand the project to positively affect the watershed level.

Sowbelly Creek, which was affected by wildfires and subsequent flooding, flows through Coffee Park, which is owned and managed by the Village of Harrison. The project aims to enhance stream habitat structures for trout and native fish while creating angler access areas.

These projects are supported financially through the Aquatic Habitat Program and Nebraska Environmental Trust grants.
Woodcock research takes flight

Nebraska Game and Parks launched a research initiative focused on American woodcock, a game species identified as vulnerable in Nebraska. The game bird population has been declining in many locations, and few — if any — studies have focused on the species in the Great Plains. Targeted surveys will be used to refine the species’ known breeding range in Nebraska.

American woodcock were captured and outfitted with GPS satellite transmitters (left) in early spring 2021 so we could learn more about their local and regional movements; this data provides precise information about their habitat selection here. In the first season, we learned some woodcock migrated north to Minnesota or Manitoba while another spent its summer along the Elkhorn River in northeast Nebraska. The transmitters continued sending data during the fall.

Additional woodcock are expected to be outfitted with transmitters in 2022.

Conserving at-risk species and their habitat

The Nebraska Natural Legacy Project enjoyed a successful year focused on improving habitat and monitoring for at-risk species.

Game and Parks worked with partners and landowners to find win-win solutions for at-risk species and landowners. This year, joint efforts included prescribed fire to control invasive plants, rare butterfly surveys, and freshwater mussel propagation (right).

An annual conference facilitates education and outreach about these efforts, including about wetland ecology, avian research, insects and other topics.

We are grateful to the Nebraska Environmental Trust, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Nebraska Wildlife Conservation Fund donors, and other partners for making this work possible.
Resources

Financials

The Nebraska Game and Parks Commission is funded mainly by user pay, which includes revenue from the sale of hunting and fishing permits and stamps, the sale of state park entry permits, and fees for camping, lodging and activities in Nebraska’s state parks and recreation areas. In 2021, approximately 88 percent of the agency revenues were generated through user pay and federal reimbursement, and approximately 12 percent came from the State General Fund.

Aside from the General Fund, 16 funds have been established for agency use. All funds are subject to budgetary authority provided by the legislature and the governor. These funds include: Game Cash Fund, Park Cash Fund, Habitat Cash Fund, Federal Funds, Fort Atkinson National Park Service Federal Fund, Nebraska Outdoor Recreational Development Act Fund, Recreational Trails Federal Fund, Aquatic Habitat Fund, Wildlife Conservation Fund, Game Law Investigation Fund, Cowboy Trail Fund, Wildlife Education Fund, Hunters Helping the Hungry Fund, Nebraska Snowmobile Trail Fund, State Park Improvement and Maintenance Fund, and Game and Parks Capital Maintenance Fund. Many of these funds are restricted, meaning their revenues may be spent only for uses designated under state law and may not be transferred to the general fund.

The agency’s major funds, their revenue sources and what they are used for include:

GENERAL FUND: Supported by money collected by the State Department of Revenue, deposited with the State Treasurer and appropriated by the Legislature. General Fund money is appropriated to the Commission for those operating activities that are not self-supporting, primarily operations of the state park system and nongame and endangered species activities; administrative activities that are general in nature, applicable to the entire agency and difficult to prorate among the various other funding sources; and activities that extend beyond the statutory use of the various cash funds.

GAME CASH FUND: Revenues derived from user fees for resident and nonresident game permits, including big game hunting, small game hunting, fishing and lifetime permits. This fund was the agency’s largest source of revenue in 2021 and is the primary funding source for
**2021 calendar year revenue sources**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>% of Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hunting Permits and Stamps</td>
<td>$19.2 M</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camping and Lodging Fees</td>
<td>$17.4 M</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal and State Grant Reimbursements</td>
<td>$12.5 M</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Fund Appropriation Expended</td>
<td>$11.7 M</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct Federal Funds</td>
<td>$9.8 M</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tobacco Products, Tax, Food, Services, Land Use Leases, Resale Items, Surplus Property, etc.</td>
<td>$9.2 M</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park Entry Permits</td>
<td>$8.7 M</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boat, ATV/UTV taxes, Capital Maintenance Fund</td>
<td>$7.6 M</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fishing Permits and Stamps</td>
<td>$7.5 M</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boating Registrations</td>
<td>$1.2 M</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investment Income</td>
<td>$1.5 M</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concessions and Admissions</td>
<td>$1.6 M</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donations</td>
<td>$0.7 M</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Revenue Sources</strong></td>
<td>$108.48 M</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**WILDLIFE CONSERVATION FUND:** Money collected via the state income tax checkoff program and from gifts and donations. The Wildlife Conservation Fund can only be used to pay for collection costs and to carry out the provisions of the Nongame and Endangered Species Conservation Act. Transfers from this fund to the General Fund are not authorized under existing law.

**WILDLIFE EDUCATION FUND:** Money received through the issuance and renewal of the Mountain Lion Conservation plates. This fund supports youth education programs relating to wildlife conservation practices. Transfers from this fund to the General Fund are not authorized under existing law.

**FEDERAL GRANTS:** These include reimbursable and direct grants issued by federal agencies, such as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Environmental Protection Agency, National Park Service and U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, among others. This was the agency’s third largest “cash” funding source in 2021. The awards, typically reimbursable, define what funding may be spent on. Grant monies may reimburse a cash fund or be spent as direct federal funding.

**NEBRASKA OUTDOOR RECREATIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACT FUND:** Revenue primarily derived from the Nebraska Tobacco Products Tax; the portion of the tax earmarked for NORDA is the equivalent of one cent on a conventional package of cigarettes. These funds are restricted to the development, operation and maintenance of areas of the state park system. This fund is critical to the development and maintenance of the state park buildings and amenities infrastructure.

**GAME AND PARKS CAPITAL MAINTENANCE FUND:** Revenues derived from sales tax on non-farm all-terrain vehicles and motorboats. This fund is used to build, repair, rehabilitate, modify or improve any infrastructure within the statutory authority and administration of the Commission. Receipts were up slightly in 2021, likely a response to the global pandemic and the increased interest in getting outdoors.

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**2021 calendar year expenditures**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>% of Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parks</td>
<td>$29.3 M</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wildlife</td>
<td>$19.4 M</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital</td>
<td>$16.7 M</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law Enforcement</td>
<td>$8.5 M</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fisheries</td>
<td>$7.1 M</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration</td>
<td>$6.3 M</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications</td>
<td>$4.6 M</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning, Engineering and Construction</td>
<td>$3.8 M</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fish and Wildlife Education</td>
<td>$0.7 M</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Expenditures</strong></td>
<td>$96.5 M</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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fish and wildlife activities. It is restricted to funding only those activities related to the support of fish and game, the provision of boating facilities, administration and enforcement of the State Boat Act, production of publications, administration, construction, operation and maintenance of fish hatcheries and for the distribution of fish. Transfers from this fund to the General Fund are not authorized under existing law. While many of the hunt/fish permit sales were lower in 2021 than 2020, the increase in nonresident permit fees as well as the return of the nonresident spring turkey hunters and other big game permit buyers resulted in an increase in revenues by nearly $3 million.

**PARK CASH FUND:** Revenues derived from user fees for park entry permits, lodging, camping, activities, equipment rentals and facility use rentals. This was the agency’s second largest source of funding in 2021. The Park Cash Fund is dedicated to the administration, improvement, maintenance and operation of the state park system comprised of state parks, recreation areas, trails and historical parks. Transfers from this fund to the General Fund are not authorized under existing law. The decrease in revenue in 2020 as a result of COVID-19 was made up in 2021, with a nearly $7 million increase in camping and lodging rentals over the previous year.

**HABITAT CASH FUNDS:** Generated through user fees from habitat and migratory waterfowl stamps, primarily from the sale of the stamps tied to hunting and fishing activities.
Revenue details

The Nebraska Game and Parks Commission is predominately funded by user pay, which includes revenue from the sale of hunting and fishing permits and stamps, the sale of state park entry permits, and fees for camping, lodging and activities in Nebraska’s state parks and recreation areas.

In 2021, approximately 88 percent of the agency revenues were generated through user pay and federal reimbursement, and approximately 12 percent came from the State General Fund. Revenues from permit sales, federal grants and other sources are placed into the Game Cash Fund, Park Cash Fund, General Fund and Habitat Fund. These monies are used to pay for specific programs, as illustrated in the diagram below:

Expenditure details

Parks
Inclusive of administration and operations of state parks, state recreation areas, state historical parks, and state recreation trails.

Funding sources:
- Park Cash Fund ........................................... 76%
- General Fund ............................................. 24%
- Direct Federal ........................................... <1%
- Wildlife Education ................................... <1%
- NORDA .................................................. <1%

Wildlife
Inclusive of administration and operations of wildlife management areas, private lands habitat work, game and nongame species activities.

Funding sources:
- Habitat Fund .............................................. 38%
- Game Cash Fund ....................................... 34%
- Direct Federal ............................................ 25%
- General Fund ............................................ 2%
- Wildlife Conservation Fund .................... 1%
- Hunters Helping the Hungry ...................... <1%

(Continued next page)
Expenditure details (Continued from previous page)

**Fisheries**
Inclusive of administration and operations of fish hatcheries and public and private waters fisheries resource management.

Funding sources:
- Game Cash Fund: 80%
- Direct Federal: 18%
- Aquatic Habitat Fund: 2%
- General Fund: <1%

**Law enforcement**
Inclusive of fish, wildlife, park and boating law enforcement activities as well as public educational programs associated with hunter education and resource utilization.

Funding sources:
- Game Cash Fund: 68%
- General Fund: 16%
- Park Cash Fund: 16%

**Administration**
Inclusive of administrative activities associated with the director’s office, personnel, budget and fiscal, information technology, district offices, Board of Commissioners, and credit card processing.

Funding sources:
- Game Cash Fund: 53%
- Park Cash Fund: 32%
- General Fund: 15%
- Habitat Fund: <1%

**Communications**
Inclusive of activities to increase awareness and engagement through comprehensive multi-media outreach and education efforts that result in more Game and Parks customers and long-term supporters for conservation, as well as safe participation in hunting, fishing, parks and outdoor recreation.

Funding sources:
- Game Cash Fund: 69%
- Park Cash Fund: 21%
- Direct Federal: 10%

**Capital construction**
Inclusive of capital construction activities on state parks, state recreation areas, state trails, state historical parks, wildlife management areas, state fish hatcheries and acquisition of lands for WMA or park purposes, as well as some grant pass through for community trails and Land and Water Conservation Fund program projects.

Funding sources:
- Capital Maintenance Fund: 45%
- Park Cash Fund: 19%
- Direct Federal: 19%
- Aquatic Habitat Fund: 12%
- Habitat Fund: 2%
- NORDA: 1%
- Game Cash Fund: 1%
- State Park Improvement & Maintenance Fund: 1%

**Planning, engineering, and construction**
Inclusive of administration and operations of planning, engineering and construction services.

Funding sources:
- General Fund: 49%
- Park Cash Fund: 25%
- Game Cash Fund: 12%
- NORDA: 7%
- Habitat Fund: 5%
- Direct Federal: 2%
- Cowboy Trail Fund: <1%

**Wildlife and fisheries education**
Inclusive of administration and operations of education activities and events.

Funding sources:
- Wildlife Education: 54%
- Game Cash Fund: 43%
- Park Cash Fund: 3%
### 2021 permits and stamps sold

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Permit or stamp</th>
<th>2020</th>
<th>2021</th>
<th>% change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Big game</td>
<td>197,753</td>
<td>208,893</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lifetime hunting, fishing stamps</td>
<td>3,138</td>
<td>4,019</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fishing</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resident annual fishing</td>
<td>124,641</td>
<td>101,802</td>
<td>-18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resident 1-day fishing</td>
<td>17,483</td>
<td>12,733</td>
<td>-27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resident 3-day fishing</td>
<td>759</td>
<td>717</td>
<td>-6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resident 3-year fishing</td>
<td>2,781</td>
<td>2,671</td>
<td>-4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resident 5-year fishing</td>
<td>1,982</td>
<td>2,137</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonresident annual fishing</td>
<td>8,635</td>
<td>7,796</td>
<td>-10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonresident 1-day fishing</td>
<td>27,134</td>
<td>19,926</td>
<td>-27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonresident 3-day fishing</td>
<td>9,817</td>
<td>10,030</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonresident 3-year fishing</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>-9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nonresident 5-year fishing</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paddlefish</td>
<td>1,878</td>
<td>1,877</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hunting</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resident annual hunting</td>
<td>17,806</td>
<td>15,593</td>
<td>-12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resident 3-year hunting</td>
<td>329</td>
<td>328</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resident 5-year hunting</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonresident annual hunting</td>
<td>11,309</td>
<td>11,280</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonresident 2-day hunting</td>
<td>3,703</td>
<td>3,677</td>
<td>-1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonresident youth hunting</td>
<td>694</td>
<td>624</td>
<td>-10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonresident 3-year hunting</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>-5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonresident 5-year hunting</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resident annual fur harvest</td>
<td>6,136</td>
<td>5,151</td>
<td>-16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Combination</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resident annual hunting/fishing</td>
<td>25,628</td>
<td>24,783</td>
<td>-3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resident 3-year hunting/fishing</td>
<td>950</td>
<td>1,007</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resident 5-year hunting/fishing</td>
<td>621</td>
<td>773</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resident hunting/fishing, veteran</td>
<td>6,244</td>
<td>6,129</td>
<td>-2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resident hunting/fishing, senior</td>
<td>17,668</td>
<td>18,591</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonresident annual hunting/fishing</td>
<td>961</td>
<td>1,010</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonresident 3-year hunting/fishing</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonresident 5-year hunting/fishing</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>-7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Stamps**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Permit or stamp</th>
<th>2020</th>
<th>2021</th>
<th>% change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aquatic stamp annual</td>
<td>170,441</td>
<td>146,145</td>
<td>-14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aquatic stamp 3-year</td>
<td>3,822</td>
<td>3,765</td>
<td>-1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aquatic stamp 5-year</td>
<td>2,664</td>
<td>2,969</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Habitat stamp annual</td>
<td>106,562</td>
<td>113,890</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Habitat stamp 3-year</td>
<td>1,394</td>
<td>1,448</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Habitat stamp 5-year</td>
<td>805</td>
<td>985</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Migratory waterfowl stamp annual</td>
<td>28,994</td>
<td>28,372</td>
<td>-2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Migratory waterfowl stamp 3-year</td>
<td>1,080</td>
<td>1,099</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Migratory waterfowl stamp 5-year</td>
<td>616</td>
<td>739</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total game and habitat</strong></td>
<td>804,839</td>
<td>763,216</td>
<td>-5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Park**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Permit or stamp</th>
<th>2020</th>
<th>2021</th>
<th>% change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Annual park Nebraska vehicle</td>
<td>143,942</td>
<td>148,040</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily park Nebraska vehicle</td>
<td>197,393</td>
<td>180,219</td>
<td>-9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duplicate park Nebraska vehicle</td>
<td>70,592</td>
<td>75,850</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual park non-Nebraska vehicle</td>
<td>10,981</td>
<td>13,369</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily park non-Nebraska vehicle</td>
<td>183,985</td>
<td>158,237</td>
<td>-14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duplicate park non-Nebraska vehicle</td>
<td>3,509</td>
<td>4,309</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total park</strong></td>
<td>610,402</td>
<td>614,111</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total permits and stamps sold**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Permit or stamp</th>
<th>2020</th>
<th>2021</th>
<th>% change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1,415,241</td>
<td>1,377,327</td>
<td>-3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The 2021 Commission

Board of Commissioners
Chairman
Dan Kreitman, Wahoo
Vice Chairman
Pat Berggren, Broken Bow
2nd Vice Chairman
Rick Brandt, Roca

Other Commissioners
Robert Allen, Eustis
Ken Curry, Columbus
Donna Rush, Omaha
Scott Cassels, Omaha
John Hoggatt, Kearney
Doug Zingula, Sidney

Game and Parks
Director
Tim McCoy, 402-471-5539
Deputy Director
Jim Swenson, 402-471-5499

Assistant Director
Roger Kuhn, 402-471-5512
Administration
Angela Janda-Craig, 402-471-1542
Budget and Fiscal
Patrick Cole, 402-471-5523
Communications
Christy Firestone, 402-471-5593
Engineering
Daren Konda, 402-471-5525
Fisheries
Dean Rosenthal, 402-471-5495
Fish and Wildlife Education
Lindsay Rogers, 402-471-5581
Information Technology
Troy Kroeger, 402-471-5646
Law Enforcement
Craig Stover, 402-471-5531
Parks
Bob Bergholz (interim), 402-471-5397
Personnel
Dirk Hood, 402-471-5453
Planning and Programming
Michelle Stryker, 402-471-5425
Wildlife
Alicia Hardin, 402-471-5448

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Headquarters and Southeast District
2200 N. 33rd St. / P.O. Box 30370
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402-471-0641 / Fax 402-471-5528
Southwest District
301 E. State Farm Road
North Platte, NE 69101-0430
308-535-8025 / Fax 308-535-8028
Northwest District
299 Husker Road / P.O. Box 725
Alliance, NE 69301-0725
308-763-2940 / Fax 308-763-2943
Northeast District
2201 N. 13th St.
Norfolk, NE 68701-2267
402-370-3374 / Fax 402-370-3256

Kearney Service Center
1617 First Ave.
Kearney, NE 68847-6057
308-865-5310 / Fax 308-865-5309
Bassett Service Center
524 Panzer St. / P.O. Box 508
Bassett, NE 68714-0508
402-684-2921 / Fax 402-684-2816
Omaha Metro
849 Frederick St.
Omaha, NE 68124
402-595-2144 / Fax 402-595-2569
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