



THE HABITAT GUIDE

Quail and Upland Wildlife Federation

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Check out our first QUWF 'Special Edition' Habitat Guide!

Coming to you in a separate email, the Special Edition Habitat Guide features our exclusive Wildlife Habitat Wagon. This Wagon took about 2 years from the drafting table to the roll out of the shop in the various "transformations" or functional models it can easily take. the wagon needed its own guide to show and explain it all!! If you miss it, call us at the office, it is a PDF we can email to you!!

Why? At QUWF we are not just promoting conservation or just talking about, we work it, get bloodied knuckles more times than we care to admit, and are certainly not in this for the money. Trying to come up with better tools, techniques, ideas that we ourselves research in the woods, fields, streams and ponds across our great nation is what makes QUWF stand out or above all the competition. Do you see any others coming out with unique and creative tools for land-owners, ideas from sweat and time in the field more than anyone else?

Many talk great stories, waste endless dollars from every source known but provide little "results"

on the ground or in wildlife counts. The habitat wagon proves that point again.

As most ideas do, it came from need, the need to have the right tools and means to transport it, to the woods or work site while at the same time, providing a way to transport people as in a crew or visitors to see the habitat work in progress. Then the most important, taking your family, grandchildren and all on a ride through the very woods and fields you work so hard to protect and enhance for wildlife.

The second in a family of "build it yourself" projects, the wildlife habitat wagon is designed for the entire family to easily build in the garage over a few weekends and have an exceptional wagon for generations of use. The pride in making it with your family is priceless.

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wedges, log rollers, lopers with a shelf for the always needed coolers. And, being one of youthful thoughts but tired body, it has wheels to move it around the barn when not in use.

Check out the "Special Edition", it does include a Special Price on the American Made compact agricultur-

al running gear from Premier Manufacturing. All the plans are FREE from QUWF and we use common tools and common materials you can buy (except for the custom old fashioned buck board seats, they come as a kit) and in no time you will be rolling out the wagon for your farm,

ranch or lease. Hurry though, the 15% discount price only lasts 30 days! Pulled by an ATV, UTV or any tractor this wildlife habitat wagon was designed for you, which of the 5 versions is best for your place? It would make a superb Christmas project.



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**Want to submit an item for the
Habitat Guide?
Send it to
*sarah.leona@gmail.com***

Notes from the Road

So where did all my spring quail go to?

I often get the question from landowners all over the country, "So Where Did All My Spring Quail I Was Hearing and Seeing go to? I have recently gotten that question from landowners and chapter members at least 4 or 5 times the past couple months from several different areas of the country. As with many wildlife management questions the answer can be more complex than you would sometimes think, but it is almost always related to habitat in the end.

Many landowners and sportsmen hear whistling mails in the springtime when they are out doing a wide variety of activities on their land or even while out doing some spring habitat management. Additionally in later summer some of those landowners report seeing the small broods of quail running across a gravel road or along a field edge they are mowing or working on. Those aggressive males in the spring can cover a large area of your land looking and whistling for mates, but many landowners thru spending considerable time on their land, listening and viewing birds think that they have a rough idea of how many birds, whistling males and even coveys they currently have to start with based on that recent information and the previous years bird numbers. So then we get a lot of comments of "Man I am hearing and seeing a lot of birds this spring", or "I am sure hearing a lot of quail whistling the past few mornings", from lots of landowners in many different states. Then the remainder of spring and summer comes. Almost without a doubt the first calls start coming in from

the same landowners and hunters in early to mid November asking where all their quail have gone that they heard and saw all spring long.

Quail as we all know have a very difficult life surviving out on the landscape with the numerous factors against them daily, from intense weather issues of large extremes (from super droughts to major floods), to large predation impacts, to rapid loss of habitat, quick change of habitats, and many more that can affect a local quail population. Many of those loud and boisterous males you were hearing have now moved on to new territories, they found the hens they wanted and have hopefully nested and now pulled off a successful brood and recently formed a covey with some other males and hens and successful broods on your property. However, many times this isn't always the case and all those birds you were hearing and encountered this past spring many times become very dispersed and scattered across the landscape and could be on your neighbors' farm or even several farms away. If several of the males and hens you were hearing survived thru the many factors against them they might have dispersed into a different habitat type that you don't have currently on your farm different than the spring habitat you had heard them in, or one that your neighbor has more of or higher quality fall/winter habitat on their farm. It is also common for several of the birds to have fallen victim to avian predators or other predation and the surviving ones have moved on in search of a much safer environment. Additionally, it

is also possible the small quail chicks made it to week 3 or 4 and then intense drought hit them hard or even intense flooding rains that many areas of the country had that took away valuable food items from them or even caused them to drown or succumb to other weather issues. As you can see there is a whole host of things that can often occur in certain years that make a landowner ask how did all the quail disappear since this spring/summer. The thing you have to do is keep searching with your eyes, ears and of course even your bird dogs to see how many birds are still using your property. Also, you should try to do a fall covey count in an early calm morning in November and see just how many quail coveys you are hearing in and around your best fall habitat. Then once you see where your bird numbers are at for the Fall season you can keep putting in an additional amount of quality habitat types across your property in order for you to give all the birds the best chance at survival and the most opportunities for utilizing your land all year long.

Keep up all the great work out there that each of you, your landowners, your chapters and conservation partners are doing on crucial wildlife habitat projects, youth field day events, as well as all your other conservation outreach efforts, you are working on in your local communities each and every day, as you are Definitely... "Making a Difference for Wildlife One Acre at a Time"!!

Nick Prough
Wildlife Partnership Coordinator

Chief Wildlife Biologist

Alabama: Game breeder receives \$750,000 fine for illegally importing deer

Prosecutors with the U.S. Attorney's Office in Birmingham have charged two Northport, Alabama, men with knowingly transporting and receiving white-tailed deer into the state – a violation of state law and the federal Lacey Act, which prohibits trade in wildlife, fish and plants that have been illegally taken, possessed, transported, or sold. In November 2016, Conservation Enforcement Officers with the Alabama Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Division (WFF) arrested deer breeder Lewis H. "Sonny" Skinner and his associate Franklin Banks Loden for knowingly importing six live white-tailed deer into Alabama from a farm in Indiana. Federal and state charges against the men were announced in Birmingham on Monday, October 2, 2017.

As part of a plea agreement announced Monday, Skinner's privilege to possess an Alabama Game Breeder License or be associated with a game breeder operation has been revoked. Skinner has also agreed to pay a \$100,000 fine to the federal Lacey Act Reward Fund, and \$650,000 in fines and restitution to the State of Alabama, which will be used to further WFF Law Enforcement activities and continue disease testing on wild deer within the state. According to the plea agreement, Skinner owned and controlled all activities occurring on Skinner Farms, a private deer breeding business located in Sumter County, Ala. Skinner had obtained a game breeder license from the state of Alabama and knew it is a "closed border" state that prohibits the importation of deer.

In November 2016, Skinner arranged for Loden to covertly move

the deer from Indiana to Skinner Farms in Alabama. Loden was stopped by WFF Enforcement Officers in Tuscaloosa, at which time the deer were seized. The seized deer and all captive deer held in Skinner's facility will be tested for Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD).

Comparable to mad cow disease, CWD is a fatal disease affecting the central nervous system of deer. The disease attacks the brain of an infected animal causing it to become emaciated, display abnormal behavior, lose bodily functions and die. Once CWD is introduced into the environment, it is impossible to eradicate.

"Over the last 15 years, we have watched this disease insidiously spread across the country," said Capt. Carter Hendrix with the WFF Law Enforcement Section. "In fact, it has spread much faster than it naturally should have. This is due largely to human transportation across state lines of infected, harvested animal parts or live animals."

In 2016, Alabama enacted a ban on the import of deer carcasses from states where CWD has been confirmed. CWD has been found in captive and/or wild deer in 24 states, two Canadian provinces, Norway, and South Korea. It is not known to be transmissible to humans or domestic livestock. For a map of CWD states, visit www.outdooralabama.com/map-cwd-north-america.

Additionally, CWD has devastating economic effects on deer hunting. The deer hunting industry results in \$1.8 billion in annual revenues for the State of Alabama. States where CWD occurs have experienced a 10-40 percent de-

crease in license sales. Those states also experience a decrease in hunting opportunities through the loss of access to public and/or leased land if they fall within a CWD management zone.

"Not only is deer hunting in Alabama a \$1 billion industry, more importantly it is an integral part of the lifestyle and heritage of many residents and non-residents who enjoy our abundant natural resources," said Chris Blankenship, Commissioner of the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.

There have been no known cases of CWD in Alabama.

Currently, Alabama has 231 licensed game breeders, which primarily raise white-tailed deer for sale to hunting-enclosure operators throughout the state.

"The arrests and prosecutions of Skinner and Loden are examples of an approach to the enforcement of statutes already in place to protect the resource," said Michael Weathers, WFF Chief of Law Enforcement. "The most effective way to keep Alabama CWD-free was to prohibit the importation of members of the deer family that are known to be susceptible to the disease."

The importation of deer from other states to Alabama has been prohibited by regulation since 1973. Violations of this regulation are actively investigated by WFF Law Enforcement.

"We've focused on preventing the spread of CWD by introducing regulations that place restrictions on certain activities within the commercial industry, of which Skinner was a member," Weathers said. "The

illegal transport of deer from outside the state by a licensed deer breeder, who is motivated solely by profit, places our entire white-tailed deer herd at risk of this fatal disease."

The traceability of animals in the breeder industry is vastly important to protection of a state's wildlife populations. The spread of CWD in Texas in 2015, which was discovered in a captive herd, was mitigated by utilizing a deer breeder electronic

database that had been in place since 2009.

"Implementing an electronic database to track animals transported by breeders within Alabama would allow an animal's location history to be immediately determined," Weathers said. "It would reduce the number of animals and locations put at risk by an infected animal. It would also allow game breeders not linked to a breeding facility affected by CWD

to continue business as usual."

WFF Law Enforcement continues a 110-year commitment to protect the state's resources for the benefit of all Alabamians. WFF needs your help in maintaining Alabama's CWD-free status. To report the importation of live or harvested deer from out-of-state, or resident deer exhibiting signs of CWD, call the Operation Game Watch line at 1-800-272 4263 (GAME).

AZGFD asks hunters to help keep Chronic Wasting Disease at bay

Arizona remains CWD-free due to surveillance efforts

PHOENIX — The Arizona Game and Fish Department is asking hunters to continue doing their part to help keep Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD), a neurodegenerative wildlife disease that is fatal to deer and elk, at bay.

All successful deer and elk hunters are encouraged to bring the head of their harvested animal, especially bucks and bulls, to any department office statewide between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. The preferred method for delivery is to place the head in a heavy-duty plastic trash bag, and keep it cool and out of the sun.

The department also requests hunters to provide accurate hunter information (name, telephone number), as well as hunt information (hunt number, game management unit in which the animal was harvested, state and hunting license number). This information is crucial should a positive CWD sample occur.

Department officials did not find any cases of CWD in the 1,200-plus deer (mule and white-tailed) and elk that were harvested by hunters and voluntarily submitted for testing in 2016. Game and Fish has been testing for the presence of the disease in Arizona since 1998. While CWD has been found in the neighboring states of Utah, New Mexico and Colorado, the disease has not been detected in Arizona. CWD has not been documented to cause disease in people.

CWD is transmitted and spread by animal movement and direct contact, which means the illegal importation of a cervid carcass or parts with brain or spinal column tissue of an infected animal could introduce the disease into Arizona. To that point, an individual is only allowed to possess, transport or import the following portions of cervids lawfully taken in another state or country:

Boneless portions of meat, or meat that has been cut and packaged.

Clean hides and capes with no skull or soft tissue attached.

Antlers, clean skull plates or skulls with antlers attached with no meat or soft tissue remaining.

Finished taxidermy mounts or products (hunters may ship their harvested animal to a taxidermist).

Upper canine teeth with no meat or tissue attached.

Do not bring the brain, intact skull or spinal column of a deer or elk harvested in another state back into Arizona.

It may take longer than a year before an infected animal develops symptoms of CWD, which can include drastic weight loss (wasting), stumbling, listlessness and other neurological symptoms. CWD can affect animals of all ages, although it's most frequently noticed in older animals. CWD is fatal, and there are no treatments or vaccines.



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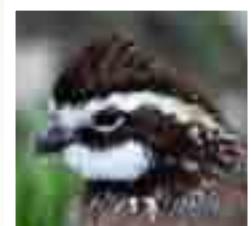
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Idaho: Steelhead Harvest open on Snake, Salmon, and Clearwater Rivers

The Fish and Game Commission on Friday, Oct. 13 approved the opening harvest season, but reduced the traditional daily bag limit from three to two adipose-clipped hatchery steelhead in the Snake and Salmon rivers, with additional restrictions in the Clearwater and lower Snake rivers limiting harvest to steelhead less than 28 inches.

The two-fish daily bag limit also applies to all other rivers open for steelhead fishing, including the South Fork of the Clearwater and Little Salmon rivers. The size restriction on the lower Snake and Clearwater rivers protects the larger “B-run” steelhead from overharvest and ensures enough will return to replenish hatcheries. The two-fish daily bag limit also applies to all other rivers open for steelhead fishing, including the South Fork of the Clearwater and Little Salmon rivers.

The size restriction on the lower Snake and Clearwater rivers protects the larger “B-run” steelhead from overharvest and ensures enough will return to replenish hatcheries. All other 2017 steelhead rules still apply.

Fish and Game in August halted the harvest season when steelhead were not arriving as expected, but fish counts during September in-

creased, and the run is close to the preseason forecast. Fisheries managers expect about 52,252 steelhead, including 37,779 hatchery steelhead and 14,810 wild, will cross Lower Granite Dam about 30 miles downstream from Lewiston.

Fisheries managers estimate about 22,000 of those hatchery fish will be available for harvest.

“The harvest closure in August was implemented when steelhead returns appeared insufficient to meet broodstock needs,” said Lance Hebdon, F&G’s anadromous fish manager. “But that is no longer the issue now that we understand this run was later than normal.”

Wild steelhead returns are expected to be the lowest since 2008, but fisheries managers are confident the rules in place will protect wild fish.

Many anglers expressed concerns about the effects of a harvest season on wild fish, although all wild fish must be released unharmed. Idaho has maintained the current rules for harvest of hatchery fish while mandating the release of wild fish since the 1980s.

Incidental wild steelhead mortality caused by catch-and-release fishing is minimal and “not considered to be a major limiting factor” in wild steelhead recovery. Previous years

with low wild returns have shown steelhead can bounce back within a couple years.

Fish managers also pointed out the purpose of adult hatchery steelhead is to replenish hatcheries and provide harvest for sport anglers. There is no conservation benefit to wild steelhead by allowing excess hatchery steelhead to go unharvested, nor does it improve future hatchery returns.

Commissioners originally planned to vote on opening the harvest season on Oct. 2, but postponed that decision to take public comment.

Fish and Game polled 19,919 resident steelhead permit holders via email asking their opinions about opening the harvest season. Out of 345 responses, 55 percent supported the proposal and 39 percent opposed.

During public comment, the department also received another 776 comments, with 54 percent opposing opening harvest and 44 percent in favor.

With the poll and the comments combined, 594 of respondents opposed opening harvest and 582 were in favor of it. However, many in opposition said they opposed opening harvest because they wanted additional protection for wild steelhead.

**Want to submit an item for the
Habitat Guide?
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How to select, split, stack and store firewood

For wood-burning fireplace and stove owners, splitting and stacking wood is an important skill to know. Whether it's your first time stacking a woodpile or you just want a refresher course on proper splitting technique, we've got a number of helpful tips on the best way to stock winter wood.

Are you cutting wood from a fallen tree?

If you're starting your wood pile right from the source – a fallen tree – there are a few things to keep in mind when doing the initial cutting. First, the timing: cut your firewood at least six months ahead of when you plan on burning it. The ideal time to cut firewood is in the late winter and early spring months. This

allows for the maximum drying time.

Next, cut the ends of the logs as flat and square as possible so that they can stand sturdily for splitting. For this, we recommend the STIHL Pro Splitting Axe or STIHL Pro Splitting Maul. If the wood has branches, cut toward the opposite direction they are pointing. Remember, the shorter the log, the easier it will split. Look for hairline cracks on the log and direct the swing of your axe to strike these cracks. This will reduce the splitting effort. Try to avoid cutting through knots – knots and branches change the direction of the wood grain in the log and make splitting more difficult. Try to align the strike of the axe so it does not split through the knot.

Wood burning safety

Burning firewood creates many byproducts, including smoke, water vapor, various gases, hydrocarbons and tar. Over time, these materials can accumulate in your fireplace and increase your risk of danger, including chimney fire and carbon monoxide poisoning. Always keep your fireplace chimney well ventilated and have it cleaned. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the National Fire Protection Association, and the American Lung Association recommend annual maintenance and inspection of your home's heating systems, fireplaces included.

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Citation issued for violating Mississippi deer carcass transportation regulations

DESOTO COUNTY – On October 17, 2017, conservation officers of the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks (MDWFP) issued a citation to a DeSoto County man for violating 40 Miss. Admin. Code, Part 2, Rule 2.7, Prohibition on Cervid Carcass Importation.

The DeSoto County resident had recently traveled to Wyoming to hunt mule deer. After his return to Mississippi, the Wyoming Game and Fish Department contacted the hunter to inform him that the mule deer he harvested in Wyoming had tested positive for Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD). The positive result was confirmed by the Wyoming State Veterinary Diagnostic Labora-

tory in Laramie, Wyoming. Chronic Wasting Disease is a fatal neurological disease that affects cervids (white-tailed deer, mule deer, elk, moose, caribou, red deer, sika deer, and fallow deer).

After being notified by Wyoming that his deer had tested positive for CWD, the DeSoto County resident contacted the MDWFP. Conservation officers were dispatched to collect the remains of the deer. The mule deer had not been processed as required in the regulation; therefore, the officers issued the citation.

The Commission on Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks passed the carcass importation regulation in May of 2016, in an effort to prevent

the introduction of CWD into Mississippi. Similar restrictions are in place in other states. “It is our duty to protect the state’s natural resources, and the public health, safety and welfare,” stated Colonel Steve Adcock, Chief of Law Enforcement for the MDWFP. Adcock went on to say, “this regulation will hopefully help us to prevent something catastrophic from occurring here in Mississippi.” Hunters are encouraged to review Mississippi’s rules on lawful transportation of trophies or meat from animals harvested out of state, before bringing these items into Mississippi.

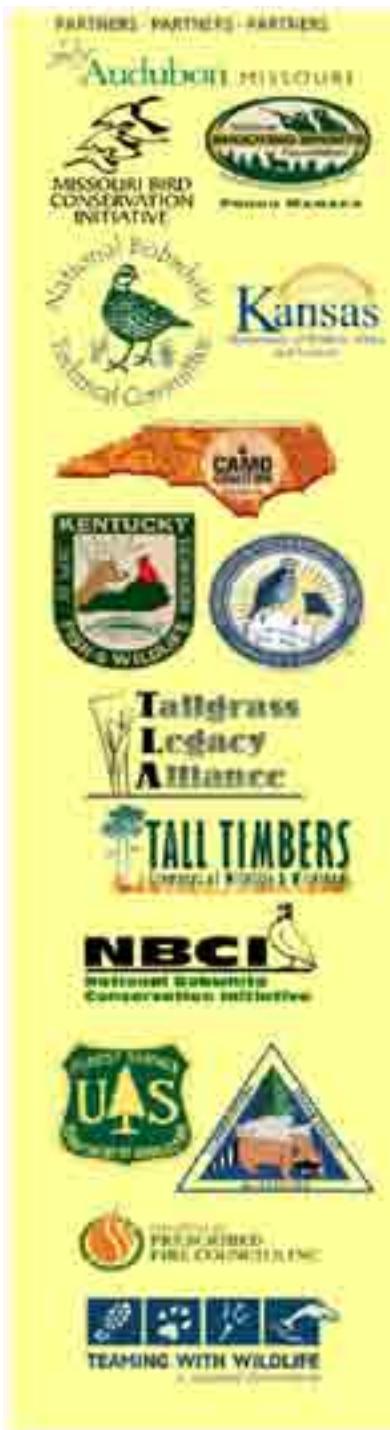
To date, no cases of CWD have been confirmed in Mississippi.



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3. Super Sorghum Food Plot Mix \$34.00 • 1-acre coverage • 15 lbs • Plant in June

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4. Green Browse Mix \$60.65 • 1-acre coverage • 15 lbs • Plant August 1--September 15

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THE NATIVE GRASS AND FORB MIXES LISTED BELOW are designed to provide a short, bunch grass growth form that is preferred by bobwhite quail and other wildlife. In addition to the grasses, varieties of preferred forbs are included to provide overhead structure and attract insects for ideal bugging sites for quail chicks. These mixes can be planted along field borders, non-farmed odd areas, forest openings and abandoned crop fields, or to replace non-native species that provide poor quality habitat such as Fescue and Bermuda grasses.

5. Eastern/High Rainfall Mix \$62.50 • 1-acre coverage • 4.5 lbs • Plant December - June

This mix is designed for areas receiving more than 35 inches of rainfall per year. This mix contains grass varieties that will remain at preferred quail height even in higher rainfall areas. *Mix includes: Little Bluestem, Sideoats Grama, Canadian Wildrye, Sand Dropseed, Illinois Bundleflower, Showy Partridge Pea, Plains Coreopsis and Alfalfa.*

6. Western/Low Rainfall Mix \$60.70 • 1-acre coverage • 4 lbs • Plant December - May

This mix has a small amount of taller grass varieties added and is adapted to sites receiving less than 35 inches of rainfall per year. Mix includes: Little Bluestem, Sideoats Grama, Canadian Wildrye, Sand Dropseed, Big Bluestem, Blue Grama, Illinois Bundleflower, Showy Partridge Pea, Plains Coreopsis and Alfalfa.

7. Super Sunflower Dove Food Plot \$35.75 • 1-acre coverage • 10 lbs • Plant April -- July

This monoculture planting of Peredovic Sunflower seed is sometimes called the black oil seed. It attracts a variety of wildlife.

Rec industry reports strong 2017

Strong outlook for 2018

Washington, D.C. – Recreational activities continue to be a main-stay of the American lifestyle and economy according to the American Recreation Coalition's new report Outdoor Recreation Outlook 2018. Outdoor recreation industry leaders report good sales and increased activity for 2017 and project still stronger activity in 2018. Americans spend more than \$887 billion annually on equipment ranging from skis and tents to RVs and boats and on services ranging from fishing licenses to zip lines, supporting millions of jobs in manufacturing, sales and service.

Public lands and waters

A core strength of outdoor recreation in America is the lure of America's public lands and waters covering nearly one third of the nation's surface. Best known is America's National Park System with 400+ units, ranging from world-renowned destinations to small historic sites. Visitation is on the rise, up 7.7% from 2016 levels, with 23.7 million more visits for the year to date. Many of the 330+ million visits to national parks rely upon services of national park concessioners, including lodging, food, retail, transportation and guide services.

Recreation.gov – the unified means for making reservations on all federal lands – reports 19 million users and 37 million sessions in 2017, up 26% and 22% respectively. The inventory of federal reservable facilities also increased to 3,367 sites. The steady growth in use of Recreation.gov leads its operators to anticipate a continued climb in visits due to increased inventory, support of high-profile events and locations, and targeted marketing strategies.

A second-generation website is in development, which will greatly expand Recreation.gov's ability to ease outdoor trip planning – offering entry passes and license sales and linking campsites to more recreation opportunity information.

Adding to this positive outlook for public lands and waters are recent initiatives announced by U.S. Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke. He is harnessing the experience and know-how of the recreation industry by forming the Recreation Advisory Committee and engaging with industry groups like the Outdoor Recreation Industry Roundtable to examine how public-private partnerships can expand access, inspire innovation, improve infrastructure and more. This renewed emphasis on outdoor recreation is creating new opportunities for Americans everywhere to enjoy their great outdoors.

State park visitation trends also continue to reach record levels. Collectively, America's State Parks hosted more than 790 million visitors in 2016, 373 million of which were to fee-collecting areas. State parks now report an inventory of more than 240,000 campsites, of which about one-third are seasonal. Of the nearly 66 million overnight visitors to state parks in the past year, over 61.4 million were by campers.

Vehicle sales

Vehicle sales remain strong. According to the Recreation Vehicle Industry Association, the market for RVs has maintained its strength and sales of new units are expected to reach 419,500 units in 2017 and 429,300 units in 2018. Looking further out, forecasts for 2019 RV sales remain favorable with total shipments expected to finish at more

than 490,000 units, marking a ninth consecutive year of gains, the longest ever recorded.

Recreational use of on- and off-highway motorcycles, ATVs, and ROVs is also growing. Nearly 30 million Americans ride motorcycles on and off roads, and ATV ridership is some 35 million annually according to the Motorcycle Industry Council. The industry contributes nearly \$109 billion in direct spending to the U.S. economy annually and over 1.5 million jobs.

Sales of new snowmobiles in 2017 declined slightly due to poor snow cover and higher than normal temperatures in the Northeast region of the United States, according to the International Snowmobile Manufacturers Association. However, average use of snowmobiles remained steady with a slight increase in the Western snowmobile states. Fall shows for the 2018 sales year are reporting large, enthusiastic crowds with sales increasing 10% compared to last year's shows.

Camping

KOA – the nation's largest private campground system – reports a very strong year across the board. According to KOA's 2017 North American Camping Report (available here), camping remains one of the most popular, affordable and accessible pastimes in North America. An estimated 13 million U.S. households planned to camp more in 2017 than they did in 2016, and more than one million new households have started camping each year since 2014.

Fishing and Boating

Fishing participation increased by 1.5 million in 2016, according to the Recreational Boating & Fishing Foundation and the Outdoor Foundation's

2017 Special Report on Fishing. Youth participation rose 3% while Hispanic participation increased by 11%. Newcomers to fishing accounted for 5.3% of total participants and tended to be young and female. The industry's efforts to reach new audiences are paying off. Initiatives like 60 in 60 – which aims to grow participation to 60 million U.S. anglers within 60 months – and effective recruitment, retention and reactivation programs are succeeding in growing the participant base and also securing funding for conservation programs.

The \$36 billion U.S. boating industry is seeing some of its highest sales in nearly a decade. Unit sales of new powerboats increased 6% in 2016, reaching 247,800 boats sold, and are expected to increase an additional 6% in 2017 – a trajectory the National Marine Manufacturers Association anticipates to continue through 2018. Economic factors, including an improving housing market, higher employment, strong consumer confidence, and growing disposable income, are all cited as positive factors contributing to the growth of boating.

Archery

Archery participation in Amer-

ica climbed over 20% from 2012 to 2015, boosting the number of archers to 23.8 million, an increase that can partially be attributed to the prominence of archery in pop culture. According to a study from the Archery Trade Association, 9.9% of Americans age 18 and older shot archery sports in 2015.

Equine activities

Recent data indicates that the horse industry is beginning to trend upwards, with more spectators and equine enthusiasts becoming involved in the industry by either going to equine events such as horse shows or races, or taking their first riding lesson. Recreational riding remains the largest segment of the equine industry overall – generating an economic impact of \$32 million and involving more than 3.9 million horses.

Active and adventure travel

Active and adventure travel outfitters experienced a very strong year in 2017 as industry diversification continues to offer new experiences in the outdoors according to the America Outdoors Association. Demand for lodging, particularly cabins packaged with outdoor recreation activities, continues to outpace oth-

er services. That trend is expected to continue through 2018. Other strong activity segments include water-based day trips near urban areas or near destination attractions. Guided hiking, jeep tours, horseback riding and iconic multi-day trips, such as rafting the Colorado River through the Grand Canyon, continue to experience strong demand, trends which should prevail through 2018.

Winter sports

U.S. ski areas tallied an estimated 54.8 million skier and snowboarder visits during the 2016-17 season – up 3.7% from the previous season's total according to the National Ski Areas Association. This past season, ski areas in the Northeast region experienced an impressive rebound, as skier visits grew by 28% to 11.9 million visits. In addition, the Rocky Mountain region had its second-best winter in terms of skier visits (21.7 million). The number of open and operating U.S. ski areas rose to 481 in the 2016-17 season, up from 463 the prior year. The Northeast region has witnessed a rebirth of several formerly defunct ski areas in the past few seasons. Ski areas on national forests are adding major new activities for warm weather fun.

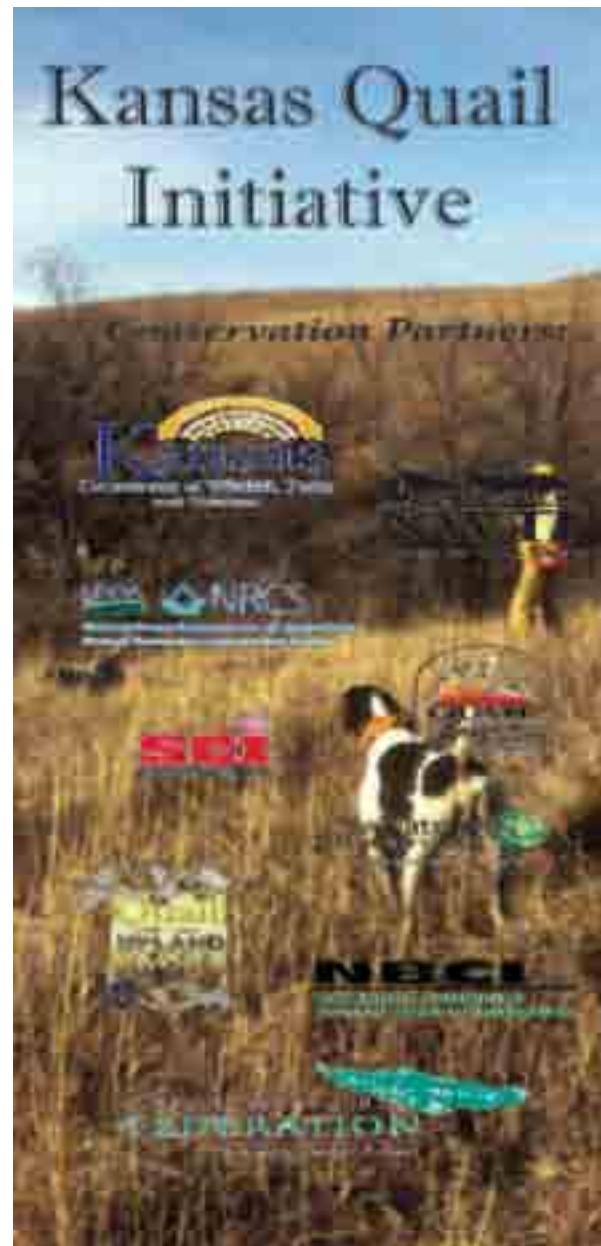


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