



United States Department of the Interior  
FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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IN REPLY REFER TO:  
WR-KRW-AEV

JUL 9 1985

MEMORANDUM

To: Assistant Regional Director, Wildlife Resources

From: Refuge Supervisor, CO, KS, UT

Subject: Refuge Inspection - Kirwin NWR

*MP file*

On June 10-11, 1985, I conducted an inspection at Kirwin NWR for the purpose of reviewing the cropland and public use program. I also wanted to address some of the developing personnel problems.

Cropland Management: Things have settled down considerably since the meeting with the farmers. Lee is getting a much better grip on the farming issue. Several of the farmers that I happened to meet in the local cafe indicated that things are going quite well. The crops looked good. It was also good to see the diversity. Peas, spring barley and much more corn has been planted this year in addition to the usual milo and alfalfa. It will be interesting to watch the wildlife response. The station should be prepared to salvage any unutilized crop in the spring in order to avoid waste. The first cutting date for alfalfa is still causing some problems, but Lee is working on a fair solution. We are now taking a percentage of the crops in the Solomon River bottom. It is no longer 100 percent alfalfa. The refuge share is planted into a crop such as corn around the outer perimeter of the field and next to the bush areas. Minimum tillage is being used and most of the crops look good. I think it will improve as the farmers accept the changes that are occurring.

Grassland Management: The grasslands at Kirwin are not large extensive areas, but are fairly small areas scattered around the refuge. They are generally in poor condition. Some are monotypic stands of brome and/or cheat grass. Other areas are just in a deteriorated decadent condition. The staff has initiated an active burning program. They were able to burn 553 acres this year. More was planned but wind and dry conditions forced them to shut the burning operation down. What had been burned looked good with results looking promising. A grassland management plan is in the process of being developed.

Musk thistle is very bad this year. A lot of effort is being put into controlling it. Mowing is being used in the areas of heavy infestation with scattered plants hand removed.

Public Use Program: The public use program needs some major revisions. In general, the public use program has not kept up with the changing reservoir conditions. Things have been managed as they always have been. There seems to have been little thought as to what roads and trails needed to be open to the public. Everything is below Service standards. Signs are in poor condition. No interpretive material exists.

Many areas were "opened" to the public as a result of refuge work activities, i.e. working of gravel and borrow pits. They seem to be everywhere. Each one has evolved into somebody's personal camping site.

The entire public use program needs to be brought up to Service standards. It is going to take time and a lot of PR work. The refuge staff is presently working on a draft public use plan that is to be reviewed by the RO and public input obtained. It should be finalized within a year.

Facilities: The headquarters looked fine. The office remodeling is underway and looks good. It will make a nice office when finished sometime this winter.

Personnel: I spent most of my time talking with the refuge staff since there are some serious problems developing in this area. I feel that this is the greatest problem on the refuge because staff problems, if not handled, can rip the staff apart and make it difficult, if not impossible, to accomplish the refuge work program. It is imperative that everyone pulls together. Basically, Lee is finding it difficult to settle into the leadership, managerial, administrative role of a project leader and a staff where some have been there in excess of 25 years and are accustomed to doing things their own way. I know it is difficult for somebody without prior field experience to slide into the project leader position without a lot of frustrations and some mistakes. I feel Lee has the ability to handle things, but is going to require a change from the way things are currently being done.

As it is now, very little interaction and communication occurs between the staff members. Harsh feelings are beginning to develop and, if left unchecked, some serious problems are inevitable. Each person operates in their own little area and have no idea what's happening on the refuge and why.

I feel a start in solving the problem would be to hold regular staff meetings where everybody participates. However, unless the proper attitude and spirit is present in all members of the staff, both during the meetings and while just going about the regular work activities, it will never work.

Gene Williams is in charge of the field crew and day to day field operations, as assistants are on nearly all of the other refuges. However, Lee feels isolated from the crew and is uncomfortable with this arrangement. Also, some staff members are not used to the assistant manager having line authority and resent reporting to the assistant. I feel it is a good arrangement that could and should work, but it, like everything else, requires interaction and a close working relationship. I will leave it up to Lee. If he wants to assume supervision of the field crew and day to day field operations until he gets his feet on the ground and the rough spots smoothed over, it is acceptable to me.

In summary, I feel the refuge program is coming along. After the initial uproar with the farmers, things have settled down and the farming program is looking good. There is a lot to be done in the public use area, however, I feel a first rate program will be developed and implemented in the near future. The personnel area is where the greatest problem is presently. It is going to require some changes on everyone's part and I believe they all can and will. They all care about the refuge and the resource too much to let it fail.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Phil Norton". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned to the right of the main text block.

Attachment

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY  
FOR OPERATIONS INSPECTIONS AND PROGRAM EVALUATIONS OF  
FIELD STATIONS

STATION OR AREA OFFICE: Kirwin NWR

DATE: June 10-11, 1985

INSPECTED/EVALUATED BY: Phil Norton

STATION DESCRIPTION: (What is the primary purpose of the station? Involvement-  
major management practices?)

Waterfowl Migration Area - fall and spring. Considerable water related recreation such as camping, picnicking and fishing occurs.

HIGHLIGHT SUMMARY STATEMENT:

The refuge program is coming along. After the initial uproar with the farmers, things have settled down and the farming program is looking good. There is still a lot to be done in the public use area in order to develop a good program.

ISSUES OF MAJOR CONCERN:

There is a problem in the personnel area that is going to require some changes on everyone's part and a lot of effort and attention on the part of the project leader.

CORRECTIVE ACTION WITH TARGET DATES FOR COMPLETION:

Public Use Plan - June 1986  
Grassland Management Plan - June 1986  
Cropland Management Plan - September 1986  
Weekly Staff Meetings - immediately

PRAISE OR SPECIAL MENTION:

Each staff member is very capable and hard working and is very devoted to the Refuge and its resources. It just needs to be pulled together.

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## OPERATIONS INSPECTION

Station: Kirwin NWRDate(s) of Inspection: June 10-11, 1985Inspector(s): Phil Norton

## STATION ROSTER

Name	Title/Series/Grade	Type of Appt.	Present (YES OR NO)
<u>Lee Wright</u>	<u>Refuge Mgr GS-11</u>	<u>PFT</u>	<u>Yes</u>
<u>Gene Williams</u>	<u>Asst. Mgr GS-9</u>	<u>PFT</u>	<u>Yes</u>
<u>Doris Hagman</u>	<u>Refuge Asst GS-5</u>	<u>PFT</u>	<u>Yes</u>
<u>Howard Stephens</u>	<u>Auto Mechanic WG-10</u>	<u>PFT</u>	<u>Yes</u>
<u>Richard Erdahl</u>	<u>Maintenance Worker WG-7</u>	<u>PFT</u>	<u>Yes</u>
<u>Pat Hubbard</u>	<u>YCC Work Leader GS-5 Int.</u>		<u>Yes</u>

Indicate BLHP ceilings with \*

Funding Allocations: FY 85

Activity	O&M	Cyclical Maintenance
<u>Migratory Birds (1210) 1260 Base</u>	<u>173,000</u>	
<u>Mammals &amp; Non-Migratory Birds (1220) <sup>Small ARMM</sup></u>	<u>20,000</u>	
<u>Animal Damage Control (1230) <sup>Total 1260</sup></u>	<u>193,000</u>	
<u>Interpretation &amp; Recreation (1240)</u>		
<u>Endangered Species (1400)</u>		
<u>Expenses for Sales (MB) (6810)</u>		
<u>Expenses for Sales (MNB) (6820)</u>		
<u>Other: <u>1994</u></u>	<u>4300</u>	
<u>TOTAL (O&amp;M and Cyclical Maintenance)</u>	<u>197,300</u>	

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## SUMMARY OF MOST RECENT INSPECTIONS/REVIEWS

<u>Inspection/Review</u>	<u>Date</u>
Program Review	
Operations Inspection	6/82
Administrative Review	
Other: Safety	
Youth Activities	
Energy Conservation	
Construction Contract Compliance	
Classification Audit	
Rental Rate Survey	12/84
Concession Contract Audit	

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATION(S) AND/OR DIRECTIVE(S)

Note: These recommendations and directives shall be discussed with the Refuge Manager prior to the conclusion of the on-site visit.

<u>Item</u>	<u>Target Date</u>
Public Use Plan	1986
Grassland Mgt Plan	1986
Weekly Staff Meetings	immediately
Crop Land Mgt Plan	1986

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## STATION SAFETY PLAN:

Note: The following discussion of safety is not meant to be an in-depth safety review.

Date prepared: Mar 74 Date of last revision: June 78

Date of last staff review and discussion of plan: none

Safety hazards identified: \_\_\_\_\_

Summary of accidents occurring during last 2 years (types of accidents, employee(s) involved, corrective actions taken): 2 accidents; an auto/truck collision and a deer/auto collision

DDC for all employees. Increased caution discussed

## STATION SAFETY COMMITTEE:

Chairman: Refuge Manager

Members: Asst. Manager  
Refuge Asst.

Frequency of meetings: quarterly (2 last quarter)

Adequacy of safety meeting minutes (review station file): Only one (January)  
in files

Safety equipment for vehicles (first aid kits/fire extinguishers/accident forms/ roll bars as necessary): All vehicles with above items



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## SAFETY

Date of last fire extinguisher inspection:

May 1985

Nature of fire suppression (Refuge-owned Equipment, Cooperative Agreement, etc.):

one 250 gal trailer mounted pumperone 200 gal truck mounted pumperCoop Agreement with County and Kirwin

## Status of Fire Management Training

Employee's NameType of Training/DateLee Wright40hrs 5/84 Missoula40hrs 4/85 JamestownGene Williams40hrs 2/82 BLM-JamestownRichard Er dahl40hrs 4/84 BLM JamestownHoward StephensExperience QualifiedEmployees Needing TrainingType of Training NeededPaint/oil storage: Oil House for the oilPaint stored in cabinets in shopExplosives storage: Some old canon net charges and shell crackers stored in old building  
in Equipment Yard - Should be disposed of - damp and corroded

Availability and use of seat belts:

All vehicles and tractors are equippedAvailability and use of life jackets: N/A - don't have a boat

Availability and use of other personal protective equipment (including fire retardant clothing):

All personnel involved in burning are supplied with  
fire retardant shirts and pants, shelters, hard hats and gloves.

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## SAFETY

Pesticide storage, application procedures, and disposition procedures: \_\_\_\_\_

20 gal. of 2,4-D stored in equipment shedEmpty containers are triple rinsed and buriedRespirator, gloves, goggles are supplied

Status of certification for pesticide application:

<u>Employee's Name</u>	<u>Type of Certification/State/Date</u>
<u>Lee Wright</u>	<u>Kansas Commercial - In progress</u>
<u>Richard Erdahl</u>	<u>Kansas Private - 1984</u>

Status of defensive driving training:

<u>Employees Name (List all personnel)</u>	<u>Type of Training/Date</u>
<u>Lee Wright</u>	
<u>Gene Williams</u>	
<u>Doris Hegman</u>	<u>10/84</u>
<u>Howard Stephens</u>	
<u>Richard Erdahl</u>	<u>1983</u>

<u>Employees Needing Training</u>	<u>Type of Training Needed</u>
<u>Richard Erdahl</u>	<u>prior to 1986</u>

Use of smoke alarms: One in residence

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Inventory

<u>Title of Plan</u>	<u>Date Prepared</u>	<u>Date Last Revised</u>
A. Land and Water Management Plans:		
1. Soil & Moisture Management Plans	<u>1956</u>	<u>1965</u>
2. Croplands Management Plan	<u>1979-81</u>	<u>Being revised</u>
3. Timber Management Plan	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
4. Range or Grassland Management Plan	<u>1974</u>	<u>Being revised</u>
5. Water Management Plan	<u>N/A</u>	<u>-</u>
6. Fire Management Plan	<u>1979</u>	<u>1983</u>
7. Oil & Hazardous Materials Pollution Cont. Plan	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
8. Wilderness Management Plan	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
B. Wildlife Management Plans:		
1. Wildlife Inventory Plan	<u>1983</u>	<u>-</u>
2. Animal Control Plan	<u>1965</u>	<u>1970</u>
3. Fur Management Plan	<u>1965</u>	<u>-</u>
4. Fishery Management Plan	<u>1960</u>	<u>-</u>
5. DVE Contingency Plan	<u>1973</u>	<u>-</u>
C. Public Use Plans:		
1. Law Enforcement Plan	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
2. Hunting and Fishing Plan	<u>-</u>	<u>1981</u>
3. Sign Plan	<u>1982</u>	<u>1985</u>
4. <del>Sign Plan</del> Public Use Plan	<u>-</u>	<u>Being Worked On</u>
5. Crowd Control Plan	<u>1973</u>	<u>-</u>
D. Administrative Management Plans:		
1. Station Safety Plan	<u>-</u>	<u>1977</u>
2. Energy Conservation Plan	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
3. Equipment Utilization Plan	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>

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Land and Water Management:

List problem areas (erosion, nutrient depletion, pollution, etc.): \_\_\_\_\_

low rainfall, declining water levelsCroplands Management:Acres Farmed: FA 0 Coop 2592 Total 2592Number of Coop Farmers 15 Range in Acreage/Cooperator 20 A. to 350+ A.

Most Recent or Current Cropping Season:

Type of Crop:

Acres:

744 wheat332 fall wheat364 milo663 alfalfa343 corn20 peas88 spring barley39 millet

Opportunity for conversion to moist soil/natural farming/other habitat types:

Moist soil potential exist if we can obtain authorization to construct impoundments on Bow Creek and the Solomon River. The refuge is encouraging the use of no and minimum tillage.Any Government share(s) other than portion of crop? Does a "product for services" situation exist? No

Acres Hayed: The haying program was eliminated in 1985. In the past large areas of bromie grass was hayed, which I believe favored cool season over the warm season  
grasses. Number of Permittees: \_\_\_\_\_

Most Recent or Current Growing Season: 1984 Summer season was the lastType of Hay: native & bromie Acres: ? No. Bales/Tons: 108 Tons reportedReceipts: Refuge \$2,062 to Bureau of Reclamation

Permittee \_\_\_\_\_

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Timber ManagementTotal Acres under Management: None

Last Fiscal Year: Number of Sales: \_\_\_\_\_

Est. Total Board Feet Harvested: \_\_\_\_\_ Receipts: \_\_\_\_\_

SUP's issued for firewood? \_\_\_\_\_

Range or Grassland ManagementAcres Grazed: 0 AUM's: \_\_\_\_\_ No. Permittees: \_\_\_\_\_

Nature of Grazing: \_\_\_\_\_

Future Plans: There are scattered tracts of grasslands that are in a deteriorated and decadent condition from years of neglect. Few natives can be found. A grassland plan is being developed that will restore the natives. A combination of fire, grazing and haying will probably be used as management tools.

Water ManagementTotal Impoundment Acreage: currently 800-1200 acres Number of Impoundments: 1

Nature of Program: over lay refuge on a Bureau of Reclamation Reservoir. The ~~water~~ irrigation water district controls the water in Kirwin Reservoir. By the end of the irrigation season, the lake is generally down to inactive storage.

There is the potential for water management by construction low level dams on Bow Ck and the Solomon River. Water would be impounded in the fall and winter and released in the spring.

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Fire ManagementPrescribed Burning ProgramNo. of Acres Burned Last FY 0 Acres Planned 0No. of Acres Planned This FY 1095

~~Wildfire Problems:~~ 553 acres burned in FY 85. Weather prevented burning the amount planned. Very dry this spring - started getting crown fires in grasses - had to stop burning. The response in some of the burned areas looked very good.

Oil and Hazardous Materials Pollution Contingency PlanHistory of Spills or other Pollution: NoneNature and degree of Pollution Threat: NoneWilderness Management PlanSolomon River Grassland  
Natural Area ManagementTotal Acres: 120

Non-conforming uses: \_\_\_\_\_

A Bluestem-Grama Prairie, held and used as an area for research. However it is in generally poor condition from years of neglect. A management plan should be developed, to be used as a guide, in implementing management practices to bring this area back to what it should be.

Wildlife Management

Nature of present inventories (types of wildlife, frequency, season, mode, adequacy, etc.):

spring / fall migrant waterfowl; Canada Goose wintering refuge  
resident wildlife includes whitetailed deer, turkey, quail & pheasant

Endangered Species Management Problems/Section 7 Compliance: \_\_\_\_\_

No conflicts exists between the refuge programs and endangered  
species.

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Animal Control

Nature of program: little control - stray cats and dogs consistent  
with policy and existing control plans  
Prairie dogs are controlled (22 rifle) when they spread into nearby  
alfalfa fields

Fur Management

Nature of Program (Bid, Trap Tags, Limits, Youth Trapping):

NoneFishery Management

Nature of program: Managed entirely by State Fish and Game  
Dept. Fisheries Biologist conducts surveys and stocks  
lake. State Conservation Officers patrol lake and checks licenses.

DVE Contingency PlanPotential for DVE: Little

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Public Use PlansLaw Enforcement

Status of Law Enforcement Training:

Employee's Name

Type of Training/Date

Gene Williams9 week FLETC 1980

Employee's Needing Training

Lee Wright9 week FLETC Sept 1985

Employees whose authority should be questioned to lack of training/medical/health/ other reasons. Has action to recind authority been initiated?

N/A

Are there any PPBE output coding problems?

No

Problem areas in recreation management?

Yes. Nearly all of the public use is fishing, camping and picnicking that has not kept pace with the changing habitat conditions. There is an excess number of roads and trails, picnic sites and camping areas open to the public. Nearly all the signs are faded and out dated and need to be replaced. There are no interpretive displays. The one walking trail is in poor shape. The entire public use program needs to be brought up to standards. A draft plan is being developed.

Specific efforts to reduce/eliminate, non-wildlife oriented recreation/results:

All public use will be reviewed while developing the public use plan

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Sign Management

Are present signs adequate to fill needs of station? \_\_\_\_\_

*No. Many of the signs are inappropriate, some are outdated, many are faded and some were produced locally. A sign plan is being prepared*

General appearance of signs: *Poor*

Is station producing signs? What actions are being taken to eliminate this practice?

*Some temporary signs are being produced until the proper signs can be plan, ordered and received.*

Status of Boundary Posting/Need for Boundary Survey: \_\_\_\_\_

*Boundary has been mostly well posted. Old faded signs need to be replaced.*

Crowd Control PlanPotential for problems with unruly crowds: *None*

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STATION BANDING PROGRAMAny Quotas? No \_\_\_\_\_ Yes 500 MallardsProblems reaching quotas? <sup>Yes</sup> Are quotas <sup>No</sup> realistic? If not, what are realistic quotas? No post season birds available to bandAny Non-Quota Banding? No

Relationship with FWS Banding Coordinator: \_\_\_\_\_

CHEMICAL CONTROL PROGRAMAcres Treated Last Fiscal Year: FY 84 Acres \_\_\_\_\_Nature of present program: Force Account weed control aimed at noxious weeds in grasslands. Coop farmers control weeds in agriculture fieldsAlfalfa generally treated for alfalfa weevilsWILDLIFE MANAGEMENT STUDIES

List current studies:

<u>Title</u>	<u>Investigator</u>	<u>Target Completion Date</u>	<u>Date Approved/ by Whom</u>
<u>None currently. The potential is there to get the Range Dept at nearby Ft Hays State University involved in the Grassland Management Program.</u>			

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GENERAL

Have all position descriptions been updated as per Performance Evaluation Form:

Yes

Are position descriptions, performance standards, and performance evaluations regularly discussed with employees? Once a year at end of year

Is there an annual Station Training Plan?

Yes

Are there individual longer range training plans for each employee?

Yes

Have all supervisors received the required 80 hours of supervisory training?

Williams has completed only 40 hrs of the required 80 hours

Wright has completed 80 hrs but it was in the early 70's

Status of Refuge Academy Training (Beckley):

Employee's Name

Type of Training/Date

Gene Williams

Basic 1983

Employees Needing Training

Lee Wright

A refresher/update in Supervisor Training

Gene Williams

The 2nd 40hrs of Supervisory Training

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Is the station annual leave schedule current for all employees? Yes

Do any morale or grievance problems exist? Some morale problems exist.

See cover memo

Are all employees physically fit for duties assigned? If not, has action been taken to seek medical determination?

Yes - for normal duties. Step tests for fire duty have not been given

Are EEO posters and wage rates posted? No EEO poster available - have been requested when they are. W.G. employees have copies of wage rates

Are staff-owned livestock and poultry in excess of permitted number? Are garden lots of approved size?

No staff-owned livestock or poultry on refuge. The one garden lot is of approved size

Is the filing system functional? Yes