# COMMISSION TAKES MEASURES TO KEEP STAFF, PUBLIC SAFE IN RESPONSE TO VIRUS

Jerry Kane March 16, 2020

LINCOLN, Neb. – In a proactive effort to prevent the potential for spread of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) at its facilities, parks and events, the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission is limiting some public access.

The Commission aims to protect its staff and customers by removing opportunities for crowds to gather at facilities and events and by maintaining clean facilities. To do so, the agency has taken the following steps:

— All agency-sponsored events and activities scheduled through May 31 have been cancelled. This includes the Cornhusker Trap Shoot, National Archery in the Schools state tournament, hunter education classes, trainings and workshops, community fishing events, Outdoor Discovery Programs at Platte River State Park (SP) and Fort Kearny State Recreation Area (SRA), and the Fort Kearny Outdoor Expo.

— The Omaha service center has been closed to public access until further notice. Customers may call the office at 402-595-2144 to get information or purchase permits. Permits and information also are available at OutdoorNebraska.org.

— Through May 31, the Schramm Education Center near Gretna, Eugene T. Mahoney SP Activity Facility near Ashland, Wildcat Hills Nature Center near Gering, Fort Kearny State Historical Park Visitor Center near Kearney, Two Rivers SRA service center near Waterloo, and the Nebraska Game and Parks Outdoor Education Center in Lincoln are closed to public walk-in access. Two Rivers SRA trout tags can be purchased at Iron Ranger locations near the trout lake.

— All cancellations, postponements and closures are posted on the Commission's website at OutdoorNebraska.org/healthinfo.

Commission headquarters in Lincoln, district offices in Alliance, North Platte and Norfolk, and service centers in Bassett and Kearney remain open to the public.

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All wildlife management areas also are open.

The Commission's meeting in Hastings will be conducted as scheduled on March 20. View the modified agenda at OutdoorNebraska.gov/commissioners.

"The health and well-being of our staff and customers is our highest priority," Commission Director Jim Douglas said. "We are being cautious during this ever-changing time, and we are committed to keeping staff and customers as safe as possible. At the same time, we want them to enjoy the state's many outdoor opportunities."

Nebraska's state park areas and wildlife areas are open-space landscapes that offer tremendous opportunities to enjoy the outdoors this spring. Nebraska has the nation's best turkey hunting opportunities, and the spring turkey season begins March 25. Trout are being stocked in lakes across the state this month, creating plenty of memory-making fishing opportunities with family and friends. In addition, hiking, biking, wildlife viewing and horseback riding all can be enjoyed at state park and wildlife areas.

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