

FORT RILEY OUTDOORSMEN GROUP

WINTER 2009 NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 2, ISSUE 3 JANUARY 26, 2009

ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL YOUTH HUNT

The FROG held another successful youth deer hunt for dependants of deployed soldiers. Three aspiring young hunters were able to enjoy a deer hunt despite the absence of their hunting mentors.

Once again, we would like to thank the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation which provided the firearms for the hunt. The blinds, hunter orange, heaters and ammunition were purchased by the FROG.

The opportunity to take a youth hunting is a tremendous gift to the youth, but even more so considering the circumstance.

The FROG could use your help if you have the time and are willing to help with future hunts. We are already planning the Youth Turkey hunt for this spring. A special thanks to our



Luke Ericson after a successful hunt

hunting guides Jim Champagne, Gordon Allen and Lucas Markland.



SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- *Results of the "Big Buck Contest"*
- *Two FROG Members successfully bag an elk*
- *Improved Sporting Goods Selection at the PX*
- *Patronize those sponsors that so generously support the FROG*
- *We want to know what you think. Please take the time to fill out the survey on pages 10 and 11 if you have not done so already.*

FROG BIG BUCK CONTEST RESULTS

The results of the 2nd Annual FROG Big Buck Contests have been finalized (almost).

Winners of the Firearms Division were:

1st Place— Bruce Anderson at 162 4/8

2nd Place—Jeff Proctor at 159 7/8

The Archery Division is a bit more complicated. We know the top two, but don't know yet the order of their placing. The original

measurements were:

Trevor Haddix at 159 5/8

Steve Spraka at 159 6/8

According to the published Big Buck Contest Rules, one inch or less in overall gross length will require re-measurement. We plan to do that on February 4th. The final results will be posted in the Spring edition of the FROG Newsletter.

Congratulations to all our winners.



Trevor Haddix with his 2008 Archery Harvest

ARCHERY RANGE VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

If you would like to volunteer to help run the FROG Archery Range, please contact Gordon Allen at 239-2390 or send the FROG an E-Mail

BANQUET SPONSERS— PLEASE PATRONIZE THESE BUISINESSES**Conservation Champion (\$2500)**

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ED RIPP SUCCESSFULLY BAGS A COW ELK (AS TOLD BY ED'S GUIDE)

It all started many weeks ago when Ed Ripp was selected for a Cow Elk tag here at Fort Riley. While rumors flew of Elk sightings, bugle calls and fresh tracks, many weeks flew by with no success. It became a group effort at this point. Anytime any one of us were out in the woods hunting, we were to be on the lookout for the herd. One phone call to Ed and he'd come a runnin' and he'd try to fill that tag.

Well, the trend continued. Not one sighting of the elk herd that calls Fort Riley home. During the spring turkey season, Eric and I walked right up on a herd of about 30 head no farther than 50ft in front of us! The wind was blowing just right and we crested a small hill into a field where they were and we just stood there staring at each other. That lasted about 2.5 minutes when the bull decided to push his herd about 100yds to our west and then began to watch us and graze. So, that little tid bit of information just goes to show that the Elk here, in my opinion, aren't under a lot of hunting pressure and aren't real "skiddish" like the Whitetail are. Well, over the next 3 days Eric and I spotted them 3 more times so we knew the Elk were out there.

Well, on Saturday 25 October 2008, I had gone out into

the field in the late afternoon in order to scout a new area from a distance to see what the whitetail movement was like.

As I was cresting this hill, just ahead of me was a herd of about 15 Elk. I was only traveling about 20mph so I came to a stop about 50yds away from them and slowly began to reverse back out of sight--just on the other side of the hill. They just stood there

front of me and they began to move to the southwest again.

I watched them walk into another field that was about 400m to my west and begin to graze. As luck would have it, they began to settle into that field. A few of the cows and the calves began to lay down and the bull continued to circle for a bit--that's where they were bedding for the night! What luck! I told Ed what I had seen



Ed Ripp after the hunt. Now the real work begins.

and watched me disappear. As soon as I was clear, I immediately jumped out of my truck, grabbed my camo jacket and hat. The Elk were directly to my west about 200yds and moving southwest very slowly. The wind was blowing east at about 10kts and the elk were headed right for me!!! The continued to advance until they were about 100m in

that evening and he decided to head out to that area in the morning. I was 90% certain that those Elk weren't going anywhere during the night and would be right where I tucked 'em in the night before. The next morning, I led the boys out to my over-watch position and we settled in. It was still about 30min before sunrise and, as is the norm, Eric was chattin'

RIPP ELK (CONTINUED)

up a storm like we're drinking coffee and eating cakes.

As the sun began to light up the fields, we began to glass the area to see what was out there. Eric caught a glimpse of some whitetail moving about near the field where the Elk were and, upon further inspection, we noticed the elk were laying right where they were the night before! The excitement began to build, but to ensure our eyes weren't deceiving us, we decided to watch a little longer in order to see some movement that would confirm that the shapes we saw were in fact elk. They were. The first one we saw moving was, of course, the bull. He is MASSIVE!! He is a really nice, symmetrical, 6x6 with body mass that is amazing. We continued to watch as they moved about and we decided that Ed and I would begin to stalk before they began moving for real. I had predicted that they would move to the north when they were ready since that is the direction I saw them come from the night before. Ed and I began to move back to the northeast down the hill a bit to stay out of view and then went straight north for about 200m. Once there, the herd had begun to move to the north as well. Direct--just like we thought. That made it a bit more difficult for us because we now had more ground to cover in order to cut them off

and not make any noise to give us away. The wind was blowing from the northwest at about 5kts and not really much of a factor but we weren't taking any chances. We moved quickly but cautiously direct west along the ditch near the road. We continued to move towards the end of the tall grass and the edge of the crop-field. We were now about 250m away from the herd, still northeast of their position but now they were definitely walking with a purpose. That big bull was pushing his herd so we had to move. We began to crawl, and then low crawl, into position. They were just getting ready to cross the road when they started looking our way. We remained prone at about 200m from them, motionless. We spotted two possible shooters and watched them walk into some thick cover to our northwest and out of range. We decided to move back to the trucks and try again later that afternoon.

Ed returned to the field a little later and once we got linked up, we decided that we would take a chance at the set of woods that we hadn't checked to see if they went that way. So, off we headed into the woods. We knew that we had a bit of advantage trying to sneak up on them from the south. Should we encounter them, as long as they are upwind of us, we had a good chance of getting really

close for a shot.

We were no more than 30min into our stalk when we came upon a clearing. As we squatted to decide which way to move now a cow busted out of the trees into this clearing like something spooked her. Another cow and two calves followed right behind--this is happening to fast so let me slowmo it for you.

When the first cow came out, we were surprised. 2 seconds later that next group comes out--Ed moves to a tree and begins to benchrest the rifle. They are about 180yds away. 3 secs later two more cows and 2 calves come out--this one was one of the shooters we spotted earlier. As they begin to quarter away from us, I reach up to my left breast pocket and give the cow call a squeeze and her and the bull stop and look in our direction, broadside. One sec later the hammer drops and, what seems to be a whole minute later, the bullet impacts the cow.

Well, it was an awesome hunt! The time spent in the woods searching, the camaraderie of 3 guys brought together by a common love of the outdoors and the hunt--well, it was one of the best times of my life. You see, much like Ed, I've never hunted elk before and, up until I got to Fort Riley, had never seen one in real life so it was just a great experience all around and I was glad to

THE CHAPLIN GETS HIS BULL ELK (BY DAVID WATERS)

First and foremost I want to thank my Lord and Savior for blessing me with the bull elk tag and for the perseverance to hang in there until I got my bull elk. Not long after we arrived Ft Riley in June 08 CSM Jim Champagne encouraged me to submit for the elk tag drawing and I am very glad he did. I drew an either sex elk tag. I had never hunted elk and I immediately started scouting areas, reading articles and talking to folks who had hunted elk. Prior to 1 Sept I saw four elk (2 bulls, 1 cow, 1 calf). Beginning 1 Sept I focused my bow hunting efforts in area K, M and F. I did not see any elk from 1 Sept to 11 Oct. I was getting pretty discouraged. On or about 12 Oct following a weather front a small elk herd with one good bull entered a food plot I was hunting in area K at 5:35 PM. The bull was over 100 yards from my tree and I only had my bow. I watched the bull eat for about 30 minutes and decided to try

to come down the tree and move in for a shot. As I climbed down the bull heard me and started to leave the plot. I made it to the ground and moved down the wood line toward the bull with the wind to my advantage. The bull was still on the edge of the plot and I decided to use my cow call to hold him on the field in order to get a closer shot. The cow call scared the bull and herd and that hunt was over. I learned a lot during that hunt and on 19 Oct I return to the same plot in area K. I decided to bring my rifle and hunt from a tree again. At 6:00 PM I called my wife Cathy and asked her to pray for my hunting success and at about 6:30 PM I caught a glimpse of a bull elk approaching the plot by himself from the southeast. The bull disappeared from my sight behind a wood line and later reappeared about 50 yards from my tree stand. He looked right at me and froze. I raised

my gun and shot and he spun around and move away from me another 20 yards. Now all I could see was the back of his neck and his rack. I shot him in the back of his neck and he dropped to the ground. I watched and he jumped up again and then fell back down. I waited in the tree thanking the Lord and elated that I had finally got my elk. Later that evening BG Wiggins, his wife Annette, CSM Champagne, my wife Cathy and Chris Wood, Game Warden, helped me get the bull out of the field. What great memories!! Now I'm looking for a monster buck!



David Waters poses with his fine bull elk

B.A.S.S. MEMBERS WANTED



The Fort Riley B.A.S.S club has joined forces with the FROG. We hope this will help strengthen both organi-

zations. Please contact the FROG for more information on joining the B.A.S.S. Club

YOUTH SPRING TURKEY HUNT

Youth that are interested in the spring turkey hunt can contact the FROG to get signed up. Preference will be

given to those dependants whom have one or both parents deployed.



FORT RILEY'S HUNTING HERITAGE (WILDLIFE AND PARKS MAGAZINE)

“Over the last 150 years, the fort has trained hundreds of thousands of warriors, from the mounted cavalry regiments to the high-tech brigade combat teams of today.”

The rich military history is undeniable: the Buffalo Soldiers, the Big Red One, and the U.S. Cavalry School. Through the years, Fort Riley has been home to several important military figures including the likes of Custer, Patton, and Wainwright, as well as enlistees who later became famous, such as Joe Louis, Earl Woods, Mickey Rooney, and Jackie Robinson. Significant national events occurred here, including a

unities for soldiers and civilians. Over the last 150 years, the fort has trained hundreds of thousands of warriors, from the mounted cavalry regiments to the high-tech brigade combat teams of today. Their jobs are as serious as it gets. Many of the current soldiers stationed at Fort Riley have already completed as many as three tours of duty in the War on Terror. It is little wonder then, that when these men and women have time off, they look to nature for relaxation. Many choose to take advantage of the tremendous hunting and fishing opportunities on Fort Riley.

Early History

Fort Riley can trace its roots to the headwaters of the Kansas ("Kaw") River. "Camp Center" as it was first named, was the initial encampment at the confluence of the Republican and Smoky Hill rivers. The location of the military outpost was selected by a surveying party, with its primary purpose being protection for travelers along the Santé Fe and Oregon Trails. They believed the site to be near the center of the U.S., hence the name. Later, the name of the encampment was changed to Fort Riley in honor of Maj. Gen. Bennett Riley.

Hunting and fishing was a common activity immediately after establishment of the outpost, but not necessarily for recreational purposes.

In the early years, deer, bison, elk, and various species of small game served as staples to support the increasing number of troops and civilians who worked to build the post. Although some hunting and fishing likely took place for leisure, most was probably out of necessity.

As the post became permanently established, government-supplied rations became more dependable. Hunting and fishing evolved from a necessity to a form of recreation. In the late 1800s, a local Fort Riley Hunting Club was established to provide soldiers an outlet from their daily duties. The Hunting Club consisted of various types of organized hunts, including fox hunts on Sunday mornings that began with the "blessing of the dogs" at the Main Post Chapel.

Recent Past

Modern game management of Fort Riley's fish and wildlife resources began in the 1950s with the establishment of the Rod and Gun Club. The club was mostly made up of interested volunteers who coordinated organized hunts and social gatherings. Although they did not employ a professional biologist, they frequently sought the advice of the Kansas Fish and Game Commission, as well as Kansas State University, to make habitat improvements. Some of those early efforts are still visible today,



visit by Franklin D. Roosevelt on Easter morning 1943 and the 1918 outbreak of the Spanish Flu — attributed by many to have originated at Fort Riley. Even the grave of the last cavalry horse, "Chief," is located near the Cavalry Parade field and centuries-old native limestone quarters.

But for all the impressive military history of this prairie post, Fort Riley also features a well chronicled history of providing excellent hunting and fishing opportu-

INSIDE STORY HEADLINE

such as tree plantings, fishing impoundments, and established food plots.

Beginning in the early 1960s, Dr. Robert Robel from Kansas State University initiated a series of important research projects on Fort Riley. Most notable was his analysis of food use by bobwhite quail, which took an in-depth look at the metabolized energy of seeds commonly eaten by the species. It was one of the most important studies of the time and is still frequently cited today. In addition, Robel published several other papers based on data collected on Fort Riley, including white-tailed deer and greater prairie chickens.

In 1967, one of the first trout fisheries in Kansas was developed on Fort Riley at Cameron Springs. Under the guidance of Dr. Harold Klaussen, Cameron Springs became one of the first places in the state to provide trout fishing. Trout were mainly acquired from the Neosho National Fish Hatchery in Neosho, Missouri. Cameron Springs, as the name implies, is a spring-fed pond that provides good aeration and slightly cooler water temperatures, making it suitable for rainbow trout.

In addition to Cameron Springs, management of a number of other impoundments began in earnest in the 1970s. These range from

small farm pond-type impoundments to moderately sized watershed ponds. Two are oxbow lakes, carved out by the Kansas River. The remaining impoundments are scattered throughout post. Interestingly, many of those are named after their former landowners. A total of 29 ponds and lakes are actively managed today.

The passing of the Sikes Act, approved Sept. 15, 1960, and its subsequent amendments brought significant changes to natural resources management on Army property. This law stipulates that professional natural resources managers prepare plans and implement provisions of the Act. Initially, understaffing and meager budgets were common at most installations, where often just a few individuals were responsible for managing hundreds of thousand of acres. Despite those difficulties, a solid foundation was created that still pays dividends today. Notably, the Department of Defense is home to more than 300 threatened or endangered species on the 25 million acres they manage.

From the mid-1970s through the mid-1990s, Fort Riley became nationally known for its upland bird hunting. During some of those years, annual harvest of bobwhite quail topped 6,000 birds, and hunters were docu-

mented from nearly every state in the nation. Fort Riley experienced a sharp decline in overall upland bird harvest in the late 1990s, due to declining bird populations and decreased hunting pressure. Despite a much improved harvest rate over the last few years, the current bobwhite harvest has been steady at around 1,200 birds per year.

In 1986, an elk restocking effort was initiated by the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks (KDWP), the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, and Fort Riley's environmental staff. The first release consisted of 12 head of elk from Maxwell Wildlife Area near McPherson. Supplemental stockings in 1987, 1988, 1990, and 1994 released 47 elk from Colorado, Montana, and South Dakota. Most releases occurred in the vicinity of the Madison Creek area on Fort Riley. The elk herd currently consists of 100-125 head, which are regulated by an annual harvest quota of permits issued by KDWP.

A gradual but very evident shift in hunter demo-



HUNTING ON THE FORT



Because of its fantastic hunting and fishing opportunities, Fort Riley has long been considered a gem by many active duty and retired military staff.

graphics took place beginning in the mid-1990s and continues to this day. While upland bird populations began to decline, pursuit of white-tailed deer and turkey increased dramatically. Overall, hunter man-days have remained nearly constant over the last 30 years, but their pursuits have changed from upland game to big game and wild turkey. In 2007, nearly 1,800 man-days were reported for archery deer hunting alone. Ten years ago, total archery man-days were fewer than 400.

Balancing the Military Mission with Hunting and Fishing Opportunities

Today's challenges are unlike any other time in the past. The military mission has changed; security restrictions have been enacted; and environmental regulations have become increasingly complicated. All the while, overall demand for hunting and fishing opportunities on public property has skyrocketed. This paradigm shift makes it increasingly difficult to strike a balance between military readiness and providing maximum opportunities for hunting and fishing.

Conservation efforts in recent years have focused on landscape-level management practices, particularly for those species that are either endangered or are declining throughout the region.

The reason for this shift is that proactive stewardship of natural resources is paramount in limiting potential effects from federally-listed species. For the most part, Fort Riley has escaped wide-scale environmental restrictions while other installations throughout the country are restricted to a point that it affects the timing and location of military training.

Recently, Fort Riley initiated an Army Compatible Use Buffer program to ease encroachment pressure near the boundary of the installation. This is in addition to the Fort Riley Prairie Partnership that was initiated in 2003, in which the Fort works cooperatively with adjacent landowners to conserve high quality tracts of tallgrass prairie. Both of these programs have been at the cutting edge in pursuing collaborative regional efforts with the Army, a base's home state, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and private landowners.

Nongame species flourish on post. More than 400 bald eagles have been documented at one time using the thermal roost along the Kansas River. It is one of the largest wintering roosts in the continental U.S. There are six streams that contain the endangered Topeka shiner. Increasingly, rare grassland birds have become fairly common on Fort Riley, a tribute to the Army's overall environmental stewardship goals.

Despite the challenges that lie ahead, Fort Riley continues to offer soldiers and civilians with some of the most best hunting and fishing opportunities in the state. At more than 100,000 acres (as much as 66,000 available for public use), the installation has the distinction of being the largest contiguously owned parcel of public property in Kansas. It is also one of the largest publicly owned parcels of tallgrass prairie in the nation.

Because of its fantastic hunting and fishing opportunities, Fort Riley has long been considered a gem by many active duty and retired military staff. Many request to be stationed here or plan their retirement in the vicinity. But Fort Riley is open to all residents, and non-resident. Still, as with all military installations, there are security issues that all prospective hunters must appreciate. Most important though is that all hunters and anglers must realize that Fort Riley is an active training facility for the U.S. Army. Accomplishment of that mission will always take precedent over any outdoor recreational activities.

That said, just as the U.S. Army serves the state and the nation around the globe, we are always at work to make Ft. Riley an inviting retreat for outdoorsmen and women, both civilian and military, right here in Kansas.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

A SPECIAL NOTE FROM A FATHER OF ONE OF THE YOUTH HUNTERS

Dear FROG Members,

I can't thank you enough for taking him out hunting. I wish I could have been there, but as you well know, duty calls. I have not talk to him yet, but Nicole sent an email and told me he was so excited. I know you took time out of your Christmas vacation to take him hunting, and once again I cant say thanks enough. Thank all the members of the FROG for me and let them know when I return they will have my full support with future FROG events.

1SG Carroll

1SG Carroll—Thank you for your letter and your service. The FROG Youth Hunts are an integral part of our mission statement and we are glad to help out.

-The FROG



Josh Carroll got a perfect shot on this doe

IMPROVED SPORTING GOODS SELECTION AT PX

- A 30% increase in linear footage within the department. Current store has 207 linear feet; the department in the new store will have 298 linear feet.
- The fishing assortment will double in size and will include an expanded assortment of boating accessories.
- Golf equipment and accessories will increase from 16 linear feet in the current store to 28 linear feet in the new store.
- Camping equipment and accessories will double in size and will include the addition of back packs and hunting accessories
- Category will include rifles, shotguns, handguns and ammunition.
- The new Fort Riley PX will be one of the first in CONUS authorized to sell firearms



TELL US WHAT YOU THINK



Let your voice be heard! Everyone has an opinion on hunting and fishing opportunities on Fort Riley. Please fill out the next two pages of the newsletter and either mail it to the FROG or drop it off at the Environmental Office, bldg 407 or place it in the

locked box at one of the hunter check stations. The results of the survey could potentially be used to make policy changes. It will also be helpful in gauging overall hunting and angling participation on Fort Riley. The survey is optional and you can

remain anonymous if you chose. Please take the time to print the next two pages and fill out the questionnaire.

Thank You!
The FROG

TELL US ABOUT YOURSELF

I am: (circle one)

- Male
- Female

I am currently:(circle one)

- 12-18 years of age
- 19-30 years of age
- 31-45 years of age
- 46-64 years of age
- 65 or older

My current status is: (circle one)

- Active duty military
- Military dependant
- Retired military
- Department of Army Civilian
- General public

TELL US WHAT YOU LIKE TO DO

My favorite outdoor pas-time is: (circle top three)

- Hunting
- Fishing
- Hiking
- Bird-watching
- Mountain biking
- Scouting
- Hunting antlers
- Horseback riding
- Boating
- Other_____

If you circled hunting, what do you like to hunt (circle all that apply)

- Deer
- Turkey
- Quail
- Pheasant
- Prairie chicken
- Rabbit
- Squirrel
- Other_____

If you circled fishing, what do you like to catch (circle all that apply)

- Bass
- Bluegill
- Crappie
- Channel Catfish
- Flathead Catfish
- Trout
- Other panfish
- Anything that bites
- Other_____

On a scale of 1-5 (five being the best), I would rate the hunting and fishing opportunities on Fort Riley as: 1 2 3 4 5

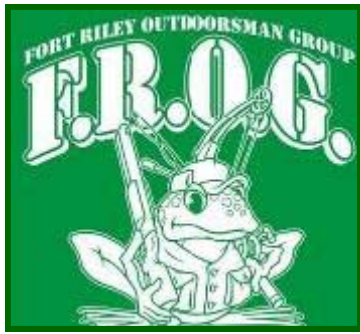
TELL US YOUR PREFERENCE

- 1. Do you hunt on Fort Riley..... Yes No N/A
- 2. Do you hunt off Fort Riley..... Yes No N/A
- 3. I agree with the current restrictions on ATV use Yes No N/A
- 4. I agree with the current restriction on vehicles being limited to roads and trails marked on the map.. Yes No N/A
- 5. I usually hunt off post for deer during the Kansas Firearms Deer Season..... Yes No N/A
- 6. I would hunt the early muzzleloader deer season if I could use an inline muzzleloader..... Yes No N/A
- 7. I would agree with eliminating center-fire rifles for deer hunting on Fort Riley..... Yes No N/A
- 8. I would support issuing fewer antlered tags if it improved overall antler quality..... Yes No N/A
- 9. I would support a mandatory antler restriction for white-tailed deer if it improved antler quality..... Yes No N/A
- 10. I would support having fewer days to hunt if it meant an increase in available antlered tags..... Yes No N/A
- 11. If you firearms deer hunt, do you also hunt the regular Kansas season off post..... Yes No N/A
- 12. Do you support the DoD ID Cardholder segment for the first three days of Firearms Deer Season... Yes No N/A
- 13. I would be more inclined to utilize the Kansas River if better access points were established..... Yes No N/A
- 14. I would support a shortened upland game season if done to increase game populations..... Yes No N/A

TELL US YOUR OPINION

- 1. Hunting and fishing opportunities are _____when compared to other military installations:
 A. Much better B. Better C. About the same D. Worse E. Don't know
- 2. Fort Riley's Hunting Permit fee of \$25 (which is used for habitat projects) is _____ .
 A. Too expensive B. About right C. Too cheap D. Don't know
- 3. Active duty soldiers and their dependants receive an equitable distribution of hunting and fishing opportunities: T F
- 4. Do you think Fort Riley has adequate Conservation Law Enforcement? Yes No

ANY COMMENTS?



FORT RILEY OUTDOORSMEN
GROUP

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FORT RILEY OUTDOORSMEN GROUP

Mission: Promote conservation and outdoor recreation on Fort Riley.

Vision: The FROG creates and sustains strong interest in Fort Riley's environment, wildlife, and recreational opportunities by educating the public, sponsoring conservation and recreational projects, and promoting outdoor recreation.

Key Tasks:

1. Educate and inform the public -- especially youth, beginners, and newcomers -- on outdoor safety, proper ethics, environmental stewardship, and recreational opportunities.
2. Sponsor conservation projects that interest the public and enhance the current program.
3. Sponsor recreational projects that enhance outdoor recreation skills and increase interest in recreational participation.
4. Sponsor recreational events to generate interest in outdoor re-creation.
5. Gain and sustain effective relationships with Fort Riley and community leaders to ensure adequate emphasis and resources for conservation and recreation programs.

Endstate: FROG's efforts in conservation and recreation on Fort Riley improve habitat, optimize wildlife populations, and increase ethical, informed participation in outdoor recreation.

NATIONAL GUARD AND DISABLED VETERAN PERMITS

A program created by the Kansas State Legislature and administered by the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks (KDWP) offers active members of the Kansas Army and Air National Guard who are Kansas residents the opportunity to receive free Kansas hunting and fishing licenses, as well as free state park permits.

Like other KDWP permits and licenses, 2009 National Guard permits will be available on Dec. 15, 2008, and will be valid for the remainder of 2008 and all of 2009. To receive free licenses and permits, Kansas guardsmen

apply to KDWP's Pratt Operations Office. Depending on the particular licenses and/or state park permits they request, they will be required to submit appropriate documentation.

Application forms for 2009 National Guard licenses and permits can be downloaded from the KDWP website and click on "Application KS 2009 National Guard Hunting, Fishing and Park Vehicle Permit." Applications may be sent in now, but licenses and permits will not be issued until after Dec. 15. The forms must be signed by the National Guard member's

unit commander and mailed to KDWP with photocopies of appropriate documentation.

Beginning Jan. 1, 2009, a portion of the program will be extended to include all Kansas veterans who have been certified by a physician as at least 30 percent disabled. Disabled veterans who enlisted as regular servicemen will be able to apply for free hunting and fishing licenses (not applicable for park permits). Those applications are also available on the KDWP website.

