



## **ODWC's Outdoors Are Always Open campaign recognized by regional peers**

### **Outdoor recreation promotional program given 2020 SEAFWA Directors' Special Recognition Award**

SPRINGFIELD, Mo. - Oct. 28, 2020 – The Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (SEAFWA) bestowed a Special Recognition Award upon Oklahoma's Outdoors Are Always Open communication campaign during their 74th annual meeting, held virtually Oct. 26-28. The Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation (ODWC) implemented the campaign to promote outdoor recreation during the trying times of the Covid-19 pandemic.

“While so many things were closed or uncertain during this unprecedented year, ODWC's Information and Education Division worked long hours and weekends to bring a ray of good news - the Outdoors Are Always Open - and to remind constituents that time spent outdoors is good for their mental and physical health,” SEAFWA President Paul Johansen said.”

Led by Nels Rodefeld, ODWC staff devised and implemented a strategic, ever evolving plan to help people social distance, maintain mental and physical health, enjoy family time, and capitalize on the natural resources around them. The team coordinated with the state's Joint Information Center to provide unified messaging, collaborated with the Oklahoma Department of Health to ensure proper recreational recommendations, and worked with the Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation Department to leverage shared audiences and communication resources.

The Association's special recognition awards are bestowed upon individuals, groups, or programs who, in the state agency directors' opinions, have served the association and made outstanding contributions toward wildlife and fisheries conservation, outdoor recreational engagement, and the natural resources professional community.

**The Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (SEAFWA) is an organization whose members are the state agencies with primary responsibility for management and protection of the fish and wildlife resources in 15 states, Puerto Rico and the United States Virgin Islands. Member states are Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and West Virginia.**