

NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICES
WORK ETHIC CAMP
LEGISLATIVE REPORT
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PAMELA MORELLO
WARDEN
2309 NORTH HIGHWAY 83
MCCOOK, NE 69001
308-345-8405

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PURPOSE

The Work Ethic Camp (WEC) was authorized by LB882, which was signed into law by then Governor Ben Nelson on June 10, 1997. State Statute 83-4,147 requires an annual progress report to the Legislature beginning on November of the year following implementation. The WEC began taking offenders on April 10, 2001. On July 9, 2007, WEC began accepting inmates into the program due to the passage of LB83. Inmates transferred to WEC under this law are paroled pending successful completion of the Work Ethic Camp program. On August 30, 2009, LB274 was passed, allowing the Director of the Nebraska Department of Correctional Services discretion as to the placement of inmates at WEC. Inmates transferred to WEC under this law will be promoted to community custody upon successful completion of the Work Ethic Camp program.

INTRODUCTION

The Work Ethic Camp, originally designated as an incarceration work camp, was designed to reduce prison overcrowding and make space available for violent offenders. The Nebraska Department of Correctional Services (NDCS) changed the name in December of 1998 to more accurately reflect the programmatic emphasis of the facility. The mission of the Work Ethic Camp is to provide an integrated program that combines evidence based practices with treatment and educational opportunities. The overall goal is to reduce the risk of recidivism through behavior change and assisting incarcerated individuals with successful community reintegration, thereby, keeping people safe.

It is the philosophy of the WEC that behaviors and attitudes that reflect positive work ethics and behavior can be learned and transferred to other areas of an individual's life. The WEC offers Intensive Outpatient/Out Patient substance abuse programming along with work experience, education, cognitive restructuring, and life skills programs to enhance positive work ethics. Specifics regarding vocational, educational, and life skills offerings will be referenced further in the Programs sections.

Statutorily, the WEC is for male and female probation offenders, housing both Intensive Supervision Probation Offenders and minimum security NDCS male Inmates. The last Probationer completed the program on July 30, 2015. The last female inmates housed at WEC were in April, 2013. They cannot have any sexual assaults and some Part I violent offenses on record, and they must be convicted as an adult of a felony offense (such as drug offenses, burglary, theft, etc). The facility does not accept referrals from juvenile courts or county courts in Nebraska. In early September 2019, LB 340 went into effect which states, the courts would no longer use the Work Ethic Camp for placement of felony offenders as a condition of a sentence of intense supervised probation. Statutorily, effective September 2019, the Work Ethic Camp housed only male incarcerated individuals at the discretion of the Director of the Nebraska Department of Correctional Services.

Prior to September 2019 the Probation Offenders admitted to WEC were referred by Parole Officers through the sentencing District Court. The NDCS Inmates are classified to minimum custody. The staff at the WEC is NDCS employees. An Identified Probation Officer assigned to the district area is the contact and liaison for probation offenders. Prior to placement at WEC, both offenders and inmates are screened, utilizing the STRONG-R assessment tool. This tool identifies each offender's criminogenic needs in order to individualize each case plan for targeting the specific needs of each offender/inmate. The partnership between Probation, Parole

and NDCS has fostered a process to ensure seamless transition between both agencies, which is critical to the success of the facility.

The WEC, for probation offenders, is based on a 180 day maximum stay, but they may successfully complete the program in 154 days. The length of stay for NDCS inmates will vary upon sentence structure and parole eligibility date. The facility, which now has 200 beds develops a case plan for each individual based upon his identified needs. The offenders/inmates do not have access to cash while at the facility and tobacco products are prohibited. Only approved visitors are allowed to visit once a week and phone calls are restricted to one hour per day.

Under Nebraska law, successful completion of the Work Ethic Camp would allow the sentencing court to modify the offender’s conditions of probation, place the offender in an aftercare program or discharge the offender/inmate. If the offender does not complete the WEC program successfully, the court may impose the original sentence with credit for time spent in the Work Ethic Camp program. For inmates, successful completion of the WEC results in the inmate’s release on parole at their earliest parole eligibility date, released on their mandatory discharge date, or custody promotion to community corrections. Inmates who do not complete the WEC program successfully will be transferred to other NDCS institutions with their parole status determined by the Nebraska Parole Board and/or they may be demoted in custody to the appropriate level.

REFERRALS, ADMISSIONS AND DISCHARGES AT WEC

One of the major issues referenced in previous WEC annual reports to the Legislature is continued underutilization of the Camp. As illustrated in Table 1.0 – Number of Offenders/Inmates at WEC, June 30th, Each Year Since 2001 the facility remained below capacity (100) since opening, until November 5, 2008:

Table 1.0 – Number of Offenders/Inmates at WEC, June 30th, Each Year Since 2001

<u>Year (as of June 30th)</u>	<u>Number of Offenders/Inmates</u>
2001	26
2002	72
2003	92
2004	75
2005	85
2006	73
2007	66
2008	68
2009	100
2010	174
2011	178
2012	148
2013	124
2014	186
2015	192
2016	182
2017	199

2018	175
2019	152

As Table 1.0 indicates, these efforts have resulted in an increase in numbers of inmates at the Work Ethic Camp in the past few years. The increase in numbers in general after 2009 is due to the implementation of LB83, which allowed the placement of inmates at the WEC, and LB274, which expanded the population base to over 180.

As indicated in Table 1.1 - Number of Admissions per Year to the WEC – From April 30, 2001 Through September 30, 2019, a total of 6,591 offenders/inmates have been admitted to the Work Ethic Camp.

**Table 1.1 – Number of Admissions per Year to the WEC
From April 30, 2001, Through September 30, 2019**

<u>Year</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Average Per Month</u>
2001	98	10.9
2002	209	17.4
2003	267	22.3
2004	244	20.3
2005	250	20.8
2006	225	18.8
2007	225	18.8
2008	237	19.8
2009	289	24.1
2010	439	36.6
2011	537	44.8
2012	475	39.6
2013	415	34.5
2014	496	41.3
2015	436	36.3
2016	527	43.9
2017	495	41.3
2018	417	34.75
2019	310	34.4
TOTAL	6591	29.8

According to WEC’s records, 4,065 Probation Offenders have been referred to the facility for intake, but only 2,247 (55.3%) were actually admitted into the program. From July 2007 through September 2019, 4344 inmates have been admitted to WEC.

**Table 1.2 – Number of Discharges per Year From the WEC
April 30, 2001 to September 30, 2019**

<u>Year</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Average Per Month</u>
2001	58	7.3
2002	174	14.5
2003	252	21.0
2004	261	21.8

2005	256	21.3
2006	222	18.5
2007	202	16.8
2008	212	17.7
2009	281	23.4
2010	414	34.5
2011	506	42.2
2012	499	41.6
2013	423	35.3
2014	455	37.9
2015	448	37.3
2016	528	44.0
2017	508	42.3
2018	398	33.2
2019	310	34.4
TOTAL	6407	29.0

As illustrated in Table 1.2, of the 6,591 offenders/inmates admitted, a total of 6,407 have, to date, been discharged from the facility. However, not all of these discharges were successful.

Table 1.3 – Number of Successful Discharges per Year from the WEC – April 30, 2001 to September 30, 2019, looks at the number of discharges that were successful. During the time period under review, 81.1% or 5,199 offenders/inmates were successfully discharged from the Work Ethic Camp.

Table 1.3 – Number of Successful Discharges per Year from the WEC
From April 30, 2001 to September 30, 2019

<u>Year</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Average Per Month</u>
2001	41	5.1
2002	147	12.3
2003	205	17.1
2004	214	17.8
2005	220	18.3
2006	200	16.7
2007	171	14.3
2008	174	14.5
2009	231	19.3
2010	305	25.4
2011	395	32.9
2012	407	33.9
2013	336	28.0
2014	387	32.3
2015	358	29.8
2016	419	34.9
2017	410	34.2
2018	317	26.4
2019	262	29.1
TOTAL	5199	23.5

Table 1.4 – Number of Unsuccessful Discharges per Year from the WEC – April 30, 2001 to September 30, 2019, is shown below. A total of 913 offenders/inmates were not successful during the time period under review. This represents 14.3% of the total number of discharges.

**Table 1.4 – Number of Unsuccessful Discharges per Year From The WEC
April 30, 2001 to September 30, 2019**

<u>Year</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Average Per Month</u>
2001	17	2.1
2002	27	2.3
2003	47	3.9
2004	47	3.9
2005	36	3.0
2006	22	1.8
2007	31	2.6
2008	38	3.2
2009	50	4.2
2010	109	9.1
2011	111	9.3
2012	67	5.6
2013	41	3.4
2014	39	3.3
2015	61	5.1
2016	54	4.5
2017	46	3.8
2018	44	3.7
2019	26	2.9
TOTAL	913	4.1

PROGRAMS AT WEC

Employment

Nebraska State Statute, section 83-4,142 mandates that the WEC provide regimented, structured, disciplined programming. Offenders/inmates are assigned to jobs at the facility. Inmates are paid for their work once per month, which encourages independence and budgeting of resources.

Work

Programs available at the WEC include supervised work crews, in which offenders/inmates are taken to work for various government agencies throughout Southwest Nebraska. Those agencies and organizations include the Department of Roads, Nebraska Game and Parks, and county and city governments. Inmates working in these areas receive pay for their daily work. WEC has also expanded the service of its work crews to include non-profit organizations, however the inmates must volunteer for these jobs and they do not receive pay for volunteer work. Many offender/inmate workers do choose to participate in these rewarding volunteer opportunities. An example of this type of work would be loading and unloading trucks and sorting donated clothing to be distributed to other communities or shipped to third-world countries. The

presence of the WEC through its supervised work crews in Southwest Nebraska has been a significant benefit to both the individual offenders/inmates and to the surrounding communities. Offenders/inmates have the opportunity to re-enter their home communities from WEC with a practiced routine work schedule, experience in teamwork, and a positive work ethic.

Table 1.5 – Total Offender/Inmate Labor Hours at the Work Ethic Camp From April 30, 2001 to September 30, 2019 summarizes offender/inmate labor at WEC since the facility opened.

**Table 1.5 – Total Offender/Inmate Labor Hours at the Work Ethic Camp
April 30, 2001 to September 30, 2019**

<u>Year</u>	<u>Total Number of Hours</u>
2001	12,484
2002	34,406
2003	44,050
2004	44,091
2005	37,696
2006	32,413
2007	27,039
2008	37,369
2009	32,455
2010	23,519
2011	13,163
2012	10,042
2013	10,294
2014	12,233
2015	18,232
2016	15,542
2017	15,929
2018	16,220
2019	13,464
TOTAL	450,641

It should be noted that the total number of work hours in 2011 through 2019 were lower than in previous years. This is due to budget modifications which reduced the Road Crew Corporal positions at WEC from eight to four and excludes participation in the non-profit organization sectors. During 2016, WEC was able to increase the Road Crew by two Road Crew Corporal Positions, bringing the team to six members. This has enabled our Road Crew inmate worker program to offer more work opportunities to our inmates/offenders and to better serve and support our surrounding communities.

Other work opportunities for inmates/offenders at WEC include: maintenance, laundry/canteen, food service, porter positions, photographer, recreation, gardener, and barber. Our food service staff have completed the Serve-Safe Manager course and they routinely offer “Serve-Safe Food Handler” certification for inmate food service workers. Many offenders/inmates re-entering society secure their first jobs in the fast food industry. By offenders/inmates already having experience, training, and certification, may give them an edge over other applicants in the job market.

Special Detail

The Special Detail Program provides offenders/inmates with the opportunity to work either on site, or off site with intermittent supervision. The special detail positions available on site are in the kitchen and warehouse/canteen. In order for an offender/inmate to be eligible for the special detail Program, he must have minimal recent misconduct report history, and have the support of his work supervisors based upon demonstrated work habits.

Education

The WEC Education department remains another main component of our program. The Adult Basic Education class targets offenders/inmates who are not high school graduates or who have deficits in educational abilities. Unless already established by another facility or agency, each offender/inmate who enters our program undergoes testing to determine his education needs. Offenders/inmates who do not already have their diploma or GED and are under 22 years of age will be required to attend Adult Basic Education classes to work toward improving academic skills and earning their diplomas or GED's. The Nebraska Department of Correctional Services Work Ethic Camp has positions for two full time teachers to provide educational instruction for WEC offenders/inmates.

One of the primary goals of the Education Department is to assist offenders/inmates in earning their diploma or GED, which is known to enhance an offender/inmate's employability upon re-entry to the community. Of the 6,591 offenders/inmates admitted to WEC since its inception, 2,246 have attended the GED program. To date, 671 (29.88%) of these offenders/inmates have received their GED's while at the WEC.

Substance Abuse Treatment

Every offender/inmate who enters the program is also given a substance abuse assessment, and those with treatment needs enter the substance abuse treatment component of the WEC, which includes substance abuse education, individual and group counseling, and attendance at self-help groups, facilitated by local volunteers. Fifty-nine percent (59%) of the offenders/inmates at the WEC have been identified as needing substance abuse treatment.

The substance abuse program at the Work Ethic Camp is at present an Intensive Out Patient/Out Patient program. Offenders/inmates assessed as appropriate for substance abuse services are referred to the substance abuse program for regularly scheduled sessions. An individualized treatment plan is completed on all offenders/inmates. The intensity of each individual's treatment will be based upon his level of need. These sessions, including group, individual and educational, focus on the impact of substance use and abuse. The groups use an educational approach to substance use and abuse that covers topics including the biomedical effects of drugs and alcohol on the body, general health risks, the effects of substance abuse on decision making, the effects of substance abuse on interpersonal relationships, and especially the relationship between addiction and delinquent lifestyles.

Cognitive Non-Clinical Programming:

The WEC programming includes the following classes: **Moral Reconation Therapy:** MRT is a cognitive behavioral treatment system that leads to enhanced moral reasoning, better decision

making, and more appropriate behavior. MRT is conducted in weekly groups, where clients present steps from their workbooks that have been completed as homework. Group facilitators use objective criteria to evaluate the participant's successful completion of each of the program's steps.

Thinking for a Change is a cognitive-behavioral curriculum developed by the National Institute of Corrections that concentrates on changing the criminogenic thinking of offenders. Thinking for a Change meets twice a week and uses a combination of approaches to increase offenders' awareness of self and others. This deepened attentiveness to attitudes, beliefs and thinking patterns is combined with explicit teaching of interpersonal skills relevant to offenders' present and future needs.

Ancillary Programs:

Inside Out Dads connects inmate fathers to their families, helping to improve behavior while still incarcerated and to break the cycle of recidivism by developing pro-fathering attitudes, knowledge, and skills, along with strategies to prepare fathers for release. Incarcerated fathers get the tools they need to become more involved, responsible, and committed in the lives of their children, providing increased motivation for them to get out and stay out.

Within My Reach offers a skills based program with critical, concrete tools that help participants control their own relationship in a way that will lead to more enriching, more satisfying, interactions with the people who matter in their lives, with themes that include: knowing yourself first, smart love, and making your own decisions.

Common Sense Parenting is a program that can be applied to every family. The program's easy to learn techniques address issues of communication, discipline, decision making, relationships, self-control, and school success. The program includes a guidebook for parents of children ages 6 to 16 facing a myriad of family challenges. Common Sense Parenting provides parents with a menu of proven techniques that will aid them in building good family relationships, preventing and correcting misbehavior, using consequences to improve behavior, teaching self-control, and staying calm.

Beyond Anger is a four week curriculum which helps clients in institutional settings and community corrections address anger, reconciliation, and emotion management and provides guidelines for daily living. Role plays and testimonials by offender/inmates help clients explore spouse and family issues, forgiveness, and letting go of the past. The program stresses how to take action, deal with feelings, and make positive progress. Beyond Anger helps corrections clients to identify sources of resentment and anger and develop strategies to move beyond them to forgiveness and to reconcile and reestablish relationships or learn to move on when reconciliation is not possible.

Seven Habits is a program modeled after the principles presented in the book, "7 Habits of Highly Effective People", by Dr. Stephen R. Covey, and is delivered in collaboration with the staff of the Franklin Covey company. Franklin Covey's 10-12 week training course for inmates has been proven to be life-changing. Studies show that recidivism drops to as low as 8% and administrative violations drop by over 76% for graduates of the Seven Habits on the Inside. The bottom line is prisons and jails are safer. Once offender/inmates believe that they can choose their path in life, they begin to make changes, before they are released, that lead to a successful

parole and reintegration into society. Although WEC still has trained staff and materials to offer this class, our focus has been on cognitive non-clinical referrals. We may soon be offering a 7 Habits class ancillary to the cognitive classes.

Intro To Business class is taught at our local Community College by their staff with intermittent staff supervision provided by WEC staff. Up to eight inmates are selected to participate in this class based upon good behavior, time to complete entire course, compliance with personalized case plan, and must have diploma or GED. Classes meet daily for approximately 3.25 hours daily for nine weeks. This course offers instruction on basic business skills and introduction to small business management. This course provides graduates with nine credit hours of college at no expense to the inmates.

ABC OSHA (Associated Builders & Contractors) classes provides 10 hours each of General Construction and General Industry instruction to educate participants as to their rights and responsibilities in maintaining a safe workplace while working productively. This grant funded class is taught at WEC in a classroom by a contracted instructor. Each 10 hour class is accomplished in one week, three afternoons in a row. ABC Construction Courses are also offered. ABC's theory is that each person who enters the construction industry is on the path to earning a competitive salary, learning a new skill and building American with their own hands. The courses (Core Construction and Construction Math) provide classroom and practical application in construction. Under supervision of the instructor, participants will use approved toolsets to create small projects to present for grading and feedback. These grant funded classes are also taught at WEC in a classroom by a contracted instructor. Each course is a two hour class meeting twice a week for six weeks.

Virtual Electric is a class where participants use virtual electric panels to learn basic electrical wiring. This class is taught twice a week for six weeks.

MPCC Access to Work Force

The Mid Plains Community College has obtained a grant to offer four courses to support inmates in their pursuit of gainful employment after their re-entry to society. These courses include, First Aid/CPR, OSHA Four Hazard, Fork Lift Certification, and CDL Preparation.

Incentive Program

One key goal at WEC is to create an environment that encourages positive change. Each offender/inmate at the facility has the opportunity to earn rewards for positive behavior. The program has four categories: Sanitation, Citizenship, Work/Education, and Behavior. Each offender/inmate who meets the established criteria may earn increasing choices of rewards depending upon the level he achieves. There are four levels that an offender/inmate may achieve: Bronze, Silver, Gold, and Platinum. Greater reward opportunities exist for higher levels.

Recreation

In the spring of 2010 a full time Recreation Specialist was added to the staff at WEC. The benefit of this position is to aid in the positive use of free time, physical exercise and development of positive social interaction. This is accomplished through organized sporting activities, board games, tournaments, and special activities on certain holidays. The Recreation Specialist position

had been open and now has been filled since January 2019. Since then, the Recreation Specialist has actively scheduling and supervising recreational activities. Yard equipment can be checked out and used by offender/inmates at WEC on a daily basis, and we have added a large shade shelter on our yard for inmates.

Library is offered daily for those who enjoy reading, and we also work with interlibrary loans to offer a greater variety of reading material.

Religion

The Religious Library is offered at the same time and place as the recreational library. We have worked with religious volunteers to meet the needs of the expanding religious affiliations represented in the offender/inmate population. Religious ground has been identified for use to accommodate offender/inmates’ religious preferences. Religious programs are provided for those offenders/inmates who wish to participate. Religious study groups (ran by inmates) are offered for groups that have no community volunteer for those religions.

Visiting

Visiting is scheduled on Saturdays and Sundays (based upon offender/inmates’ last names) for offenders/inmates with approved visitors. Offenders/inmates may apply for special, emergency, or extended visits based upon criteria established within regulations. Offenders/inmates are provided lists of general rules and dress codes which they may mail to their visitors ahead of time. The Work Ethic Camp recognizes the value in maintaining and repairing family relationships, and that this is beneficial toward successful re-entry to society. The Work Ethic Camp staff recognizes the distance that some families must travel to visit at our facility, and we have made efforts to make the visit experience more family friendly. There are toys and games available for different age groups. We will also begin making a craft activity available as often as possible.

OFFENDER/INMATE DISCIPLINE ACTIVITY

There have been 391 releases from WEC during fiscal year 2019 (July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019). Within that same time period, 71 offenders/inmates have been removed prior to successfully completing the program. It should be noted that the individuals could be removed via two mechanisms. First, probation offenders can be determined to be a threat to themselves or others, or threaten to abscond, and as a result be removed by Probation staff. The second mechanism is through serious or repeated violations of WEC rules, where a Disposition Treatment Team recommends removal of the offender. The offender can appeal that (or any) decision of the Disposition Treatment Team to the Warden’s Review Committee. NDCS inmates can be removed for the same issues; however, the inmates are returned to the Diagnostic and Evaluation facility and will be reclassified to a lower custody level. Inmates must also demonstrate adequate institutional adjustment as well.

Offenders/inmates during fiscal year 2019 have been removed for the following reasons:

<u>Reason for Removal</u>	<u>Number of Offender/Inmates</u>
Unsuccessful Discharges	33
Medical/Mental Health	10
Escape	2
Other	26

Removals from the program have decreased over the last fiscal year by a total of 1.25%. However, the total of admissions for the last fiscal year decreased by a total of 1.2%. WEC staff continues to develop in effectively dealing with disruptive behavior. There do continue to be some referrals from the courts that have been deemed inappropriate referrals, as with some NDCS referrals.

OFFENDER COMPLETION AND RELEASE TO PROBATION

Probation offenders are ordered to complete the WEC program as a condition of probation, the decision of completion of program centers on the ability of an individual offender to finish the program (all available classes) within 180 days successfully completing all recommended substance abuse classes and other programming classes. By statute (83-4, 143, paragraph 2) an offender may not be kept longer than 180 days; however, the program can be completed in as early as 154 days if the offender progresses through the program with little difficulty.

INMATE RELEASE TO PAROLE, PROBATION, OR PROMOTION TO NDCS COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS INSTITUTIONS

Inmates who are transferred to WEC are assessed for their recommended clinical and non-clinical needs. All inmates are expected to work on their identified needs by taking the appropriate classes offered at WEC prior to their parole, probation, or transfer to other facilities. Inmates who have completed their recommended classes can be reclassified for transfer to community corrections if time allows preceding their release dates. Inmates who earn serious misconduct reports may be transferred to other, more secure facilities. The Parole Board will be notified of such incidents for those who are pending parole.

COMMUNITY REINTEGRATION

Because probation offenders are sent to the WEC as a condition of ISP, following their discharge from the facility they are on supervised probation for an extended period of time. Initially, offenders are supervised by a Probation Officer who makes contact with them several times per week, both in the office and in the field, and regular random drug testing is required. As the offender obtains employment and complies with probation conditions, that supervision may be relaxed over the course of his probation until eventually he is rolled over to traditional probation, or given a successful discharge. NDCS inmates successfully discharged from WEC are most often either released on parole (to be supervised in the community by the Adult Parole Administration), released to Post Release Supervision (to be supervised in the community by a Probation Officer), or transferred to another NDCS facility (usually, Community Corrections in Omaha or Lincoln). Conditions of parole are set by the parole board, conditions of probation are set by that agency. WEC staff prepares discharge summaries for Probation offenders released to them, and prepares parole guidelines reports for inmates who are under consideration for parole. A STRONG-R is completed on all inmates/ offenders at WEC which establishes individual needs and assists in creating appropriate goals to reduce recidivism. Re-Entry officers work with inmates to plan for residence, employment, and other needs as they transition to life in the

community. Navigational Officers do the same for individuals who will be on probation. For inmates approaching a mandatory release date from our facility, re-entry preparation and support become the focus. WEC staff and Re-entry Specialists work with them to identify and address their needs.

IMPACT ON PRISON COST

The WEC cost approximately \$4.86 million to build, has 98 appropriated staff, and the facility operates on a \$6.238 million annual budget. The average daily population for WEC in fiscal year 2019 was 168.

The data in Table 1.6 – WEC Admissions July 2018 to June 2019 shows the number of offenders/inmates sentenced to the Work Ethic Camp per month during fiscal year 2019.

Table 1.6 – WEC Admissions July 2018 to June 2019

<u>Admission Month</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Admission Month</u>	<u>Number</u>
July 2018	45	January 2019	37
August 2018	44	February 2019	29
September 2018	13	March 2019	14
October 2018	25	April 2019	20
November 2018	39	May 2019	25
December 2018	28	June 2019	49
TOTAL			368

During the same time period, there were a total of 393 offenders/inmates released from the Work Ethic Camp. As Table 1.7 – Work Ethic Camp Releases July 2018 to June 2019 shows, 81.9% or 322 offenders/inmates were released successfully.

Table 1.7 – Work Ethic Camp Releases July 2018 to June 2019

<u>Release Type</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Successful	322	81.93
Program Failure	33	8.40
Medical/Mental Health	10	2.54
Escape	2	0.51
Other	29	6.62
TOTAL	396	100

Table 1.7 also indicates that there were 33 offenders/inmates, or 8.4%, who could be considered program failures. Ten offenders/inmates (2.54%) left the program for medical/mental health reasons, and 26 offenders/inmates (6.62%) were removed from the program for other reasons.

Finally, as can be seen in Table 1.8 Average Cost Savings to the State for Each Offender/Inmates Sentenced to the Work Ethic Camp, the basic concept behind the construction of the WEC continues to pay dividends for Nebraska. The WEC was established as an alternative to prison, to free up bed space in Nebraska’s prisons for violent offenders. To that end, the WEC continues to meet its objective.

Given that the judge must make a finding that absent the Work Ethic Camp the probation offender would go to prison, the State has, since WEC opened in April 30, 2001, successfully

diverted 2,247 offenders from prison. In today's dollars that would equal the following overall savings in Table 1.8:

Table 1.8 – Average Cost Savings to the State for Each Offender Sentenced to the Work Ethic Camp

<u>Fiscal Year 2018</u>	<u>Average Cost</u>
Average Cost per Offender/Inmate in State Prison (Incarcerated)	\$38,577
Average Cost per Offender/Inmate at WEC (Based on # of Admissions per Year)	\$11,322
TOTAL COST SAVINGS PER OFFENDER	\$27,255

Using the data from Table 1.8, the 272 offenders/inmates successfully discharged from the Work Ethic Camp during FY 2019 have saved Nebraska taxpayers a total of \$7,413,360. Another way to look at the impact of the Work Ethic Camp is to measure how it is impacting prison population. As of June 30, 2019, the State prisons held 4807 inmates in space designed to hold 3535. This represents a crowding index 152% of design capacity.

ISSUES

The number of Probation offenders admitted to WEC continues to decrease. IN FY 2011, Probation offenders were 45.92% of the admissions to WEC. In FY 2012 they were 34.44% of the admissions. In FY 2013, Probation offenders were 3.99% of the admissions. In FY 2014, Probation offenders were .82% of the admissions. In FY 2015 Probation offenders were .93% of WEC admissions. FY 2016, FY 2017, FY 2018, and FY 2019 there were no Probation offenders.

In April 2012 it was determined female inmates would no longer be transferred to WEC and would receive program offerings through other department avenues.

The WEC is continually exploring avenues to expand its vocational and recreation opportunities for its population. Increasing both opportunities contribute greatly to occupational opportunities upon release and more constructive use of free time while at the WEC.

The WEC is in its eighteenth year of operation. Through utilizing preventive maintenance, equipment and fixtures have reached their expected years of service are still in operation. This will continue to increase basic maintenance and replacement costs. It will be necessary to establish a replacement schedule based on priority needs basis as funds become available.

SUMMARY

The makeup of WEC has changed. Due to the change in the makeup of the WEC population as reflected in the lower numbers of Probation offenders admitted to the WEC, and the implementation of LB 83, LB 274, and LB 340, the original concept is evolving. The focus and goal of the Work Ethic Camp remains to reduce recidivism by providing quality programming.

The Work Ethic Camp is a vital component in the sentencing continuum available within the Department of Correctional Services. It provides structure and programs necessary for offenders

and inmates to gain the tools needed to lead a law-abiding life and to establish and maintain steady and legal employment.