

NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICES
WORK ETHIC CAMP
LEGISLATIVE REPORT
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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. Neb. Rev. Stat. § 83-4,147 requires that the Nebraska Department of Correctional Services (NDCS) provide an annual progress report to the Nebraska Legislature. The WEC began accepting probation 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 WEC program. On August 30, 2009, LB274 was passed, giving the Director of NDCS discretion to place inmates at WEC. Inmates transferred to WEC under this law are promoted to community custody upon successful completion of the WEC program.

INTRODUCTION

The Work Ethic Camp, originally designated as an incarceration work camp, was designed to reduce prison overcrowding and make prison bed 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 WEC 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 to assist 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 ethic and behavior can be learned and transferred to other areas of an individual's life. The WEC offers outpatient and intensive outpatient substance abuse programming along with work experience, education, cognitive restructuring, and life skills programs to enhance positive work ethic. Specifics regarding vocational, educational, and life skills offerings will be referenced later in the Programs section.

Historically, the WEC was for male and female probation offenders who were referred by probation officers through the sentencing District Court, 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 discharged in April, 2013. To be assigned to WEC, offenders/inmates cannot have a history of sexual assaults or have certain Part I violent offenses on their records, and the offender must have been convicted as an adult of a felony offense. The facility does not accept referrals from juvenile courts or county courts in Nebraska. In early September 2019, LB 340 went into effect prohibiting courts from using the WEC for placement of felony offenders as a condition of a sentence of intense supervised probation. Since September 2019, the WEC houses only male inmates at the discretion of the Director of NDCS.

NDCS inmates housed at WEC are classified as minimum custody. The staff at the WEC are NDCS employees. Prior to placement at WEC, inmates are screened utilizing the STRONG-R assessment tool. This tool identifies each inmate's criminogenic needs to ensure that each case plan targets the specific needs of the inmate. Probation, Parole, and NDCS have partnered to provide a seamless transition between each of these agencies. This partnership is critical to the success of this facility.

The length of stay for NDCS inmates varies depending on an inmate’s sentence structure and parole eligibility date. Inmates who successfully complete the WEC receive release on parole at their earliest parole eligibility date, release on their mandatory discharge date, or custody promotion to community corrections. Inmates who do not complete the WEC program successfully may be transferred to other NDCS institutions with their parole status determined by the Nebraska Parole Board, be demoted in custody to the appropriate level, or both. The facility, which now has 200 beds, develops a case plan for each individual based upon his identified needs. Inmates do not have access to cash while at the facility and tobacco products are prohibited. Only approved visitors are allowed to visit and may visit once per week. Phone calls are restricted to one hour per day.

REFERRALS, ADMISSIONS, AND DISCHARGES AT WEC

One of the issues referenced in previous annual reports has been the underutilization of the WEC. As illustrated in Table 1.0 – Number of Offenders/ Inmates at WEC, June 30th, Each Year Since 2001, from the time the facility opened in 2001 until November 5, 2008, the facility was below capacity, which at that time was 100 individuals.

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
2020	196

As Table 1.0 indicates, legislative action and efforts by the department have resulted in an increase in the number of inmates at the WEC in the past few years. The increase in numbers 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, 2020, a total of 7,040 offenders/inmates have been admitted to the WEC.

**Table 1.1 – Number of Admissions per Year to the WEC
from April 30, 2001, Through September 30, 2020**

<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	425	35.4
2020	334	37.1
TOTAL	7040	30.2

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 2020, 4,793 inmates have been admitted to WEC.

**Table 1.2 – Number of Discharges per Year from the WEC
April 30, 2001 to September 30, 2020**

<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	410	34.2
2020	360	40.0
TOTAL	6867	29.5

As illustrated in Table 1.2, of the 7,040 offenders/inmates admitted, a total of 6,867 have, to date, been discharged from the facility.

Table 1.3 – Number of Successful Discharges per Year from the WEC – April 30, 2001 to September 30, 2020, details the number of successful discharges annually. During the time period under review, 81.6% or 5,603 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, 2020**

<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	348	29.0
2020	318	35.3
TOTAL	5603	24.0

As shown in Table 1.4 – Number of Unsuccessful Discharges per Year from the WEC – April 30, 2001 to September 30, 2020, a total of 934 offenders/inmates were not successful during the time period under review. This represents 13.6% of the total number of discharges.

**Table 1.4 – Number of Unsuccessful Discharges per Year from the WEC
April 30, 2001 to September 30, 2020**

<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	33	2.8
2020	14	1.6
TOTAL	934	4.0

PROGRAMS AT WEC

Employment

Neb. Rev. Stat. § 83-4,142 mandates that the WEC provide regimented, structured, disciplined programming. Inmates are assigned to jobs at the facility or may apply to specific jobs. Inmates are paid for their work once per month, promoting independence and budgeting of resources.

Work

Programs available at the WEC include supervised work crews, in which inmates are taken to work for various government agencies throughout Southwest Nebraska. Those agencies and organizations include the Department of Transportation, Nebraska Game and Parks, and county and city offices. 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 inmate workers do choose to participate in these rewarding volunteer opportunities. Examples of this type of work include 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 proven to be a significant benefit to the inmates as well as surrounding communities. Inmates have the

opportunity to reenter their home communities from the 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, 2020 summarizes offender/inmate labor at the WEC since the facility opened.

**Table 1.5 – Total Offender/Inmate Labor Hours at the Work Ethic Camp
April 30, 2001 to September 30, 2020**

<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
2020	16,549
TOTAL	467,190

It should be noted that the total number of work hours in 2011 through 2020 were lower than in previous years. This is due to budget modifications, which reduced road crew corporal positions at the WEC from eight to four. Additionally, total work hours do not include participation in non-profit organizations. During 2016, WEC was able to increase the road crew by two road crew corporal positions, bringing the number of team members to six. This has enabled the road crew inmate worker program to provide more work opportunities to inmates and better serve and support the surrounding communities.

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

Special Detail

The Special Detail Program provides inmates with the opportunity to work either on-site or off-site with intermittent, at least hourly supervision. The special detail positions available on-site are in the kitchen and warehouse/canteen. For an 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 is another main component of our program. The Adult Basic Education class assists inmates who are not high school graduates or who have deficits in educational abilities. Unless already established by another facility or agency, every inmate who enters the program undergoes testing to determine educational needs. Inmates who do not already have a diploma or GED, and are under 22 years of age, are required to attend Adult Basic Education classes to work toward improving academic skills and earning their diplomas or GEDs. The WEC has two full time teachers who provide educational instruction for WEC inmates.

One of the goals of the Education Department is to help inmates earn their diplomas or GEDs, which enhances their employment potential upon re-entry to the community.

Substance Abuse Treatment

Each inmate is assessed and evaluated at the Diagnostic and Evaluation Center (DEC) for substance abuse treatment needs and appropriate level of care. 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. Approximately 59 percent of the inmates at the WEC have been identified as needing substance abuse treatment.

The substance abuse program at the WEC is an outpatient or intensive outpatient program. 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 inmates. The intensity of each person's treatment is based upon the level of need. These sessions, which include group, individual, and educational sessions, focus on the impact of substance use and abuse. The groups use an educational approach to substance use and abuse covering topics like 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 how addiction impacts choices and behaviors.

Cognitive Non-Clinical Programming:

The WEC programming includes the following classes:

Moral Reconciliation 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 each participant's successful completion of the program's steps. There are 12 sessions in MRT, which are held once per week. MRT can generally be completed in 12 weeks.

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 for twenty-five sessions and uses a combination of approaches to increase inmates' awareness of self and others. Class participation, written assignments, and role playing reinforce skills that are taught and demonstrated by class facilitators. This deepened attentiveness to attitudes, beliefs, and thinking patterns is combined with explicit teaching of interpersonal skills relevant to offenders' present and future needs. Thinking for a Change can generally be completed in 12 weeks.

Ancillary Programs

Inside Out Dads connects inmate fathers to their families. The goal is 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 for release. Participants 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 is a skills based program with critical, concrete tools that help participants control their own relationships in ways that will lead to more enriching, more satisfying interactions with the people who matter in their lives. Themes include: knowing yourself first, smart love, and making your own decisions.

Beyond Anger is a four week curriculum which helps clients in institutional settings and community corrections address anger, reconciliation, and emotion management plus guidelines for daily living. Role playing and testimonials by 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 allows participants to identify sources of resentment and anger and develop strategies to move toward 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 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 the WEC still has trained staff and materials to offer this class, the focus had been on cognitive non-clinical referrals. Recently, the WEC began offering 7 Habits classes with two trained facilitators.

Intro To Business class is taught at the local community college by their staff with intermittent staff supervision provided by the WEC staff. Up to eight inmates are selected to participate in this class based upon good behavior, having sufficient time to complete the course,

compliance with their personalized case plan, and participants having a diploma or GED. Classes meet daily for approximately 3.25 hours a day for nine weeks. This course covers basic business skills and provides an introduction to small business management. Graduates receive nine hours of college credit at no cost. During 2020, we have not been able to offer these classes at the college due to either minimal interest of qualified persons or COVID restrictions.

ABC OSHA (Associated Builders & Contractors) classes provides 10 hours each of General Construction and General Industry instruction on the rights and responsibilities in maintaining a safe workplace while working productively. This grant-funded class is taught at the 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 America 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 tool sets to create small projects to present for grading and feedback. These grant-funded classes are also taught at the WEC in a classroom by a contracted instructor. Each course is a two-hour class, meeting twice a week for six weeks. Due to COVID restrictions, only two sessions of the 10 hour OSHA course and one session of Construction Math course were available in 2020.

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. Due to COVID restrictions, this course was not available in 2020.

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 re-entry. These courses include First Aid/CPR, OSHA Four Hazard, Fork Lift Certification, and CDL Preparation. Due to COVID, participation at Mid Plains Community College has been temporarily suspended.

Incentive Program

One key goal at the WEC is to create an environment that encourages positive change. Each 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 inmate who meets the established criteria may earn increasing rewards depending upon the level achieved. There are four levels available: Bronze, Silver, Gold, and Platinum.

Recreation

In the spring of 2010, a full time recreation specialist was added to the WEC staff. 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 has actively scheduled and supervised recreational activities. Yard equipment can be checked out and used by inmates at the WEC on a daily basis and a large shade shelter was added on the yard for inmates as well as a handball court. The recreation specialist position is open at the time of this report, as the previous person was promoted.

Library is offered daily for those who enjoy reading. The WEC also utilizes 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 inmate population. Religious ground has been identified for use to accommodate inmates’ religious preferences. Religious programs are provided for those inmates who wish to participate. Religious study groups (run by inmates) are offered for groups that have no community volunteer associated with those religions.

Visiting

Visiting is scheduled on Saturdays and Sundays (based on inmates’ last names) for inmates with approved visitors. Inmates may apply for special, emergency, or extended visits based on criteria established in regulations. Inmates are provided with the general rules and dress codes which they may mail to their visitors ahead of time. The WEC recognizes the value in maintaining and repairing family relationships, and its benefit in a successful re-entry to society. The WEC staff recognizes the distance that some families must travel to visit and have made efforts to make the visit experience more family-friendly. There are toys and games available for different age groups. Craft activities are also available. Due to COVID restrictions, there were months in 2020 that visits were not available, or were available with preventative precautions in place.

INMATE DISCIPLINE ACTIVITY

There have been 446 releases from the WEC during fiscal year 2020 (July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020). Within that same time period, 59 inmates were removed prior to successfully completing the program. Individuals at the WEC can be removed via two mechanisms. First, inmates can be removed if determined to be a threat to themselves or others, or if they threaten to escape. The second mechanism is through serious or repeated violations of the WEC rules. As a result, they will be returned to the Diagnostic and Evaluation (DEC) facility and will be reclassified to a higher custody level. For success in the program, inmates must also demonstrate adequate institutional adjustment.

Inmates during fiscal year 2020 have been removed for the following reasons:

<u>Reason for Removal</u>	<u>Number of Offender/Inmates</u>
Unsuccessful Discharges	30
Medical/Mental Health	10
Escape	1
Other	18
(Programming needs, new criminal charges, safety issues)	
TOTAL	59

Removals from the program decreased over the last fiscal year by a total of 16.9%. At the same time total admissions for the last fiscal year increased by a total of 24.9%. WEC staff continues to develop ways to effectively deal with disruptive behavior.

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

Inmates who are transferred to the 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 the WEC prior to their parole 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 Nebraska Board of Parole will be notified of such incidents for those who are pending parole.

COMMUNITY REINTEGRATION

NDCS inmates successfully discharged from the WEC are 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 and conditions of probation are set by the courts. The WEC staff prepare parole guideline reports for inmates who are under consideration for parole. A STRONG-R is completed on all inmates at the WEC which establishes individual needs and assists in creating appropriate goals to reduce recidivism. Reentry staff 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 the WEC, reentry preparation and support become the focus. WEC staff and reentry 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 \$7.932 million annual budget. The average daily population for the WEC in fiscal year 2020 was 186.

The data in Table 1.6 – WEC Admissions July 2019 to June 2020 shows the number of inmates sentenced to the WEC per month during fiscal year 2020.

Table 1.6 – WEC Admissions July 2019 to June 2020

<u>Admission Month</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Admission Month</u>	<u>Number</u>
July 2019	31	January 2020	51
August 2019	68	February 2020	32
September 2019	37	March 2020	38
October 2019	41	April 2020	38
November 2019	34	May 2020	35
December 2019	40	June 2020	45
TOTAL		490	

During the same time period, 446 offenders/inmates were released from the WEC. As Table 1.7 – Work Ethic Camp Releases July 2019 to June 2020 shows, 86.8% or 387 inmates were released successfully.

Table 1.7 – Work Ethic Camp Releases July 2019 to June 2020

<u>Release Type</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Successful	387	86.77
Program Failure	30	6.73
Medical/Mental Health	10	2.24
Escape	1	0.22
Other	18	4.04
TOTAL	446	100

Table 1.7 also indicates that there were 30 inmates, or 6.73%, who could be considered program failures. Ten inmates (2.24%) left the program for medical/mental health reasons, and 18 inmates (4.04%) 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 Inmate Sentenced to the Work Ethic Camp, the basic concept behind the construction of the WEC continues to pay dividends for Nebraska.

Given that the judge must make a finding that absent the WEC 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 Inmate Sentenced to the Work Ethic Camp

<u>Fiscal Year 2020</u>	<u>Average Cost</u>
Average Cost per Inmate in State Prison (Incarcerated)	\$40,828
Average Cost per Inmate at WEC (Based on # of Admissions per Year)	\$16,371
TOTAL COST SAVINGS PER INMATE	\$22,206

Using the data from Table 1.8, the 334 inmates successfully discharged from the WEC during FY 2020 have saved Nebraska taxpayers a total of \$7,439,010.

ISSUES

The number of probation offenders admitted to the WEC continues to decrease. In FY2011, probation offenders were 45.92% of the admissions to the 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. In FY 2016, FY 2017, FY 2018, FY 2019, and FY 2020 there were no probation offenders.

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

The WEC continually explores new avenues to expand vocational and recreation opportunities for its population. Increasing both types of opportunities contributes greatly to the inmate's occupational opportunities upon release and to more constructive use of free time while at the WEC.

The WEC is in its 19th year of operation. Through the use of preventive maintenance, equipment and fixtures continue to remain in operation. However, they have reached their expected years of service. That is a situation which will continue to increase basic maintenance and/or replacement costs. It will be necessary to establish a replacement schedule based on priority and need, as funds become available.

SUMMARY

The makeup of the WEC has changed. Due to the implementation of LB 83, LB 274, and LB 340, the original concept is evolving. The focus and goal of the WEC remains to reduce recidivism by providing quality programming.

The WEC is a vital component in the sentencing continuum. It provides the structure and programs necessary for inmates to gain the tools to lead a law-abiding life and to establish and maintain steady and legal employment.

