

Dr. Jonathan W. Gassett

Jon Gassett came to the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources in 1999 to run the state's white-tailed deer program and oversee the fledgling elk restoration project. Gassett, a Ph.D.-level biologist and skilled communicator, became head of the wildlife division in 2001, was selected as interim commissioner in the spring of 2005, and then became the full-time commissioner in June 2005.

Gassett's goals as Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Commissioner include continued efforts to increase the amount of land available to the public for hunting, fishing, and wildlife associated recreation. He also aggressively works to increase participation in hunting and fishing in the state.

Gassett, a certified wildlife biologist, received his undergraduate degree in biology from Kennesaw State University, and his master's degree and doctorate in forest resources from the University of Georgia. He is Kentucky's first commissioner to have a doctoral degree.

He currently serves as President for the Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (MAFWA). He served as past President for the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA). His memberships include The Wildlife Society, Professional member of the Boone & Crockett Club, the Wildlife Disease Association, the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, the American Society of Mammalogists, Gamma Sigma Delta Honor Society of Agriculture, Xi Sigma Pi Honor Society of Forestry and the Quality Deer Management Association.

He is a SCUBA diver, whitewater kayaker, and a private pilot.