

Approved: 3-19-97  
Date

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT.

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Steve Lloyd at 3:30 p.m. on March 10, 1997 in Room 526-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except: Rep. Kent Glasscock - excused  
Rep. Richard Alldritt - excused

Committee staff present: Raney Gilliland, Legislative Research Department  
Hank Avila, Legislative Research Department  
Mary Torrence, Revisor of Statutes  
Mary Ann Graham, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee: Ray Aslin, State Forester

Others attending: See attached list

Chairman Steve Lloyd called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m. He reviewed the agenda for the remainder of the week. He opened public hearing on **SB 365**:

**SB 365:** **An act changing the name of the office of state and extension forestry to the Kansas forest service; relating to the powers and duties thereof; amending K.S.A. 1996 Supp. 76-425a, 76-425c, 76-425d, 76-425f and 82a-326 and repealing the existing sections.**

Raney Gilliland, Legislative Research Department, explained the bill.

The Chairman welcomed Ray Aslin, State Forester, to the committee. He testified that **SB 365** will clearly identify the Kansas Forest Service as the state forestry agency and make it comparable with natural resource agencies and organizations with which they work. (See Attachment 1) Discussion and questions followed.

The Chairman, hearing no others to testify, closed the hearing on **SB 365**. He announced that this bill may have final action on Thursday, March 13.

The meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for March 11, 1997






## Cooperative Extension Service

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TO: The Honorable Steve Lloyd, Chairperson  
House Committee on Environment

FROM: Ray Aslin   
State Forester

DATE: March 10, 1997

SUBJECT: SB 365 - Kansas Forest Service

Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee; I am Ray Aslin, State Forester with Kansas State and Extension Forestry at Kansas State University. I appreciate the opportunity to testify before your Committee regarding SB 365, updating the Kansas Forest Resource Statutes.

As the State Forestry Agency in Kansas, we provide technical assistance to:

- (1) landowners in the stewardship of their woodlands as it relates to long-term management in harvesting timber products, improving young stands of trees, expanding the resource with tree planting, controlling soil erosion, improving water quality, enhancing wildlife habitat and providing recreational opportunities;
- (2) the forest industry in better utilization of wood and markets for their products;
- (3) communities in tree management and care and tree planting on public property; and
- (4) rural fire departments in training and equipping volunteers for safety and improved fire fighting capabilities. In addition, we have a state forest nursery where we produce and distribute low cost tree and shrub seedlings for conservation plantings across the state.

Surprising to many, Kansas has a rich history and long tradition in forestry. For a "prairie state", Kansas has a significant forest resource. Natural woodlands occupy approximately 1.5 million acres; most of it in the eastern third of the state. The annual timber harvest for Kansas is estimated to be 25 million board feet providing an annual income to farmers and other landowners of \$7.5 to \$10 million. The primary processing of logs into secondary products, the sale of secondary products and the utilization of these products in the final manufacturing process provides \$75 to \$100 million annually in economic benefits to the Kansas economy.

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In addition to these natural forests, Kansas has a sizable planted forest. Kansans have always been tree planters from the beginning of settlement. It is estimated that over 260,000 acres in Kansas have been planted to trees for farmstead windbreaks, field shelterbelts, Christmas trees, fuelwood, soil erosion control, filter strips and other multiple benefits.

In 1887, the first state forestry organization was created by the state legislature; the 5th state in the union to do so. This was "An act to establish the office of Commissioner of Forestry ... and to encourage the planting and growing of forest trees in the state ..." A new state forestry law, in 1909, established a division of forestry in Kansas State University. This forestry division was under the supervision of a State Forester appointed by the College Board of Regents. In 1936, the first Extension Farm Forester was employed in the state, half-time by the Kansas State University Extension Division and half-time by the Agricultural Experiment Station. The Extension Forester was officially designated State Forester, in 1961, with overall responsibility for the state forestry program. In 1965, the Kansas Legislature then brought the state forestry legislation up-to-date and more clearly defined the scope and responsibilities of the forestry program as administered by the Office of Extension Forestry. The 1965 Forest Resource Statutes were again up-dated in 1993, in HB 2436, to change the name to "State and Extension Forestry" and included responsibilities for urban and community forestry, nonpoint source pollution control and riparian protection and the establishment of our state forest nursery.

The 1993 Forest Resource Statutes that we are operating under are in need of updating to more clearly reflect our forestry programs and responsibilities now and in the future. Our current official title "State and Extension Forestry" does not accurately describe the work we do as the State Forestry agency. Technical assistance and service to the people and forest resources of this state are the focus of our state forestry programs we administer through a cooperative agreement with the USDA Forest Service. Therefore, we are recommending our title be changed to the "Kansas Forest Service".

Senate Bill 365 will identify the Kansas Forest Service as the state forestry agency to the public and other federal, state and local natural resource agencies and organizations. It maintains the Kansas Forest Service at Kansas State University in the College of Agriculture but separates it from the Cooperative Extension Service. Program roles and responsibilities between state forestry and Extension forestry will be more clearly delineated. State appropriated funding for the Kansas Forest Service provided by the Kansas Legislature will continue to be included in the Extension Service and Agricultural Research Program (ESARP) budget.

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Historically, one full-time equivalent (FTE) Extension forestry position existed within Kansas State and Extension Forestry. The tenths, however, were placed on a number of foresters throughout the state. With the name change to the Kansas

Forest Service, the one FTE will be consolidated in an Extension forestry position to be located in the Department of Horticulture, Forestry and Recreation Resources under the supervision of the Department Head. This position will be responsible for conducting Extension forestry educational programs across Kansas.

Senate Bill 365 will clearly identify the Kansas Forest Service as the state forestry agency and make it comparable with natural resource agencies and organizations with which we work. It will also clarify roles and responsibilities in carrying out the programs set forth in the Kansas Forest Resource Statutes.