

Approved: 2-10-98
Date

MINUTES OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE.

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Steve Morris at 10:00 a.m. on February 5, 1998 in Room 423-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except:

Committee staff present: Raney Gilliland, Legislative Research Department
Jill Wolters, Revisor of Statutes
Nancy Kippes, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Jamie Clover Adams, Legislative Liaison
Tracy Streeter, Executive Director, State Conservation Commission
Ray Aslin, State Forester, Kansas Forest Service
Steve Williams, Secretary, Department of Wildlife and Parks
Dan Thalmann, Kansas Audubon Council
Bill Fuller, Associate Director, Public Affairs Division, Kansas Farm Bureau
Charles Benjamin, Sierra Club

Others attending: See attached list

Senator Biggs made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 3 and 4 meetings as submitted. Senator Umbarger seconded. Motion carried.

SB 523: **State Conservation Commission's Kansas Water Quality Buffer Initiative**

Jamie Clover Adams, Legislative Liaison, appeared before the Committee in support of **SB 523**. She stated the Kansas Water Quality Buffer Initiative is a voluntary, incentive based program in an attempt to address non-point sources of pollution (Attachment 1). The first component will be payments to landowners in the Upper Black Vermillion watershed and the Grasshopper Creek watershed through long-term contracts to implement the program. Ms. Adams advised the second component of the Initiative involves a property tax incentive for landowners across the state to install buffer strips.

Tracy Streeter, Executive Director, State Conservation Commission, testified in support of **SB 523** (Attachment 2). He advised the Committee that the State Conservation Commission is the agency responsible for the administration of the Kansas Water Quality Buffer Initiative and along with other state and federal agencies, they have begun developing the procedures which will govern this voluntary, incentive-based initiative. The Buffer Initiative is being designed to complement the existing Conservation Reserve Program emphasis on Riparian Buffers and Filter Strips. Mr. Streeter provided an illustration to show how payments would be calculated in each of the targeted watersheds and a map of the Lower Republican Basin.

Ray Aslin, Kansas Forest Service, in support of **SB 523**, made remarks centering around the Kansas Forest Service's interest and work in riparian forest buffers, the importance of maintaining healthy riparian forest buffers and the need to reestablish trees along streams and rivers across the state to improve water quality (Attachment 3). He advised the Committee the State's investment in forest buffers will be a good water quality investment, as it has been proven from past agricultural incentive programs that tree plantings, once established, stay on the land and provide long term public benefits.

Steve Williams, Secretary, Department of Wildlife and Parks, testified in support of **SB 523** (Attachment 4). Mr. Williams stated that the bill would help lead to restoration of riparian areas and, consequently, would help protect the water quality in Kansas.

Dan Thalmann, Kansas Audubon Council, appeared before the Committee in support of **SB 523** (Attachment 5). He advised the Kansas Water Quality Buffer Initiative would improve water quality, increase habitat for

CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, Room 423-S Statehouse, at 10:00 a.m. on February 5, 1997.

wildlife and provide incentives for farmers.

Bill Fuller, Kansas Farm Bureau, supported **SB 523** inasmuch as it's purpose would be to filter out sediment, pesticides and other contaminants before they wash into the rivers and streams of the State during rainfall events, and the program is voluntary and incentive based (Attachment 6). Mr. Fuller stated Kansas Farm Bureau has begun a new program statewide to inform and promote conservation buffers.

Charles Benjamin, Kansas Chapter of the Sierra Club and the Kansas Natural Resource Council, appeared before the Committee in support of **SB 523** and approved the approach of the program which contains voluntary aspects and which relies upon positive incentives.

Written testimony in support of **SB 523** was provided by Doug Wareham, Kansas Fertilizer and Chemical Association (Attachment 7), Joe Lieber, Kansas Cooperative Council (Attachment 8), and Farmland Industries, Inc. (Attachment 9).

The next meeting is scheduled for February 10, 1998.

SENATE AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE GUEST LIST

DATE: 2/5/98

NAME	REPRESENTING
Ray Aslin	KANSAS FOREST SERVICE, KSU
Steven Graham	K-State Research & Extension
GREVE WILLIAMS	KDWP
Tom Stiles	KWO
Wendy Harms	KS Aggregate Producers' Assn.
Dale Lambley	KS. Dept of Agric.
Blake Henning	State Conservation Commission
Al LeDoux	KWO
Joe Lieber	KS Co-op Council
Mar Marty Vanier	KS Ag Alliance
Bill Fuller	Kansas Farm Bureau
Carole Jordan	KIDA
Charles Argaman	KNRC / KS Sierra Club
Dan Thelmann	Kansas Audubon Council
Ken Murray	SEN. EMERY'S OFF.
Sabrina Wells	Div. of the Budget
Tracy Stutz	Cons. Comm.
Judy Molen	Ks. Assoc of Counties
Gene & White	KCGA

Mike Beem
 Jamie Clover Adams

KS LUSTK ASSN.
 GOVERNOR'S OFFICE

STATE OF KANSAS

BILL GRAVES, Governor
State Capitol, 2nd Floor
Topeka, Kansas 66612-1590



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OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

MEMORANDUM

TO: House Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture & Natural Resources

FROM: Jamie Clover Adams, Legislative Liaison *Jamie*

DATE: 4 February 1998

SUBJECT: Support for S.B. 523

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear this morning in support of Senate Bill 523. As you know, the Governor announced \$800,000 in funding for this Initiative during the State of the State message last month. Tracy Streeter, Executive Director of the State Conservation Commission will follow me today to explain how the Administration envisions implementation of this program.

Kansas has made great strides in improving water quality over the past 25 years. The main focus of these pollution control efforts has been point sources of pollution, i.e., industrial facilities and municipalities that discharge from pipes. Governor Graves understands that the remaining pollution problems cannot be addressed in this command and control manner. To address non-point sources of pollution -- runoff from agricultural land, and urban streets and lawns -- will require working side-by-side with landowners and citizens through voluntary, incentive based programs.

The Kansas Water Quality Buffer Initiative is one such voluntary, incentive based program. It provides an incentive to landowners for creating a buffer to protect rivers and streams from pollution. A buffer is an area of stream side vegetation along any perennial or intermittent stream that is at least 66 feet wide and no more than 150 feet wide. Its purpose is to filter out sediment, pesticides, and other pollutants that might wash into rivers and streams during rainfall events.

The Kansas Water Quality Buffer Initiative has two components. One portion of the Initiative will target the Upper Black Vermillion watershed located in portions of Marshall and Nemaha Counties, and the Grasshopper Creek watershed, which is located in portions of Atchinson and Brown Counties. These areas were selected as a result of monitoring data from the Governor's Water Quality Initiative reflecting elevated levels of Atrazine (Grasshopper

*Senate Agriculture
February 5, 1998
Attachment 1*

Creek) and fecal coliform (Black Vermillion). The Conservation Commission will enter into long-term contracts with landowners to implement the program. The payments will be per acre rental payments in exchange for landowners planting these riparian areas with grass and/or trees. Our goal is to enroll at least 50 stream miles -- about 1,200 acres. We believe this incentive, along with the USDA's Buffer Initiative through the Conservation Reserve Program will be an enough to persuade landowners to install buffer strips.

The Administration intends to use this program to test the effectiveness of buffer strips in preventing pollution. Water monitoring locations currently used in the Governor's Water Quality Initiative will be used to collect data near these buffers.

The second component of this Initiative involves a property tax incentive for landowners across the state to install buffer strips. The proposal changes the classification of these strips from cropland to grassland. Since grassland is assessed at a lower rate, it will provide landowners with additional incentive to protect streams and rivers across the state. Attached is a comparison of several soil types in the target area. The current categorization of these lands provides no incentive to restore stream side areas since the land is taxed at cropland values whether it is earning income or is planted to grass and/or trees.

On behalf of the Governor, I respectfully request Committee approval of S.B. 523. Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have on the program.

Buffer Strip Value Comparison						
County	Soil Names	Dry Crop Value/Acre (dollars)	Grass Value/Acre (dollars)	Percent Change	Tax Reduction/Acre	Average Rural Levy
Atchison		<i>see report</i>				104.748
	Judson silt loam, 2-7 % slopes	\$290	\$147	-49%	\$4.49	
	Kennebec silt loam	\$370	\$147	-60%	\$7.01	
	Wabash silty clay loam	\$140	\$147	5%	(\$0.22)	
Brown						114.244
	Judson silt loam, flood plains	\$420	\$143	-66%	\$9.49	
	Judson silt loam, 3-10 % slope	\$340	\$143	-58%	\$6.75	
	Shelby clay loam, 4-10 % slope	\$245	\$81	-67%	\$5.62	
Marshall						107.456
	Eudora silt loam	\$280	\$81	-71%	\$6.42	
	Morrill loam, 1-4 % slope	\$230	\$144	-37%	\$2.77	
	Muir silt loam	\$230	\$81	-65%	\$4.80	
Nemaha						104.893
	Chase silty clay loam	\$290	\$148	-49%	\$4.47	
	Reading silt loam	\$345	\$148	-57%	\$6.20	
	Olmitz loam, 1-5 % slope	\$290	\$84	-71%	\$6.48	

1-3

1-3



State Conservation Commission

109 SW 9th Street
Suite 500, Mills Building
Topeka, KS 66612-1299

Telephone: (785) 296-3600 • Fax 785) 296-6172

MEMORANDUM

TO: Senate Agriculture Committee
FROM: Tracy Streater, Executive Director
DATE: February 5, 1998
SUBJECT: Senate Bill 523

Tracy Streater

On behalf of the State Conservation Commission, I appear before you in support of Senate Bill 523. As the state agency responsible for the administration of the Kansas Water Quality Buffer Initiative, the Commission and other state and federal agencies have begun developing the procedures which will govern this voluntary, incentive-based initiative. Those participating in the development of the Initiative include the Governor's Office, Departments of Agriculture, Health and Environment and Wildlife and Parks, Water Office, Kansas State University, Kansas Forest Service, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and Farm Service Agency. Initial input has also been obtained from county conservation districts in the targeted areas of the Governor's Water Quality Initiative.

The Buffer Initiative is being designed to complement the existing Conservation Reserve Program emphasis on Riparian Buffers and Filter Strips. These two conservation practices have documented benefits for reducing runoff and filtering sediment and other pollutants from runoff flow. Research conducted by KSU at the Foster Farm north of Rossville has indicated that a grass buffer, in conjunction with other conservation practices such as terraces and crop residues can reduce pesticide loading by as much as 50 percent. Research on vegetative filter strips in Indiana, Virginia, Maryland and Iowa has shown filter strips can remove 56 to 97 percent of sediment transported through runoff, depending on the filter strip width and the area draining to the filter strip. Other benefits of these practices include streambank stabilization, increased wildlife habitat and reduced flooding.

Current efforts under the Governor's Water Quality Initiative have focused on upland treatments and best management practices to address cropland erosion, confined livestock facilities, failing onsite wastewater systems and pesticide application. Assistance is also available to establish riparian buffers and filter strips. However, current incentives to establish these practices do not supplant the income lost by converting areas suitable for the practices from crop production to permanent vegetation. Federal rules under CRP prohibit the harvest of a hay crop or grazing without penalty on enrolled acres.

*Senate Agriculture
February 5, 1998
Attachment 2*

As mentioned, the Initiative is being designed to complement the federal Conservation Reserve Program. CRP, under the Continuous Sign-Up Provision, offers cost-share assistance to establish buffers and filter strips and provides rental payments to participants for up to 15 years, depending upon the type of vegetation established. The Buffer Initiative will further enhance rental payments received from the federal government by providing a state supplemental rental payment for acres enrolled in targeted watersheds.

The incentives offered through the CRP are based upon established soil rental rates for each county. For example, soil rental rates in Marshall County range from \$38 to \$73 per acre. Rates in Brown County range from \$49 to \$95 per acre. Participants may also receive up to a 20 percent bonus incentive from the CRP depending upon the type of conservation practices enrolled.

It is proposed that the Buffer Initiative further enhance these rental payments as follows:

- If trees are established as a riparian buffer, the state will enhance the federal rental rate by 50 percent.
- If grasses are established as a riparian buffer or filter strip, the state will enhance the federal rental rate by 30 percent.
- The total rental payment resulting from the state enhancement would not exceed \$150 per acre.

Illustrated below are two examples of how payments would be calculated in each of the targeted watersheds:

	<u>Upper Black Vermillion</u>	<u>Grasshopper Creek</u>
Soil type:	Kennebec	Judson
Practice selected:	Riparian buffers w/ trees	Grass filter strip
Years enrolled:	15	10
Acres enrolled:	25	25
Base federal rental rate/acre/year:	\$69	\$95
Bonus federal rental rate/acre/year:	\$13.80	\$19
Total federal rental rate/acre/year:	\$82.80	\$114
State rental rate/acre/year:	\$41.40	\$34.20
Total federal/state rate/acre/year:	\$124.20	\$148.20

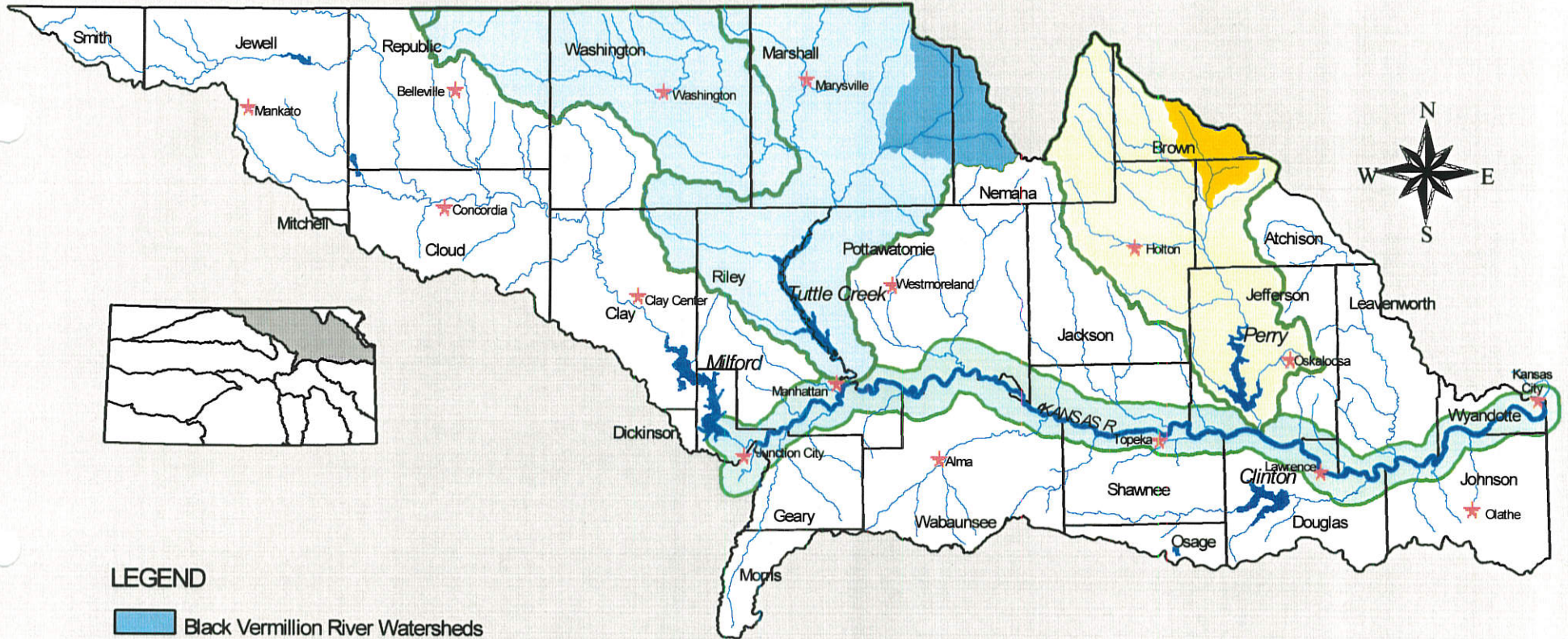
Under these examples, the Conservation Commission would enter into a FY 1999 contract with the participants for \$15,525 in the Upper Black Vermillion and \$8,550 in Grasshopper Creek. The participants, by enrolling 25 acres, would receive an annual payment of \$1,035 (25 * \$41.40) and \$855 (25 * \$34.20), respectively.

I hope my testimony clearly describes the benefits of the Kansas Water Quality Buffer Initiative and outlines the proposed process for its operation. I thank you for the opportunity to appear in support of SB 523 and will stand for questions.

GOVERNOR'S WATER QUALITY INITIATIVE

Kansas - Lower Republican Basin

2-23



LEGEND

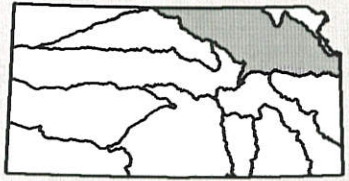
- Black Vermillion River Watersheds
- Big & Little Blue Rivers Subbasins (Tuttle Drainage)
- Grasshopper Creek Watershed
- Delaware River Subbasin (Perry Drainage)
- Kansas River Corridor

DATA SOURCES:

Basin Boundaries - KWO/NRCS
 Political Boundaries - KGS/KCDB
 Hydrology Features - EPA River Reach 1 File

Governor's Water Quality Initiative, February 1998

This map intended for planning purposes only.



4-5

February 5, 1998

TO: Senate Committee on Agriculture
Steven R. Morris, Chairperson

FROM: Ray Aslin
State Forester



DATE: February 5, 1998

SUBJECT: SB 523 - An Act Concerning Conservation; Relating to the Kansas Water Quality Buffer Initiative

Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee; I am Ray Aslin, State Forester, with the Kansas Forest Service. I appreciate the opportunity to testify before your Committee in support of SB 523, an act relating to the Kansas Water Quality Buffer Initiative.

As the State Forestry Agency in Kansas, the Kansas Forest Service is responsible for statewide programs in rural forestry, community forestry, rural fire and conservation tree planting. My remarks today will center on our interest and work in riparian forest buffers, the importance of maintaining healthy riparian forest buffers and the need to reestablish trees along streams and rivers across the state to improve water quality.

The Kansas Water Quality Buffer Initiative could not be coming at a better time. At no time in my 22 year career as a forester in Kansas have I ever seen a better opportunity for conservation work especially dealing with environmentally sensitive lands such as riparian areas. Federal and state agencies and private organizations and associations are working more closely than ever before to protect and improve these areas. Agri-businesses have also made a commitment to riparian buffer establishment and have formed a National Conservation Buffer Council. Companies such as Cargill, Farmland Industries, Pioneer, Con-Agri and Monsanto, who all work in Kansas, have committed to promote conservation buffers with producers they work with. They want to see buffers established on private lands through voluntary efforts because of the important benefits they provide and also to make sure agriculture is not hindered by future environmental regulation.



*Senate Agriculture
February 5, 1998
Attachment 3*

The Kansas Forest Service has focused its rural forestry program on riparian areas for the past ten years. Riparian areas support our prime commercial forests and it is in these areas where proper forest management has its greatest benefit to landowners and the state as a whole. We have been working to protect existing forest land associated with streams and rivers and where feasible, planting trees and shrubs in combination with grass strips to build riparian buffers to help filter runoff from nearby cropland, thus improving water quality. Based on current research, properly designed forest buffers located along streams and rivers improve water quality by reducing nitrogen entry into surface waters by 80 to 99%, phosphate by 50% and sediment by 85%. Pesticide entry is also reduced by 90%. In addition, tree roots stabilize stream banks and reduce soil erosion.

Tree buffers are excellent wildlife habitat, providing food, cover and travel corridors. They shade streams and rivers by lowering water temperature and improving habitat for fish and other aquatic wildlife. Lower water temperature increases the presence of oxygen, reduces evaporation and reduces the release of unwanted chemicals from sediment. Tree buffers function as transformers when bacteria and fungi located in the buffers convert chemicals in runoff from adjacent fields into forms usable by plants. Trees buffers composed of black walnut, bur oak, green ash and hackberry that normally grow well in riparian areas can be a good economic investment. Properly managed buffers can provide an important long term economic return to the landowner in the form of wood products.

In spite of these benefits, riparian buffers can be a hard sell to private landowners. In a recent study, 80% of the landowners surveyed did not consider buffers to be an option as a conservation practice. I believe the reason they are not considered is because riparian areas usually contain the best soils on the farm and are used for agricultural crop production. Agricultural producers operate on a small profit margin and to become active in buffer establishment economic incentives are needed to encourage their participation.

Currently, we have not found the right form of incentives to entice landowners to implement buffers in riparian areas. By using state funds in designated focus areas to enhance federal funds under the Conservation Reserve Program, I believe the right incentive will be provided for landowner participation and on-the-ground project implementation.

The State's investment in forest buffers will be a good water quality investment. It has been proven from past agricultural incentive programs that tree plantings, once established, stay on the land and provide long term public benefits.

The Kansas Forest Service will play an active role in promoting the Water Quality Buffer Initiative, preparing forest buffer practice plans for landowners and assisting them with practice implementation. Because of the important benefits that forest buffers provide, a buffer initiative supported with state funding to enhance an existing federal program will go a long way in providing the necessary incentive for landowners to implement forest buffer practices that the state will reap the benefits from for many years to come.



STATE OF KANSAS
DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE & PARKS

Office of the Secretary
900 SW Jackson, Suite 502
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Testimony for Senate Bill 523

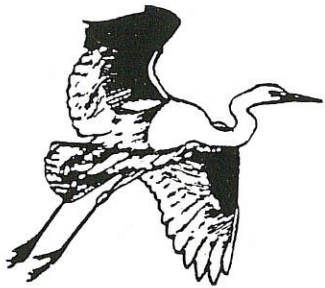
Presented to: Senate Committee on Agriculture

Provided by: Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks

Date: February 5, 1998

The Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks supports the Kansas Water Quality Buffer Initiative, proposed as SB 523. As part of the Governor's Water Quality Initiative, the bill would help lead to restoration of riparian areas and, consequently, would help protect the water quality in Kansas. In addition, the Buffer Initiative can serve as a further example of the ability of public agencies to work together with agricultural producers and organizations to promote clean water. We believe SB 523 can be an important part of the state's efforts to protect and improve its valuable natural resources.

*Senate Agriculture
February 5, 1998
Attachment 4*



Kansas Audubon Council

February 5, 1998

Senate Agriculture Committee

Testimony on Buffer Initiative S523

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you *in support of the Kansas Water Quality Buffer Initiative, S523*. My name is Dan Thalmann, and I am here on behalf of the Kansas Audubon Council and the approximately 5000 Audubon members and their families throughout the state of Kansas. There are several positive impacts this legislation would have on the state of Kansas.

- **Improved water quality.**

Filter strips and riparian buffers would slow and/or stop sediment runoff and remove contaminants from water. The impact of these buffers would be measured by water monitoring stations near the proposed streams.

- **Increased habitat for wildlife.**

Riparian buffers and grass buffer strips would increase available habitat for birds and mammals. Grassland bird populations in particular are declining because of loss of habitat and this would be a certain benefit for them. Besides benefiting the animals, Kansans would benefit from more wildlife viewing opportunities which Audubon has particular interest in.

- **Incentives for farmers.**

This initiative would have numerous economic benefits for farmers. Per acre rental payments, lower taxes because of the change of designation from cropland to grassland, and possible further incentive through similar federal programs would all benefit the landowners. An added future incentive would be saving land that would otherwise be subject to bank erosion.



Recycled Paper

*Senate Agriculture
February 5, 1998
Attachment 5*



PUBLIC POLICY STATEMENT

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

RE: SB 523 – Developing the Kansas Water Quality Buffer Initiative

February 5, 1998
Topeka, Kansas

Prepared by:
Bill Fuller, Associate Director
Public Affairs Division
Kansas Farm Bureau

Chairman Morris and members of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, my name is Bill Fuller. I am the Associate Director of the Public Affairs Division for Kansas Farm Bureau.

SB 523 expands the Water Quality Initiative launched by Governor Bill Graves in 1995. The proposal creates the Kansas Water Quality Buffer Initiative. The purpose is to filter out sediment, pesticides and other contaminants before they wash into the rivers and streams of the State during rainfall events. The program is voluntary and incentive based.

The plan proposes to encourage landowners, rural and urban, to convert land adjacent to streams and rivers to riparian areas by planting grasses, shrubs and/or trees. Governor Graves earmarked

*Senate Agriculture
February 5, 1998
Attachment 6*

\$800,000 in his State of the State Message to initially enroll 1,200 acres along 50 miles of stream in the buffer program to prevent pollution. As an added incentive in rural areas, the proposal recommends changing the classification of these buffer strips from cropland to grassland. This will result in lower property taxes on the enrolled land.

Kansas Farm Bureau strongly supports SB 523 and commends Governor Graves for developing the initiative. Since the initiative is voluntary, provides landowner incentives and will reduce the pollution of streams, we believe many landowners will participate in this program.

Governor Graves' Buffer Initiative is timely and very compatible with a new program Kansas Farm Bureau began developing last fall. KFB is developing a statewide information and promotion campaign on conservation buffers. A video is being produced. Information sheets and brochures will be direct mailed to Farm Bureau leaders and members. Informational packets will be provided for distribution at all 105 county Farm Bureau Offices. KFB is purchasing three more EnviroScape watershed demonstration units and three more table-top displays for use in schools and at county fairs, farm expos, meeting and conferences. We believe the development of buffer strips is common sense conservation and a proactive activity for agricultural producers.

The 435 Voting Delegates representing the 105 county Farm Bureaus at the 79th Annual Meeting of Kansas Farm Bureau developed and adopted policy that includes these statements:

- *“We encourage additional efforts to prevent contamination of ground water and surface water in Kansas. Success is dependent upon partnering by government agencies at all levels, and organizations representing agriculture, business, homeowners, natural resource and environmental interests. All these entities must participate in order to increase public awareness and encourage appropriate action.”*
- *“Since the protection of natural resources is vital to all Kansans, and important for future generations of Kansans, we support expanding cost-share programs, creating tax incentives, and establishing a state revolving-loan fund for resource protection.”*
- *“Federal and state cost sharing is appropriate for conservation compliance, and as an incentive for developing and maintaining soil and water conservation structures.”*
- *“We support the Governor’s Water Quality Initiative and the ongoing research and data collection necessary to protect and enhance water quality in Kansas.”*

The farm and ranch members of Kansas Farm Bureau are committed to protecting water quality, other natural resources and the environment. The farm is not only the work place, but it is also the location of the family home and the place where the children are raised.

We appreciate this opportunity to explain why Kansas Farm Bureau supports SB 523 and encourage your approval of the Buffer Initiative. We will respond to any question you may have. Thank You!

We encourage additional efforts to prevent contamination of ground water and surface water in Kansas. Success is dependent upon partnering by government agencies at all levels, and organizations representing agriculture, business, homeowners, natural resource and environmental interests. All these entities must participate in order to increase public awareness and encourage appropriate action.

An increased focus and allocation of resources should be directed at developing crop and livestock management practices, which protect natural resources, the agricultural economy and the opportunity for continued use of crop and livestock protection products. Researchers, agencies and agricultural producers must all be involved in developing management practices, which are effective and widely utilized. Since the protection of natural resources is vital to all Kansans, and important for future generations of Kansans, we support expanding cost-share programs, creating tax incentives, and establishing a state revolving-loan fund for resource protection.

Soil and Water Conservation

CNR-12

Federal and state cost sharing is appropriate for conservation compliance, and as an incentive for developing and maintaining soil and water conservation structures.

We support legislation that encourages groundwater conservation through conservation reserve incentives offered to landowners who convert to dry land farming and defer irrigation pumping during periods of commodity surplus.

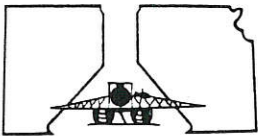
We support the Governor's Water Quality Initiative and the ongoing research and data collection necessary to protect and enhance water quality in Kansas. The Legislature should increase funding for Kansas State University for its science-based research projects in Best Management Practices, which will assist in water quality protection.

We urge the Kansas Legislature to provide adequate funding to assure that existing statutes and regulations relating to salt water disposal and proper plugging of dry holes are being enforced.

The Kansas Corporation Commission and the Department of Health and Environment should determine that the method of disposal of salt brines will not contaminate fresh water. No well drilled on leased property should be used for disposal of salt water from wells on other property without consent from and compensation to the landowner. The power of eminent domain should NOT be granted for the purpose of salt brine disposal.

We ask that legislation be enacted to require that surface pipes of all producing and disposal wells shall be set to a depth sufficient to protect all fresh water formations from contamination.

KANSAS FERTILIZER & CHEMICAL ASSOCIATION



KFCA is committed
to professional
development and
business viability for
the plant nutrient
and crop protection
industry in Kansas.

STATEMENT OF THE KANSAS FERTILIZER & CHEMICAL ASSOCIATION

TO THE
SENATE AGRICULTURE
COMMITTEE

REGARDING S.B. 523

FEBRUARY 5, 1998

SEN. STEVE MORRIS, CHAIRMAN

*Senate Agriculture
February 5, 1998
Attachment 7*

The Kansas Fertilizer and Chemical Association

..... a voluntary professional association for those involved in the plant nutrient and crop protection industry. KFCA represents our nearly 500 members interests in legislative matters at all levels of government, as well as providing educational opportunities and business services. The industry is committed to professional development and business viability for the plant nutrient and crop protections retail industry.

The following statement is submitted on behalf the Kansas Fertilizer and Chemical Association (KFCA). KFCA is the professional trade association for the state's plant nutrient and crop protection industry. KFCA's nearly 500 members are primarily retail dealers scattered across Kansas which sell and custom apply crop protection chemicals and fertilizers for Kansas producers. However, KFCA's membership also includes distribution firms, manufacturer representatives, equipment manufacturers and others who serve the industry.

The Kansas Fertilizer and Chemical Association has strongly supported the practical approach of the Governor's Water Quality Initiative which relies on voluntary, common-sense programs to solve water quality problems rather than mandatory programs which often prove to be less than successful. This water quality buffer initiative is the next logical step to increase producer awareness, foster cooperation between agricultural organizations and state agencies and most importantly reach positive results. We applaud Governor Graves for his dedication to protecting Kansas' natural resources and his leadership through introduction of this water quality buffer initiative.

Kansas State University research has proven that well-designed and maintained vegetative filter strips can be very effective in trapping and removing soil sediments and limiting agricultural-related run-off from reaching streams and rivers. By slowing the velocity of surface water run-off, vegetative buffer strips provide filtering action which keeps soil particles and custom applied nutrients and crop protection chemicals from reaching waterways. This initiative will improve the quality of Kansas' surface waters.

KFCA supports and encourages producers to adopt the use of this best management practice (BMP). The additional incentive provided by this initiative will further enhance producers willingness to implement this proven strategy. The Kansas Fertilizer and Chemical Association supports the cooperative approach this legislation provides and respectfully requests support and passage of Senate Bill 523.

KFCA appreciates the opportunity to submit comments in support of Senate Bill 523. Any questions should be submitted to Doug Wareham, Vice President of Government Affairs, (785) 234-0463.

Testimony of Senate Bill 523
Senate Agriculture Committee
February 5, 1998
Prepared by Joe Lieber
Kansas Cooperative Council

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, I'm Joe Lieber, Executive Vice President of the Kansas Cooperative Council. The Council has a membership of nearly 200 cooperative businesses, which have a combined membership of 200,000 Kansans.

The Council and its members have always encouraged safe environmental practices. Many of our members are promoting the use of buffer strips and many of their farmer/owners are engaged in the practice.

We feel that SB 523 will enhance the program and encourage favorable support for it.

Thank you for your consideration.

*Senate Agriculture
February 5, 1998
Attachment 8*

Written Comments
on
Senate Bill 523

“The Kansas Water Quality Buffer Initiative”

by

Farmland Industries, Inc.
Kansas City, Missouri

February 5, 1998

Contact: Gina Bowman-Morrill
Director, Government Relations
Farmland Industries, Inc.
816/459-6745
email: gmbowman@farmland.com

*Senate Agriculture
February 5, 1998
Attachment 9*

On behalf of the farmer-owned Farmland System and specifically the over 50,000 farm families who own the 140 local cooperatives in this state, we strongly support S.B. 523. Farmland, as one of the major sponsors of the National Conservation Buffer Initiative, has committed nearly \$1 million to ensure that landowners install 2 million miles of conservation buffers by the year 2002. This initiative is a public-private partnership.

We applaud the Governor and the Committee for also taking a leadership role in this endeavor. An American Academy of Science study has determined that conservation buffers, used in concert with cropland management practices can reduce agricultural runoff by as much as 70 percent. Buffers provide a means of improving soil, water and air quality while improving wildlife habitat.

We strongly believe that S.B. 523, the Kansas Water Quality Buffer Initiative, is essential in ensuring the agricultural community has the opportunity to implement major water quality improvements through voluntary, incentive-based approaches. S. B. 523, in addition to the federal programs, will enhance greater participation in this important program by Kansas agricultural producers.

We urge support for this measure.