

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT.

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Joann Freeborn at 3:30 p.m. on February 22, 2000 in Room 231-N of the Capitol.

All members were present except:

Committee staff present: Raney Gilliland, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Mary Torrence, Revisor of Statute's Office
Mary Ann Graham, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee: Secretary Steve Williams, Department of Wildlife & Parks,
900 SW Jackson Suite 502, Topeka, KS 66612-1233
Clint Riley, Attorney, KS Department Wildlife & Parks, 900
SW Jackson, Suite 502, Topeka, KS 66612-1233
Representative Shari Weber, District 68
Shawn Harding, KS Bowhunters Association, 2237 SE
Shawnee Drive, Tecumseh, KS 66542
Stacy Hoeme, P.O. Box 196, Scott City, KS 67871

Others attending: See Attached Sheet

Chairperson Joann Freeborn called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m. She opened public hearing on **HB2954**.

HB2954: An act concerning taking of coyotes.

The Chairperson welcomed Rep. Shari Weber to the committee. She appeared in support of the bill at the request of a constituent, Lance Homman. This bill would allow the hunting of coyotes by any individual in possession of a current and valid fur harvesting license or hunting license. Under current statutes, coyotes may be hunted only with a hunting license, and trapped only with a fur harvesting license. The conflict this creates for the sportsman involves the requirement of possessing two separate licenses to pursue and take the same animal. Furthermore, predator calling enthusiasts must currently purchase and carry both a hunting and a fur harvesting license to participate in a form of hunting where there is an equal likelihood that bobcats, foxes, or any of a whole host of other legally harvestable furbearers or predators might respond in addition to coyotes. To require two separate licenses for the legal pursuit and harvest of a species (the coyote) that enjoys no protection whatsoever under present state law makes current statutory requirements a glaringly unique oddity. By enacting this bill, you will be reducing the overall number of licenses required to pursue coyotes while, at the same time, increasing opportunities to hunt. (See attachment 1)

Clint Riley, Attorney, Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks, was welcomed to the committee. He appeared on behalf of the Department in support of the bill. This bill would allow coyotes to be hunted by anyone having either a furharvesting license or a hunting license. The bill amends the definition of "furharvesting" to include any legal means of taking a coyote, and adds clarifying language to the statutes requiring hunting licenses and furharvesting licenses. The Department does not believe this change will affect a great number of people, since only those who hunt coyotes, trap furbearers, and hunt nothing else would be affected. Nonetheless, the Department believes this bill is a sensible change that would address the concerns of these individuals. Therefore, the Department supports this bill and encourages its adoption. (See attachment 2) Questions and discussion followed.

The Chairperson closed the hearing on **HB2954**. She opened **HB2831** for discussion and possible action.

HB2831: An act concerning solid waste; relating to fees and charges for the collection and disposal thereof.

Rep. Tom Sloan made a motion to adopt the amendments recommended by Marion County Commissioner at the hearing of the bill on 2-17-00. Rep. Gerry Ray seconded the motion. Motion carried.

CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT, Room 231-N of the Capitol
at 3:30 p.m. on February 22, 2000.

Rep. Laura McClure made a conceptual motion to adopt amendment “person receiving bill to be responsible for bill”. Rep. Douglas Johnston seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Rep. Gerry Ray made a motion the bill be passed favorably as amended . Rep. Tom Sloan seconded the motion. Motion carried. Rep. Becky Hutchins voted no.

The Chairperson opened **HB2954** for discussion and possible action.

HB2954: An act concerning taking of coyotes.

Rep. Ted Powers made a motion to table the bill. Motion failed.

Rep. Sharon Schwartz made a motion the bill be passed favorably. Rep. Ray Merrick seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Chairperson Freeborn opened hearings for **opponents only** on **HB2813; HB2816; HB2819; HB2863; HB2937; HB2974; and HB2977**

HB2813: An act concerning deer; relating to permits to take; providing for certain tax credits; providing for certain payments to processors of deer meat and entities operating solid waste management disposal areas.

HB2816: An act concerning big game permits; relating to deer.

HB2819: An act concerning deer; relating to the taking thereof.

HB2863: An act concerning big game; relating to deer permits.

HB2937: An act relating to big game animals; providing for reimbursement for big game damage under certain circumstances.

HB2974: An act concerning wildlife; relating to big game permits; purchase, sale and transfer thereof; report of property damage.

HB2977: An act concerning wildlife; relating to big game permits.

The Chairperson appointed a Sub-Committee to work with deer issues. Members appointed were, Rep. Gerry Ray, Chairperson; Rep. Clay Aurand; Rep. Bill Light; Rep. Laura McClure; and Rep. Tim Tedder.

The Chairperson welcomed Steve Williams, Secretary, Kansas Department Wildlife and Parks, to the committee. Secretary Williams addressed the committee in opposition to the above seven bills. He believes these bills address a variety of issues associated with deer management in the State of Kansas. The Department opposes these bills due to serious concerns and reservations about certain provisions of these bills and their effects. The Department shares serious concerns about deer population levels throughout the state. His testimony identifies specific concerns about individual bills. He suggests a substitute bill that would incorporate portions of individual House and Senate bills and additional actions to be taken by the Department and the Kansas Wildlife and Parks Commission. He hopes that the committee will agree that their suggestions provide a more comprehensive and effective approach than each bill considered individually. (See attachment 3) Included with testimony is a copy of “2000 Deer Management Initiatives”, the management objective is to reduce white-tailed deer numbers statewide by increasing the antlerless deer harvest. Also a copy of “Deer Management Initiatives Since 1995”.

Secretary Williams introduced Will Carpenter, Commissioner, Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks, in attendance.

Shawn Harding, Kansas Bowhunters Association (KBA), was welcomed to the committee. He appeared in

CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT, Room 231-N of the Capitol
at 3:30 p.m. on February 22, 2000.

opposition to the seven bills. The Bowhunters Association recognizes the deer problem that has angered certain regions of the state. The Association has worked to be a part of an answer to the problem by enrolling the majority of their members in the hunter referral program. Unfortunately they only had 37 Landowners for placement of hunters. They have aggressively pushed for the membership to improve landowner relations and harvest more antlerless deer. **HB2813** has its heart in the right place by addressing the antlerless harvest. However with only one Conservation Officer per three counties this becomes a logistics nightmare. The coupon idea of **HB2816** is interesting but the ways it can be abused are numerous. In **HB2819**, what percentage of a rural county's accidents are deer related and what percentage of a county with a large metro area's accidents are deer related? If the number of accidents in the county with a metro area are twice as high as a rural county but it's half the percentage of the rural county, is this a fair tool? In **HB2863**, the state is selling a lot of "game permits" for \$10.50. The state is selling more tags than ever. Until this trend slows down there doesn't seem to be a need to cut the price down to \$2.00. **HB2937** could promote the increase in our states deer herd by simply paying for damages instead of promoting access to private land and actually reducing the deer herd. This bill eliminates the motivation to allow access and kill deer. **HB2974** creates the possibility of a leasing problem that actually could cause deer increases. In **HB2977** the KBA feels that this increased number of permits could be better utilized if you raised the non-resident archery percentage on "either or" permits to a 10% cap from the current 5% cap and remove the cap on archery non-resident antlerless permits. (See attachment 4)

Stacy Hoeme, Scott City, Kansas, was welcomed to the committee. He appeared in opposition to the seven bills. He is manager of his family's feed yard, HCR Feed Yard, of Scott City. They lease and own three different ranches, which includes about 23,000 acres. He also manages a farm of 4800 acres. Being both landowner and tenant, has some concerns about the bills before the committee today. He believes **HB2813** does not specify between mule deer and whitetail. It would totally wipe out the mule deer population in western Kansas. In **HB2816**, he feels this would be a hassle to get the coupon from hunters and to get the cash back from the state. He believes the problem addressed in **HB2819** has been taken care of with the regular hunting season, especially this year. **HB2863** concerning purchase of doe permit for \$2 when purchasing hunting licence, he feels people will pay \$2 or \$10, if they want to hunt. He sees problems in certain areas with **HB2937**. Who would adjust claims, how would you go about it, and how much hunting would be allowed. **HB2974** and **HB2977**, he feels these bills would shut off private property to state residents and create more deer population problems than there are now. KDW&P have increased resident and non-resident deer tags every year and most people are getting the tags they request. (See attachment 5)
Questions and discussion followed.

Written only in opposition to the bills heard today was submitted by Troy B. Mattheyer, Ellis, Kansas. He is a Kansas hunter education instructor and a National Bowhunter Education instructor and believes many of these proposed laws undermine the basic things taught to young people about hunter ethics, following game laws, safe ways to hunt, and the importance of managing our resources correctly. (See attachment 6)

The Chairperson closed the hearings on **HB2813; HB2816; HB2819; HB2863; HB2937; HB2974; and HB2977**. She asked the committee if anyone had corrections on committee minutes for January 25, 27, and February 1 and 3, which had been distributed for review. No one had corrections. The minutes were considered approved.

The meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m. The next meeting will be announced.

CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT, Room 231-N of the Capitol
at 3:30 p.m. on February 22, 2000.