

March 6, 2013

TO: House Appropriations Committee Members

FROM: Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism

RE: KDOT Transfers out of State Highway Fund  
Wildlife, Parks, Tourism (2178-2760)

Kansas Dept. of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism (KDWPT) respectfully requests the Appropriations Committee amend the recommendation of the Transportation and Public Safety budget Committee and reinstate the full KDOT transfer to KDWPT.

The Governor's recommendation reflects a transfer to KDWPT road funds if \$2,802,755. Approximately \$1.7 million is designated for maintenance of road in state parks; the remainder was reflected as operations. The Transportation and Public Safety Committee's recommendation removes the operations funding in the amount of \$1.0 Million from our current fiscal year and an additional \$700,000 in FY 14 and FY 15. The monies appropriated for road maintenance were retained.

In addition to the information previously outlined by the agency in a memo dated March 5, it is important for the full committee to understand that all roadways within our 26 state parks are state roads and state transportation corridors. The operations monies transferred to the state parks are utilized to support salaries and expenditures for the following:

- Over half of our state park personnel are State Certified Law Enforcement. These law enforcement officers ensure the compliance with state law on all state park roads and ensure the safety of all park visitors. Much like KHP, these law enforcement officers have statewide jurisdiction. Due to proximity, state park law enforcement personnel are regularly called beyond the parks to provide mutual aid or primary response for KHP, sheriff departments and police departments. (DUI's, reckless driving, blockades, bodily threat, search and seizure, narcotics/DUI lane checks, etc.). No additional reimbursement for officer services/time rendered is received.
- Labor for snow removal, mowing of shoulders and ditches, signage repairs, crack seal, asphalt patching, etc.
- Small equipment such as cement saws/blades to cut out damaged roadway areas
- Fuel and repairs for road maintenance equipment
- Road signage
- Erosion control along roadways
- Flood repair
- Other highway related repair/maintenance

Effective January 1, 2013, the State Park Passport program was implemented in an effort to move our state parks toward self-sufficiency. This effort was supported by the legislative body during the 2012 session. Although the agency is committed to its goal of becoming self-sufficient, a slower phase out of

supplemental support is imperative to our success. Since February 2013 has provided the first month of potential participation by residents, results have yet to be realized. As such, the recommended reduction would be devastating.

Should you have any questions regarding the information outlined above, please feel free to contact a member of our agency for further clarification.

Your support in this matter is greatly appreciated.

The Parks Division is responsible for managing 26 state parks, including 8,000 acres of maintained lawn, 32,200 acres of park-land resources, 510 miles of trails, over 280 miles of roads, more than 10,000 campsites, 35,000 acres of recreational surface water, over 1,000 structures, sewer systems including 24 lagoons and treatment plants, 24 potable water systems, and more than 3,000 miles of utility lines. Over 220 special events are offered annually. Although the agency is approved to support the state park system with 116 FTE's, they have operated with approximately 80% of these positions due to cash flow constraints. Most of the agency's cabins are in the parks (112 in state parks, seven at state wildlife areas and fishing lakes, and one at the Kansas State Fairgrounds). Park managers and park rangers are certified state-wide law enforcement officers who provide support throughout their communities as needed.

Since 2007, there has been a 55.8% decrease in state funding of our Kansas State Parks. Limited capital improvement has been approved by our state since 2003.

#### Historical Revenue

	SGF	Parks SGF	Annual Permit	Daily Permit
2007	\$ 9,053,444.00	\$ 6,581,246.00	\$ 1,402,979.50	\$ 624,614.60
2008	\$ 10,724,154.00	\$ 6,428,040.00	\$ 915,300.30	\$ 597,710.05
2009	\$ 8,204,229.00	\$ 6,371,197.00	\$ 1,011,076.90	\$ 733,315.49
2010	\$ 5,438,265.00	\$ 3,478,824.00	\$ 1,022,391.50	\$ 733,211.00
2011	\$ 5,015,657.00	\$ 2,925,529.00	\$ 1,011,641.10	\$ 671,210.42
2012	\$ 5,556,434.00	\$ 3,779,059.00**	\$ 1,123,860.00	\$ 719,408.00
2013	EDIF	\$ 2,913,207.00		

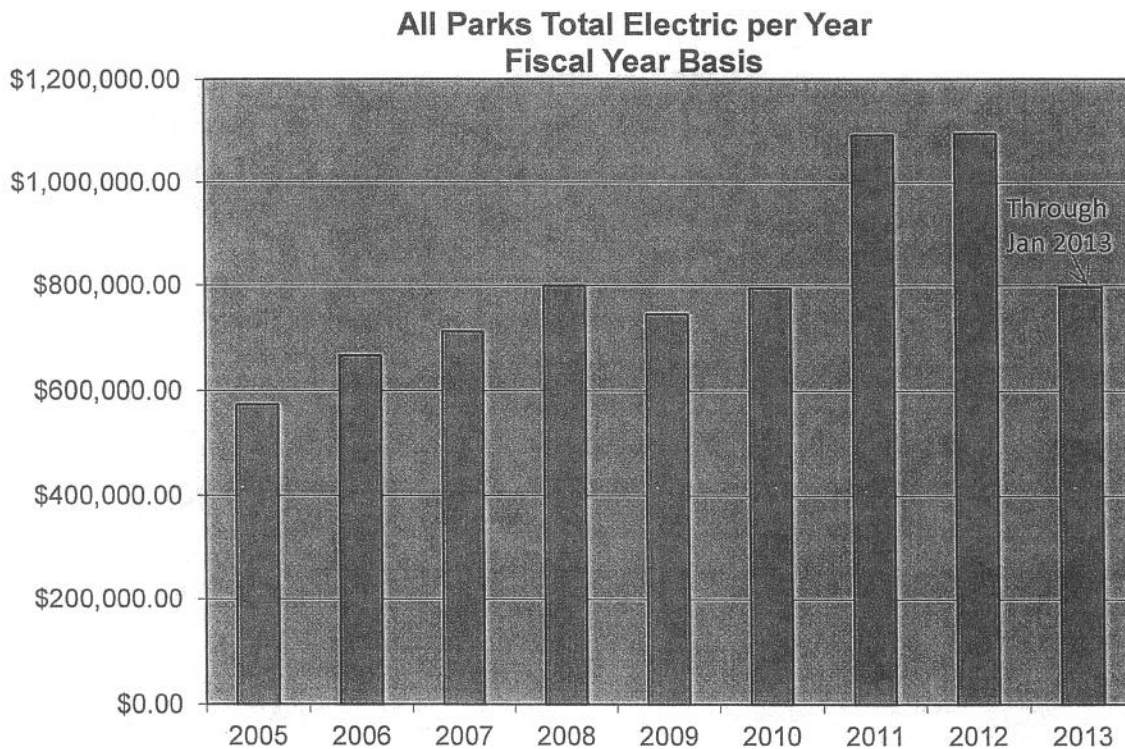
\*\*Increase reflects supplemental issued to offset revenue loss due to blue-green algae & drought

The agency is committed to becoming self-sufficient, but a slower phase out of general tax support is imperative to our success. The legislative body supported this effort by passing legislation for the State Park Passport program in the 2012 session. Effective January 1, 2013, this program allows Kansas residents to purchase an annual vehicle permit for the reduced rate of \$15 at the time of vehicle registration renewal. Although the agency anticipates an increase in participation and revenue as a result of implementing the program, it is in its infancy. Since February 2013 has provided the first month of potential participation by residents, results have yet to be realized.

Furthermore, the legislative body supported the Governor's initiative to pay-off the debt service for the cabin program. This was greatly appreciated and has resulted in additional cash flow, but the full impact has not been established as the pay-off has recently occurred and a number of cabins were not onsite during the camping season.

To compound the loss of monetary support received, the cost of doing business has continued to increase. Even though the parks have implemented programs to enhance the utility efficiencies, electrical costs have continued to escalate. In calendar year 2005, state parks spent a total of \$573,912 (8.1% of SGF funding) for electricity. As a result of increased rates/kwh, calendar year 2012 electrical

costs increased to \$1,095,308 (37.6% of EDIF funding). If the state parks see an additional \$1 Million decrease to its operating budget in this current fiscal year, electrical costs alone will consume 57.2% of state supported funding. (see following graph for electrical costs).



Although blue-green algae, floods, drought and significant heat plagued the state park system throughout calendar year 2011 and 2012, the staff worked diligently to offer programs, special events and a climate that attracted visitors.

Visitation	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Total	6,236,610	6,519,423	7,201,743	6,936,891	6,403,567	6,763,186

These numbers reflect a full-time customer to staff member ratio of approximately 67,632:1. The national average is 36,018:1. Additionally, our Kansas State Parks provide a full spectrum of services at a very efficient and minimal cost/visitor. Kansas total actual expenditure per visitor of \$1.77 in fiscal year 2012 (this is reduced to \$1.65/visitor when federal flow-through funds are deducted). Based on recent information gathered by the National Association of State Park Directors, the national average expenditure is \$3.15/visitor, nearly twice that of Kansas.

The Kansas State Park Team is committed to providing quality service to its customer base. We are also committed to implementing procedures to enhance our ability to operate more efficiently. Not only do current recommendations make this difficult to continue, they actually jeopardize continued operations of our facilities. This in turn would have major detrimental impacts to our communities and the overall economic condition of the state. Recent results of a joint study conducted by the U.S. Corps of

Engineers and the Kansas Water Office (March 2011) show that spending related to recreation at Perry, Milford and Tuttle Creek alone generates more than \$45.3 million annually. It was noted in this report that “approximately 80-90% of the visitors to these lakes are from outside the region, bringing new money into the area and increasing its economy”.

Recognizing that state parks enhance the quality of life for our citizens, host significant numbers of out of state visitors, provide outdoor recreational opportunities for all, and significantly benefit the economy of the state, we request that the recommended budgetary funding be fully restored to the Kansas State Parks.