

## MINUTES OF THE HOUSE AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Sharon Schwartz at 3:30pm on Tuesday, January 20, 2015, 346-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except:

Representative Tom Sloan – Excused

Committee staff present:

Raney Gilliland, Legislative Research Department

Joanna Wochner, Legislative Research Department

Shirley Jepson, Kansas Legislative Committee Assistant

Natalie Scott, Office of Revisor of Statutes

David Wiese, Office of Revisor of Statutes

Conferees appearing before the Committee:

Robin Jennison, Secretary, Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism

Jim Pittman, Small Game Biologist, Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism

Chad Depperschmidt, Land Acquisition and Leasing, Department of Wildlife

Kevin Jones, Director of Law Enforcement, Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism

Others in attendance:

[See Attached List](#)

### **Bill introductions**

Chris Tymeson, Chief Legal Counsel, Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism, appeared before the Committee to request the introduction of two pieces of legislation: (1) pertains to the state fish (RS#443) and (2) pertains to voter education (RS#444).

*Representative Lusker moved to introduce the two bills as requested by the Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism. Motion was seconded by Representative Hibbard. Motion adopted without objection.*

### **Update on:**

Robin Jennison, Secretary, Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism (DWPT), appeared before the Committee to introduce department staff and make a few comments. Secretary Jennison noted that the Department will provide updates on prairie chicken, antler issues and land purchases.

With reference to the antler issue, Secretary Jennison explained that the department has always maintained that the state owns the wildlife within the state. Legislation passed during the 2014 Legislative Session was directed at the ownership of antlers.

Secretary Jennison noted that the department has not actively pursued the purchase of land in the state. On a number of occasions, private individuals have approached the department with land for sale. The Secretary explained that it is important for the department to purchase land for conservation easements as well as hunting land.

## CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES of the Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources at 3:30pm on Tuesday, January 20, 2015, 346-S of the Capitol.

Secretary Jennison explained that land, which has been contaminated with lead in the past, is available for purchase by DWPT. Money has been paid to the State by the defending companies to reclaim this area of Southeast Kansas to improve the social and economy of the county. These funds are available to DWPT and the Kansas Department of Health and Environment for the purchase of land.

Secretary Jennison responded to questions from the Committee.

Jim Pittman, Small Game Biologist, DWPT, provided a power-point update on the population of prairie chickens in the state after the listing of the prairie chickens as an endangered species by the federal government ([Attachment 1](#)). Mr. Pittman explained that the Department has developed a plan and goals for the management of the prairie chicken species.

Mr. Pittman responded to questions from the Committee.

Chad Depperschmidt, DWPT, provided information on land acquisition by the Department ([Attachment 2](#)). Mr. Depperschmidt explained that no state general funds (SGF) or Economic Development Initiative Funds (EDIF) are used for the purchase of land by the Department; noting also that statute does not allow the Department to purchase land in excess of 328 acres without legislative approval.

Mr. Depperschmidt and Secretary Jennison responded to questions from the Committee.

Kevin Jones, Director of Law Enforcement, DWPT, provide information and a summary of numbers of antler species and average price of species ([Attachment 3](#)) ([Attachment 4](#)) .

Mr. Jones responded to questions from the Committee.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m. The next meeting of the Committee is scheduled for January 21, 2015, with an agency update by Department of Agriculture.