

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Larry Powell at 9:00 a.m. on February 18, 2011, in Room 783 in the Docking State Office Building.

All members were present except:

Representative Rocky Fund - Excused
Representative Charlotte O'Hara - Excused
Representative Michael Peterson - Excused

Committee staff present:

Sean Ostrow, Office of the Revisor of Statutes
Raney Gilliland, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Michael Wales, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Kay Scarlett, Committee Assistant

Conferees appearing before the Committee:

Senator Ty Masterson
Representative Joe Seiwert
Representative Kyle Hoffman
Tony DeRossett, President, Kansas Hunters Feeding the Hungry, Tonganoxie (oral only)
Senator Steve Abrams (written only)
Walt Burling, Walt Burling Farms, Inc., Partridge, Kansas (written only)
Gary Rohlman, Rohlman Farms, Kingman, Kansas (written only)
Steve Westfahl, Irish Creek Outfitters, Haven, Kansas (written only)
Jane Wallace, Executive Director, Kingman County Economic Development (written only)
Fred Simon, Kingman County (written only)
Heath Weninger, Kingman County (written only)
Steve Schweizer (written only)
Chris Tymeson, Chief Legal Counsel, Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks

Others attending:

See attached list.

Representative Wetta moved to approve the minutes of February 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, and 10. Seconded by Representative Hayzlett, the motion carried.

Hearing on HB 2295 – Amending state hunting laws and regulations relating to hunting seasons, permits and the use of bows.

Chairman Powell opened the hearing on **HB 2295**. Sean Ostrow, Office of the Revisor of Statutes, explained that the bill would amend and make technical corrections to existing laws concerning the regulation of hunting. The bill would remove the requirement that a family member must be domiciled with the landowner to be exempt from the requirement to have a valid hunting license and would allow them to apply for resident big game permits as landowners or tenants; allow any person to hunt with a crossbow; prohibit the extended season for female white-tailed deer hunting with firearms from ending prior to January 23, 2012; increase the fee cap for non-resident big game and mule deer permits and non-resident big game applications; and require that anyone purchasing a deer permit to also pay \$2 to the Kansas Hunters Feeding the Hungry program.

Senator Ty Masterson testified in support of **HB 2295** and the proposed change to allow any person to hunt with a crossbow. He also supports the provisions of the bill that extend the season and help the Kansas Hunters Feeding the Hungry program. (Attachment 1)

Representative Joe Seiwert appeared in support of **HB 2295** introduced at his request. He stated that he is trying to work with the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks to make the roads safer, build a quality deer population in the State of Kansas, provide quality hunting for local hunters, and help feed the hungry. With the changes proposed in this bill, he believes the state can improve highway safety along with a quality hunting program by reducing the doe population. (Attachment 2)

CONTINUATION SHEET

The minutes of the House Agriculture & Natural Resources Committee at 9:00 a.m. on February 18, 2011, in Room 783 of the Docking State Office Building.

Representative Kyle Hoffman testified in support of **HB 2295** with the goal to reduce the number of deer accidents in Kingman County. He supports the Kansas Hunters Feeding the Hungry program. The provision to allow a crossbow to be used during bow season will allow older, younger, and female hunters to participate thus selling more hunting permits and helping to reduce the deer population. He also believes these changes in statute will help reduce damage done to farmers' property by large deer herds. (Attachment 3)

Tony DeRossett, Tonganoxie, President of Hunters Feeding the Hungry, appeared in support of the requirement in **HB 2295** that anyone purchasing a deer permit also pay \$2 to the Kansas Hunters Feeding the Hungry program. The program is in need of additional monetary support.

Letters of written testimony in support of **HB 2295** were submitted by: Senator Steve Abrams (Attachment 4); Walt Burling, Walt Burling Farms, Inc., Partridge, Kansas (Attachment 5); Gary Rohlman, Rohlman Farms, Kingman, Kansas (Attachment 6); Steve Westfahl, Irish Creek Outfitters, Haven, Kansas (Attachment 7); Jane Wallace, Executive Director, Kingman County Economic Development (Attachment 8); Fred Simon, Kingman County (Attachment 9); Heath Weninger, Kingman County (Attachment 10); and Steve Schweizer. (Attachment 11)

Chris Tymeson, Chief Legal Counsel, Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks, appeared in opposition to the provisions contained in **HB 2295** and outlined the Department's objections. He explained that the current deer management system went into effect in 2008 and was a direct result of stakeholder participation, including landowners, tenants, hunters, guides, and general members of the public. He said that scientific management and fee funding are basic tenants of the North American Model of wildlife management. Deer hunting in Kansas alone generates, approximately, \$350,000,000 in economic benefit to the State of Kansas. This influx of spending to the State is a direct result of professional and scientific management by Kansas biologists. He said the proposals in **HB 2295** would jeopardize the existence of the current system. (Attachment 12)

There being no other conferees, the Chairman closed the hearing on **HB 2295**.

The meeting adjourned at 10:10 a.m. The next meeting of the House Agriculture & Natural Resources Committee is scheduled for February 21, 2011.