

**Testimony on Division Mission, Background, Programs and Budget
to the Special Committee on Water
by Andrew Lyon, Director
Kansas Department of Agriculture, Division of Conservation
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Good morning Chairman Kerschen and members of the committee. My name is Andrew Lyon and I serve as the Director of the Kansas Department of Agriculture's Division of Conservation. I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you today to discuss the mission, background, programs and budget of the Division of Conservation.

Mission

The Kansas Department of Agriculture is committed to a balanced approach of:

- Serving Kansas farmers, ranchers, agribusinesses and the consumers/customers they serve;
- Providing an environment that enhances and encourages economic growth of the agriculture industry and the Kansas economy; and
- Advocating for and promoting the agriculture industry, the state's largest industry, employer and economic contributor; while
- Helping to ensure a safe food supply, protecting natural resources, promoting public health and safety, protecting animal health, and providing consumer protection to the best of our ability.

The Division of Conservation's mission statement is to protect, enhance, and regenerate Kansas' natural resources through the development and implementation of policies, guidelines, and programs designed to assist local governments and individuals in conserving the state's natural resources.

Background

The State Conservation Commission was established by the Kansas Legislature in 1937 to promote soil and water conservation. The Division of Conservation was established in 2011 by an Executive Reorganization Order to transition the State Conservation Commission into the Kansas Department of Agriculture and create the Division of Conservation. The Division of Conservation receives guidance from the SCC, an advisory board consisting of nine members with an elected commissioner from each of the five conservation areas; two ex-officio members representing KSU Research and Extension; and two appointed members representing KDA and the USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service.

The Division of Conservation has the responsibility to administer the Conservation Districts Law (K.S.A. 2-1901 et seq.), the Watershed District Act (K.S.A. 24-1201 et seq.) and other statutes authorizing various programs.

The Division of Conservation implements programs in partnership with 105 conservation districts and 88 organized watershed districts, and other local, state and federal entities to achieve the goals of the Kansas Water Vision.

Objectives

- To protect federal reservoirs and other public water supplies from pollutants and siltation.
- To reduce flood damage in critical flood prone areas.
- To reduce the discharge of sediment, nutrients, and other pollutants into water bodies across the state to achieve the Water Quality Standards as set forth by the Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL) process.
- To improve the health of stream riparian areas.
- To improve soil health and reduce soil erosion.
- To improve habitat for wildlife and aquatic species.
- To reduce the consumptive use of groundwater supplies in the High Plains Aquifer to sustain and preserve agricultural, industrial and municipal water supplies.

Programs

The KDA Division of Conservation implements programs to meet those objectives. Those programs include:

- Support for Conservation Districts
- Water Resources Cost-Share Program
- Non-Point Source Pollution Control Program
- WTAP and CREP Water Conservation Programs
- Irrigation Technology
- Riparian and Wetlands Protection Program
- Streambank Stabilization
- Sediment and Nutrient Reduction Initiative
- Watershed Dam Construction Program
- Water Supply Restoration Program
- Multipurpose Small Lakes Program

Reporting Structure

As the Director of the Division of Conservation, I report to the Secretary of Agriculture, who in turn reports to the Governor. Within the Division there are four program managers who oversee the various Division of Conservation programs and who report to the Director of the Division of Conservation. The Division of Conservation has two additional professional staff members and one administrative assistant.

Budget

The budget of the Division of Conservation is funded by a mix of the State General Fund, State Water Plan Fund, user fees, and federal grants. Additional information is contained in the table below.

Division of Conservation	FY22 Adj.	FY23
SGF - State General funds	\$482,980	\$483,602
SWP - Irrigation Technology	\$325,046	\$300,000
SWP - Water Resource Cost Share	\$2,475,044	\$2,698,289
SWP - Nonpoint Source Pollution Assistance	\$1,978,238	\$1,853,185
SWP - Conservation District Aid	\$2,223,373	\$2,473,373
SWP - Conservation Reserve Enhancement	\$768,820	\$496,593
SWP - Watershed Dam Construction	\$688,285	\$550,000
SWP - Water Quality Buffer Incentive	\$436,599	\$200,000
SWP - Riparian and Wetlands Program	\$555,840	\$54,024
SWP - Lake Restoration	\$0	\$0
SWP - Streambank Stabilization	\$918,286	\$1,044,264
SWP - Soil Health Initiative	\$0	\$103,780
Agricultural Liming Materials Fee Fund	\$31,323	\$42,609
Buffer Participation Incentive Fund	\$110,815	\$0
Land Reclamation Fee Fund	\$168,296	\$125,197
NRCS-Streambank / Water Quality	\$1,243,954	\$1,207,194
EPA/KDHE Watershed Protection	\$378,904	\$0
Gifts and Donations Fund	\$64,911	\$0
Subtotal	\$12,850,714	\$11,632,110

Program Expenditures	FY22 Adj.	FY 23 Budget - Governor's Rec
Grants, Claims & Aid to Locals	\$8,753,449	\$7,450,590
Fees - Professional Services	\$2,889,886	\$2,967,587
Salary	\$804,256	\$804,589
Rents	\$51,763	\$49,113
All Other OOE	\$351,360	\$360,231
Total	\$12,850,714	\$11,632,110

Thank you again for the opportunity to appear before you today. I am happy to stand for any questions you might have.