

**Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism  
Commission Meeting Minutes  
Thursday, March 26 2015  
Kansas Historical Society History Center  
6425 SW 6<sup>th</sup> Ave, Topeka, Kansas**

**Approved** Subject to  
**4/23/15** Commission  
Approval

The March 26, 2015 meeting of the Kansas Wildlife, Parks and Tourism Commission was called to order by Chairman Gerald Lauber at 1:00 p.m. at Bonner Springs Parks & Recreation. Chairman Lauber and Commissioners Don Budd, Tom Dill, Gary Hayzlett, Roger Marshall and Aaron Rider were present.

**II. INTRODUCTION OF COMMISSIONERS, STAFF AND GUESTS**

The Commissioners and Department staff introduced themselves (Attendance roster - Exhibit A).

**III. ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS TO AGENDA ITEMS**

Sheila Kemmis - Dustin Mengarelli will be doing the Public Land update in the workshop session in place of Brad Simpson.

**IV. APPROVAL OF THE January 8, 2015 MEETING MINUTES**

Commissioner Gary Hayzlett moved to approve the minutes as corrected, Commissioner Tom Dill second. Approved. (Minutes – Exhibit B).

**V. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

Michael Pearce – Question for Kevin Jones, did feature story on game warden situation in Kansas, most thinly covered area in the state, main reason poor pay; anything changed in that? Jones – Have progressed, in process of filling open positions. We have put an officer in Finney County and other open locations, but still have six vacancies, partially due to retirements including two captains. Still have vacancy in Scott, Atchison and Miami counties. Have investigators position we will be filling in southcentral part of state. Pearce – Getting quality applicants? Jones – We are, last three we hired are high quality. Pearce - Training still the same? Jones – First KLTC, then new officer training that takes another 12-14 weeks to complete. Pearce – When researching this story I went to three officers that went to other states and they said it was due to the pay. Any changes in that? Jones – Trying to work through that. Chairman Lauber – Do we set number of officers by geography or population vote? Also, when officer is gone does someone cover that area? Jones – Look at several criteria, like year-round pressure and what work requirement throughout the year would be, distance between officers, response time. Also, look at higher priority areas, spread out in the west. At current time, first level supervisors, each lieutenant has 5-6 officers each. For instance boating activity, not much in western part of state, use those officers from there in other parts of the state during that season

and the same with antelope. We have 70 field-level officers.

Ken Kreif – Working with zebra mussels since 2009, work with Jessica Howell from your staff. Share zebra mussel info and cover points you brought up in January. (Handout – Exhibit C; Powerpoint – Exhibit D). *Went over slides* – Kansas is in the lead as far as westward migration. Kansas should be concerned in downstream drift, we passed contamination to Oklahoma. Every time more contamination tax payers pay, Council Grove paid \$885,000 to rejuvenate their water supply, the mussels were seven feet deep and two inches thick in the hole. Department allows uninspected baitfish in Kansas controlled waters. This issue is not about controlling private ponds. Your decision in 2012 was to allow bait fish to be moved. We are reactive state not proactive state. If we stop movement of uninspected baitfish we will stop the contamination. Political issue is unclear what fishing people want and how many are driving the need to move private pond baitfish to KDWPT controlled waters. Petition was lost. Senator Olson was supporting this petition, but no response from his office. Working with Governor’s Constituents Service on this issue. Also, unclear why limited concern for downstream contamination of neighboring states; may involve Lacey Act because zebra mussels are considered injurious species. States west of Kansas have declared us high-risk for aquatic nuisance species. Most of bait fish coming from Arkansas. There is scientific evidence to stop movement. Moving bait fish from one body of water to another can also move zebra mussels, larva, veliger, juvenile and adult mussels; listed in Sea Grant, VA Dept Game and Inland Fisheries, SD Aquatic Nuisance Species; USGS, KDHE, 100<sup>th</sup> Meridian Initiative, 2014 Lake George Aquatic Invasive Species prevention program., Aquatic Invasive Species, Quagga-Zebra Mussel Action Plan for Western U.S. Waters, USFWS Region 6, Jessica Howell KDWPT employee, even KDWPT commercial says don’t transfer live bait. It only takes one, video on silence the invaders with Dr. Russell Cuhel, Doug Jensen and Byron Karns who put together this video (*showed short clip*), it only takes two, one male and one female. We need to be proactive and stop movement of uninspected/uncontrolled bait fish from private ponds to KDWPT controlled waters. We recommend KDWPT controlled waters “only use bait fish where caught.” Pearce – How prevalent are zebra mussels in private waters? Robin Jennison – You would have to ask Doug and he is not here. Chairman Lauber – Aren’t all states that have the red dots high risk? Kreif – No, Oklahoma is, Texas and Nebraska are not. Chairman Lauber – If using PowerPoint in the future it needs to be on the agenda, don’t mind handouts, but can cause problems. Kreif – I can follow your protocol. Chairman Lauber – Like to have our agency take a look at this, similar to Asian carp issue. Have bait dealers with monopoly on trot line bait is an issue. I hear what you are saying; our people recently addressed this and hope they will continue. Commissioner Budd – Are you asking Commission to do something? Kreif – Yes, remove “except blue gill and green sunfish”. Budd – Was this going to be looked at again? Jennison – If you would like presentation from Doug or aquatic nuisance staff we can do that. Budd – We would like that.

~~Steve Wilts~~ **Keith Miltz**, Lake Kahola Homeowners Association - Ken is chairman of our zebra mussel committee, he has been asking for change for just over a year now. We sent a letter (Exhibit E) and never got any response back from you. Interested in your feelings about this subject? We allow live bait, but we have rule that you have to buy from certified bait dealer. We have set of rules that are stringent and inspection of boats before they can be put on lake and have a cleaning process. We have quarantine of boats if you move the boat off and bring it back. Chairman Lauber – Stopping the movement of private water is difficult. Most of areas tend to be

around a lake and seems to be a boat that brings them in. Your success is in the moving of boats. Wilts – Not talking about boats, but moving green sunfish or blue gill. I want to hear from each of you so we know where to proceed? Commissioner Budd – Robin is going to bring a presentation from the staff. Jennison - Important to understand when we pass more restrictive regulation in 2012 there are two sides to this issue and we were going to error on the side of caution and heard from a lot of fisherman. Focus on western lakes that don't have zebra mussels, probably spread by boats, not to say not spread by bait. We will have a presentation and talk to Sheila and Chris and try to do at the next meeting.

## **VI. DEPARTMENT REPORT**

### **A. Secretary's Remarks**

1. Agency and State Fiscal Status – Robin Jennison, Secretary, presented this update to the Commission (Exhibit F). The last time we met we reported that when the budget office took a look at our budget, for reasons we never completely understood, they took \$375,000 out of the Land and Water Conservation Fund and \$300,000 out of our Cabin Fee Fund. We have visited with the legislature about that and those issues have been rectified in the current bills, not to say it couldn't be changed in a conference committee, but it is highly doubtful. The Governor and budget office did reduce EDIF funding by \$500,000; they told us that was going to happen so they gave us the spending authority in the Park Fee Fund (PFF) so it did not decrease the parks budget but transferred spending authority and available monies. Senate passed budget and are adjourned until Monday, House is yet to pass theirs. The thing holding them back the most was what was going to happen to K-12 education funding and they have passed a block grant until a new formula could be worked out; schools made estimates and then found out there were more at-risk or title-one children and other issues and needed more money. Gave handouts for both the park fee fund (PFF) and the wildlife fee fund (WFF). In the PFF down in February, but have increased balances year to year and getting better each month. Budget is pretty flat year to year, except February which we think was weather; still running about six percent ahead. We did modify revenue projections based on first four months of the year, so we are on track to do that. WFF balances are down, part of that is the drought has finally affected the revenues, watching this closely, should be fine. South Dakota saw a year before we did. House took \$300,000 from our budget for land acquisition, but Chris will speak about that in his legislative report. Chairman Lauber – Is EDIF lottery money or casino money? Jennison – Yes, EDIF is Economic Development Initiative Fund, which is lottery money, casino money is ELRF (Expanded Lottery Revenue Fund) money; we do not get any casino money. Chairman Lauber – How many agencies participate in EDIF money? Jennison – Not sure, lottery retains some, and some of it goes into Corrections, Regents Institutions, Commerce and maybe some others. Chairman Lauber – Annual scuffle on getting money or set amount? Jennison – Didn't used to be; it is a scuffle, parks used to get general fund, but moved to EDIF because not scrutinized as much, but with challenges in the last four years it is watched more so don't know if we saved ourselves that much.

2. 2015 Legislative Update – Chris Tymeson, chief legal counsel, presented this update to the Commission. First year of two-year cycle. Conference committees met today and possibly tomorrow. Have Easter break for three weeks than come back for veto session April 29. I track a

lot more bills than I put on website, I am tracking 115. A few have made it okay, but some have floundered, but none that we needed this year. SB45 is about concealed carry and no permit, as you recall we allow concealed carry when hunting and fishing and don't have to have a permit. Passed Senate with 26 co-sponsors, went to House and passed and now on its way to the Governor. Also, followed other firearms bills, but everything has to come from conference committee now. SB46 – Domestic deer, identification and modernizing the statute and allowing Dept of Agriculture to determine how animal is marked, Governor signed; we provided comments for this bill. SB50 dealt with property tax and bed and breakfast, part of tourism, no hearing. SB59 magistrate judge jurisdiction, have jurisdiction over wildlife and parks crimes. Bill passed Senate and House committee but will have to come in through conference committee attached to another bill, believe amended to larger bill that deals with courts. SB97 – large dangerous animals, passed statutes several years ago (lions, tigers and bears), prohibiting contact with dangerous animals, using some arbitrary size limit, for example use for pictures or shows. Passed 23-17 and referred to Ag and natural resources and did not get a hearing, still alive for next year. SB112 - department initiative, writing citations, subject to dismissal if they made a mistake, like wrong date or something, a bit aggressions. Don't believe we have to write a ticket for an individual to be charged. We have other ways to deal with mistakes, like Civil Service Board, combined with SB113, don't have to give up phone or iPad if license is on that and it is revoked; passed House almost unanimous, in conference committee. New procedure, joint bundling to pass bills out, four bills can be bundled together. Don't know if required to pass ours, but depend on whatever passes with ours. SB120 – On land acquisition, took \$300,000; changes buying less than 640 acres without Senate approval; last year money from trustees, not much sense to seek approval for non-department funds to be spend. Limited to four counties and reduced 320 acres to 160 acres without permission. An attempt to make it so we couldn't buy any land at all without approval; going to Governor for signature. SB132 – add to dangerous animals to restrict more species like apes and wolves. SB134 – regarding noxious weeds, we are on advisory panel. SB 169 – State fish symbol, no official fish and we proposed the channel catfish and the bill did not receive a hearing. SB178 – Valuation of Ag land which would have made taxes go up four to five hundred percent didn't go anywhere. SB190 – sail boat classes, can use sunfish sailboats, have trailing boat instead of having to be on boat with them. We opposed boater education portion. As of this morning, routed to committee, can put back on and exempt from deadlines if they come back on general orders. SB262 - charitable activities, like bingo and raffles, Governor vetoed last year, voters approved it and they have to pass another statute, not moved much, but expect to move before end of year. SB268 – prohibiting stream maintenance and obstruction clearing in SG County, remove nongame and endangered species conservation act permit, opposed, working with SG County, alive but expect no movement. SB269 – want eastern spotted skunk removed from T&E species, also out of SG County, not done in statute. SB65, HB2074 and 2087 are other firearms bills, sales tax and not allowing local government from regulating firearms dealers out of business. HB2116 - House version of state fish as catfish. HB2117 – phase in boater education, not interested. HB2155 – charitable gaming bill passed House, placed in a gutted bill. HB2168 – taxation on outbuildings beside bed and breakfast, not moving. HB2341 – antler bill – return antlers in our possession for last 10 years, department opposed, but blessed and routed to a different committee and they worked the bill, sent to House floor and passed 82-43 yesterday. It has been routed to the Senate natural resources. There is one on movement of employees from classified to unclassified, case law out there. Also, one on compensation for final average salary, not use annual leave time. House Concurrent Resolution

5008, did not get a hearing, constitutional right to hunt and fish, changed my mind from 15 years ago, feel we should support. Chairman Lauber – Antler bill have to go back to Senate or is it done? Tymeson – Not done until the last day, routed from one committee to another and sent out by a committee that didn't know any of the facts; so anything can happen. Chairman Lauber – North American model concept defied. Commission Rider – Final action on land acquisition? Tymeson – 640 acres in four counties, 160 acres in general acquisitions. Our typical practice is pay appraised value. Commissioner Rider – We are like fiftieth state in the nation on state percentages. Tymeson – Forty-ninth, only Rhode Island behind us.

*Break*

## **B. General Discussion**

1. Strategic Plan Briefing - Steve Adams, Natural Resources Coordinator, present this report to the Commission (Exhibit G). Drafting a plan, expect a couple of pages when complete, must be something that is doable and convey message; theme will be recruit, retrain and reactivate; churn is something we struggle with already, 40 percent of license buyers buy only one of every three years. We need to educate and inform people we are not reaching now. Enhance opportunities, protecting and conserving resources and nurture positive relationships. Diversity, more urban than 50 years ago and society has changed in many ways. How do we reach out? How do we enforce the rules of the agency, treated in fair, consistent and congenial manner? Create direction that has a positive impact and assess how successful we have been, measurable need to be identified. Have a draft and next few months will bring in broad cross section of agency to review. Easy to identify actions, but sheer numbers tend to be overwhelming so we want to limit to one or two items in order to succeed. Ask management to be observers and invite Commission to be a part of this effort. Jennison – The plan we have moving forward, idea is to have each segment worked through and handled by a facilitator and to tape meetings. Target achievable measures and objectives that let us hit the goals. Look at Kansas population and diversity of groups; socially, culturally and ethnically. Hopeful that not something that sits on the shelf, but hope meetings create enough thought process within the department employees. Commissioner Dill – Anticipated timeframe? Adams – Have completed by fall, with facilitated process to begin in next few months. Commissioner Marshall – Catch us at a meeting as opposed to a separate date.

Linda Craghead – Introduced park staff here – Jeff Bender and Tony Reitz, park supervisors; and Dale Schwieger, park manager. Linda Lanterman was nominated for a prestigious award and was selected a distinguished fellow for Kansas by Kansas Park and Recreation Association board. She has done a great job leading and bringing the team together. May 4 is beginning of Travel and Tourism awareness week and we will be having a large media event in Overland Park with the Governor and the Secretary to showcase what we have going on in Kansas. Also, kicking off media event to showcase the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Kansas Magazine, it will be the “bucket list.” June 5 is second capital campout in conjunction with Coleman at Cedar Crest, which will kick off get outdoors campaign and media campaign for state parks. On May 12-14, we will be host to the Association of Great Lakes Outdoor Writers cast and blast event in southeast Kansas. Also, hosting Society of American Travel Writers, Central States Chapter from June 5-15. Commissioner Marshall – Where are the events? Craghead – The cast and blast Great Lakes

Outdoor Writers will be hosted in Parsons area and American Travel Writers will begin in Wichita and will go to Manhattan, Kansas City, Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve, and will participate in the Symphony in the Flint Hills on June 13.

2. Tourism Update – Kelli Hilliard, Tourism Travel Development Manager, presented this update to the Commission (*reviewed website*, flyer - Exhibit H). Kansas at your Service is a statewide standardized customer service training that can be taken by anyone who wants to improve their customer service skills with a company called Red Global. It emphasizes the importance of quality customer service in the tourism and hospitality industry and equips employees of Kansas with tools and resources to better serve our visitors so they will return time and time again. Training for the web-based certification is offered at no charge at [KansasAtYourService.com](http://KansasAtYourService.com). It is available in Spanish and English and will take about two hours to complete and an additional 20 minutes if you complete individual destinations (Manhattan and Great Bend). We have had 460 people complete; 52 complete byway course and 59 have completed Manhattan course; including Secretary Jennison and several of our staff. (*Watched “Nellie No Care” video on website.*) Now that program is launched, promotion is the key and Andrea Johnson will be working on that. Looking at additional local reward programs; Great Bend is offering anyone from there who completes the certification a chance to win three \$100 cash prizes and businesses will be entered for a company picnic. Would like to try to implement into curriculum plans. Entirely online program. Commissioner Marshall – Interactive or pre-recorded? Hilliard – It is pre-recorded. Jennison – It is user-friendly because if I can do it anyone can.

3. Preview of New Department Website - Ron Kaufman, Information Services Division director, presented this report to the Commission (*showed website*). Have two sites, [ksoutdoors.com](http://ksoutdoors.com) and [travelks.com](http://travelks.com). Introduced Jason Dickson and Jason Calhoun, both are experts at using application behind our website. Also, have Randy Oller and Dan Gasswint back in Pratt. Also, here is Mike Miller and Nadia Marji, with Dustin Teasley, graphic designer back in Pratt. It is a group effort. Website is six years old with some things are difficult to find. New site with new visual look header, thanks to Nadia. Navigation on left stays the same no matter what page you are on. Places boxes on first page and when you go to landing page more options to look at. *Navigated to several of the pages.* Website is also mobile responsive, less graphics; have calendar for events. Commissioner Dill – This site looks much more user-friendly. Kaufman – Intend to launch early to mid-May.

4. Webless Migratory Birds - Rich Schultheis, migratory game bird biologist, presented this report to the Commission (Exhibit I). Although webless migratory birds are subject to the same federal framework process with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) as waterfowl, stability in season dates and bag limits allows us to include webless regulations, bag limits, and season dates as permanent regulations. Webless migratory game bird regulations are set in 115-25-16 crows, 25-19 dove, 25-20 sandhill crane, and 25-21 snipe, rail and woodcock. No changes are recommended at this time and we will follow last year’s dates. Season dates are listed at bottom of the page.

5. Early Migratory Bird Seasons - Tom Bidrowski, migratory game bird program manager, presented this update to the Commission (Exhibit J). Federal frameworks establish

maximum bag, possession limits and season lengths, and earliest opening and latest closing dates. States must operate within these frameworks when establishing state specific migratory game bird seasons. September Teal Season Frameworks are published in late-June, after results from the May Breeding Duck Survey and recommendations from Flyway Councils are completed. Blue-winged teal (8.5 million) are one of the earliest migrating waterfowl, with most passing through Kansas from late August through September, prior to the opening of the general duck season. Green-winged teal are also early migrants, and many arrive in September and October, but they are commonly found in Kansas throughout the winter, depending on weather conditions.

Bidrowski – Will cover next two items in same PowerPoint presentation.

6. Update on Federal Changes and Timeline for Migratory Birds - Tom Bidrowski, migratory game bird program manager, presented this update to the Commission (Exhibit K). This presentation covers this year's migratory game bird season setting process, duck zone discussion schedule and season setting timeline for the 2016-17 season, and beyond. This year's timeline is similar to past regarding to setting of dates; the early season selection is due to USFWS by July 1. In 2013 the USFWS released an EIS that addressed the timing of season setting process. Regulations allowing the hunting of waterfowl, doves, cranes, snipe, woodcock, rails, coots, gallinules and moorhens currently are promulgated annually. These annual regulations include framework regulations and special regulations, and take into consideration factors that change from year-to-year, such as abundance and distribution of birds, times of migration, and other factors. Beginning the 2016-17 season, the process will change to: biological information is gathered, analyzed, feds place into the models, and model output is reviewed. KDPWT may consider the following migratory game bird timeline: January general discussion on webless and waterfowl regulation; March workshop; and move to public hearing in April. There are other alternatives, but the dates described here would be latest due to the April 30th deadline.

7. Duck Zone Boundaries - Tom Bidrowski, migratory game bird program manager, presented this update to the Commission (Exhibit K). Kansas' last changes to its duck zone boundaries were in 2011. The next federal open season on duck zone boundaries will allow for changes in the Low Plains Zones beginning in the 2016-17 season however, zone boundary changes must be submitted by December 1, 2015. Zoning is the establishment of independent seasons in two or more areas (zones) within states for the purpose of providing more equitable distribution of harvest opportunity for hunters throughout the state. An important condition is zoning shall not detrimentally change the harvest distribution pattern among species or populations at either the state or flyway level. Because of this, most zoning initiated in the 1970s was experimental. Until recently, few requests for zoning have been denied by the Service and no penalties currently are in place when zones are selected. Zoning is utilized extensively in all flyways. Many states use both zones and split seasons in combination to most effectively position seasons within the established framework dates. Federal guidelines require zones to be contiguous and are only for regular duck season (not during teal season, etc.). The high plains are not eligible (more on that later). Kansas does not have any grandfathered boundaries and they will be set for another five-year period based on the three options listed. 1) No more than four zones with no splits; 2) split seasons (no more than three segments) with no zones; or 3) no more

than three zones with the option for two-way (two-segment) split seasons in one, two, or all zones. Kansas duck zones are based geographically for habitat features contained in that zone rather than a latitude or longitude justification. The irregular shapes are to capture these features in a contiguous boundary required by the USFWS. There are two units – the high plains and the low plains and Hwy 283 delineates the two units that were created in 1972. The high plains unit has no zones and consists of the area of the state west of US Hwy 283, with a 97-day season; we are able to offer great opportunity for a variety of hunting preferences from those who wish to take advantage of early migrants. The additional 23 days of hunting available in the high plains are due to differential harvest of mallards associated with the High Plains east of the 100th meridian. The USFWS notified KDWP that any changes to duck zone boundaries are due by December 1, previously we were told May 1, 2016. These changes will not be in effect until the 2016-17 season. Dates and locations for public meetings are not set yet and we are designing a survey instrument as well. If Kansas cannot make the December 1 deadline, it has the option to submit any boundary changes May 1; however those changes would not go into effect until the 2017-18 season. Commissioner Budd – All zones on same five-year cycle? When was last zone change, other than five years ago when we added Southeast zone? Bidrowski – Small tweak in early zone in 2011, prior to that 1996 when we separated early and late zones. Commissioner Budd – Have feds ever denied a zone change request? Bidrowski – No, they give us a set of frameworks and as long as changes fit that criteria, they have usually been accepted. Tymeson – There was a small change proposed on the inclusion of federal reservoirs and they said no, so there was a denial. Bidrowski – That was regarding the High Plains Unit which was separate from these duck zones where we tried to include Cedar Bluff Reservoir into the High Plains Unit and that was denied back in 2011 based off a different set of criteria. Commissioner Budd - Ever asked the feds, since half of Kansas, or one-third of Kansas, is already in the High Plains zone at 97 days, maybe they should consider giving us 97 days for the whole state? Bidrowski – Currently at 74 days with the liberal package, but hesitant to make changes due to going to the new process in 2016. Commissioner Budd – Is it just because you have drawn a line in the sand and decided this is pretty much it, but what percentage of chance? Bidrowski – When we made the judgment on Cedar Bluff that affected only a few hunters, they said no, this is the agreement and they were afraid of creep, we would take small amount, then want more in the next five years, so they said no. That is something that doesn't have to go under a five-year process and we have asked the last few years and it has never made it to the SRC. Commissioner Dill – When do expect public meeting dates to be set? Bidrowski – Throughout May and early part of June and shortly after that have an internet-based survey going out to those that purchased a waterfowl stamp last year and have results at August meeting. Commissioner Budd – Like to see meeting date and survey in southeast zone, particularly Marais des Cygnes area. Bidrowski – Have proposed sites. Commissioner Budd – Place Marais des Cygnes area in other. Bidrowski – That can be done. Commissioner Dill – Getting a lot of duck emails.

In 2013, federal process proposed changes (*from PowerPoint 2013 final supplemental environmental impact statement – read completely*). Change in federal schedule compared to what we have now will identify regulatory action first in April rather than last in August. Commissioner Budd – Understandable for anyone now so that is great. Do you or your staff have opinions on season dates or boundaries at this point? Bidrowski – Boundaries based on season dates in a way. Allowed to January 31, latest ever except for 2009, this was the same date. Commissioner Budd – In low plains zone why three zones and what was purpose of last zone?



Bidrowski – To cover four waterfowling areas; late zone covers 40 percent of hunting area, southeast zone carved off in 2007, forego some wood ducks by later season dates. Commissioner Budd – When you submitted southeast zone to feds did you give reason why? Bidrowski – Hunter satisfaction, habitat and migration. Commissioner Budd – It has come a long way, the bottom line is where the hunters are coming from. I hope by end of process all are feeling like that. Bidrowski – Any of season dates can satisfy a particular hunter. Commissioner Budd – Appreciate you coming down to southeast Kansas this last year. Bidrowski – A strong desire to keep holiday dates in that zone. Commissioner Budd – If we can draw a line to appease the ones that need to appease as long as we don't hurt the majority of the hunters. Chairman Lauber – Consensus in emails seems to be confusion on whether changing dates or season dates. My suggestion is to lower northern tier of southeast zone boundary, but emails seem to want to keep it. Commissioner Budd – If you send surveys in off season, responders will be really for it or really against it. We have all come to realize the southeast zone likes a later season, ultimate question is do you tweak northern boundary of northeast zone or tweak other boundaries? Chairman Lauber – We have to decide what we want and present that to the feds. Commissioner Budd – Do we as a commission vote on recommendation we make to feds? Bidrowski – As long as recommendations meet their criteria. Commissioner Budd – Hope to get options on zone boundary, not try to figure out at a public meeting. Chairman Lauber – Get clear sense of what people want. Emails I received different than what I had heard in the past. They seem to be tying zone and season together. Chairman Lauber – staff can make decision on where “other” meetings will be. Commissioner Rider – SE zone runs border to border, move north boundary of SE zone, push west and make sure it doesn't go all the way down to Oklahoma. Bidrowski – Have heard some of that. Commissioner Budd – Target Marais des Cygne area to get their input on SE zone. Pearce – When are season dates set? Bidrowski – June meeting. Pearce – As far as duck zones? Bidrowski – June or August meeting. Pearce – When will public meetings be set? Bidrowski – In next two weeks.

8. KAR 115-25-9a. Deer; open season, bag limit, and permits; additional considerations; Fort Riley. - Lloyd Fox, big game research biologist, presented this report to the Commission (Exhibit L). This regulation covers deer seasons at Fort Riley and has typically been used to address deer issues which developed during the legislative session. Shawn Stratton from Fort Riley is here today. Looking at reducing pressure on whitetail deer through extended season and number of permits hunters can obtain on antlerless season. A three-day season includes three more units, 2, 8 and 16, from trend information these are adjustments. In addition, in those units we are recommending a single whitetail antlerless permit, not two. In Unit 2, five permits can be used as a result of Cedar Bluff, but drop back to a three-day season. The rest remain the same as last year. Season dates are: October 9-12 for youth and designated people (disabled). November 27-29, December 19-23, and December 26-29. Archery hunting for September 1-13, and January 11-31, 2016.

Shawn Stratton – Firearms dates are tricky, training is number one mission, but like to provide opportunity around those training dates. Five year average is 1,000 hunters per year, 101,000 acres, 76,000 open for use. Success rate is about 330 deer total per year. Buck/doe ratio is one buck to every two does. We appreciate the support and opportunity the department has given us.

### **C. Workshop Session**

1. Public Land Regulations – Dustin Mengarelli, public lands section, presented this regulation to the Commission. We have no changes being recommended at this time.

**VII. RECESS AT 4:06 p.m.**

**VIII. RECONVENE AT 6:30 p.m.**

**IX. RE-INTRODUCTION OF COMMISSIONERS AND GUESTS**

**XI. DEPARTMENT REPORT**

**X. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

Statewide Habitat Award Presentation (Cancelled due to no-show of recipient).

Robin Jennison – We have come to recognize the importance of connectivity in streams to maintaining our native fish and wildlife resources in Kansas (Exhibit M). Obstructions break this connectivity by creating a physical barrier that interferes with migration and successful reproduction of many of our native species. Also, structures by design alter the hydrology of a stream and we have also come to recognize that hydrology and biology of stream ecosystems that cannot be separated. When you change the hydrology, you affect the biological community. About two weeks ago I was reading a bulletin in 1939 that Sheila has scanned onto our intranet history site, it made reference to something happening pre-1900s, while we recognize it today and an interesting story was connected to it. A fellow out around Ellsworth was doing research and got California salmon eggs, put boxes in the stream and a flood came up and washed his experiment away, he was not upset as he figured the eggs were still in the water somewhere; they had gone down the Kaw and up the Delaware where salmon were found, which could not happen today because of the fracturing. We want to present awards to two individuals who have been great partners, Norman Bowers and Wayne Stancill. Mr. Bowers has been a tireless partner working on a variety of projects; all in all, Mr. Bowers facilitated the implementation of 11 road crossing and stream restoration projects in Kansas, one of which would not have been completed without his negotiations with the project sponsor. Mr. Bowers was recognized for a National Fish Passage Program Award by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service this year for his contributions to stream connectivity and we feel it is a great honor to be working with Mr. Bowers and have his expertise and guidance right here at home. Mr. Stancill has been a long-term partner with the state for many years and has worked on a variety of projects in Kansas, as well as many other states in the region. One notable project that Mr. Stancill has been involved with is the renovation of the Lincoln Street Dam in Wichita. This project involves not only fish passage but boat passage as well, and is the largest in the State of Kansas. Mr. Stancill has a long-term commitment to improving health of our streams and the fishery resources they provide in Kansas and across the region as well. Beyond the project in Wichita, Mr. Stancill has worked on nine completed projects and is currently assisting with six other projects. We look forward to working with him in the future. We would like to recognize two individuals whom have been great partners and have put considerable effort into working with the department to reconnect streams and rivers in Kansas. Both these individuals have portrayed the importance of partnerships at the local, state and federal levels and how cooperation among these entities leads

to great accomplishments in natural resource management.

The awards read: “In recognition of outstanding contribution and dedication to conservation, sustainable development, and natural resource stewardship in the State of Kansas”

We are honored to present these awards to Norman Bowers and Wayne Stancill for their work in stream and river connectivity in the State of Kansas.

Norman Bowers - Engineers and biologists talk but don't communicate. Wayne Stancill – None of this would be successful without partners. I've been with the USFWS 23 years and still no one knows me. I am just the guy next to Norm.

## **XI. DEPARTMENT REPORT**

### **D. Public Hearing**

*Notice and Submission Forms; Kansas Legislative Research Letter and Attorney General Letter (Exhibit N).*

1. KAR 115-25-7. Antelope; open season, bag limit, and permits. - Matt Peek, wildlife biologist, presented this report to the Commission (Exhibit O). Archery permit numbers have increased from 110 to 380, but now are tapering off below 350, which we feel we can support. About a ten percent increase. The firearm season is allowing 104 resident firearms permits for unit 2; 36 for unit 17; and 14 for unit 18. Muzzleloader-only season is authorized for 26 resident muzzleloader permits for unit 2; 10 for unit 17; and 8 for unit 18. The bag limit shall be one antelope of either sex. Pearce – Ten percent across the units, lumped together? Peek – Yes.

**Commissioner Gary Hayzlett moved to approve KAR 115-25-7 before the Commission. Commissioner Don Budd second.**

**The roll call vote on KAR 115-25-7 to revoke was as follows (Exhibit P):**

<b>Commissioner Budd</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Commissioner Dill</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Commissioner Doll</b>	<b>Absent</b>
<b>Commissioner Hayzlett</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Commissioner Marshall</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Commissioner Rider</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Commissioner Lauber</b>	<b>Yes</b>

**The motion as presented on KAR 115-25-7 passed 6-0.**

2. KAR 115-25-8. Elk; open season, bag limit, and permits. - Matt Peek, wildlife biologist, presented this report to the Commission (Exhibit Q). Testing for CWD, but not in regulation any longer so we want to strike that, but no other changes to recommend. In the briefing book recommended 10 any elk and 15 antlerless elk for Unit 2a (Ft. Riley). An unlimited number of hunt-on-your-own-land antlerless-only elk permits and either-sex elk permits shall be authorized in units 2 and 3. A hunt-on-your-own-land permit shall be valid during any open season. An unlimited number of over-the-counter antlerless-only elk permits and either-sex elk permits shall be authorized in unit 3. Commissioner Rider – If elk with CWD, what is the protocol? Does hunter get to keep the head and antlers? Peek – Yes, recommend they

not eat the meat, but can mount it or use the cape and work with them on disposal of the rest of the animal. Commissioner Rider – Some hunters might not reach out to us if they think they could lose the animal. Peek – That is not the case. Continue to sample suspect animals.

**Commissioner Roger Marshall moved to approve KAR 115-25-8 before the Commission. Commissioner Tom Dill second.**

**The roll call vote on KAR 115-25-8 to revoke was as follows (Exhibit R):**

<b>Commissioner Budd</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Commissioner Dill</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Commissioner Doll</b>	<b>Absent</b>
<b>Commissioner Hayzlett</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Commissioner Marshall</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Commissioner Rider</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Commissioner Lauber</b>	<b>Yes</b>

**The motion as presented on KAR 115-25-8 passed 6-0.**

3. KAR 115-4-13. Deer permits; descriptions and restrictions. – Lloyd Fox, wildlife biologist, presented this report to the Commission (Exhibit S). Modifying antlerless whitetail first permit which is valid statewide and add statement “unless otherwise specified in these regulations.” We have taken Unit 18 out of KAR 115-25-9 and that supersedes this regulation so that is confusing, so need to do that here. Chairman Lauber – Does this have to do with wildlife areas? Fox – No, last year we eliminated use of WAO in Unit 18 for all hunters in 25-9, but still had part of sentence, but we could eliminate them in any specific unit if we so desire.

**Commissioner Don Budd moved to approve KAR 115-4-13 before the Commission. Commissioner Aaron Rider second.**

**The roll call vote on KAR 115-4-13 to revoke was as follows (Exhibit T):**

<b>Commissioner Budd</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Commissioner Dill</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Commissioner Doll</b>	<b>Absent</b>
<b>Commissioner Hayzlett</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Commissioner Marshall</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Commissioner Rider</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Commissioner Lauber</b>	<b>Yes</b>

**The motion as presented on KAR 115-4-13 passed 6-0.**

4. KAR 115-25-9. Deer; open season, bag limit, and permits. – Lloyd Fox, wildlife biologist, presented this report to the Commission (Exhibit U). We have completed harvest survey, up 4.8 percent from year before. Harvest on mule deer was down about 11 percent. Deer vehicle accidents were also up last year. Extended firearm seasons are for unfilled deer permit valid in units 6, 8, 9, 10, 16, or 17, and shall be valid during an extended antlerless-only firearm season beginning January 1 - 3, 2016 in those units. Each unfilled deer permit valid in units 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 11, 12, 13, or 14, shall be valid during an extended antlerless-only firearm season beginning January 1 - 10, 2016 in those units. Each unfilled deer permit valid in units 10A, 15, or

19, shall be valid in an extended antlerless-only firearm season beginning January 1 - 17, 2016 in those units. Permits restricted to a specific unit shall remain restricted and equipment legal during a firearm season shall be authorized with any permit. Unlimited resident hunt-on-your-own-land, special hunt-on-your-own-land, and nonresident hunt-on-your-own-land deer permits shall be authorized for all units. These permits also shall be valid during the portion of the extended firearm season beginning on January 1, 2016 and extending through the last open day in units open during an extended or special extended firearm season. Any individual may obtain no more than five antlerless white-tailed deer permits with one antlerless white-tailed deer permit valid statewide, except in unit 18, including lands managed by the department and four additional antlerless white-tailed deer permits valid in units 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 10A, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, and 19 on lands not managed by the department, except Cedar Bluff, Glen Elder, Kanopolis, Lovewell, Norton, Webster, and Wilson Wildlife Areas and Kirwin National Wildlife Refuge. Pearce – For number of antlerless permits, none in 18, one in units with short antlerless season and everything else is up to five? Fox – That is correct. Commissioner Budd – There were concerns last year about this. Fox – We did this last year, can't hunt in Unit 18. Harvest opportunities are the same. Commissioner Dill – Unit 2 and 16 we moved from longer season? Fox – Yes, shifted to short season, three days and one permit. Commissioner Hayzlett – Thanks for answering emails that came from my area. In Unit 17, how many allowed? Fox – One and season is only three days. Can use WAO during any season and hunt with unused other permits in that three-day season. Commissioner Hayzlett – Still concerned about not seeing any deer, mule deer or whitetail. Appreciate it when you respond to those emails. Pearce – At one time had another unit that went with 15, was that 7? Fox – It was 7, 8, 15 and 19; dropped back to three-day season. Commissioner Budd – Do you think this addresses the issue in your area? Commissioner Hayzlett – It is a good start. Commissioner Dill – Reduced the season, but overall the actual number of permits we issued we have not decreased? Fox – Whitetail either-sex permit will still be available. Will talk about reductions in Secretary's Orders. Chairman Lauber – To address perceived and real decline you are reducing number of days, rather than number of permits? Fox – That is correct. Few hunters buy more than one WAO permit.

**Commissioner Tom Dill moved to approve KAR 115-25-9 before the Commission. Commissioner Roger Marshall second.**

**The roll call vote on KAR 115-25-9 to revoke was as follows (Exhibit V):**

<b>Commissioner Budd</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Commissioner Dill</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Commissioner Doll</b>	<b>Absent</b>
<b>Commissioner Hayzlett</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Commissioner Marshall</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Commissioner Rider</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Commissioner Lauber</b>	<b>Yes</b>

**The motion as presented on KAR 115-25-9 passed 6-0.**

5. Secretary's Orders for Deer – Lloyd Fox, wildlife biologist, presented this report to the Commission (Exhibit W). In 2014, in draw permits, we allowed 2,770 permits; we are reducing to 2,315, a 16 percent reduction in number of firearm permits for either species, either sex. Units 3, 4, 5, 7, and 17 have no either-species antlerless permits, and we are reducing the number of either-species antlerless percent by 20 percent in the West Zone; we are also reducing the quota for nonresident whitetail either sex by five percent in Deer Management Units 8 and 6. This should not result in a reduction in hunting opportunity for our residents. They can still

obtain whitetail permits. Pearce – How would you characterize mule deer in last few years? Fox – Moving west over last 20 years. Pearce – Hunter I hunt with says we are down to 20 percent in mule deer numbers in western zone. Declining in most states, why do we have permits for antlerless mule deer? Pearce – Aren't there depredation permits for those other types of issues? Fox – Not for hunters. Pearce – What was reduction, from what to what? Fox – Twenty percent, nine percent reduction in hunting pressure in keeping place with harvest decline. Commissioner Hayzlett – Used to hunt mule deer in Wallace County, can't find any there now. A little troubling to be able to hunt mule deer does at all. Fox – We are reducing the number. This last year, antlerless whitetail harvest was 56 percent of total whitetail harvest; corresponding value in mule deer was 19 percent and we are going to cut that back even more. We are seeing shift of mule deer back to the west; don't understand why. We reduced it a little bit last year too. Chairman Lauber – As eastern zone reduces mule deer are whitetail increasing there? Fox – There may be some increase, usually tend to inhabit different habitats, but not in Kansas. Don't know if whitetail is filling niche or whitetail is outcompeting mule deer. Commissioner Dill – Would it be too dramatic to eliminate mule deer antlerless completely for a few years? Fox – That would be our next step, could be in 2016, but not in 2015.

## **XII. Old Business**

*None*

## **XIII. Other Business**

### **A. Future Meeting Locations and Dates**

April 23, 2015 – GPNC, Wichita

June 18, 2015 – Fort Hays State Robbins Center, Hays

August 20, 2015 – Wetland Education Center, Great Bend

October 22, 2015 – Burlington or Emporia

## **XIV. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

(Exhibits and/or Transcript available upon request)  
Exhibit X – 2015 Kansas Wildlife Habitat Conservation Award