

**Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks  
Commission Meeting Minutes  
Thursday, September 7, 2023  
Lee Richardson Zoo – Finnup Center  
312 Finnup Drive, Garden City  
including a  
Virtual ZOOM Meeting Option**

**Approved** Subject to  
**11/30/23** Commission  
Approval

The September 7, 2023, meeting of the Kansas Wildlife and Parks Commission was called to order by Assistant Chairman Emerick Cross at 12:00 p.m.

Commissioners Phil Escareno, Emerick Cross Warren Gfeller were present in person; and Gerald Lauber, Troy Sporer, Delia Lister, were present via Zoom. Lauren Sill was not present.

**II. INTRODUCTION OF COMMISSIONERS AND GUESTS**

The Commissioners and Department staff introduced themselves (Attendance Roster – Exhibit A).

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

Mission Statement (Exhibit B) and Agenda (Exhibit C) Sheila – Please note the order of the presentations has changed for this meeting. Public Hearing first, then General Discussion, General Public Comment on Non-Agenda items, then Secretary’s Remarks, Workshop Session and ending with another session of General Public Comment on Non-Agenda items.

**IV. APPROVAL OF THE August 17, 2023, MEETING MINUTES**

Sheila – Correction to minutes, on first page, approved June 22, 2023, minutes, (not March 9, 2023, minutes as previously listed).

Commissioner Gerald Lauber moved to approve the minutes, Commissioner Phil Escareno second. *Approved* (Minutes – Exhibit D).

**V. DEPARTMENT REPORT**

**A. Administrative Rules and Regulation Procedure – Pursuant to K.S.A. 77-421 – Public Hearing** (Notice of Public Hearing – Exhibit E)

1. K.A.R. 115-20-2, possession limits amphibians and reptiles – Daren Riedle, wildlife diversity coordinator, in the Ecological Services section presented this to the Commission (Exhibit F). These regulations came about through discussions of Ad Hoc group between law enforcement and Ecological Services looking at poaching of amphibians and reptiles in the state and some other issues. Also, a bill was introduced, HB 2479, to basically eliminate all take and

possession of ornate box turtles. We wanted to develop some possession limits that would reduce take from the wild, make it easier for law enforcement during stops and still provide educational opportunities for kids. All of us that grew up keeping a box turtle, lizard or something like that, we wanted to still allow those educational opportunities which are beneficial for those growing up enjoying the outdoors. We discussed these regs and once we were happy with result we sat down with Ecological folks, then presented them at two Kansas Nongame Wildlife Advisory Council meetings. The Council consists of most of the NGOs in the state that are concerned with natural resources in the state at one level or another. It includes state chapters of the Wildlife and Fisheries societies, Kansas Herpetology and Ornithological societies, Sierra Club, Audubon of Kansas, Kansas Association of Zoos, Farm Bureau, Kansas Livestock Association and several others. In 2022, I presented to the Kansas Herpetological Society, a society focused on amphibians and reptiles. There has been consensus across the board, and we are happy because it meets the requirements we were looking for. Currently, the regulation allows anybody to keep five individuals of any nonthreatened and endangered species of amphibian and reptile. Changing to maximum of any mix of five individuals of amphibians, per domicile. And five reptiles and no more than two individuals of any species per domicile.

Andrew Clark, Hays – Will that affect bag limit for bullfrogs? Riedle – No, bullfrogs come under fishing licenses.

Testimony was submitted by the Kansas Chapter of Sierra Club prior to the meeting (Exhibit G). They indicated they were in favor of the regulation however would like us to go one step further in prohibiting take of ornate box turtles.

**Commissioner Gerald Lauber moved to approve K.A.R. 115-20-2 as presented to the Commission. Commissioner Phil Escareno second.**

**The roll call vote to approve was as follows (Exhibit H):**

<b>Commissioner Cross</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Commissioner Escareno</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Commissioner Gfeller</b>	<b>Absent during vote</b>
<b>Commissioner Lister</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Commissioner Sill</b>	<b>Not Present</b>
<b>Commissioner Sporer</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Commissioner Lauber</b>	<b>Yes</b>

**The motion to approve K.A.R. 115-20-2 passed 5-0.**

## **B. General Discussion**

1. Deer 25-series big game regulations – Levi Jaster, big game coordinator, presented these regulations to the Commission (Exhibit I, PP – Exhibit J). This is where statewide seasons are set, as well as dates and units for extended antlerless seasons. Also, limitations on obtaining multiple permits of certain types. Approved in August 2023 to set seasons and we set durable dates where it no longer includes a yearly date. We will only have to come back and address if changes are needed and to announce what dates will be. What I am announcing today is 2024/2025 season dates. The season dates for deer hunting during 2024-25 following the regulation are as follows: Youth and Disability, September 7-15, 2024; Muzzleloader, September 16-29, 2024; Archery, opens concurrently with muzzleloader season on September 16, 2024, and

runs through December 31, 2024; Pre-Rut Whitetail Antlerless-Only (WAO), October 12-14, 2024; Extended Pre-Rut WAO (only in DMU 12), October 15-20, 2024, since need for additional doe harvest in that unit; Regular Firearm, Wednesday after Thanksgiving, December 4-15, 2024; 1<sup>st</sup> Extended WAO, January 1-5, 2025; 2<sup>nd</sup> Extended WAO, January 1-12, 2025; 3<sup>rd</sup> Extended WAO, January 1-19, 2025; Extended Archery (DMU 19 only), January 20-31, 2025. Everything follows what we have been doing for the last several years as far as length and dates, except for DMU 12 extended pre-rut adds those extra days. Nothing to vote on but putting this in front of folks to see where dates will fall and to be able to evaluate anything that comes up.

Andrew Clark, Hays – Have we considered placing muzzleloader and archery into draw like we have with rifle, as far as mule deer? They would have to draw a stamp. Since success rates of muzzleloader and archery seem to be climbing. Jaster – Talking about that internally. Archery tags are statewide, over the counter, limited to archery equipment, only buck tag you can have. The muzzleloader tag is limited to archery or muzzleloader-only during muzzleloader or firearm seasons for a buck and it is over the counter like archery, except limited to zone you get, east or west mule deer zones. Firearms is a draw, any deer valid during firearm unless you hunt January for antlerless whitetail, all tags turn into antlerless whitetail tag on January 1. That is draw that is limited and have been considering how to address mule deer harvest on declining populations and considering potential of moving archery and muzzleloader tags into a draw system. We are looking at other potential options, as well. That way one group doesn't bear the brunt of reductions. Commissioner Sporer – Is last statement directed towards mule deer? Jaster – Yes, mule deer rifle hunters have had to bear the brunt of any tag reductions because it was only one that is limited because everything else is over the counter. Also implementing reductions on nonresident mule deer stamps to the point they are no longer available. Commissioner Sporer – You are considering a draw for archery and muzzleloader mule deer tags? Jaster – Yes, that is under evaluation right now and looking at feasibility. If it comes to that point, it would be trying to figure out what tag quotas would be. If we move that direction, we will bring that to the Commission.

Greg Bieker, Hays – Would that be a second buck tag or like a mule deer stamp? Jaster – A mule deer stamp or very similar to that; We would maintain one buck permit.

2. Harvest Reporting Methods – Rich Schultheis, assistant Wildlife director and overseer of wildlife research group, presented this update to the Commission (PP - Exhibit K). Talk about harvest reports and methodology we use. There are a number of techniques available for collecting harvest information. Our wildlife resource group has been asked to provide a summary of current reporting methods and why we don't utilize mandatory reporting system. This is also an opportunity to summarize survey efforts and provide background on why we do what we do. Our goals are to collect data sufficient to produce precise, reliable and statistically valid estimates of harvest. We want to be able to provide harvest estimates at appropriate spatial scales needed to inform wildlife management decisions. We make a lot of decisions on statewide scale or at management-unit level but not at property or square-mile level. We try to avoid unnecessary burden to hunters that may result in survey fatigue. Utilize methodology that is fiscally responsible and logistically feasible to conduct on annual basis, something we do year in, and year out is to manage species appropriately. Start with summary of census versus a survey and difference of the two. Census is information collected on entire population, like being able to

count them, sex them or age them, whatever characteristic is; you can come up with reliable results, 100% compliance if you can count or see them all, then census methodology works well. Often best option, especially for smaller populations. It does become increasingly difficult as population size increases. Survey is sampling a population, only looking at some individuals of that overall population. We calculate a sample size that is needed and then sample those randomly selected individuals. We are able to estimate confidence intervals, response bias and things that make us feel more confident and feel good about what estimate is. The best option when looking at populations with large sample sizes. It does rely on reliable and accurate observations. Still need reliable information whether a census or a survey. Example of a census, population is everyone in this room, measure is everyone with a green shirt on, straightforward, I can close and lock the doors and I can census this population and we would all be confident in the information. If we add to complexity, instead of people with a green shirt on, we want the people where green is their favorite color; again, we can close the door and ask each individual that question, in theory should get results from most, or all, the folks here. If we don't, I know who I don't have an answer from, a straightforward estimate. If someone doesn't answer, we don't know if they are prone to like green or not, or don't want government to know they like green. Always some scenarios as it becomes more complex and more difficult for overall estimate. Let's talk about the same question for the residents of Kansas, things get tricky pretty quick. Just being able to contact everyone who is resident of Kansas would be a monumental task and getting responses from all of them would be impossible. What we are faced with is having the ones we get and the ones we don't get and if there are any biases. You can see as you get in a bigger population and as things get more complicated coming up with estimate gets tricky. Contrast with example for survey; if you talk about flipping a quarter, if you flip it enough times you are going to come up with 50/50 heads and tails. You might not in the first two or first ten but with 20,000-coin flips, probably end up with about 10,000 heads and 10,000 tails. The question is how many times you want me to flip the coin before we are at point you are comfortable with 50/50. There is a formula to utilize when using this methodology for surveys that gives us that number, depending on how confident and how precise we want to be we can come up with how many flips we need. If we just do a few flips, you might get 50/50 but you might not. Get to 100,000 flips, you are within 10%, from 9,000 to 11,000, so, 100 flips out of 20,000, that saves a lot of times. If you move up to just under 400 flips, you are going to get within 5%. A reliable estimate. If just over 1,000-coin flips, it would be within 3%. Generally, we would be around 10,000 and our estimate would be close. It gives you an idea of how survey versus census works and benefits. Decide what acceptable precision is, how close we need to be, and then you sample accordingly using that formula. As you get higher and start sampling more you see limited benefit, the curve levels off and not a lot of benefit to oversampling. It can lead to survey fatigue and associated expense. Not a lot of benefit to oversample versus what we need. The summary is, those are what we can utilize for methodology when we are trying to estimate harvest of a species. Harvest survey is an example of what we talked about. Generally, we talk about in-season or post-season surveys, we sample the population of hunters that have a tag or permit that allows them to take a certain species. That can be in form of mail, email, telephone, smart phone application, or several other ways to gather information. Contrast that to tele-checks or mandatory check stations are a form of a census, we are trying to get all information from all individuals, like, did they harvest or not with that permit. The idea is you are requiring hunters to comply, anyone who has a license or permit has to provide a response, or at least if successful. Check stations, telephone, internet or smart phone applications, all of those are examples of what states utilize. Typically, we only require responses from successful hunters, but some states require responses whether successful or not. Harvest surveys are used extensively. We use it for ten plus harvest surveys on an annual basis. We send surveys to

randomly selected individuals with appropriate permit or tag. We sample at level needed for precision estimates at appropriate scale we need. We are making management decisions based on statewide or management unit level, but not making decision on a piece of property. This works well because generally larger scale is where we can affect population level. We use responses with estimates, all things that go into a calculation to extrapolate to overall harvest estimate. We sample 1,000 to 1,500 people, do extrapolation and arrive at overall harvest estimate for that species. It is a well-established methodology and has a long utilization in wildlife biology. There are textbooks and peer group publications on this, it is a well-defended good technique utilized over time. Benefits of survey methodology, calculate things like confidence levels in the estimates, so not only do we have a number of estimated harvests, but we also know how confident we are in that harvest range and when making management decisions it matters a lot. It doesn't require complete compliance, sample fewer people and over sample a little to be sure we have appropriate sample size. Fewer responses overall are needed and less burden on the hunters. No additional surveys needed. If you do mandatory harvest check stations, more information is needed because we don't know if someone didn't respond because they didn't harvest anything or because they don't want to share information. Then would need a survey for both unsuccessful hunters, a lot that doesn't fall in line with a particular harvest. When you do a harvest census or mandatory check, they are going to ask you things about that particular animal, where it was shot and those types of things. There is a lot of information we utilize on statewide basis. We just made some decisions on turkey season and quotas in units and that information came from turkey harvest survey on where folks spend their time and management units on turkey. If we didn't have this information, not just how many points a deer had, male or female, etc. that we would need to do an additional survey on. There are some consistency issues in Kansas. We have a long historical database with this type of information, and it is consistent across species. We can look at trends over time, look across species and everything is the same, methodology is the same and that is helpful. There are some drawbacks of harvest surveys, it is not all good. It does rely on voluntary response, not mandatory and we are seeing decreases in response rate, which is not ideal. Everyone sees a lot of surveys which makes it harder to get responses. It means more work for us, and we have to send out more surveys. Need to consider sampling error, response bias, memory bias, things that go into calculations that you need to consider. It is not straightforward, there are other things to consider and measure. Difficult to communicate with constituents the benefit of this. It is not straightforward, like saying everyone responds and here are the numbers. It is not a particularly useful tool for law enforcement because we don't have the time sensitive requirement, but that is not the goal of the program. For smaller populations you end up asking everyone, survey the whole population. While it still works well some benefits go away with smaller population. Benefits of survey versus census goes down. Compared to mandatory harvest reporting, a harvest census. We require harvest information for everyone that has a permit, or at least everyone that was successful. Generally, mandatory check stations, especially in western states, was part of the culture to get elk or deer checked. Not so much in Kansas but in other places it was. It started with mandatory check stations, moved to telecheck, where you had to report, or call in, and computer prompted you to hit one if it was doe, two if buck, etc. More recently, as technology is available, internet and smart phone apps and used for most states that do this. It is not typically utilized for all species, mostly for big game. Benefits of census, if you can get full compliance, it provides complete picture of harvest at any scale and avoids sampling errors. If we have information from everyone, it is pretty straightforward, and useful. Easier to communicate because of that and is

helpful at times. If real time reporting requirement it could help avoid post-season recollection bias so things would be fresh on persons mind. It can be useful when voluntary response rates begin to fall, and mandatory requirement could be useful in some situations when you must get responses needed. It works well in small population and quota hunts. Because of real time requirement it can be beneficial for law enforcement purposes as well. Drawbacks are it is difficult to get everyone to respond 100% and that is rarely achieved and can be 50% or lower for mandatory surveys. Even good states are 90-95%, that creates issues, without 100% compliance you end up with minimum or underestimate of what harvest actually is. When trying to do wildlife management and conservation and having an underestimate is difficult to determine rate and end up underreporting population. It can be difficult to estimate compliance, response bias, confidence intervals; all the things that make us feel good about data, is not available for those, so in the end we get a number but are not sure what that number actually means and how confident we should be in that number. Concerns raised with honesty when you start to require someone to submit information, that goes down. If voluntary, that rate is better. It is difficult to estimate what difference is but always a concern when talking about mandatory requirement. It still requires additional information, those that didn't harvest, or any information tied to the harvest. Even if we do a check station, we still have to send out survey at the end of the year to get that additional information, so there are drawbacks to this system. The unnecessary burden on hunters is the biggest. One year we did twelve different harvest surveys, for all the different species we have. It probably wouldn't be mandatory or telecheck for every species, but for each one everyone would have to respond. Most we ever asked one person, out of those 12, was three. We try to minimize overlap and lift to try and reduce survey fatigue. In Kansas, there is some consistency with using the same survey methodology each year. The assumption that comes up with constituents is that this is a cost decision. From our perspective it is a wash, if you think about mandatory harvest reporting, telecheck, there is high up-front cost. On an annual basis it can vary, if use phone, like smartphone app, it can be low. If you are doing check stations cost is high, a lot of staff time and salary. If you do a telephone operating system those are not cheap either. Generally, high up-front cost, mixed long term. Surveys have a moderate annual cost, time spent putting them together, postage and sending two to three reminders to get information back, time spent entering information when we get it back; or if phone component, all those costs can add up. There are some benefits and detriments to both systems as far as cost but not a huge component of decision for us. We utilize harvest surveys. We use that because best method to come up with most reliable estimates, which is what we are after. Comparing harvest survey to mandatory survey; there is accuracy, truthfulness, non-response bias, confidence intervals, need for high compliance, which is difficult to get, consistency historically and across species, and burden on hunters. The benefit falls with harvest survey versus the harvest census. There are some in the middle, cost, ease of communication, use in limited quota harvest situations, lean more towards census. The value for law enforcement also relies on census component. In the end we stack up the characteristics of the two and feel confident in harvest survey. We seek consistency with other measures out there. There are some species where we have numerous estimates for harvest, or harvest and participation, or harvest and abundance in habitat. When we look at those things, they track remarkably well, which is a good sign. The other thing that makes us confident in this information is we see smooth changes and realistic scales over time. You can see artificial bumps or outliers on an annual basis on estimates. During migration it is difficult and some years you get a great count, some you don't. That estimate goes up and down by half a million, which is obviously not realistic. In our harvest estimates we see realistic changes over time, they trend well, and we don't see outlier years. We make changes to regulations, permits and allocations, we anticipate if it will affect harvest significantly and they show up in harvest survey. So that makes us increasingly confident in the

information we are collecting and estimates we are coming up with. The harvest survey method is the best option available for collecting harvest information. This isn't a financial decision. The information request may suggest we need to improve communication with constituents, do a better job of explaining components that go into those decisions better. We will continue to assess available and emerging technology and techniques to ensure we are always using the most appropriate option. I work with staff across the state and in other states, biologists, and I have yet to be asked to move to mandatory harvest survey program, which makes me confident about information we are collecting. There is a huge number of peer review publications, textbooks and other things available, and I am happy to share examples, a lot of literature out there.

Commissioner Escareno – Do you ask outfitters for information on harvest data they collect and gather and compare to what we have, to see if it is close? Schultheis – We do not. There are times we will do a survey that may target, in some component, outfitters. With removal of outfitter permit system, we do not have reliable list of outfitters to survey. Generally, we are interested in the overall information from the people who harvest those animals. It would be a difficult task and we have a great dataset to rely on. We know folks that are legally able to be out there harvesting that species so we can sample that population. The population of outfitters would be difficult list to come up with. Commissioner Escareno – A hunter and an outfitter still must apply for a permit to hunt in an outfitter's location, so they are included in the data request. Your data you collect does include some of those hunters hunting with an outfitter? Schultheis – Yes, they have the same permit as anyone else so are in survey pool. Commissioner Escareno – So, we have that information. Schultheis – Yes. It could be secondary information source to utilize them. The value of doing a random selection of 2,000 people of 50,000 that might be doing it, the number of folks we would be comparing to, the folks that utilize outfitters, as far as confidence, it may not help to have that information for purpose of management decisions. Commissioner Escareno – Outfitters contradict our harvest information; they say it is different than what we have. Trying to understand how we can compare to make sure we are close on estimates of what is harvested. Schultheis – Not an expert on how harvest estimates look for a particular outfitter, one thing that is probably occurring is scale we estimate in and scale we make decisions in. On a property level, generally there are going to be differences versus if we look at a management unit. That is where estimates are that we make a decision at unit level, which may not align well with particular properties. I think we have pretty good confidence in scale. Commissioner Escareno – Thank you for work and staff that are gathering that and providing information to us. You do a fantastic job of providing information we need to make intelligent decisions. Schultheis – I will share with my staff. Commissioner Gfeller – Surveys require response, right? Schultheis – We don't require folks to respond. Commissioner Gfeller – They respond to request, a voluntary reporting of harvest. Schultheis – Correct. That has to do with methodology. Having a random sampling of the population versus soliciting response, you will see a bias in who responds. People who do generally like to respond, and those that don't, don't respond. We do a random sample and utilize that, which gives us a better non-response. Commissioner Gfeller – Response rate is what? Schultheis – Varies by different surveys, in higher surveys some 60-70%, some below 50%. As an agency doing well compared to some other states. Generally, we send out the initial request by mail or email and follow up with another request to try and encourage them to respond. There is a concern that there is a decline in response rates but is common in society today. Commissioner Gfeller – Any species you would want to consider a different approach on, where you do have concerns about response rates or

accuracy? Schultheis – I don't think response-wise, no. I haven't heard any requests for need to change methodology. This is limited to big game mostly. The idea is, it is not that we are not providing reliable estimates, it means we have to spend more to get the same data, because we have to send out more requests and more reminders. It takes more from our agency to do that, but still confident in estimate. Commissioner Cross – Is the lion's share done electronically or snail mail? Do you run into generational issues with those methodologies? Schultheis – Overall yes. Most of these we will provide either through email or send a postcard with a link to report online. Most occurs online and smartphones are in that too. There are issues with resistance to technology and still send some paper surveys or people call the Emporia office with their information and dictate it over the phone. We do our best to accommodate as best we can to get the data. The reliance on paper and phone has gone down, general cultural behavior. Secretary Loveless – To Commissioner Gfeller's comment, you answered it like I expected, you said we evaluate survey response rate and determined we still have confidence based upon those responses and the trends you see. However, you pointed out that if that drops too far you may reconsider that for a certain species. Schultheis – Certainly. We are not at that point now. We know what we need for responses. That 2,000 is not how many surveys we send out; it is how many surveys we need back. We are nowhere near that but there could be a point where we need to reconsider how we do this. Commissioner Escareno – I am on another board where we gather information with regards to cell phone usage in a WIHA or i-WIHA area or state-owned or leased property. It indicates how many cell phones are in an area, and if there they are probably hunting, may be a few wildlife watchers. Can we gather that information to look at numbers of hunters out there and compare those? Schultheis – We have not explored that technology, some of that geo-tracking and where people are spending time. There could be some benefit, particularly for smaller scale things, like utilization of a wildlife areas. We use things like road trackers. I could see benefit on a local scale, it could be useful.

Kenny Graham – Appreciate the presentation, very informative. Of states that touch Kansas, how many have mandatory check-in besides Kansas? Alaska doesn't, Missouri does, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Colorado? Is there less paper pushing to come up with data when it is mandatory? You are saying 50% to 90% is checking in honestly, yet on paper you are only getting 70%. Want your opinion on that, when you balance a checkbook, it is better to have all the data then part of it? Schultheis – Not sure on question. I don't have data in front of me on surrounding states, but generally close to 50/50 who require mandatory system. As far as numbers, difference between response rates and you when you require a census that number matters a lot more. When we are doing a survey, if we get 50% response rate, we are sampling at a level that still allows us to produce a reliable estimate with confidence interval. When we say we have a harvest estimate of 10,000 and our 95% confidence level is within 1,000 of that, we know harvest estimate is between 11,000 and 9,000. When doing a census and you get 50% of 10,000 you get 5,000, you don't know what real number is. The reliability of that estimate and concerns with having a number and interpreting what that number means, or what the actual harvest is in the field, is the difficult step with a census that we overcome by using a survey. It isn't apples to apples to compare response rates. Graham – You use that information to be able to extrapolate that we had a 25% downward harvest of nonresidents across the state on turkeys, based strictly on the survey. Statistically that showed it was 25% statewide, not higher in one unit or lower in another? Schultheis – The question was, did we utilize survey data to make recommendations for turkey regulations? The answer is yes, we used harvest survey information, participation and population information. Harvest always fits in our decision process for recommendations we make. Graham – It was 25% statewide in every unit.



Andrew Clark, Hays – You pulled up some great harvest information charts. Is that publicly available data and how can we get that? Schultheis – I pulled that data from our website. I can walk you through the process, there is information about reports under wildlife research, for each species group. On an annual basis when we produce those estimates, and we try to post it every year. All those charts come straight from that information out there. It can be useful to hunters and is online. If you are looking for one you don't see, reach out through "Contact Us" (on ksoutdoors.com) and we can give you that information.

Will Cokley, Lawrence (*did not sign in*) – Now that we are moving towards online permit purchasing, have you considered putting the survey as mandatory questions before you can buy your permit? I know your data will be late in the season but most of us are habitual hunters and are buying permits every year, then you would get 100% response because they won't be able to buy a permit unless they answer your questions. I understand the more questions the less likely people are to answer, but could ask important ones, like did you harvest a deer, what day and what unit. Everybody would be willing to answer those questions to get their deer tag. Schultheis – Everyone would provide answers but what those answers' mean could be in question. There are some states that have gone to that, not just successful hunters. Some states have gone to "no response, no tag next year," to get closer to 100%. From everything I have found, there has yet to be a state that has gone to 100% compliance. There is always going to be some people not willing to. Cokley – Higher than where you are now. Schultheis – True but where we are now is a more reliable estimate. Response rate versus having a survey response rate versus compliance is two different things. Our estimate now is more reliable than if we had 90% census information. Two percentages don't necessarily mean the same thing. Cokley – An honesty issue? Schultheis – That can be an issue, as well.

3. Bison Conservation – Stuart Schrag assistant secretary, presented this update to the Commission. Talk about all things bison and things coming up in next year. Back in early 1920's our agency took a stance to conserve bison numbers in the U.S. and restore numbers across the country. In 1924, brought in one bull and two cows to the Finney Game Refuge, our first shot at conserving and managing bison. In the 1930s, we added a few more at Meade. We have had herds at Kingman SFL, Crawford County State Lake, and Maxwell in 1951, brought in from Wichita Mountains in Oklahoma. Maxwell is the largest herd we maintain. In 2024, will be our 100-year anniversary of being in bison conservation and management. We are planning to celebrate that centennial. We maintain 150-175 head, annually have roundup and auction, which will be October 30 for the roundup and auction on November 1; we are selling 63 head, which will include animals from Maxwell and Sandsage Bison Range. We had to relocate some of the animals at Sandsage during the drought, since May grass has come back so maintaining animals there. Big Basin Prairie Preserve, north of Ashland, 50 head there but we don't own those animals, we contract with a private individual to run animals there. We have good standing with Kansas Buffalo Association and National Bison Association. In 2024, Wildlife and Parks and the Kansas Buffalo Association are co-hosting a National Bison Association summer conference June 7 and 8 at Maxwell Refuge, inviting producers and others to that two-day event. Have a lot of bison-related activities to plan and work on. If Commissioners want to be more involved ask myself or one of Public Lands staff members. Commissioner Cross – What is total headcount statewide? Assistant Secretary Schrag – We maintain 50 head at Sandsage, 150-175 at Maxwell, and five at Bob Grant Memorial Bison Herd at Frontenac, so about 250 maximum, depending on

time of year. We cull animals every year because of available grazing acres we have. The money from the auction goes back into maintain the bison herds. Including public and private herds our best estimate is about 6,000 head. Commissioner Gfeller – Are any of our bison genetically pure? Assistant Secretary Schrag – That has been a big topic of conversation in the bison industry the last several years. A lot of that derives from Yellowstone herd. We have done genetic testing at Sandsage. The whole concept of genetically pure bison is a heated debate. No matter what kind of testing you do there is still some domestic or cross species contamination; plains bison crossed with wood bison or plains bison with domestic cattle, still ongoing in the industry. Hard to say anyone's animals are 100% genetically pure. Commissioner Gfeller – It has been so long that the cattle influence was there. Assistant Secretary Schrag – Our agency is involved with disease and natural immunity and *mycoplasma bovis* is one of the big ones. We had an outbreak at Maxwell in 2006 and we lost significant portion of herd. We have been vaccinating for it ever since. Part of summer conference will be a panel of folks talking about that disease. It used to be a death sentence, if some survive, we can retain them and keep them in the breeding population and there might be some genetic resistance in their offspring. Excited about being involved in that study. Lot going on in the industry. On national scale we have been fighting truth in labeling in Washington; pet food companies label product as buffalo, but is water buffalo not bison, truth in labeling act going through Congress right now. Commissioner Escareno – How do we compare with other states in number of buffalo? Assistant Secretary Schrag – As state agency, we are small scale here. Custer State Park in South Dakota has thousands, Teddy Roosevelt National Badlands in North Dakota have thousands. We have less than 10,000 acres where we are running bison. We are in Region 4, which is Kansas, Nebraska, Missouri and Iowa, out of those four we are the most active. A lot of Kansas bison ranchers out there. We get animals from other state agencies as well and keeps our genetic purity too. Initial animals brought in 1924, following years we brought in more that we are confident were from the Charles Goodnight herd, a unique history we are part of. Secretary Loveless – Reading for years the conversations about genetic purity. From management perspective and managing our herds, does that have any bearing on decisions you make? Assistant Secretary Schrag – No bearing on management, more interested in overall herd health and calf production. We don't do it to make money and we have to cull animals via the auction every year to maintain grassland health. When topic was hot, Tom did some here in Garden City, an interesting study. He was able to identify some genetic markers and he got rid of some animals that didn't match the majority of the herd. Andrew Clark – Is bison herd considered wildlife? But we auction them off? Is there ever going to be a hunt available? Assistant Secretary Schrag – This has come up over the years. Actively involved with Maxwell herd since 1993. We do cull some annually, 50 plus head typically. The reason we have done that versus hunts; back in 1970s and 1980s Maxwell was central hub where producers came to buy animals to start their herd. Back then not that many animals out there. That morphed in 1990s and 2000s, now get more meat buyers for restaurants. Other issues that have come up is, Maxwell is a high fence refuge, and what the optics would be of having a hunt. Teddy Roosevelt National Park and Custer SP does hunt every year, not new territory for agencies, but would be something new for Kansas. We have talked about special hunts for Make a Wish or disabled vets, or something like that. It is a sensitive subject, but we continue to discuss.

4. ~~Cheyenne Bottoms Update - Jason Wagner, Cheyenne Bottoms public land manager, presented this update to the Commission~~ (Exhibit L, PowerPoint M). Manuel Torres, Region 1 public land supervisor – PL Reg Supervisor or SW Kansas, Scott City, to Great Bend to Medicine Lodge. Jason not able to be here today, he is getting ready for opening teal season. Cheyenne Bottoms is a 41,000-acre basin, 19,998 acres which is the largest interior wetland in

the United States. The projects we've done using the Pitman Robinson started in 1937 in 1942 the first land purchased at Cheyenne Bottoms. In 1957, was our first project and since then there has been millions of dollars spent on improvements and maintenance. Our A-team at Cheyenne Bottoms we have Gene Schneweis who is our general maintenance technician, his wife uh Kim Schneweis is our heavy equipment operator, and our public lands wetland manager is Jason Wagner. All three of these individuals have received awards from Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks and Ducks Unlimited for their outstanding contribution to the wetlands and the Bottoms. There are 40 water control structures, 26 miles of dikes, 19 parking lots and the list goes on and on. These individuals do a phenomenal job out there. Cheyenne Bottoms is a wetland of international importance. About 356 bird species out of 482 visit the Bottoms and 45% of North American shorebirds stop there. In 2022, over 600,000 shorebirds visited and about 1.5 million waterfowl stopped at the Bottoms. When we make decisions in our state agency, we want to protect and preserve our natural resources, but we also have to look at what we are doing to our local economy. In 1987 there was an economic impact study and they showed that \$2.8 million came into Kansas of that, \$1.8 million came into Barton County. We have about 60,000 visitors annually. On average there are 4,975 hunter days and in 2021/22 about 53% of hunters were from out of state and they came from 32 different states. We bring in water through two creeks that come into the inlet, Arkansas River and emergency spillways to keep Great Bend safe during floods. In 1990, did \$17 million in renovations, Kansas pipeline added. In 2018, wrote PR grant, got \$6.9 million grant. It is five miles from the Arkansas River to the now dry Wet Walnut River. We couldn't get water in timely manner, so we added five-foot pipe that goes five miles and adds water quicker and reduces sentiment and built a dam right inside our five-foot pipe and it took two weeks to clear it up. That grant was funded by wildlife fee fund, which was funded by waterfowl stamp sales. DU also has a "bring back the Bottoms" campaign and they assisted with some funds. That grant has been phenomenal for us. Of 19,998 acres, we have 13,400 surface acres of water, not the case right now, challenges are silt, cattail and phragmites. In the last five years, staff has worked on 5,000 acres of cattails and phragmites. Equipment is also a challenge, just keeping it going, it is very large. Staffing is always an issue as well. Currently we have very little water and all the water we have is going into 3A, we should have 10 to 11 inches of water. In 2A we have 500 to 600 acres, a very large pool, and it's all going to be ankle deep water. So, if you're going to the Bottoms, you better be physically fit because it's going to be tough. In pool 5, we have a little bit of water there but it's only about 150 acres. Our storage capacity, which is 1A right now, all we have is 20 inches of water. Unfortunately, the way the silt is we're not able to get it all out of there. I will tell you that our habitat conditions are awesome and if it rains, I encourage you to come out and visit. Remember we do have a check-in/check-out system. Commissioner Cross – What should water depth be in pool 2? Torres – It varies. Water comes from two difference sources; we don't control rainfall and it could be 15-20 inches. It is a 3,400-acre pool, rainfall we had didn't hit where we needed it. Commissioner Escareno – It is my understanding that they are going to put windmills in the area, and they do spray that kills vegetation that the birds eat? Torres – Currently no windmills up. It is my understanding that there was a company three or four years ago, that came from overseas, but opted not to after finding out the importance of the wetland. Commissioner Escareno – I understand they still spray on an annual basis, if not twice a year, according to a constituent call I received. Torres – Reach out to me and let me know where that is at. There are guidelines and windmill companies are particular in what they are doing. Assistant Secretary Schrag – There are pipelines close by and they might be doing aerial spraying or annual

maintenance. Torres – I don't know of any pipelines that go through there. Unless they are talking about our phragmite spraying. We spend \$50,000 to \$60,000 a year, use helicopter and airplane due to all the invasive species. Cattails and phragmites are what our managers are targeting. Our wetland management plan is also spring migration, so not just waterfowl hunting, but shorebirds as well. We estimate 45% of them will stop. Commissioner Escareno – They mentioned helicopter spraying. Torres – I bet that was to control phragmites and cattails, especially in pool 2. Last year when it was dry, they did a phenomenal job of getting in there and controlling some of that. Secretary Loveless – Jason and Manual took advantage of dry conditions to till those acres and kill them and avoid the use of chemicals. Effective wetland management is to move water on and off and is an important part of being able to select those annual plants that are valuable to those migrants and get away from perennial grasses. Torres – It is all about protecting and conserving our natural resources and managing water when it is available, based on rainfall. It is not like we can just turn on the pump and fill 19,000 acres of water. Our crew communicates on daily basis on what they are going to do for that year.

*Unknown person* – Where do phragmites come from? Schultheis – They were introduced after mining activities, once a mine operation wrapped up, they put them on the ground. They have an invasive nature in wetlands and are hard to control. When drying out and plowing or tilling, a real battle. Most of them introduced and had unanticipated consequences. *Unknown person* - Where did they originate from? Schultheis - There are a couple species of phragmites but the one that we face is an invasive species and is a tough one. I believe it actually may be a hybrid species.

Commissioner Cross – No benefit to wildlife? Schultheis – Some benefit, some species may rely on it, but that is limited. It forms a monotypic stand that is dense, and it doesn't produce a lot of food resources for waterfowl. It is thick and hard to get through. Especially compared to native vegetation. Cattail species can be the same with similar issues, but less severe. If we get the right conditions, like drying and can utilize chemicals we can gain on them, however they still spread and stick around. Assistant Secretary Schrag – That is one of our biggest challenges, we spend thousands of dollars and manhours trying to control those species as well as sericea lespedeza and other noxious weeds. All of the water systems above our properties are full of them. In a flood or high-water event, we have a new influx of seed. One of the biggest aspects on what we do on public lands is invasive and noxious weed control. Commissioner Cross – I remember we did that tour of the strip pits, and we had that issue over there as well, looks like it's pretty tough to get a handle on. Commissioner Sporer – Is there a movement from Department of Ag to list phragmite as a noxious weed? Assistant Secretary Schrag – I've been on the Kansas Statewide Noxious Weed committee, and Dustin Mengarelli is currently serving. Phragmites is one species that has come up the last several years, but no determination made so far. I heard there is consideration in the future on a county-by-county basis. If further east you don't see them like you do at the Bottoms, but in the east, they have more sericea lespedeza. Commissioner Sporer – Well there be any cost share with some counties to get people motivated to start taking care of them? Assistant Secretary Schrag – There is a whole list of other species. Bluestem is also becoming a big problem as well and always new ones. Commissioner Escareno – Company from Spain looking at a project in close proximity of Cheyenne Bottoms on a solar panel project. Are we taking a stance with regards to that project and have we showed causes to why we would not be in favor of them putting that in proximity of there because of the migratory birds that fly through there? Secretary Loveless – Had a lot of discussions on that but handicapped because that company has never sent us data on where they would locate that. We don't have basic data on where that will be or whether it is a problem or not. We have made it clear we are glad to evaluate it. The county could compel them to share that data with us but that hasn't happened. We are aware, as well as the Governor, about that project. Just waiting to see if county calls us in to help or not. We just haven't seen that data yet. Andrew Clark, Hays – I'm a user of the

Bottoms and I just want to let everybody know how appreciative we are for Manuel and Jason and the crew that work there and what they've done in the last several years. You can really tell a difference. It's appreciated, thank you.

5. Southwest Kansas Youth Programs - Manuel Torres, Region 1 public land supervisor presented this update to the Commission (Exhibit N, PowerPoint on Outdoor Mentoring – Exhibit O). Tasked to do presentation on southwest Kansas youth program. One of the topics that came up was Real Men Real Leaders organization. They came to Garden City to visit with me to see how it fit into our outdoor programs. After spending time with them, no doubt these individuals needed to present here. They go above and beyond any program I have ever been around. They mentor young men to be part of outdoors, part of the community and how to be outstanding citizens. Reynaldo Mesa – I want to thank the commission for having us, Manuel, and Phil Escareno, who was a former board member, he and his wife Susan were instrumental in helping the program and Susan worked in the office creating the administrative part and with programming. I am the executive director for Real Men Real Leaders. Gabe Gallardo is here also and is our board president as well Tim Sperry who is the assistant for programming. (*Showed slides with other staff members*). Most of the students come from two schools Bernardines and Charles Stones, they are fifth and sixth graders. We get suggestions for students, or people refer us when they have a young man that could use our services, or the parents who want their boy in the program. It has blown up and we have a waiting list of young boys, it is gratifying to see we are making an impact. We've been around for about 14 years. In 2012, we became a leadership program but in the last three years we really strengthened our programming, both in leadership and volunteerism. There was a group of us that came together concerned about what we were seeing with our youth, especially in the Hispanic community. There was a high dropout rate, gang banging, and our little girls were having a high teen pregnancy rate, it was so bad that on an episode of Johnny Carson. We felt we needed to make a difference, we can't always be complaining about what's going on in schools, what's going on in law enforcement, what's going on with parenting, we wanted to make a difference and so we stepped up. We formed this group, which was patterned off an organization out of Wichita, called Real Men Real Heroes that was aimed at the black community there. We were going to team up with those guys, but things didn't work out. They're doing very well and still in existence today. We went our own way. Since then, we've grown. What we do with our boys is we introduce a leadership program to them, and it's based on five areas, actually eight areas, but we combined a few areas. These boys get an opportunity to earn challenge coins provided they finish the programming. They are leadership and organization; personal management; wellness and family, we all know family is important regardless of your situation, regardless of where you come; communication; literacy; and citizenship. They earn points and they have to show up, if they miss over three or four times without an excuse, we drop them, if not we are allowing them to develop a pattern. We've had to dismiss some of our boys for a variety of reasons. We have a waiting list that want to be in our program. Our sixth-grade students we do a little something different with, because they've been introduced to our program, and they know what we expect of them. There are four core areas that we concentrate on: government; private, public and social sectors. We could add church, religion or faith, but we don't get into faith; we don't get into politics either, we stay away from those, but those areas are very important because they make up a community. We introduce those kids to those different areas in the community. We tell them how important it is and leaders within those. We challenge our sixth-grade boys to provide a lunch for the first responders. Last year

they put the whole project together, with guidance we give them, some tools and resources, but they have to put it together. We tell them this is your opportunity to shine. We are teaching them to step up to the plate, take hold of things and we ask them to do something. Last year was a huge success and we had over 75 first responders show up to the lunch. What we're trying to accomplish is to keep these boys involved until they are out of high school and working on some things for the seventh and eighth grade boys too. One thing would be to help them get ready to learn how to drive to school or to work. Here in Garden City there's a lot of kids that don't get into drivers education, they can only take so many, and then the other kids have to figure out how to get that done. Goal setting; and financial literacy; are things these young men are going to learn and hopefully they continue their education and careers here in Garden City. After the completion of the program, we have a banquet, and we recognize them for the work and accomplishments they've done. Last year we had over 350 people, over 190 parents and students, and all our former students. We served over 250 young boys and most of them came back for this, and we filled up the Community College gym. We had businesses and sponsors there and it was gratifying to see how much people appreciate what we're doing and what these boys were able to accomplish. The other thing we teach is servant leadership, in order to become a good effective leader, you learn to serve other people first, so they have faith in you, believe in you, and know you're a man of your word. We tell our boys we don't expect perfection. A real man is a guy who actually makes mistakes, no matter how big or how bad, he corrects them himself and gets back on track, and then say sorry or apologize to those who you may have hurt. Learn that through your mistakes and failures, and learn you'll become successful if you just stay with it, and we are here to help. We do have a summer program and it's revolving around drugs, drinking and bad habits like vaping or a variety of things that aren't for them. We bring a lot of law enforcement in and teach them to live well in any county. Some of the things the older boys do is, we took a group of our seventh graders to go meet with the Governor and talked to our representatives. I hoped they would draft a resolution on our behalf and read it on the House floor, because I've seen that done. So, I asked Representatives Clifford and Lewis and Senator to see if they would be willing to do that, and they did. They drafted a resolution on the House floor and one on the Senate floor. They were read to the members. That was an awesome day for these boys who probably would never have an opportunity to visit the senate, Governor or the representatives. Our goal is to expose them to people, not just leaders. We tell our boys they can be a leader at home, help mom by picking up the trash, doing the dishes, getting room clean, or getting ready for tomorrow morning by getting clothes ready. What we're trying to teach is going to save a lot of these boys. We will not save all of them, but we are going to try to save as many as we can. I'm glad we're developing a relationship with the Kansas Wildlife and Parks and Outdoor Mentors because this is what we need. I have to give kudos to Outdoor Mentors and Bobby Cole who is here, he found out about our organization and approached us about having the boys learn about hunting, fishing and conservation. At first, I know Jonas was a little skittish about that because these are young boys, the whole gun situation, but I said it's the perfect thing. Gun safety and learning how to be a hunter and a fisherman and respecting the land that you're hunting on and the landowners. So, we went forward, and it went crazy. Mr. Jameson is here; he has allowed our boys to hunt on his property. We appreciate that and thank you. It started out with 10 boys now we close to 50 young men that learn how to fish and hunt and about conservation. Many of these boys don't have fathers, live with mothers, some have both parents, some no parents, or live with their grandmother or an aunt. This program is tailored for boys who are struggling in Hispanic or minority community, but we will accept any boy that wants in our program. We try to help educate them and help them become leaders. We have boys who are very intelligent, in the middle, and some those of those who struggle, but we try to help them any way we can. We tell them we're going to be with them hopefully until they get out of high

school. Then if they decide to go to four-year institution, two-year institution, go to work, or go to technical college, we're going to help them get that goal. Looking forward, we just started a podcast a few months ago, I am the host, and we use it to shine the light on adult leadership. We relaunched it in our own studio, it's not ours but one of our social media guys, Edgar Messa, is a photographer and has a studio where we do our podcast now. We interview leaders that are in in community, whether they are education, city, county or any variety of folks, mainly geared towards our students. The other thing we hope to create is a magazine to tell stories of these young people and having our own yearbook so these young men have something to see just like they would in high school. Teaching these young boys to drive is going to be added to our programming and of course expanding our program all the way up to the top. We have been asked about doing a girls program and we're going to have that conversation with the Women of Purpose organization here in Garden City next week. I'm not saying we're going to do it, but we need to start that dialogue. When we started fine-tuning our leadership program students were doing very well here and performed well, but finding out they were getting in trouble in school, grades weren't good, so I went to the superintendent and decided we had to do something. We got an attorney involved to put together the document and now if the parent doesn't sign off during the application process, then their son is not going to be in our program. Gabe Gallardo – Real Men Real Leaders has been blessed with the support of the community, but it takes a lot to run this program. We pick the kids up after school, take them to their activities, they have educational presentations and then we promote wellness, so they have some physical activity. We feed them and then we take them home. We feed 60 kids every week. This year they are volunteering about every weekend and this weekend they have the fiesta where they serve the community. It is a great organization that teaches these boys the value of leadership, not just within our program, but at home, at school, with friends and wherever they are at. You don't have to be the CEO to be a leader, you can be the custodian, just do what you're supposed to do, act with integrity, be responsible. This organization is seeing great things happen and we have a scholarship program. We have kids in college, serving in the military, and we get calls for recommendations for employees from business owners and have placed several kids in jobs, so they're being productive citizens we want them to be. We break out of those boundaries they learn about our community, they learn about other communities, government, education, and we have several businesses present so our boys learn about the different trades and business opportunities. We expose them to different things. Now we've got the hunting and fishing piece of it, I don't know what that looks like, but this is huge, and our boys are really getting involved. Next year we get to take some boys to the Air Force Academy. There is a lot of things happening and it takes a lot of money, time and commitment, but above all passion, and I know all involved have a great deal of passion, including Phil. Working with outdoor mentoring group, they stepped in and started becoming a partner and that is another way to introduce these kids outside; president Mike Christensen is from western Kansas and Britney French born and raised in Dodge City, and she's the CEO, and our coordinator, Bobby Cole, who is really instrumental in pushing some of these programs out here. When they got involved in 2022, they hosted 10 advanced hunter education courses for this group. They've hosted over 20 events and obviously Bobby's goals are to expand those. We have Curtis here who been involved in a lot of outdoor programs and Brent Clark and Angie, a conservation officer who is not here, she did hunter education classes in Garden City, one traditional, which is a two-day class working with the Garden City Police Department helping get people certified. This partnership that we're building is a great opportunity for us. Messa – We are creating a model, copyrighted our name and will

probably copyright our material. We came up with our own curriculum, so that is going to be the next step. We want to spread out to Dodge City, Liberal and across the state. It is going to take a lot of people that believe in what we're doing to help us get there. That includes the outdoor group and the department. Torres – I do have a flyer here for southwest Kansas youth program. We've hosted since 2002 and we will have raffles for shotgun, archery equipment, BB guns and have invited outdoor mentor groups to take part of this program as well. Commissioner Escareno – Thank Bobby for reaching out to Real Men Real Leaders and participating with mentoring those young men. They wouldn't have had a chance to hold a rifle or shotgun. They've hunted turkey, dove and been trout fishing and done all kinds of different things. Unless you had reached out to them, they would have never had an opportunity to do that. One of the young men went on a fishing and camping trip. I was fishing beside him and asked if he was having any luck and what kind of bait he was using, he was using hotdogs. I was using shrimp and prepared bait and was not catching anything; he caught several and offered to share them. They are taught to be polite and lend a hand, even though you know they are having a tough time at home. Thank you for your efforts, keep up the good work and bringing those two programs together. Bobby Cole – It has been a real honor to do that. Commissioner Gfeller – Appreciate what you are doing, adding fishing and hunting, such a character-building experience being outdoors and learning respect. One of my questions you answered, you are you going to take this on the road. Messa – Completed trademark, we haven't copyrighted material yet but we're finalizing this model and I'm hoping maybe next year. We have had an interest from Ark City, Eric Burr found out about us from a commercial about the Tumbleweed Festival, brought a television crew out here and interviewed us and televised the whole month of March on Wichita station. Commissioner Gfeller – What is your funding model? Gallardo – About 40% comes from grants, 60% from fundraising and local supporters. The boys are active in the community, and we have had people feed them at events and meetings. We have vehicles and staff to take care of these boys and get them where they need to go. Messa – We have a grant writer, who works remotely from Florida, she is a professional and she has maintained what Susan Escareno used to do. We needed exposure, she hasn't gotten us big money yet, but she's maintained what we do have coming in from western Kansas community Foundation United Way and she's given us exposure to national companies. We met with Tyson recently although we were not successful, they get a lot of requests. Gallardo – Still people in our community that haven't heard about us that we learned in talking to some organizations. They want to learn more about us, and we appreciate the opportunity to come before people and share our story. Our kids are out in the community, people see them but really don't understand what they're doing. These kids aren't in trouble, and they don't have to be there to serve, but they want to, and they'll do anything. We adopted a piece of highway; two and a half miles, and they go out and pick up trash to keep community clean. Those types of things build character and integrity. Surrounding communities have asked us to take this on the road and we've invited people in and had them learn about our program, with the hopes of starting it one day in their community. We had a pastor from Missouri come to our annual banquet, he sees a need in his community and found us online and he really has a heart for it. Commissioner Cross – Thanks for presentation we appreciate the job you're doing.

*Break*

## **VI. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

Will Cokley, Lawrence – I want to talk about out-of-state deer tag draw. Right now, percentage of people drawing is going down every year. I'm an outfitter and landowner, there are many of us I'm speaking for. We would like to present a win-win situation much like controlled shoot. I also



run a controlled shoot for upland game. If we had controlled deer access, we would pay a premium and would assign pieces or parcels of land and pay a premium for those. Just like we do for the pheasant hunting. Those parcels would be assigned tags to distribute as we saw fit. Out-of-state or in-state hunters would pay \$1,000 or \$750 for a deer tag to hunt on the controlled deer access area. That way you guys get your money, and we could control, and be able to plan for, who we're going to have hunt. Right now, the problem is that several guys apply for a deer tags, and we have no idea whether we're going to have three hunters or 20 hunters and it's impossible to budget and impossible to plan for and they can't plan travel. It's really an impossible situation. Outfitters and landowners are looking for a way to control deer hunting on land that we control.

Greg Bieker, Hays – Thanks for coming to western Kansas. Over the last few months there's been discussion around banning feeding, some in favor, many against. I wanted to do my best to hear all sides and gain as many perspectives on the situation as possible. The major topic is fair chase as primary motive for their personal support for banning feeding in Kansas. I'd like to offer some solutions that can bring us all together towards a common goal, protecting our deer herd and specifically the mature trophy bucks in Kansas. I own a feed business, started in June of last year making feed in my garage using a cement mixer, I bag it and allow customers to come pick it up. My goal, if hunters were going to feed deer, was to provide them with a healthier option for our deer herd versus buying products shipped in from other states. If I made a little extra money to offset my hunting cost that was a bonus. Twenty-two years ago, I harvested my first buck in Kansas and been hooked ever since. I want to thank you all for the resources and the opportunities we have as Kansas residents, it is unmatched by any other state. I believe many people want to see the preservation of this and I spoke with a lot of people about fair chase and that is a valid point. I would like to provide a potential list of solutions for your consideration to protect our deer herd in Kansas, along with allowing youth and disabled hunters better opportunities. I support all hunters however they choose to hunt as long as it's within the legal ramifications. Here are a few recommendations from a Kansas resident who is everyday guy. I don't own ground, lease ground, don't run an outfitting business and if protecting our deer is our number one priority, here's six recommendations that can make an immediate positive impact. 1) Let's evaluate the Kansas any-season resident tag, technology has surpassed our resource and our seasons in Kansas, this would reduce the hunting pressure on the current hunting season while also allowing hunters the benefit to hunt whichever season they pick. For example, archery hunting gets the benefit of hunting the rut, but it's tougher. 2) Evaluate the legal use of crossbows for anyone outside of youth and disabled. These products have become advanced and may not be classified as traditional archery equipment. Archery equipment wasn't intended to shoot over 100 yards. What we're looking at is an early crossbow season only, during muzzleloader season as an alternative. 3) Scopes on muzzleloaders during the early muzzleloader season were not intended to shoot 700 yards. With technology advancements they become early season rifles in Kansas. 4) Remove battery operated equipment from bows that allow 80 plus yard shots. I commend them for their ability to shoot long distances but provided they can do it accurately without the help of battery powered equipment. 5) Start rifle season on December 1 and if we reach a point where we must do something around feeding let's consider following Nebraska and put in regulations where hunters may not hunt within 200 yards of a feed site excluding youth and disabled. This would still allow hunters to supplement. 6) Take inventory of deer herd. That would go back to a fair chase conversation and allow more of our two and a half or three-and-a-half-year-old mature bucks to make it. I hope you consider the above recommendations that would help everybody

including our deer herd in western Kansas but also those in eastern Kansas as well.  
Commissioner Cross – Appreciate your comments.

Andrew Clark, Hays – I'd like to further push the furbearing season. I know we are planning on recommending dropping the season dates for raccoon and possums to a year-round status. I would also like you to consider allowing those to be grouped in with the night vision season with coyotes. Harvest is important, and we need to stay on those for our ground nesting birds. I'd like to tell you that me and others support the K.A.R. 115-8-26 which is going to be discussed here later about limiting non-resident hunting on public wildlife areas for waterfowl. I mentioned earlier setting up a quota on mule deer permits, including muzzleloader and archery, which are currently over the counter tags. When I initially moved out here and hunted the area it was 50/50 whitetail deer. When came out to western Kansas, in the Oakley area, there were tons of mule deer and there still are pretty good populations out there. In Ellis County it seems like they have been decimated. You are almost seeing localized extinctions. I'm pleading that we do something on that front, if we can, as far as setting a quota and keeping track of that population as tightly as possible.

Commissioner Escareno – I, as a commissioner, received tons of calls on deer feeding. Appreciate comments. I don't know what is right and what is wrong. We hired biologists and staff that gives recommendation to us, their job is to gather data and provide data to us. We simply had a presentation on deer feeding that had relationship to CWD and it was taken out of context and misinformation went out that said we were going to take a vote. We are open to hearing conversations with regards to deer feeding and other topics. Appreciate the fact that we are trying to communicate, KDWP done a fantastic job of maintaining deer herd and why we are one of destination places to hunt. If we don't take precautionary measure, we won't be able to have those deer or deserve the right to hunt turkey and deer. That is our job. Appreciate all the calls but sometimes enough is enough, 20-30 calls a day. Appreciate the comments on info heard thus far. If it ever goes to a vote, it is a long process to go through. Communicate to make a good decision when the time comes, if it ever comes to that. Restricted on KDWP-owned and leased property, done a great job. Just hearing information for later down the road. You will know way ahead of time if we are going to vote. Clear the air. We are trying to communicate there is CWD out there, is a problem, I don't know. Thank staff for information gathered and steps they have taken and difficult phone calls they have had to answer also. It has been rough on Commissioners. Comments are important, but not any vote any time soon. Working towards resolutions. Bieker – Anytime soon, how do you define that? Escareno – Not on my radar has that been indicated. It takes a year and half or two years to be in place, language goes to Attorney General, is presented for rules and regulations, and it is quite a long process. One of the commissioners made comments, stating that based on information today he would probably make a recommendation, but neither one of those were in place. Bieker – Conversation at June meeting, situation changes. If I don't have ability to put cameras up that has a major impact. At end of day a big change in western Kansas. Commissioner Escareno – We don't have any intention of telling people what to do on their own property. If impact on deer population and creates problem for deer out there. In it for the wildlife, that is what we volunteer to do. We want to help the wildlife of our area. Fortunate to have good populations, drought has had impact recently but want to continue for youth and future hunters. Bieker – Look at all things to help with that.

Commissioner Sporer – It has been a rough couple of weeks taking phone calls, on staff and Commissioners. Brings to light that most people concerned about baiting have financial gain in

the business, don't get caught up in the money. I didn't become a Commissioner to fight about money, I got on to be inspired about the resource. Concern about fair chase. Dad told story about early 1950s, there was a guy that fed a bucket of corn at same time every day throughout the summer, come rifle season, traded that bucket for a 270, so I have concerns about fair chase. If doing anything with this, after having gotten roughed up in last couple weeks, start with fair chase.

Cokley – Mr. Secretary, what's your budget for KDWP? Secretary Loveless – About \$100 million. Cokley – How much is brought in from out-of-state hunters buying tags? This is about money, this operation doesn't happen without money, there is no department. I don't think you can say let's not worry about money because money matters. If somebody said let's ban asphalt because its toxic, I'm sure that would cause you an uproar. Money is a part of everything, it makes it all work, we can't run without it. Pay respect to people trying to earn money as well as farmers who are in dire straits right now with drought. I can take you out to a corn field right now and show you about 30% of it gone because deer are eating it. That's a choice, if I can't sell deer hunts, I don't want to feed the deer with my crops that I'm raising, so maybe there isn't any more deer. I mean I don't want to feed them if it's going to cost my livelihood. I'm going to have to sell my land because I can't raise crops because deer eating it all. Money is an integral part of this whole thing, so I think you should keep that in mind.

Bieker – Thanks for your comment, Commissioner Sporer, I wish it was that easy, like your story in the 1950s. Unfortunately, we've got a lot of guys who buy feed from a feed business that won't ever kill a deer this year because it's not that easy. So, if you guys have hunted, or dumped a bucket of corn out, you don't just go kill a 200. If I have to close my feed business tomorrow, I will just have a higher feed bill to go deer hunting, that's the reality of it. It's not as easy as putting feed on the ground and shooting a 200, I've got nine of them and not one of them has been killed over feed.

Clifford Shipley – I am veterinarian and taught at University of Illinois. Deer hunting and deer are my life passion, especially in last 20-30 years. I've worked with both wild deer and farmed deer. This is the hottest topic that stirs emotions in people, more than politics or religion. Ethics seems to be driving part of your conversation. I've been all over the country hunting and out of country as well. Ethics locally are what they are, when I was in Virginia they chase deer with dogs, they conduct deer drives, they stand hunt, people hunt over bait, over corn fields and food plots, hunt over scrapes and all sorts of things. I don't try to dictate anybody's ethics it's what that individual person has developed either through their lifetime or what they were taught or observed. Scientifically, supplemental feeding in two states that never had it, Wyoming and Illinois; Wyoming is probably number one for CWD and Illinois has had CWD spread in 30 counties and never allowed feeding. In Michigan, they have two zones, one that you can feed and one you can't, to control tuberculosis (TB). CWD and TB are the most talked about as far as health concerns. There is little, or no, evidence that baiting drives CWD in the area. It is spread through social contact of deer, grooming each other, scrapes, mineral licks, licking branches, sexual behavior, deer urine, water sources, feed sources and all types of sources. I think some of CWD is passed, more by man through hauling carcasses from one place to another or releasing deer or selling deer that were released into the wild. Tradition in certain areas, and health factor is not main factor in banning. Leading deer researcher, Dr. James C. Kroll, has written

extensively on improvements of herd health through supplemental feeding. He said it increased body condition, winter survival, twinning rates and antler size. I encourage you to read that. Commissioner Cross – Thank you.

Commissioner Sporer – How many bushels of product does the hunting industry sell to feed wildlife? Anyone know? Secretary Loveless – I don't believe we have any kind of handle on that number. Commissioner Sporer – I asked someone from the Kansas Corn Commission, how much corn was fed and utilized in Kansas. He said nearly 200 million bushels to feed livestock, 200 million to ethanol production. I can't believe feeding wildlife would be a decimal point of that. I've said it many times and that is why we are having public meetings. It isn't about CWD, it's about other issues, it is about turkey populations, and we need to encourage everybody that contacted me to go to public meetings and learn something as to why we shouldn't be feeding wildlife. Bieker – I'll just give you some answers just on the Midland Marketing in Hays, one co-op location, last year reported they sold roughly 100 pallets of corn to deer hunters, roughly 4,000 50-pound bags or roughly a bushel. If we take that across 105 counties 420,000 bushels and that is one per county and there could be multiple per county.

## **V. DEPARTMENT REPORT (continued)**

### **C. Secretary's Remarks**

1. Agency and State Fiscal Status Report – Brad Loveless, Secretary, presented this update to the Commission. Thank you for coming. It has only been a few weeks since our last meeting. FY 2024 began July 1. Park Fee Fund (PFF), derived from entrance fees, camping fees and annual vehicle passes to state parks. Total revenue for year to date \$2.3 million, revenue for July and August similar to same two months last year. Revenue for calendar year 2023, end of July has been good and cash balance at end was \$6.95 million. Cabin net revenue for parks and public land cabins from rental of cabins, July and August was just under \$300,000, slight increase from previous year. Wildlife Fee Fund (WFF) is derived from sale of hunting and fishing licenses, big game permits and tags, to hunters and anglers. WFF revenue for August was \$849,000, and year to date is \$1.66 million. On August 31, \$23.6 million just below July. So, we're declining some but still a healthy budget for big expenditures that will be coming in. The Boating Fee Fund (BFF) is derived from boat registrations and with this money we provide boating safety, education, and access infrastructure to protect and support the boating public. Receipts for August were approximately \$177,000, increase of \$40,000 from last year. Balance at end of July of \$2.74 million.

Assistant Secretary Schrag – Interesting information from Shanda Knapic, Licensing chief. We have gone to electronic federal waterfowl stamp, we sold \$8,000 worth last year, same time this year \$75,000 in federal duck stamps. Initial thought is people are buying ahead of season. Wouldn't it be nice if we could continue to see that? Shanda commented that a lot of other states aren't offering that so maybe other states are buying their federal waterfowl stamp through us, some that may never hunt in Kansas.

### **D. Workshop Session**

1. Big Game permanent regulations – Levi Jaster, big game coordinator, presented these regulations to the Commission (Exhibit P). These are 115-4 regulations. Only considering change to equipment regulation. Comes about because of muzzleloader materials that projectile

can be made of. Currently the language is, tumble-on-impact, hard-cast solid lead, conical lead, and sabot bullet. In initial discussions with law enforcement division, it indicates lead specifically. There are common bullets and many other non-toxic options that are not necessarily legal for muzzleloading. We are doing internal evaluation; potential recommendation may strike out the word "lead". Still bring these back to next meeting unless something else comes up. Commissioner Escareno – Regarding crossbows, speed and how it fires, they are as fast as a rifle was my understanding. Is a crossbow considered archery equipment? Jaster – It is considered archery. It is pushing bolts at fast speed, the bolts have to be heavy to handle the power, but not as fast as a muzzleloader or rifle. You don't get the boom part of shooting a rifle, that explosion is not just powder but breaking the sound barrier. That is same reason why, when considering arrows and speed, you have to beat the deer and jump the string, but it's not going break the sound barrier and no sound. Studies show in comparing crossbows and compound equipment, that ranges are the same, maybe 5-10 yards further and can shoot 100 yards accurately. But ability to take deer is limited to how much trajectory you have and how long it takes the bolt to get there. Most hunters want to harvest an animal as ethically as possible. You know your effective range and know your equipment. There are some advances and additional equipment that is new, and some may, or may not, be legal. Currently there is a crossbow that is wound in some spring-type setup, and by definition it is not a legal crossbow in this state. There is some stuff that we may need to evaluate, and we are constantly looking at equipment, however we need to take time to evaluate before recommendations.

2. Carcass Movement Regulation – Levi Jaster, big game program, coordinator, presented this update to the Commission (Exhibit Q, PowerPoint – Exhibit R). Seen these several times. For importing into the state, ideally, we don't want to bring anything in at all, but that is unrealistic. We have put together a list of what gives us the best option of keeping out the worst parts and still be able to let people bring stuff back from hunting in other places. Looking at states with CWD detected so constantly updating a list. Internally, within the state, we are trying to find a way that does the best job of limiting movements, especially those most infective parts, without completely overburdening everybody. Currently, looking at 30 miles from the unit that you harvested it in to let people get over the line and then we ran into those issues with municipal areas where we were cutting a lot of cities in half. There just wasn't a good solution so at 30 miles, if a municipal area is intersected by that line, then we allow within that area. Because of the short turnaround time between the last meeting and this one I haven't been able to get our legal staff to discuss getting a draft of what the regulatory language would look like. In talking with Dan about it there are several things we'll have to define in this regulation because it's not defined elsewhere in our regulations. So that will be a big part of this. The goal is to get the first draft in front of the commission by the next commission meeting in November.

3. Boating Regulations – Eric Deneault, boating Law Enforcement officer presented this regulation to the Commission (Exhibit S). Assistant Secretary Stuart Schrag – Eric is unable to be at this meeting. There are no changes from his presentation made at the June meeting.

4. Public Lands Regulation KAR 115-8-26 – Ryan Stucky, Public Lands assistant director, presented these regulations to the Commission (Exhibit T). Before I get started on the non-resident waterfowl 3day restriction regulation I'd like to go over some of the information regarding wildlife and parks public land acreage. I have a small spreadsheet up there that has

some acreage numbers (Exhibit U). At the last commission meeting there was a few comments made about Kansas having 2 3% in public property and around 97 8% in private hands. I did kind of go over that and clarify there's 98.1% in private hands and only 1.9% is non-private. I say non-private because when we talk in these settings and we say public, people have that perception that is our public lands throughout Kansas and it's not open to the public for access for hunting and fishing. So, that 1.9% are military installments from the Department of Defense, which are also U.S. Army Corps of Engineer properties, we have 16 reservoirs that fall under the Department of Defense; we have Department of the Interior, which also includes Bureau Reclamation lakes, we have six of those; also U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and other federal properties; and we have over 100 state agencies that have properties in Kansas; as well as County properties, township properties and municipalities. I'd also like to mention that we have 150,000 acres of those million acres that is public in Kansas. So, there is a lot of folks holding these public lands that that don't have anything to do with public access for recreational activities. I want to move to what properties are owned and managed by Wildlife and Parks. We have state fishing lakes we own, a total of almost 19,000 acres; around or within those holdings we have around 15,000 land acres and that supports 4,000 acres of water; if we move over to the state wildlife areas there is 106,000 acres of land acres and we have several wetlands within those holdings; there is about 3,700 acres of water and wetlands within those properties making up 110,000 total. We also have about 1,542 acres of public domain scattered out, mostly in western Kansas, and those range from three acres to 400 acres. Moving to our federal properties there are 312,756 acres comprising of 170,000 acres of land and 142,000 acres of water and when I say water, I don't mean the federal reservoirs, the main bodies of water where the tributaries meet the main bodies, so that's not counting the river properties that we have going up through our wildlife areas. We also partner with a few private-owned holdings and the two biggest are Jeffrey Energy Center, 12,000 acres that is limited for hunting and LaCygne Wildlife Area, which has the power plant there as well, which makes up most of 16,000 acres but is limited on access. I wanted to go over some of those just to put a better perspective when we start talking about public land versus private lands in Kansas. I also wanted to mention that on the private lands we do contract with several landowners for walk-in hunting areas (WIHA) and there's a little over a million acres in that program, run by the wildlife division; also, i-WIHA was implemented for limited hunts on specific properties and that equals 26,000 acres. So, we do have more opportunities on those grounds. We also have the Community Fisheries assistance program and Jeff Conley, and fisheries division runs that program with 150 contracts that makes up 13,000 acres of water open to public fishing. Also, they started a new program called the walk-in fishing access (WIFA) program and there's 1300 acres involved in that. Then there is agricultural property. Kansas has 52,657,420 acres and in 2016 there was 46,567,800 acres involved in agricultural activity as reported to the Farm Service Agency with USDA; there are several acres that don't get reported into that agency and I'm going to guess that would push that probably closer to 48 million acres. From 2001 to 2016, there was an increase of 500,000 acres; half a million acres that went into agriculture in those 15 years and in the past seven years they also are going to be looking at about those same similar numbers of increase in agricultural property. Where I'm going at with this is, when you start taking that agricultural property and increasing that and you're looking at urban sprawl and how that's taken away from some of these properties that could be available to hunt, it's really important when we start looking at what property we do have out there that's available to hunt. To get more access is tough and tough for us to get property entitled and hold that property in ownership. We would appreciate everybody's support when we start looking at how we get more acres into public access. Commissioner Gfeller - I want to clarify that if urban land is taking from agricultural land and that land is increasing in acres, where is that coming from? Stucky - The land that doesn't get reported may be sitting idle,

it's not in agriculture and it's not in development so we have to look at some of those acres that are public already, that million acres, that could be used for wildlife. When it comes to habitat, some of this is critical habitat, I know we're working on how we preserve critical habitat and working through Section Six grants with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to gain some of these properties and see if we can get these holdings to protect those critical habitats, whether it be for whooping cranes or black rail or some of our other species. Ecological Services is working with them to identify a lot of this ground that is critical. Assistant Secretary Schrag - Talk a little bit about the 31% in the 46%. A lot of our conversations with acquisitions and regulation changes, when we say there's only 1.9% in Kansas that's in public ownership. You were talking about 1.9% does not equate to grounds that you can access to hunting or fishing, so talk about your 31% and your 46%. Stucky - So, 31% of the 1.9%, when we start throwing in the federal reservoirs and the actual bodies of the water and we move those numbers from 307,000 acres and adding any of the waters and look at the 460,000 acres total, that's 46% of 1.9%. Some folks called in after last meeting and wanted to see some of the numbers so that's why I wanted to show you so you can reference this. Commissioner Cross - Can you give me a quick example of the public domain up there, that 1,542 acres? What is an example of that? Stucky - There is one in Kearney County, about 400 acres that is land we acquired title to from the Bureau of Land Management in the U.S. Forest Service still left from the Louisiana Purchase. Assistant Secretary Schrag - It was never put back into private ground and was lands here and there in Kansas. I think there is about 30 of them and we acquired some in the 1960s, some later up until 1995. We acquired two in eastern Kansas that are small. They are small and not very many of them, only 1,542 acres total. There are several in Stevens County that look like a chain link that moved down towards the southwest. A lot of those public domains are landlocked so there's no public access to them even for our management and it's hard to get access. For transparency we have discussed the public domain issue and if we should still be holding those properties if we can't manage them and the public can't access them. When we try to lobby for new acquisitions that do make sense, like areas adjacent to an existing Wildlife Area, we've been having those conversations of should we look at selling some of these public domain areas for an opportunity to get better acquisition in the future. We'll continue to have those conversations, as we're trying to make wise use of our funding and the land, we have available for access. Commissioner Escareno - So, you are saying that we're paying for something that we're utilizing? Assistant Secretary Schrag - Yes, we make payments in lieu of property taxes on all these public domains. So, there is some expense related to them. I think there is one in Finney County, right Manuel? Manuel Torres - A lot of minimal acres, can't do much with 0.3 acres, can't even put a blind up. Stucky - Look at in next few years to maybe liquidate some of those properties. Commissioner Lister - Do we leave money on the table for Habitat First? Jake George - We do not leave money on the table, that is a Pitman Roberts (PR) grant, we use wildlife fee fund (WFF) to match that grant and it is fully utilized on an annual basis. Commissioner Lister - Want more funds? George - Certainly, we have an unmet need there and there is room for expansion, but it depends on whether there are any unobligated PR funds available on any given year. Stucky - Move onto regulation proposal. This is the fifth time we have brought this before the Commission and public. The nonresident waterfowl access regulation would state, in some fashion, that nonresident hunting or waterfowl hunting on Kansas Department Wildlife and Parks department lands and waters shall be restricted to Sundays, Mondays and Tuesdays throughout the duration of the established Kansas waterfowl season, including September teal season. Nonresidents would not be allowed to hunt waterfowl on department lands and waters Wednesday to Saturday.

The three-day restriction is for the regular duck and goose seasons. We are still having conversation with our federal partners, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Reclamation and Corps of Engineers and doing more homework on that and taking public input. We would like to keep this on the table. Gfeller – Effective for 2024? Stucky – Correct. Kenny Graham – Brought up at one of our meetings by Kansas Outfitters Association and gentleman that gave Cheyenne Bottoms presentation. A great presentation on what they do. Another thing he brought up was about economic impact on that area and even read some numbers. Have you looked at that how much that small community would be affected. For By going to a three-day hunt versus a seven-day hunt, he mentioned nonresidents brought in 54% of revenue into that community. I hope you all take that in. I know one of the commissioners doesn't want to hear about economics, but it is what makes things go around. By going from 7-day to 3-day season you could impact businesses in community there. Benefits from that has nothing to do with outfitters, it's the community. Still people will come but go around that. Stucky – We are looking at economic impacts to the communities and we hope those nonresidents will enjoy other activities in the area. Some of them don't just hunt Cheyenne Bottoms, they move to other wildlife areas and hunt as well if the crowding is too much. We do have some comments from local community and business owners, and we continue to take input and keep looking at it. Assistant Secretary Schrag – This is just a three-day restriction on public lands, nonresidents can still hunt seven days a week in the state, just not on public lands. Graham – They could go to other properties, but not other state lands unless Corps don't accept that proposal. Since that is a migratory animal, we don't mess with duck hunters but has a huge following. When it is kind of like pheasant season. Appreciate all the work you do. Commissioner Cross – Mr. Stucky thank you; we appreciate your presentation.

5. Pending Regulations (Exhibit V) – Dan Riley, legal counsel – In the pending category of regulations we have one, the fee regulation K.A.R. 15-2-1, which will come before the commission in November. Everything else is either being prepared to submit to promulgation process or language is being drafted for that purpose.

- K.A.R. 115-2-1 Amount of Fees.
- K.A.R. 115-2-3 Camping, utility, and other fees
- K.A.R. 115-4-11 Big game and wild turkey permit applications
- K.A.R. 115-25-14 Fishing (Reference Document)
- K.A.R. 115-7-3, 7-2, 7-9, 7-10 Aquatic Invasive Species Regulations
- K.A.R. 115-5-1 and KAR 115-25-11 Furbearer regulations
- K.A.R. 115-8-1 Public Lands regulations (Reference Document)

## **VII. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

*None*

## **VIII. OLD BUSINESS**

*None*

## **IX. OTHER BUSINESS**

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



~~November 9~~, Lyon County Fairgrounds (Bowyer Building) Emporia, **changed to November 30** to accommodate fee regulation vote.

~~January 11~~, **changed to January 25** to accommodate Dan's desire for meetings towards the end of the month because we are struggling to get enough notice time, used to meet early in January because it was before legislative session started – Sabetha or Seneca area, exact location TBD.

Commissioner Gfeller – The meeting on September 21 that is public information on baiting, is that still in Manhattan? George – September 21 meeting is at Manhattan K-State campus. It is on our website with directions, and it will be from 6:30 to 8:30 pm. No other locations have been set yet, Wichita or Hays possibly, partnering with universities for space. It will not be live streamed, but we will record them. Commissioner Gfeller – Who will be the presenters? George – It will be agency staff. We will be doing is overviews concerns with the practices of baiting and feeding from professional wildlife community, similar to what commissioners saw. Then we'll have an opportunity for questions and answers with panel and get public comment from the public in attendance. Then there will be a survey for feedback regarding the presentation. Commissioner Gfeller – Are commissioners welcome? George – Commissioners are welcome. Commissioner Escareno – Do you think it would be beneficial for us to attend? George – It is probably not going to be something you haven't already heard. If you want to view comments made or questions asked you could watch it online if you weren't able to make it. We will be summarizing all of the feedback for you.

*March 28 – Topeka*

## **X. ADJOURNMENT**

Adjourned at 3:48 p.m.