

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairman John Faber at 3:30 P.M. on January 18, 2007 in Room 423-S of the Capitol.

All members were present.

Committee staff present:

Raney Gilliland, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Emalene Correll, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Jason Thompson, Revisor of Statutes
Florence Deeter, Committee Assistant

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Chris Tymeson, Chief Counsel, Department of Wildlife and Parks
Dr. Lloyd Fox, Big Game Coordinator, Kansas Wildlife and Parks
Mike Miller, Chairman of the Deer Task Force

Others attending:

See attached list.

Review of State Regulations of Deer Populations and Report of Deer Task Force

Chairman Faber introduced Chris Tymeson, Chief Counsel, Department of Wildlife and Parks, who recalled for members the difficulty he experienced in obtaining a license to hunt deer about ten years ago. During that period there have been many additional statutes and regulations which have complicated the process further. The introduction of the proposed bill will simplify both the statutory and regulatory process for residents and non-residents.

Dr. Lloyd Fox, Big Game Coordinator, Kansas Wildlife and Parks, commented on the large number of deer in the Great Plains hundreds of years ago and the exploitation of that population as the years progressed. By the early 1990's, the deer population was negligible. Kansas was one of the last states to re-institute a deer hunting season, which occurred in 1965.

Deer hunting opportunities in Kansas have increased dramatically since the first season. In 1965, only 3,925 permits were issued to firearms hunters with only 1,340 deer harvested. In recent years, up to 165,000 permits and tags have been issued with hunters harvesting approximately 75,000 deer per year. The hunting season has been increased from a five-day time period for firearms hunters and 46 days for hunters using archery equipment in 1965, to an expanded time period of five months, depending on the availability in the region.

Deer management personnel in Kansas have conducted surveys of landowners' and their tolerance of damage caused by deer as well as reviewing trends in deer-related vehicle accidents. Surveys also include monitoring population trends and harvest information from landowners. The management program began with authorization of a limited number of deer permits for hunters to take antler-less or female deer. The Deer Task Force was formed to establish parameters for streamlining the deer management program.

Mike Miller, Chairman of the Deer Task Force, said the task force came into being in 2005 for the purpose of determining how deer-related statutes could be simplified and condensed ([Attachment 1](#)). He brought recommendations as well as comments and ideas garnered from landowners and other public entities. Mr. Miller advised the members that a time period for youth and disabled persons could be established on the next to last Saturday and Sunday of September; the following Monday would open the season for muzzle loader hunters.

Mr. Miller explained permit types for both resident and non-resident opportunities and how permit allocation could function. He stated that after the application period is closed, any permits left over are available on a request basis; eighteen deer management units will be maintained for out-of-state permits. A purchased hunt-on-own-land permit is transferable and can only be given to a relative; the purchase of a non-resident transferable permit can be used anywhere in the county. Mr. Miller said there is an inequality that exists in the kind of permit issued for the type of weapon used; firearm, archery, and muzzle permits are determined by demand of the hunter. The process of obtaining a permit can be made more accessible by providing more

CONTINUATION SHEET

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readily available places such as Wal-Mart, the local license vendor, or on-line acquisition. The resident landowner may purchase a white-tail-either-sex permit or an antler-less permit, which allows hunting anywhere in the state at any season.

The Task Force has presented their recommendations to the Commission. When the legislative statutes are adjusted to allow implementation through the regulation process, changes would then be in place for the 2008 hunting season.

The Chairman thanked those who brought testimony from the Department of Wildlife and Parks and the Deer Task Force.

By consensus, a bill introduction by Representative Bill Light to designate Bluegill as the state fish was approved.

The meeting adjourned at 4:35 p.m. No meeting is scheduled for Monday, January 22, 2007