

MINUTES OF THE SENATE NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Vice-Chairman Ralph Ostmeyer at 8:35 a.m. on March 8, 2007, in Room 423-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except:

Chairman Carolyn McGinn- excused

Tim Huelskamp- excused

Committee staff present:

Raney Gilliland, Kansas Legislative Research Department

Emalene Correll, Kansas Legislative Research Department

Art Griggs, Revisor of Statutes Office

Judy Holliday, Committee Assistant

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Fred A. Cholick, Dean and Director, College of Agriculture and K-State Research and Extension

Others attending:

See attached list.

Vice Chairman Ostmeyer asked the Committee members to look over the minutes of the March 1 Committee meeting for approval at the end of the meeting.

Vice Chairman Ostmeyer noted that copies of the amendments and related information by Senator Huelskamp on **SB 123, Establishment of upper Arkansas river conservation reserve enhancement program (Attachment 1)**, were distributed to Committee members.

Fred A. Cholick, Dean and Director, College of Agriculture and K-State Research and Extension, distributed a booklet on the programs offered through the College of Agriculture and Research and Extension (On file in Room 222-E) and a map of water projects (Attachment 2) to each Committee member. Mr. Cholick referenced the booklet, "An Informal Report to the Kansas Legislature" and told the Committee he would be using the booklet as a context for his update.

The K-State Research and Extension includes statewide county and district extension offices, research centers, and experiment fields supported by county, state, federal and private funds. Research conducted on-campus and at off-campus facilities is shared with Kansas citizens through meetings, field days, publications, Web sites, news releases, radio and television.

Dean Cholick told the Committee the mission of the K-State Research Extension focuses on five themes: Natural Resources and Environmental Management; Healthy Communities—Youth, Adults and Families; Safe Food and Human Nutrition; Competitive Agricultural Systems; and Economic Development through Value-Added Products.

As a land-grant university, the State of Kansas accepted the relationship with the federal government for funding for the development and application of new knowledge to the citizens of the state. Dean Cholick told the Committee that every state has an experiment station, a cooperative extension, and a "grassroots" or county agent system. The state has about 2400 citizens that serve on either development committees or state boards that set the local programs.

Within K-State Research and Extension there are a number of institutes or centers, one of which is the Kansas Center for Agriculture Resources and Environment (KCARE). This institute studies environmental issues and the natural resources of water, soil and air. Dean Cholick told the Committee that these resources are vital not only to agriculture, but to the economic viability of the state and to the world.

Dean Cholick specifically wanted to address the Committee about the Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategies (WRAPS) and emphasize the water resource. He stated that this is a unique approach because it takes a look at the watershed level. He discussed 'strategies,' which is to collect stakeholders within the watershed, hold public meetings, and let the public determine what they want to address in the watershed. The process would include determining the priority, assessing the wealth (water), setting a goal, and

CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES OF THE Senate Natural Resources Committee at 8:30 a.m. on March 8, 2007, in Room 423-S of the Capitol.

determining the cost.

Dean Cholick told the Committee that present WRAPS programs have a total of 22.9 million acres in development, or 43% of the state. The funding for the project is from the Kansas Water Authority through the Kansas Department of Health and Environment for approximately \$800,000, plus an additional request through the State Conservation Commission for \$821,000, and local input which varies from one area to another. With regard to federal grants, Kansas ranks fifth in the nation for these types of grants.

A specific example of the accomplishments of the WRAPS program include the area of water quality. Animals often drink from streams, contaminating the water with waste. Separation of the animal water from the riparian zone, typically a wooded area that is situated by a stream, significantly improves the quality of water and reduces sedimentation and erosion along the streams. By moving the winter feeding area for cattle from along streams, the sediment load is significantly reduced. Dean Cholick mentioned the Little Ark Project which deals with the water projects for the City of Wichita. He told the Committee that “Best Management Practices” are used in the 6,000 acre collection area for the City of Wichita, mainly by reducing sediment load, nutrient load, and pesticide load through filtering and other mechanisms.

Dean Cholick mentioned the partners involved in the WRAPS program: Kansas Water Authority; Kansas Department of Health and Environment; Kansas Department of Agriculture; State Conservation Commission; Kansas Livestock Association; Kansas Rural Center; Kansas Farm Bureau; and the citizens of Kansas. On the national level: National Research Conservation Service; United States Geological Survey; Environmental Protection Agency–Region VII.

Dean Cholick stood for questions. Senator Wysong asked for information on flood control on the Marais Des Cygnes River, and Dean Cholick deferred to Joe Fund of the Kansas Water Office, who offered to get the information for Senator Wysong. Senator Taddiken asked who “writes the check” for the project when it’s completed. Mr. Fund responded that the Kansas Department of Health and Environment pays for it from funds received from the Environmental Protection Agency.

Vice Chairman Ostmeyer asked for a motion to approve the March 1 minutes. Senator Taddiken made a motion, seconded by Senator Bruce to approve the minutes. The motion passed.

The meeting adjourned at 9:05 a.m.