



**The Wildlife Society**  
The Kansas Chapter

Promoting Excellence in Wildlife Stewardship  
Through Science and Education

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The Kansas Chapter of the Wildlife Society

February 23, 2013

Position on House Bill No. 2362

The Kansas Chapter of the Wildlife Society (KCTWS), representing a professional society of wildlife biologists, managers, researchers, and educators in the state opposes Kansas House Bill No. 2362 (HB 2362), a proposal to amend the Kansas Nongame and Endangered Species Act of 1975.

If signed into law, HB 2362 would have serious consequences for the protection of imperiled, native, wild animal species that are important components of the natural heritage of the State of Kansas. Premature and induced extinction of any organism degrades the environment of which all Kansan's are an inseparable part. Some species act as sensitive and crucial indicators of environmental quality and ecosystem health which all species, including humankind, depend.

It is the policy of the Wildlife Society to oppose activities that jeopardize threatened and endangered species populations and support restoration of critical habitats by establishment of market-based strategies including tax incentives, conservation credits, safe harbor agreements, and expanded use of Farm Bill conservation programs to assist and encourage private landowner actions contributing to recovery of at risk species.

The Bill as proposed will not allow the state to operate in a capacity necessary to meet its public mandate of conserving declining species and their habitats. The Bill would effectively remove the state's ability to manage species in order to preclude their listing on the Federal Threatened and Endangered list, an action which often brings regulatory actions into play unpopular with industry and private landowners.

Preventing the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism from environmental review of development projects with the potential to affect critical habitat undermines the ability of the state to work cooperatively with industry to minimize harm to environmentally sensitive landscapes and develop adequate offsetting measures.

Public opinion on threatened and endangered species was made clear by a recent survey of Kansas citizens: <http://www.kdwpt.state.ks.us/news/Services/Threatened-and-Endangered-Wildlife/Kansas-Residents'-Opinions-on-Threatened-and-Endangered-Wildlife-and-Actions-to-Protect-Wildlife-by-Responsive-Management>

A large majority (73%) agree with the statement, "Wildlife that is threatened and endangered in Kansas yet abundant in other states should still be protected in Kansas." An overwhelming majority of Kansas residents (91%) agree that the Department Of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism should continue to identify and protect habitat critical to the existence of threatened and endangered wildlife.

The Kansas Chapter of the Wildlife Society advances sound, science-based management and conservation of fish, wildlife and their habitat in the public interest of all Kansan's. The Chapter opposes HB 2362 on the basis that the Bill undermines the state's ability to manage species effectively and is in opposition to the majority of views of Kansas citizens on threatened and endangered species.

Respectfully submitted,

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