



KANSAS FARM BUREAU
The Voice of Agriculture

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Kansas Farm Bureau
WRITTEN POLICY STATEMENT

House Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee

**Re: HB 2362, an act concerning wildlife and parks, relating to
endangered species**

February 25, 2013

Submitted by:

Steve M. Swaffar

Director of Natural Resources

Interim Director of Government Relations

Chairperson Schwartz and members of the committee, thank you for this opportunity to provide written testimony on House Bill 2362. I am Steve Swaffar, Interim Director of Governmental Relations. Kansas Farm Bureau offers qualified support HB 2362.

Our members have adopted both state and national policy addressing the issue of threatened and endangered species. That member adopted policy addresses appropriate listing procedures, critical habitat designations and providing cost/benefit analyses of any proposed listing. As you might imagine, our members have had and continue to have challenges with species listings both at the State and Federal levels.

Mitigation requirements and costs for water resource projects are one of the main challenges facing our producers. In this challenging time of drought, mitigation costs in excess of actual construction costs are preventing new water resource projects and improvements to existing projects from proceeding. This is a troubling trend for our members trying to prepare for another dry season and future drought times. Providing clear and scientifically defensible justification for mitigation and species listings is in the best interest of our members and all Kansans. Parts of HB 2362 clearly can improve the listing process.

We have concerns with the Kansas process that allows for a species to be listed as threatened or endangered in Kansas when the species has stable populations in other

States. If a listing is only because the species is at the edge of its occupied range in Kansas and merely a result of population fragments, then that does not justify adding it to the Kanas list. It appears that the intent of Section 2(b)(4) of the bill would prevent those types of situations from occurring in the future.

KFB does have one concern, if any of the proposed language in the bill relinquishes State oversight of threatened or endangered species consultations or decision-making and in turn puts US Fish and Wildlife Service in that role, we would not like to see the federal agency assume or reassume those authorities. We believe the State is in much better position to perform these functions.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.