

Proponent Statement for HB2207

Tim Nedeau

Dear members of the House Committee on Agriculture.

My family owns 180 acres in Osage County Kansas. I am in full support of HB2207.

Under current law, State Statute 32-1013 Section C, the Kansas Department of Wildlife Parks & Tourism allows anyone who holds a hunting license the right to cross onto our property to pursue wounded wildlife. Or in reality, they give them the right to trespass on our land without ever notifying me.

As a landowner / land manager, I alone should have the right to allow hunting, or the right to keep people off the land that I purchased, maintain, pay property taxes on, and insure. For over 30 years I have worked our land in order to improve our land for the purpose of establishing wildlife habitat. I cannot imagine how many thousands of dollars I have spent in my efforts during this time. I have purchased tractors, mowers, skid loaders, chainsaws, and other equipment to assist in my work on our lands. I have also spent countless hours maintaining the land through rotation burning of the grasslands each spring, while allowing other vegetation to stand idle in order to benefit the wildlife. At my expense, I have purchased a variety of fruit and nut producing trees, and added food plots throughout our land for the wildlife to utilize. Why then does KDWP&T feel they have the right to allow trespassers onto our lands! They have contributed nothing to our land and the development of it!

I certainly do not want others to walk through my hunting areas, nor the areas utilized by the wildlife as bedding or feeding purposes without my permission. I have too much invested for this to be allowed.

If a hunter wounds a deer and it enters our lands, I want them to be able to find their kill. However, the ethical thing for the hunter to do, is to contact the landowner for permission first. No landowner wants to find tracks or other signs of trespassers on their land. An ethical hunter will know the boundaries of where they have permission to hunt, and they should also have the contact numbers of the surrounding landowners. In the past I have had neighbors call me about deer that have crossed the property line, and ask permission to pursue it. I have given permission and even assisted in the finding of the deer. The key is however, they asked "first". Years ago I was taught in Kansas Hunters Safety classes to always ask for permission first, just as the KDWP&T landowners cards issued today still state. "Always Ask Permission."

The KDWP&T through their Walk In Hunting Program, covers the landowner with liability insurance. However, through the current statute, they allow trespassers to enter onto private property, but they do not extend the same liability insurance to those landowners. It doesn't seem fair that over 97% of the land in Kansas is owned by private citizens, but the KDWP&T allows trespassers onto our lands without first asking permission to be there, nor any liability insurance coverage for the Kansas landowner.

Therefore, I ask for your support in protecting the Kansas landowner's rights, and please support HB2207.

Thank you

Tim Nedeau
Scranton, KS