

Testimony on House Bill No. 240

To

Senate Committee on Ways and Means

By Robin Jennison
Secretary
Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks, and Tourism

April 4, 2017

The Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism (KDWP) appreciates the opportunity to discuss the provisions of Senate Bill No. 240 with the Committee. Per K.S.A. 32-833, KDWP needs Legislative or State Finance Council approval to purchase property over 160 acres.

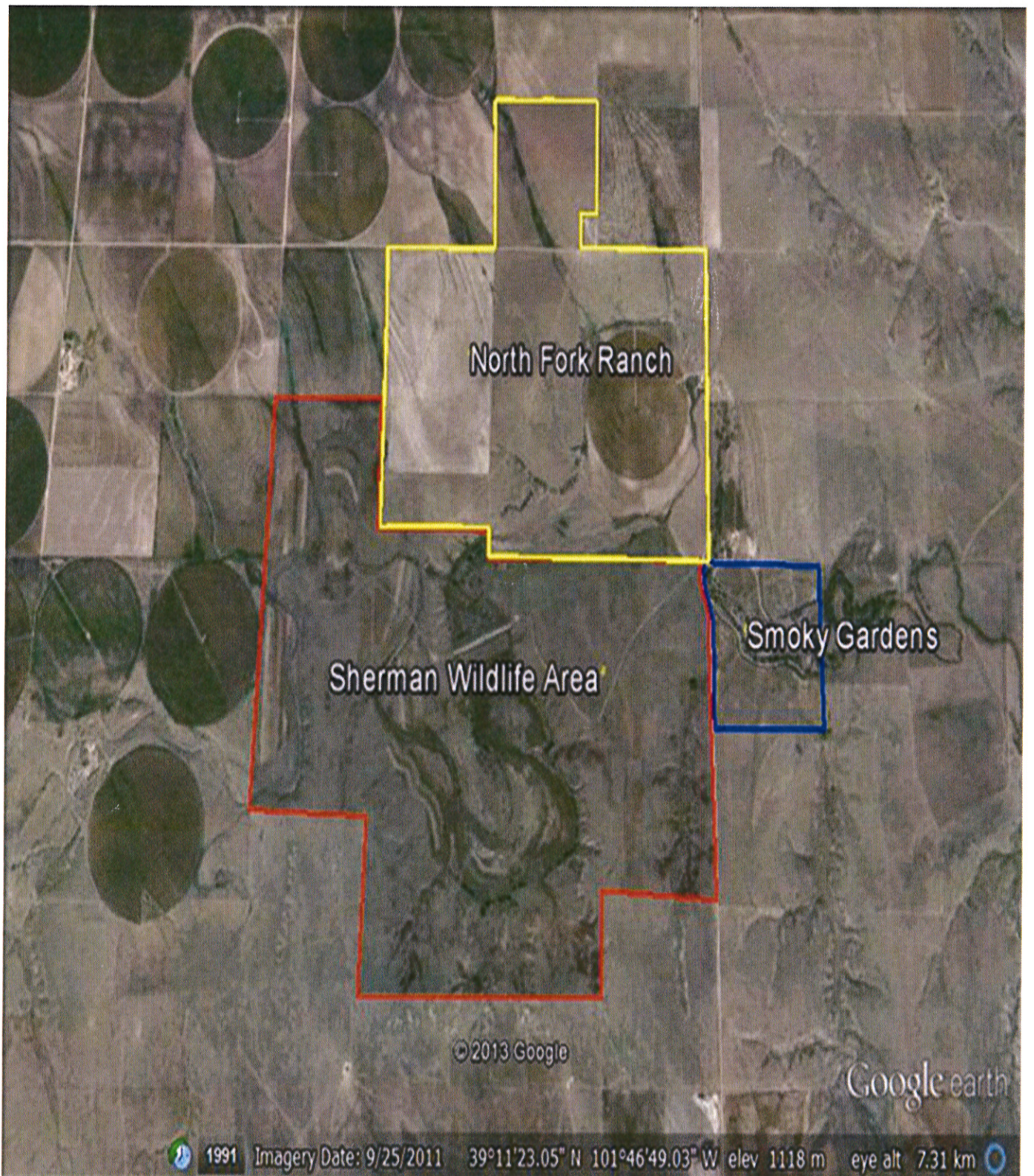
Senate Bill 240 will allow KDWP to purchase approximately 1095 acres in Sherman County, Kansas. KDWP is required by statute to have the property appraised by appraisers selected by the Kansas Supreme Court. Approximate value of the property is estimated at \$2,400,000. KDWP will be using Pittman Robertson Grant funds from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, with matching state funds from KDWP's wildlife Fee fund, at a 75/25 % split, and the property will remain on the counties tax roll.

There are several reasons why this purchase is important not only to KDWP, but the sportsman of Kansas and the conservation of our natural resources. First, this property is a priority for the constituents in Sherman County as it is adjacent to The Smoky Gardens farm and Sherman County Lake. Purchase of this property will eventually lead to the removal of two current center pivot water rights covering 347 acres of the property. Public ownership of this property would provide restoration, protection and conservation of this important ecosystem. Additionally, the proposed acquisition would be open to the public for a variety of uses including hunting, fishing, wildlife viewing and hiking.

Thank you for your consideration of this bill

Sincerely,

Robin Jennison, Secretary
Kansas Department of Wildlife Parks, and Tourism



North Fork Ranch

Sherman Wildlife Area

Smoky Gardens

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