



To: House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources, Rep. Ken Rahjes, Chair

From: Jared McJunkin, CWB – Director of Conservation Operations (Central), National Wild Turkey Federation

Date: February 6th, 2025

RE: HB 2063 – Establishing a state conservation fund

Chairman Rahjes and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 2063. The National Wild Turkey Federation is a conservation non-profit with nearly 250,000 members across the country, 3,631 of which are from Kansas, with the mission to conserve the wild turkey and preserve our hunting heritage. We are members of the Kansans for Conservation coalition, which has led the collaborative drafting process of HB 2063.

Conservation is the proper management of our natural resources and there are few investments more critical to the quality of life in Kansas. Our economic success, public health, and future generations are dependent upon us maintaining and improving these resources. Currently, the state does not provide dedicated funding for this work and is subsequently losing out on federal or private matching dollars to the 35 states that have already established dedicated conservation funding, including all four of our neighboring states. I oversee the NWTF's conservation programs in a 14-state region, including several with dedicated conservation funding sources. I can say that the lack of a dedicated funding source for conservation has prevented the NWTF from delivering conservation efforts at a similar scale to these other states in my home state of Kansas.

The National Wild Turkey Federation, founded in 1973, has the mission to conserve the wild turkey and preserve our hunting heritage. Our mission is supported by four shared values: clean water, healthy forests and wildlife habitat, resilient communities and robust recreational opportunities. A key component of HB 2063 is the Wildlife Conservation Fund, which will provide critical resources for implementing the Kansas state wildlife action plan. These efforts include expanding walk-in hunting access on privately owned properties, restoring key habitats for wildlife, and supporting voluntary conservation agreements. The conservation funding provided through HB 2063 would be particularly beneficial to wild turkeys since they thrive and depend on a diverse landscape that includes forests, open grasslands, and areas with abundant food sources. Furthermore, this bill emphasizes the importance of protecting native landscapes, which benefits not only wild turkeys but also a wide range of wildlife species in Kansas.

HB 2063 will contribute to healthier wild turkey populations, improved ecological balance, and enhanced hunting and recreational opportunities, all of which are critical to NWTF's mission.



This bill represents a significant step forward in supporting conservation across the state and will provide a sustainable framework for wildlife conservation through securing funding for habitat management and wildlife conservation, which will strengthen Kansas's rich natural landscape for future generations.

As outlined above and by our fellow coalition members, the establishment of state conservation funding benefits all Kansans, allows for the proper stewardship of the resources bestowed upon us, and enables the state to be competitive for match opportunities. Therefore, we ask you to support HB 2063. Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments and please reach out if you have any questions about our support.

Sincerely,

Jared W. McJunkin
Certified Wildlife Biologist®
Director of Conservation Operations (Central)
National Wild Turkey Federation
770 Augusta Rd, Edgefield, SC 29824
mobile: 785.844.1055
email: jmcjunkin@nwtf.net