

KANSAS OUTDOOR HERITAGE ALLIANCE

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

From: Kurt Ratzlaff on behalf of Kansas Outdoor Heritage Alliance

Date: February 6, 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 Kansas Outdoor Heritage Alliance (KOHA) recently came together to provide the Kansas legislature with the voice of Kansas resident hunters, anglers, trappers and houndsmen. We represent the interests of the everyday sportsmen and women out there walking in a field behind a bird dog, the angler sitting on the bank or in a small boat trying to catch a few fish to fry up, the trapper checking the line every day, and the houndsmen listening to hear a dog sound off on a raccoon. KOHA represents those of us who are not looking to make money off the outdoors, but we do invest our passion, time, money, and effort. We are the backbone of the financial support of the outdoors and its conservation.

The following members of the Kansas Outdoor Heritage Alliance support HB 2063:

Backcountry Hunters and Anglers, NA

Delta Waterfowl

Flatland Fly Fishers

Kansas Backcountry Hunters and Anglers

Kansas Bowhunters Association

Kansas Federation of Houndsmen

Kansas Fur Harvesters Association

Kansas Hunters For Access

Kansas Walleye

National Deer Association

Pheasants Forever/Quail Forever

HB 2063 makes great financial sense for the state of Kansas. This bill would establish a state conservation fund that would allow Kansas to compete for conservation money that is already available and currently flowing to 35 other states, including all our neighboring states. Every dollar put into the fund would be at least doubled because priority will be given to applications that utilize matching funds. See Sec 2(g), 3(f) and 4(f).

KOHA is primarily focused on Section 3 of HB2063 that creates the wildlife conservation fund. Grant applications to this fund will be generally required to assist with habitat development and increase hunting access. As Kansas residents who actively participate in traditional outdoor pursuits, we constantly experience the crisis of a lack of access for hunting and the loss of quality wildlife habitat. Studies have consistently show that lack of access is the primary reason people stop hunting or reduce the frequency of their hunting. Habitat loss is a primary limiting factor in the populations of game and non-game species alike.

HB 2063 assists in addressing these two greatest threats to our traditional Kansas outdoor pursuits. We ask this Committee to support and pass HB 2063 and establish a state conservation fund as soon as possible.

Kurt Ratzlaff

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