

**CONFERENCE COMMITTEE REPORT BRIEF
HOUSE BILL NO. 2028**

As Agreed to March 25, 2025

Brief*

HB 2028 would amend law concerning the resident senior combination hunting and fishing pass and the Kansas kids combination lifetime hunting and fishing license (license). The bill would also prohibit non-residents from hunting migratory waterfowl during certain times and in certain places, require the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks (KDWP) to present certain data in a report to the Legislature, and change the fees for migratory waterfowl habitat stamps.

Combination Hunting and Fishing Passes and Licenses

Resident Senior Combination Hunting and Fishing Pass

The bill would revive law authorizing the KDWP to offer a resident senior combination hunting and fishing pass and remove the sunset date. These provisions allowed any Kansan age 65 or older to purchase a discounted lifetime hunting and fishing permit. The provisions expired on June 30, 2020, and the bill would state the provisions would be effective as of January 1, 2025.

Kansas Kids Combination Lifetime Hunting and Fishing License

The bill would allow licenses to be issued by the Secretary of Wildlife and Parks to children 5 years or younger for \$300, and to children from ages 6 to 15 years for \$400.

The bill would also remove the sunset for the license provisions that are currently set to expire on July 1, 2032.

*Conference committee report briefs are prepared by the Legislative Research Department and do not express legislative intent. No summary is prepared when the report is an agreement to disagree. Conference committee report briefs may be accessed on the Internet at <https://klrd.gov/>

Migratory Waterfowl Hunting and Habitat Stamps

Non-resident Hunting Prohibition

The bill would prohibit non-residents from hunting migratory waterfowl during the hunting season except on Sundays, Mondays, and Tuesdays.

The bill would define “non-resident” as any person who has not been a *bona fide* resident of Kansas for the immediately preceding 60 days. “Non-resident” would not include a non-resident lifetime license holder or a non-resident entitled to resident licenses, permits, stamps, and other issues as authorized in law.

This prohibition would apply to:

- “Department lands and waters,” which would be defined by the bill as lands, water, and facilities that are under the jurisdiction and control of the Secretary of Wildlife and Parks through ownership, lease, license, cooperative agreement, memorandum of understanding, or other arrangement, including, but not limited to, state parks, state lakes, recreational grounds, wildlife areas, sanctuaries, fish hatcheries, natural areas, and historic sites; and
- Federal lands and waters owned by the United States and administered by:
 - The Secretary of the Army, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, at the Bill Hill, Clinton, Council Grove, El Dorado, Elk City, Fall River, Hillsdale, John Redmond, Kanopolis, Marion, Melvern, Milford, Perry, Pomona, Toronto, Tuttle Creek, and Wilson reservoirs and Missouri River fish and wildlife mitigation lands, including, but not limited to, Benedictine Bottoms, Burr Oak, Dalbey, Elwood, and Oak Mills;
 - The U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Reclamation, at Cedar Bluff, Cheney, Glen Elder, Lovewell, Norton, and Webster reservoirs; and
- The U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, at Flint Hills National Wildlife Refuge, Quivira National Refuge, Marais Des Cygnes National Wildlife Refuge, and Kirwin National Wildlife Refuge.

The non-resident hunting prohibition would not apply to:

- Property enrolled and designated as walk-in hunting access areas or interactive walk-in hunting access areas;
- Navigable rivers in Kansas; or
- The conservation order for light geese season, as provided in federal law.

The bill would require the KDWP to compile certain data into a report to provide to the House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources and Senate Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources on January 31, 2026, and January 31, 2027.

The provisions of the bill applying to non-resident hunting prohibitions would sunset on July 1, 2028.

Fees for Migratory Waterfowl Habitat Stamps

The bill would change the fees for a migratory waterfowl habitat stamp (stamp). The current fee for a stamp is a maximum of \$8 for any hunter. The bill would create separate fees for resident and non-resident hunters:

- The resident fee would be a maximum of \$20; and
- The non-resident fee would be a maximum of \$100.

Effective Date

The bill would be in effect upon publication in the *Kansas Register*.

Conference Committee Action

The Conference Committee agreed to the provisions of HB 2028, as amended by the Senate Committee of the Whole, with the following amendments:

- Add two age categories for the Kansas kids lifetime combination hunting and fishing license (license), including one for children 5 years of age or younger, with a license cost of \$300, and one for children 6 years of age to 15 years of age, with a license cost of \$400;
- Sunset the provisions regarding the dates on which non-residents can hunt migratory waterfowl on July 1, 2028; and
- Require the KDWP to provide a report regarding the provisions of this bill related to non-resident migratory waterfowl hunting to the House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources and the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources on or by January 31, 2026, and January 31, 2027.

Background

The Senate Committee of the Whole inserted the contents of SB 213 into HB 2028 while retaining and amending the contents of HB 2028. Background information for each bill may be found below.

HB 2028 (Combination Hunting and Fishing Passes and Licenses)

The bill was introduced by the House Committee on Federal and State Affairs at the request of Representative Corbet.

House Committee on Federal and State Affairs

In the House Committee hearing, **proponent** testimony was provided by Representatives Corbet and W. Carpenter. The conferees stated their intent to restore the language that had sunset in 2020, which would allow more participation in hunting and fishing by senior citizens. They further stated that removing the sunset on the youth combination license would allow for greater participation by youth in the future.

Written-only neutral testimony was provided by the Acting Secretary of Wildlife and Parks and by a representative of the Kansas Chapter of Backcountry Hunters & Anglers. The neutral testimony stated the KDWP has remedied the unavailability of additional senior combination licenses by offering additional numbers of discounted senior annual licenses. Additionally, neutral testimony stated concern with future availability of federal funds under the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act of 1937 (also known as the Pittman-Robertson Act) that could be jeopardized if hunting and fishing licenses do not meet federal requirements.

No other testimony was provided.

Senate Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources

In the Senate Committee hearing, **proponent** testimony was presented by Representative Corbet emphasizing his previous testimony and the effects of the bill.

Written-only neutral testimony was provided by the Acting Secretary of Wildlife and Parks.

No other testimony was provided.

The Senate Committee amended the bill to:

- Remove previous age ranges and fees for which a Kansas kids lifetime combination hunting and fishing license may be issued and establish the maximum age of 15 years and a universal fee of \$500 [*Note: The Conference Committee did not retain this amendment.*]; and
- Change the effective date of the provisions of the bill concerning the resident senior combination hunting and fishing pass from July 1, 2020, to January 1, 2025. [*Note: The Conference Committee retained this amendment.*]

Senate Committee of the Whole

The Senate Committee of the Whole amended the bill to:

- Reduce the Kansas kids lifetime combination hunting and fishing license fee from \$500 to \$400 [*Note: The Conference Committee did not retain this amendment.*]; and
- Add the provisions of SB 213, as amended by the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources. [*Note: The Conference Committee retained this amendment.*]

SB 213 (Migratory Waterfowl Hunting and Habitat Stamps)

The bill was introduced by the Senate Committee on Federal and State Affairs at the request of Senator Blew on behalf of Representative W. Carpenter.

Senate Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources

In the Senate Committee hearing on February 12, 2025, **proponent** testimony was provided by Representative W. Carpenter, Senator Billinger, and a private citizen. The proponents expressed concerns regarding the overcrowding of Kansas wetlands by non-resident waterfowl hunters and lack of access to public hunting grounds for Kansas resident hunters.

Written-only proponent testimony was provided by five private citizens.

Neutral testimony was provided by the Deputy Secretary of KDWP, who stated non-resident waterfowl pressure on limited public lands has increased significantly. In 2006, non-residents accounted for 19 percent of all waterfowl hunters in Kansas. For the 2020-2021 season, non-resident waterfowl hunters increased to 40 percent of all waterfowl hunters; that season was the first time non-resident hunters outnumbered resident hunters at Cheyenne Bottoms. The Deputy Secretary also stated the Wildlife and Parks Commission has discussed and solicited public input on the limitations placed on non-resident hunters.

Written-only neutral testimony was provided by a representative of Backcountry Hunters & Anglers.

No other testimony was provided.

[Note: A companion bill, HB 2268, was introduced in the House. The House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources held a hearing on the bill on March 17, 2025; however, the House Committee did not take any action.]

Fiscal Information

A revised fiscal note on the amended bill was not immediately available.

HB 2028 (Combination Hunting and Fishing Passes and Licenses)

According to the fiscal note prepared by the Division of the Budget on the bill, as introduced, KDWP states enactment of the bill would decrease fee fund revenues because seniors currently pay a higher price for their hunting and fishing licenses due to the lapse of the lifetime combination license provisions. Reintroduction of this license would reduce revenues by an unknown amount.

Additionally, the sale of licenses is used to calculate the amount of federal funds the agency receives; however, KDWP cannot estimate the potential increase or decrease in federal funds, if any. KDWP also states that removal of the sunset date for the Kansas kids lifetime combination hunting and fishing license would not have a fiscal effect.

SB 213 (Migratory Waterfowl Hunting and Habitat Stamps)

According to the fiscal note prepared by the Division of the Budget on the bill, as introduced, KDWP states that enactment of the bill would increase revenues into its fee funds because the agency no longer sells mussel fishing licenses, and the bill would increase cost of the migratory waterfowl stamps. However, the agency cannot estimate a fiscal effect as it would need to promulgate the regulation that sets the fee amount of the stamps because the bill allows up to a maximum amount.

Any fiscal effect associated with either bill is not reflected in *The FY 2026 Governor's Budget Report*.

Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks; hunting; fishing; licenses; seniors; youth; migratory waterfowl; fees

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