

Kansas Wildlife Action Plan

From Vision to On-the-Ground Action

Several broad themes emerged while developing Kansas' wildlife action plan: existing data gaps impede effective conservation planning and implementation, land management practices have changed the structure of habitats over large areas, fragmentation and conversion of habitat is occurring, invasive non-native plants and animals are a problem, natural resource management may affect habitat conditions, and there is inadequate coordination between government agencies for resource management. Kansas' 315 species of greatest conservation need were associated with habitats within three conservation regions.

As Kansas communities grow, these proactive approaches will conserve wildlife and vital natural areas before they become more rare and more costly to protect.

Protecting Imperiled Land, Water, and Wildlife

Conserving Natural Areas

To keep common species common, Kansas' wildlife action plan seeks improved information on the health of important wildlife habitat. A State Wildlife Grants funded study identified the remaining high-quality natural areas

and rare wildlife in a five-county area of northeast Kansas. This region is developing rapidly, creating many challenges for wildlife conservation. Each of these high-quality natural areas can sustain several priority species such as red-shouldered hawks, broad-winged hawks, regal fritillary butterflies, and red-eyed vireos.

The Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks uses this information to help guide planning commissions and development to conserve as many high quality natural areas as possible. This successful regional

inventory prompted similar efforts in other counties. As Kansas communities grow, these proactive approaches will conserve wildlife and vital natural areas before they become more rare and more costly to protect.

Gathering Information to Take Action

Kansas Mammals Status

Of the 75 mammal species in Kansas, 17 are species of greatest conservation need in the wildlife action plan. Following a highly successful and informative documentation of Kansas' amphibians and reptiles, a similar effort was undertaken for mammals. A thorough update of mammal information has not occurred in Kansas for over three decades so this effort will efficiently direct new conservation efforts and will serve as the baseline for long-term monitoring of mammals of Kansas. All information will be available online to biologists, citizens, and other conservationists. Sound data on Kansas mammals will allow the most



Hikers in Kansas' Konza prairie/Mike Blair



Bat cave/Ken Brunson, Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks

effective conservation efforts to be taken, conserving wildlife and the places they live for future generations.

Protecting Imperiled Land, Water, and Wildlife

Stream Monitoring and Assessment Program

A top statewide priority in Kansas's wildlife action plan is obtaining vital information on wildlife that is not hunted or fished. Since 2003, State Wildlife Grants have supported the Kansas statewide stream survey. This long-term effort to assess aquatic life in Kansas will provide necessary guidance for conservation of imperiled aquatic wildlife. Over 1300 assessments have been completed, providing many agencies and conservation organizations with important species information. The data provides additional information

about all fish species and helps document the spread of aquatic nuisance species and pollution. Having good information on Kansas stream wildlife will help prevent costly endangered species listings, benefiting wildlife and people.

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Stream survey/Shawn Hume, Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks