

DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE AND PARKS

Budget Committee Report

KLRD Analyst: Drury
KLRD Summary: Vol. 2, pg. 515

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GBR Analysis: Vol. 2, pg. 498

Executive Summary

Summary of Total Expenditures, FY 2023 – FY 2027						
	SGF	EDIF	All Other Funds	Total	FTE Positions	
FY 2023 Actual	\$ -	\$ 3,596,921	\$ 89,348,919	\$ 92,945,840	456.0	
FY 2024 Actual	617,160	4,235,303	85,980,420	90,832,883	466.0	
FY 2025 Actual	5,082,840	4,553,817	96,950,440	106,587,097	465.0	
FY 2026						
Approved, with Reappropriations	\$ -	\$ 4,285,523	\$ 132,631,978	\$ 136,917,501	465.0	
Agency Revised Estimate	95,435	4,285,523	132,536,543	136,917,501	465.0	
Special Committee on the State Budget	95,435	4,224,000	132,536,543	136,855,978	465.0	
House Committee of the Whole	95,435	4,224,000	132,536,543	136,855,978	465.0	
Senate Committee of the Whole	-	4,224,000	132,631,978	136,855,978	465.0	
Legislative Approved	-	4,224,000	132,631,978	136,855,978	465.0	
Governor's Recommendation	95,435	4,227,632	136,764,175	136,859,610	465.0	
FY 2027						
FY 2026 Approved, without Reappropriations	\$ -	\$ 4,224,000	\$ 124,443,888	\$ 128,667,888	465.0	
Agency Request	96,258	4,224,000	124,347,630	128,667,888	465.0	
Special Committee on the State Budget	96,258	4,224,000	124,347,630	128,667,888	465.0	
House Committee of the Whole	96,258	4,224,000	124,722,630	129,042,888	468.0	
Senate Committee of the Whole	-	4,224,000	124,443,888	128,667,888	465.0	
Legislative Approved	-	4,261,755	124,830,731	129,092,486	465.0	
Governor's Recommendation	396,258	4,224,000	129,295,637	129,691,895	473.0	

The Department of Wildlife and Parks (KDWP) is a cabinet-level agency administered by the Secretary of Wildlife and Parks. The Secretary is appointed by the Governor, subject to confirmation by the Kansas Senate. The Kansas Wildlife and Parks Commission, a seven-member board appointed by the Governor, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the President of the Senate, and the Attorney General, serves in an advisory role to the Secretary. The Commission has the authority to approve, deny, or modify the agency's rules and regulations. The Secretary of Wildlife and Parks and Assistant Secretary for Administration are located in the Topeka administrative offices, while the Assistant Secretary for Operations is located in Pratt. The agency is administered by staff in the Topeka office, while field operations are managed from the Pratt office.

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FY 2026

Summary of Legislative Recommendations, FY 2026						
	SGF	EDIF	All Other Funds	Total	FTE Positions	
Approved, with Reappropriations	\$ -	\$ 4,285,523	\$ 132,631,978	\$ 136,917,501	465.0	
Agency Revised Estimate	95,435	4,285,523	132,536,543	136,917,501	465.0	
Special Committee on the State Budget (SBC)						
Change from Agency Revised Estimate	\$ -	\$ (61,523)	\$ -	\$ (61,523)	-	
TOTAL – Special Committee	\$ 95,435	\$ 4,224,000	\$ 132,536,543	\$ 136,855,978	465.0	
House Committees						
Agriculture and Natural Resources Budget	\$ -	\$ 3,632	\$ -	\$ 3,632	-	
Appropriations	-	(3,632)	-	(3,632)	-	
Committee of the Whole	-	-	-	-	-	
Subtotal – House Change from SBC	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	
TOTAL – Current House Position	\$ 95,435	\$ 4,224,000	\$ 132,536,543	\$ 136,855,978	465.0	
Senate Committees						
Agriculture and Natural Resources	\$ (95,435)	\$ -	\$ 95,435	\$ -	-	
Ways and Means	-	-	-	-	-	
Committee of the Whole	-	-	-	-	-	
Subtotal – Senate Change from SBC	\$ (95,435)	\$ -	\$ 95,435	\$ -	-	
TOTAL – Current Senate Position	\$ -	\$ 4,224,000	\$ 132,631,978	\$ 136,855,978	465.0	
Legislative Approved						
Conference Committee	\$ (95,435)	\$ -	\$ 95,435	\$ -	-	
Governor's Vetoes	-	-	-	-	-	
Veto Overrides	-	-	-	-	-	
Certifications	-	-	-	-	-	
Subtotal – Approved Change from SBC	\$ (95,435)	\$ -	\$ 95,435	\$ -	-	
GRAND TOTAL – Final Approved	\$ -	\$ 4,224,000	\$ 132,631,978	\$ 136,855,978	465.0	

Agency

The **agency** requests a revised estimate of \$136.9 million, including \$95,435 SGF and \$4.3 million EDIF, and 465.0 FTE positions in FY 2026. The agency's request is an increase of \$8.1 million, all from agency fee and federal funds, above the amount approved by the 2025 Legislature. The revised estimate includes the following changes from the approved amount:

- **Capital Improvements.** The agency's revised request includes an increase of \$7.2 million, including \$600,000 from American Rescue Plant Act (ARPA) funds, for a total of \$34.0 million for capital improvement projects in FY 2026. The agency indicates the increase in capital improvement expenditures in FY 2026 results from a need to spend allocated federal dollars so that they do not revert back to the federal government.

The agency's revised request also includes \$600,000 ARPA for Little Jerusalem State Park and Lehigh Portland State Park in FY 2026. The agency was awarded \$10.0 million ARPA through the State Park Revitalization and Investment in Notable Tourism (SPRINT) Grant offered by the Kansas Department of Commerce for FY 2025. The agency did not expend all ARPA moneys in FY 2025, and those moneys were carried over to FY 2026. The agency's revised request includes expending all remaining ARPA moneys in FY 2026.

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- **Ecological Services.** The agency's revised request includes an increase of \$2.9 million, for a total of \$6.9 million, for the Ecological Services Program in FY 2026. The agency indicates that federal grant funds were delayed or not awarded within the expected budget timeframe in FY 2025. The agency further indicates that applications for funding that were submitted for FY 2025 are now being awarded in FY 2026, along with new applications in FY 2026 being awarded. These factors are increasing estimated federal awards in the Ecological Services Program.
- **Public Lands.** The agency's revised request includes a decrease of \$2.5 million, for a total of \$15.1 million, for the Public Lands Program in FY 2026. Specifically, the agency is estimating decreased expenditures for agricultural equipment and machinery in FY 2026. The agency indicates that some fleet replacements for vehicles and heavy equipment for land management on public lands throughout the state have been deferred, with moneys from the Wildlife Restoration Fund being shifted to capital improvements in FY 2026.
- **All Other Adjustments.** All other adjustments made by the agency result in a net increase of \$622,965 in FY 2026. Increases in the agency's Administration Program (\$137,365), Law Enforcement Program (\$456,282), Parks Program (\$2,471), and Wildlife Program (\$516,805) are partially offset by decreases in the agency's Education Program (\$85,784) and Fish Program (\$404,174).

Included in the agency's revised estimate is an increased transfer of \$843,519 from the State Highway Fund of the Department of Transportation to the Department Access Roads Fund of the Department of Wildlife and Parks, for a total of \$4.2 million, in FY 2026

Special Committee on the State Budget

The **Special Committee** concurs with the agency's revised estimate in FY 2026 with the following adjustment:

1. Delete \$61,523 EDIF in reappropriations in FY 2026.

Joint Committee on State Building Construction

The **Joint Committee** concurs with the Special Committee's recommendation in FY 2026.

House Committees

House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources Budget

The **House Budget Committee** concurs with the Special Committee's recommendation in FY 2026 with the following adjustment:

1. Add \$3,632 EDIF in reappropriations for operating expenditures in FY 2026.

House Committee on Appropriations

The **House Committee** concurs with the Budget Committee's recommendation in FY 2026 with the following adjustment:

1. Delete \$3,632 EDIF in reappropriations for operating expenditures in FY 2026.

House Committee of the Whole

The **House Committee of the Whole** concurs with the House Committee's recommendation in FY 2026.

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Senate Committees

Senate Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources

The **Senate Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources** concurs with the Special Committee's recommendation in FY 2026 with the following adjustments:

1. Delete \$95,435 SGF and add the same amount from agency fee and federal funds in FY 2026.
2. Add language requiring the agency to provide a report to the Senate Committee on Ways and Means, the House Committee on Appropriations, the House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources Budget, and the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources detailing any efficiencies or savings identified by the agency on or before June 30, 2026, and add language to prevent the agency from taking action upon any efficiencies or savings identified by the department that would result in the termination or modification of any currently filled full-time or part-time position until the submission of such report in FY 2026.

Senate Committee on Ways and Means

The **Senate Committee on Ways and Means** concurs with Senate Subcommittee's recommendation in FY 2026.

Senate Committee of the Whole

The **Senate Committee of the Whole** concurs with the Senate Committee's recommendation in FY 2026.

Conference Committee

The **Conference Committee** concurs with the Special Committee's recommendation in FY 2026, with the following adjustment:

1. Delete \$95,435 SGF and add the same amount from agency fee and federal funds in FY 2026.

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FY 2027

Summary of Legislative Recommendations, FY 2027						
	SGF	EDIF	All Other Funds	Total	FTE Positions	
FY 2026 Approved, without Reappropriations	\$ -	\$ 4,224,000	\$ 124,443,888	\$ 128,667,888	465.0	
Agency Request	96,258	4,224,000	124,347,630	128,667,888	465.0	
Special Committee on the State Budget (SBC)						
Change from Agency Request	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	
TOTAL – Special Committee	\$ 96,258	\$ 4,224,000	\$ 124,347,630	\$ 128,667,888	465.0	
House Committees						
Agriculture and Natural Resources Budget	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 375,000	\$ 375,000	3.0	
Appropriations	-	-	-	-	-	
Committee of the Whole	-	-	-	-	-	
Subtotal – House Change from SBC	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 375,000	\$ 375,000	3.0	
TOTAL – Current House Position	\$ 96,258	\$ 4,224,000	\$ 124,722,630	\$ 129,042,888	468.0	
Senate Committees						
Agriculture and Natural Resources	\$ (96,258)	\$ -	\$ 96,258	\$ -	-	
Ways and Means	-	-	-	-	-	
Committee of the Whole	-	-	-	-	-	
Subtotal – Senate Change from SBC	\$ (96,258)	\$ -	\$ 96,258	\$ -	-	
TOTAL – Current Senate Position	\$ -	\$ 4,224,000	\$ 124,443,888	\$ 128,667,888	465.0	
Legislative Approved						
Conference Committee	\$ (96,258)	\$ -	\$ 96,258	\$ -	-	
Governor's Vetoes	-	-	-	-	-	
Veto Overrides	-	-	-	-	-	
Certifications	-	37,755	386,843	424,598	-	
Subtotal – Approved Change from SBC	\$ (96,258)	\$ 37,755	\$ 483,101	\$ 424,598	-	
GRAND TOTAL – Final Approved	\$ -	\$ 4,261,755	\$ 124,830,731	\$ 129,092,486	465.0	

Agency

The **agency** requests \$128.7 million, including \$96,258 SGF and \$4.2 million EDIF, and 465.0 FTE positions for FY 2027. The agency's request is a decrease of \$54,792 from all funding sources, including an increase of \$823 SGF, below the amount approved by the 2025 Legislature in FY 2026. The revised estimate includes the following changes from the amount approved for FY 2026 by the 2025 Legislature:

- **Ecological Services.** The agency's request includes an increase of \$1.1 million, for a total of \$5.1 million, for the Ecological Services Program for FY 2027. The agency estimates increased expenditures for contracts with universities and other entities to conduct scientific surveys and research on non-game species.
- **Public Lands.** The agency's revised request includes a decrease of \$1.8 million, for a total of \$15.8 million, for the Public Lands Program for FY 2027. The agency is estimating decreased expenditures for agricultural equipment and machinery for FY 2027.
- **All other adjustments.** All other adjustments made by the agency result in a net increase of \$698,412 for FY 2027. Increases in the agency's Administration Program (\$452,638), Education Program (\$31,472), Law Enforcement Program (\$780,640), and Wildlife Program (\$383,944) are

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partially offset by decreases in the agency's Capital Improvements Program (\$644,162), Fish Program (\$231,236), and Parks Program (\$74,884).

- Included in the agency's estimate is an increased transfer of \$854,926 from the State Highway Fund of the Department of Transportation to the Department Access Roads Fund of the Department of Wildlife and Parks, for a total of \$4.3 million, for FY 2027.
- The agency's request includes a net change of \$823 SGF, including an increase of \$871 SGF for group health insurance rate changes which is partially offset by a decrease of \$48 SGF for a KPERS rate change for FY 2027.

Special Committee on the State Budget

The **Special Committee** concurs with the agency request for FY 2027.

Joint Committee on State Building Construction

The **Joint Committee** concurs with the Special Committee's recommendation for FY 2027 with the following adjustment:

1. Add \$225,000, all from agency fee funds, for cabin site development for FY 2027.

House Committees

House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources Budget

The **House Budget Committee** concurs with the Special Committee's recommendation for FY 2027 with the following adjustment:

1. Add \$375,000, all from agency fee funds, and 3.0 FTE positions to hire additional law enforcement officers and equip the positions for FY 2027.

House Committee on Appropriations

The **House Committee** concurs with the Budget Committee's recommendation for FY 2027.

House Committee of the Whole

The **House Committee of the Whole** concurs with the House Committee's recommendation for FY 2027.

Senate Committees

Senate Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources

The **Senate Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources** concurs with the Special Committee's recommendation for FY 2027 with the following adjustments:

1. Delete \$96,258 SGF and add the same amount from agency fee and federal funds for FY 2027.
2. Add language requiring the agency to provide a report to the Senate Committee on Ways and Means, the House Committee on Appropriations, the House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources Budget, and the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources detailing any efficiencies or savings identified by the agency on or before June 30, 2027, and add language to prevent the agency from taking action upon any efficiencies or savings identified by

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the department that would result in the termination or modification of any currently filled full-time or part-time position until the submission of such report for FY 2027.

3. Add language allowing the agency to retain interest earned on the agency's Parks Fee Fund for FY 2027.

Senate Committee on Ways and Means

The **Senate Committee on Ways and Means** concurs with Senate Subcommittee's recommendation for FY 2027, with the following adjustment:

1. Add language allowing the agency to retain interest earned on the agency's Parks Fee Fund for FY 2027. Add language requiring the agency submit a report on the interest earned to select committees.

Senate Committee of the Whole

The **Senate Committee of the Whole** concurs with the Senate Committee's recommendation for FY 2027.

Conference Committee

The **Conference Committee** concurs with the Special Committee's recommendation for FY 2027, with the following adjustments:

1. Delete \$96,258 SGF and add the same amount from agency fee and federal funds for FY 2027.
2. Add language allowing the agency to retain interest earned on the agency's Parks Fee Fund for FY 2027.

Legislative Approved

HB 2513 authorized the following statewide adjustments which were certified following the conclusion of the 2026 Session:

1. Add \$424,598, including \$37,755 EDIF, to implement the Executive Branch pay plan approved by the 2026 Legislature and certified by the State Finance Council for 2027.