

THE KNRC WATCHMAN

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THE VALUE OF WORKGROUPS IN SHAPING POLICY

- James R. Carlson KNRC Executive Director

The success of any Coalition depends upon Member participation in decision making, shared experience in developing strategy, and innovation brought through collective efforts. Like the hearty pioneers crossing the wild western frontier, KNRCs success at analyzing reconnaissance, developing strategy, and deploying resources will distinguish between successful battles or languished initiatives; also like the pioneers, forward movement results only from collective contribution of those willing to clear brush, dislodge wagons and otherwise band together for a common vision.



For its part, mutual commitment can be likened to a three stranded cord - the sum of which is stronger than the individual parts.

In short, success comes not from resources, nor from power, but from teamwork, tenacity and from resolve to a common objective.

Since its inception in March, 2013 the KNRC has leveraged limited resources through the use of two focused Committees - the Steering Committee which guides the

organization and the more recently formed BLM Issues Committee.

For its part, the BLM issues Committee will analyze, monitor and actively participate in - through the mechanism of Coordination - changes BLM is proposing for their Resource Management Plan (RMP).

The RMP will become increasingly important to KNRC Counties because it serves as the long term Guidance document BLM relies upon to issue resource access permits for public lands - such as for Oil and Gas (O&G) exploration. Because nearly all KNRC Members have BLM-owned O&G resources held in split estate, KNRC Members have keen interest in participating in revision of the RMP - and because Committees are the mechanism by which work gets done at KNRC, your participation in the BLM issues Committee will ensure the voice of your County is heard and the issues you face are understood at all stages in the RMP development.

- Commissioner Shawn Tasset of Ford County is the Chairman of the BLM Issues Committee



KNRC Newsflash

On July 21, 2014 four human cases of Pneumonic Plague were confirmed by the Colorado Department of Health and Environment in Adams County, Colorado. Transmitted by fleas from prairie dogs to animals, livestock, and humans the *Yersinia pestis bacterium* can carry both Pneumonic and Bubonic Plagues and its outbreak in Colorado is significant given that USFWS Black-Footed Ferret programs encourage and cultivate resurgence of prairie dog populations.

PRESIDENTS ADDRESS



Left to Right: KNRC Research Analyst Sheila Ellis; State Senator Larry Powell; Sherman County Commissioner Ken Klemm, KS Governor Sam Brownback, Gove County Commissioner Mahlon Tuttle, Ford County Commissioner Shawn Tasset

Greetings Commissioners - Please allow me to take a few moments to update you on the advances your Kansas Natural Resource Coalition has recently made.

As you may be aware, we had our last Policy Meeting on the 22nd of May. It was very well attended and we had quite a few commissioners attend that had not attended previously. As usual, those who attended gained a deeper knowledge and appreciation for what KNRC is doing on behalf of the citizens of western Kansas. Attendance to these meetings has been likened to a hill-top prairie view, where one can see many issues of concern that the prudent leader should address well before arrival.

The meeting gave your KNRC Steering Committee clear direction that KNRC should continue in its mission and that our mission statement remains an accurate description of what we have been doing.

Specifically, the consensus was that KNRC should pursue legal strategies, willing partners and the needed funding to file suit against the USFWS using one or more of the many bases KNRC has so excellently documented.

To that end, KNRC leadership has entered into detailed discussions with the Permian Basin Oil Producers Association as per the possibilities of KNRC entering into their lawsuit. At this point it appears that what KNRC offers would bring value to their lawsuit and that KNRC's interests may be well-cared for if we chose this route. However, we believe we had a civic duty to inform our Governor - personally - of what we have discovered and how the Lesser Prairie-Chicken listing is already causing economic harm and judge his willingness to work with KNRC to further our goals.

Consequently, with the invaluable help of Senator Larry Powell, KNRC leadership recently met with Governor Brownback, his chief legal counsel, assistant Deputy of Agriculture and Director of Communications. The meeting was mutually fruitful and we are in the process of scheduling a follow up meeting where we can further probe the possibilities of the State of Kansas and KNRC working together.

The Governor was very complimentary of our excellent work and tenacious efforts. I got the impression that Governor Brownback is a good and decent man who full-well realizes that this listing is a terrible over-reach by the Federal Government. He already was aware that the listing has begun the processes of damaging the economic well-being of Western Kansas and beyond. I can tell you that for me, personally, after many long months of dealing with an out-of-control, out-of-touch and often heartless federal government

KNRC Vision

The Kansas Natural Resource Coalition (KNRC) is an association of counties who maintain collective and participatory involvement in administrative government on behalf of our citizenry. The coalition serves as a conduit between local, state and federal governments to promote balanced, necessary and effective administrative policy making. Our mission is to monitor, analyze, understand, communicate, and participate in those initiatives that materially affect the natural or human systems governed by individual member counties.

that frequently left me despondent about how far our American system of self-governance has devolved, I was renewed and reenergized. Our Nation was built on the foundation of federalism whereby the States were meant to be the check that would hold back an over-reaching federal government. I see in Governor Brownback a Governor who understands that for America to regain its balance, and for individual liberties to be secure, the states must be willing to commit resources.

We were also able to inform the Governor of the BLM's intent to revisit and greatly expand the scope of their Resource Management Plan (RMP).

The concern over how this update may affect the Kansas economy and the greater issue of combining three states into what here-to-fore has been a State Plan was communicated. The governor assured us he will direct his staff to survey the human resources the State of Kansas government has and determine what assistance the State may be able to provide.

KNRC was able to effectively communicate to the Governor that both issues, the Lesser Prairie Chicken listing and the BLM Resource Management Plan, are really state-wide in nature and are deserving of state support.

We are actively counseling with able legal counsel to plot strategy and will sometime in the near future be able to report our recommendation to your commission via Policy Meeting.

The KNRC Steering Committee greatly appreciates the prompt payment of the 2014 allocations made by many counties. To continue your support of KNRC, it was determined at the last Policy Meeting that 2015 allocations will be \$6,608 (\$5,507 + a 20% factor) per county. Please include this amount into your 2015 budget allocations.

In conclusion, KNRC is yet actively engaged on behalf of your Commissioners and is enjoying success in our goals. Please feel free to contact any of us should you require greater detail or have questions yet unanswered.

- Ken Klemm, KNRC President

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Sheila's Statistics:

The Official 2014 USFWS Black Footed Ferret Census count is in: 5 Ferrets were counted in the Haverfield Complex and a total of 1 ferret was 'observed' on the Natural Conservancy Ranch!

This translates into a cost of \$113,113 per ferret over the 6-year life of the USFWS program, and does not include expenditures by other Federal agencies, KDWP, Logan County or neighboring landowners.