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# Bulletin

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## KNRC: 2013 to 2017 ... and Beyond

Since its organization in 2013, the Kansas Natural Resource Coalition (KNRC) has become a viable, nationally-recognized coalition of urban and rural county governments with an extensive record of effectively engaging federal agencies and influencing natural resource policy decisions. Central to our success has been excellent research, good strategy, and purposeful application of federal statutes and administrative procedures. Key challenges, highlights, policy initiatives, and links to KNRC documents include:

- Hosted a 32-county public hearing on the advisability of listing the Lesser prairie-chicken (LPC) as an threatened species; produced a [finding of facts and conclusions of law report](#) documenting the scientific, procedural and policy problems with the proposed listing; filed a complaint with the [Council on Environmental Quality](#) requesting intervention in what was an impending decision to list the LPC.
- Contributed, as local governments, an [amicus curiae brief](#) to the 2015 Permian Basin Petroleum Association litigation challenging the LPC listing – brief helped secure a decision vacating the LPC listing.
- Ongoing monitoring and reporting of the WAFWA LPC Range Wide Conservation Plan activities, LPC population counts, reports by environmental groups, and USFWS actions surrounding the LPC.
- Reported on a 2016 petition by environmental NGOs [to list the LPC as endangered](#); notified USFWS of its [failure to comply](#) with 2017 statutory deadline. These activities resulted in USFWS proposing a coordination meeting with KNRC, thereby establishing positive dialogue with USFWS staff.
- Proposed [legislative packages](#) to the Kansas House and Senate that would give counties authority to regulate conservation easements; participated in committee hearings, [testimony](#) and white papers.
- Developed and launched the KNRC.org website ([www.knrc.org](http://www.knrc.org)).
- Reported on the tax losses, maintenance expenses, and property implications to counties from rails-to-trails initiatives; assisted members with strategies and correspondence ending with a positive outcome.
- Reviewed authorities and reported on federal relocation of Black-tailed prairie dogs from Haskell to Comanche county. Assisted Comanche County with correspondence to BLM and a [resolution prohibiting relocation of prairie dogs](#) due to state law and human health/safety.
- Prepared a widely circulated [analysis and critique of the BLM Planning 2.0 Rule](#). KNRC's analysis contributed support and information to Congress and ultimately the rule was withdrawn under the Congressional Review Act (CRA).
- Organized three conferences that featured nationally-recognized experts in local government operations, natural resource issues, and methods for engagement with state and federal administrative agencies. [Presentations](#) were attended by legislators, authors, attorneys, legislators, talk-show hosts, congressional delegations, and the public.
- Prepared a [comprehensive analysis, with recommendations, for reorganizing the Federal government and eliminating redundant agencies](#). The KNRC matrix, prepared by local government in response to the President's Executive Order 13781, contained 105 recommendations in 23 categories, and is currently being utilized by Congress and the Executive branch in budget cuts and policy modifications.
- KNRC continues monitoring agency activities and proposals, federal personnel reassignments and departures, natural resource and local government issues.
- Provided assistance and guidance for the formation of the Minnesota Natural Resource Coalition.

As we enter into 2018, KNRC will continue our work in land use planning, revisit rails-to-trails initiatives, continue active engagement of USFWS on LPC listing proposals, and investigate the potential delisting of the Arkansas River shiner. KNRC is also reviewing a positive proposal by a national, public interest law firm in which our organization would act as a plaintiff in a lawsuit that will force USFWS to submit specific rules to the congress as required under the CRA. Attorney's fees and costs would be paid by outside parties.