STATE OF OKLAHOMA

1st Session of the 44th Legislature (1993)

HOUSE CONCURRENT
RESOLUTION NO. 1020 By: Mass

AS INTRODUCED

A Concurrent Resolution relating to wildlife management and regulation; creating the Southeast Oklahoma Wildlife Study Committee; providing for membership, officers, meetings, quorums, reimbursement, staffing and duties and responsibilities of such Committee.

WHEREAS, the rules promulgated and adopted by the Oklahoma Wildlife Conservation Commission are contrary to the views of the average sportsman participating in wildlife activities in southeast Oklahoma; and

WHEREAS, the perception of such sportsmen in southeast Oklahoma is that there has been a significant decline in the overall number of whitetail deer, due primarily to a disease commonly referred to as "blue tongue" and to extreme hunting pressure; and

WHEREAS, both the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation and sportsmen in southeast Oklahoma agree that there has been a significant decline in the population of the eastern turkeys and the bob white quail; and

WHEREAS, solutions to the decline in the population of the whitetail deer, eastern turkeys and bob white quail have not been adequately addressed by the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation; and

WHEREAS, the geography of the wildlife habitat has been altered dramatically by oil, gas and timber industries and such change has

not been properly addressed by the rules of the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation; and

WHEREAS, it is necessary for the future of all wildlife in this state that a study be made of such declining populations, that the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation review the rules concerning such wildlife, and that recommendations be made to attempt to prevent the further decline of such wildlife populations.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE 1ST SESSION OF THE 44TH OKLAHOMA LEGISLATURE, THE SENATE CONCURRING THEREIN:

THAT there is hereby created until July 1, 1994, the "Southeast Oklahoma Wildlife Study Committee". The Committee shall be composed of eighteen (18) members as follows:

1. Six sportsmen holding current hunting licenses who are residents of southeast Oklahoma and who have been residents of Oklahoma for not less than ten (10) years. Three such sportsmen shall be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives and three such sportsmen shall be appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate;

2. Six landowners who are Oklahoma taxpayers, have authorized hunting on their private property, are residents of southeast Oklahoma and have been residents of Oklahoma for not less than ten (10) years. Three such landowners shall be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives and three such landowners shall be appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate; and

3. Six persons appointed by the Oklahoma Wildlife Conservation Director who are employees of the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation.

The Chairperson and Vice-chairperson of the Committee shall be elected from the other members of the Committee.

Meetings shall be held at the call of the Chairperson and a quorum of members appointed shall be necessary to conduct all

business. Members of the Committee shall receive no compensation for work on the Committee but shall receive travel reimbursement in accordance with the State Travel Reimbursement Act. It is the intent of the Legislature that staff be provided as needed by the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation.

The duties and responsibilities of the Committee shall include but not be limited to:

1. Conducting a wildlife population study of the geographic area consisting of all counties south of I-40. The western boundary of such area shall include a portion of Okfuskee, Hughes, Coal, Atoka and Choctaw Counties;

2. Communicating with wildlife specialists and consultants in the area of wildlife populations and diseases in order to become better informed on the issues of wildlife depopulation;

3. Recommending policies and programs designed to stop the decline of the targeted wildlife populations;

4. Holding at least six public hearings in the specified southeast Oklahoma area, such hearings to be held in locations most accessible to persons affected by the study. Adequate notice for such hearings shall be by publication in all local newspapers in the affected areas and the publication shall be an expense of the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation;

5. Making findings and recommendations for any necessary legislation or for any modifications of the rules of the Oklahoma Wildlife Conservation Commission to aid in stopping the decline of the targeted wildlife populations; and

6. Filing a report on its findings and recommendations prior to July 1, 1994, with the Governor, Speaker of the House of Representatives, President Pro Tempore of the Senate and the Chairpersons of the Wildlife Committees of both the House of Representatives and the Senate. Copies of such report shall be made available on request from the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife

Conservation and copies shall be made accessible in each county courthouse within the study area.

44-1-6150 MCD