

ENROLLED HOUSE  
BILL NO. 2300

By: Leist of the House

and

Bell of the Senate

An Act relating to agriculture; authorizing establishment of a forestry cost-share program; specifying use; providing for promulgation of rules; creating the Forestry Cost-Share Fund; providing for purposes; providing for contents of fund; providing for deposits and expenditures; providing for deposit of certain proceeds; prohibiting use of fund for state agency purposes; prohibiting certain transfers; providing for certain submissions; providing procedures for applications for funds; providing for eligibility; specifying certain criteria as basis for approval or denial of application; providing for appointment of an advisory committee; providing for duties; authorizing in lieu of committee; providing for appointments; providing for quorums; prohibiting certain compensation; authorizing certain travel reimbursement; providing for codification; and providing an effective date.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

SECTION 1. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 1301-109 of Title 2, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

The State Board of Agriculture is hereby authorized to establish and administer a forestry cost-share program. The forestry cost-share program shall provide monies to private landowners for the purpose of implementing forest conservation or management practices on the land as described in forest management plans approved by the Commissioner of the State Department of Agriculture or meeting certain standards established by the Commissioner. The State Board of Agriculture shall promulgate rules governing the cost-share program.

SECTION 2. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 1301-110 of Title 2, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

A. There is hereby created within the State Treasury a cost-share fund for the State Board of Agriculture to be designated the "Forestry Cost-Share Fund". The fund shall be a continuing fund, not subject to fiscal year limitations, and shall consist of all monies received by the Board to implement and maintain the forestry cost-share program.

B. The Forestry Cost-Share Fund shall consist of:

1. Money received by the State Department of Agriculture in the form of gifts, grants, reimbursements, donations, forest industry contributions, funds allocated by federal agencies for landowner

forestry cost-share programs and such other monies specifically designated for the forestry cost-share program. All monies accruing to the credit of said fund are hereby appropriated and may be budgeted and expended by the Board for the forestry cost-share program; and

2. Interest attributable to investment of money in the Forestry Cost-Share Fund.

C. All donations or other proceeds received by the Department pursuant to the provisions of this section shall be deposited with the State Treasurer to be credited to the Forestry Cost-Share Fund. Expenditures from the fund shall be made upon warrants issued by the State Treasurer against claims filed as prescribed by law with the Director of State Finance for approval and payment.

D. The monies deposited in the Forestry Cost-Share Fund shall at no time become part of the general budget of the Department or any other state agency. Except for any administration costs incurred in development and implementation of the forestry cost-share program, no monies from the Fund shall be transferred for any purpose to any other state agency or any account of the Board or Department or be used for the purpose of contracting with any other state agency or reimbursing any other state agency for any expense.

SECTION 3. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 1301-111 of Title 2, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

A. The State Department of Agriculture may require eligible applicants to submit information, forms and reports as are necessary to properly and efficiently administer the forestry cost-share program.

B. Persons may apply to the Commissioner of the Department of Agriculture for cost-share funds to improve forest lands in the State of Oklahoma, in accordance with rules promulgated by the Board. To be eligible, landowners shall follow a written forest management plan that has been prepared by a professional forester and approved by the Commissioner of the State Department of Agriculture or which meets standards established by the Commissioner of the State Department of Agriculture. Applications for funds shall be approved or denied by the Department in accordance with criteria promulgated by the Board.

C. The Commissioner shall allocate monies from the Fund to eligible landowners on a matching basis.

SECTION 4. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 1301-112 of Title 2, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

A. The Commissioner of the State Board of Agriculture shall appoint a forestry cost-share advisory committee, which shall meet at least twice each year to review the implementation of the forestry cost-share program. The committee may seek public input and make recommendations on how best to achieve the purposes of the program. In lieu of appointing a new advisory committee, the Commissioner of the State Board of Agriculture may use the Forest Stewardship Program Committee.

B. The committee shall be chaired by the Commissioner of the State Board of Agriculture, and shall include persons the Commissioner of the State Board of Agriculture determines will assist the committee in performing its advisory functions.

C. A majority of the members of the committee shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. Committee members shall serve without compensation but may be reimbursed expenses incurred in the performance of their duties as provided in the State Travel Reimbursement Act.

SECTION 5. This act shall become effective November 1, 1996.  
Passed the House of Representatives the 28th day of February,  
1996.

Speaker of the House of  
Representatives

Passed the Senate the 27th day of March, 1996.

President of the Senate