

1 STATE OF OKLAHOMA

2 2nd Session of the 60th Legislature (2026)

3 COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE
4 FOR
5 HOUSE BILL NO. 1770

By: Moore

6
7 COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE

8 An Act relating to animals; enacting the Elk
9 Population Study and Management Act; providing
10 definitions; providing certain organizations to
11 establish a plan and outline for a comprehensive
12 study of the elk population within a certain region
13 of the state; requiring the plan and outline to be
14 completed on a certain date; providing requirements
15 for the comprehensive study; providing for
16 coordination with other relevant state and federal
17 agencies; requiring the maintaining of detailed
18 accounting and financial records of appropriations
19 received and expenditures made; providing that
20 external experts and scientists may be retained to
21 complete the study; providing for codification;
22 providing an effective date; and declaring an
23 emergency.

24 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 4101 of Title 2, unless there is
created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

A. This act shall be known and may be cited as the "Elk
Population Study and Management Act".

B. As used in this act:

1 1. "Study zone" refers to the Special Northwest Zone that
2 encompasses all private lands in Woodward, Dewey, and Ellis
3 Counties, and a portion of Roger Mills County north of State
4 Highways 33 and 47 to the north county line and west to the state
5 border and east to the county line;

6 2. "Authority" refers to the Oklahoma State University
7 Veterinary Medicine Authority; and

8 3. "Management plan" refers to a document developed based on
9 the findings of the study that outlines recommended actions for the
10 conservation and management of elk populations.

11 C. No later than November 1, 2026, the Oklahoma State
12 University Veterinary Medicine Authority in cooperation with the OSU
13 College of Veterinary Medicine, shall establish a plan and outline
14 for a comprehensive study of the elk population within the Special
15 Northwest Zone. The comprehensive study shall assess current
16 population levels, trends, habitat usage, and develop science-based
17 management recommendations aimed at ensuring the long-term
18 sustainability of elk populations and the health of the ecosystem.
19 The comprehensive study shall include, but not be limited to, the
20 following program characteristics:

21 1. The current elk population size, distribution, and density
22 within the study zone;

1 2. The health and genetic diversity of the elk population,
2 including disease monitoring and signs of inbreeding or other health
3 concerns;

4 3. The effectiveness and impact of current elk population
5 management strategies, including hunting, predation control, and
6 habitat conservation; and

7 4. Recommendations culminating in the form of a management plan
8 for the conservation and management of elk populations within the
9 study zone.

10 D. The Authority may coordinate with other relevant state and
11 federal agencies to effectuate the provisions of this act. Such
12 coordination may include requests for temporary suspension and/or
13 restrictions of elk hunting or harvesting while the comprehensive
14 study is being conducted.

15 E. The Authority shall maintain detailed accounting and
16 financial records of appropriations received and expenditures made
17 pursuant to the purposes of this act. The Authority may engage
18 external experts and scientists to plan and implement the
19 comprehensive study. The engagement of such external experts shall
20 be implemented in accordance with the policies of the Authority.
21 The Authority is authorized to carry forward to a future fiscal year
22 any unexpended funds related to this act.

23 SECTION 2. This act shall become effective July 1, 2026.
24

1 SECTION 3. It being immediately necessary for the preservation
2 of the public peace, health or safety, an emergency is hereby
3 declared to exist, by reason whereof this act shall take effect and
4 be in full force from and after its passage and approval.

5

6 60-2-17105 GRS 03/06/26

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24