

1 STATE OF OKLAHOMA

2 1st Session of the 60th Legislature (2025)

3 HOUSE BILL 1770

By: Moore

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5  
6 AS INTRODUCED

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

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

24 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, 2025, 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, 2025.  
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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.

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