

share with non-Game fund picking up 47 percent of the cost as currently financed. And response from the agency is that from the outset it has been our opinion the natural heritage program should be funded under the General Fund as all Nebraskans benefit, and admittedly, the non-Game fund has been used to fund a portion of the contract, however, to continue to do so was never our intent and it goes on which I'll be glad to share with you but it would clearly indicate to me that if it is, in fact, the same program, that it was intended and is intended to have a General Fund appropriation. There was a second question that they also were asked to respond to which was the retention or expansion of three positions which again indicates that in order to proceed with it that it was not a one-time inventory as initially started out but is an ongoing program. In fact, it indicates this process that they currently have had was initiated by establishing a list of approximately 600 species and communities, elements to track. I'm not sure what that means but known location information of these elements are being collected from various sources indicating those that establish a base line and it is anticipated that for 2,000 location records along with other information in a data base is going to continue. In any event, without going into more detail it would appear to me that there is a direct relation between the two and that for the proper implementation of the intent of the legislation is going to require more than the \$2,000 Cash Fund that they indicated. And I'm only raising the question so that we do not have another piece of legislation enacted and then goes unfunded and is meaningless. I have a lot of sympathy with what it is that...the purpose of the bill, but I also have a lot of sympathy that this body doesn't get back into expenditures without knowing that we are incurring an obligation at the same time. So I would suggest that we very clearly define whether or not this is the same program or a different program and then address the funding issue appropriately where the cost occurs, which I believe probably is with the passage of the act.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you. Any other discussion? Senator Schmit, would you care to close?

SENATOR SCHMIT: Yes, well in closing I would just like to say that I hope certainly that the program will grow, that it will become popular and that it will be a very significant addition to the program of the Game and Parks, and Senator Warner is entirely correct in attempting to delineate whether or not the General Fund impact is going to be in excess of the 2,000 or