



GMD 4 ANNUAL REPORT for FY 2025

skenyon@gmd4.org
www.gmd4.org

785-462-3915
1290 W. 4th Street, Colby, Kansas 67701



TABLE OF CONTENTS

- **2025 FINANCES**
 - **Income**
 - **Expenditures**
 - **Assets**
 - **Audit**
- **2026 BUDGET**
- **ACTIVITIES**
 - **INTRODUCTION**
 - **DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES**
 - **Local Enhanced Management Areas (LEMA)**
 - **Irrigation Technology Initiative**
 - **Moratorium Policy Change**
 - **Irrigation Water Day**
- **HOW EXPENDITURES CONSERVE AND REDUCE CONSUMPTIVE USE OF WATER**
- **PREVENTION OF ECONOMIC DETERIORATION**
- **STABILIZATION OF AGRICULTURE**
- **OTHER ACTIVITIES FROM MANAGEMENT PROGRAM**
- **CONCLUSION**

2025 FINANCES

Income

2025 INCOME (All sources):

Cash forward from 2024 (Cash) -----	\$358,142
County Assessments -----	\$454,984
Interest Earned (GMD4) -----	\$2,782
DOC ITI Income -----	\$191,161
Miscellaneous Income -----	\$0

2025 TOTAL INCOME: \$1,007,069

Expenditures

2025 EXPENDITURES:

Postage -----	\$698
Printing -----	\$136
Dues -----	\$275
Subscriptions -----	\$802
Insurance -----	\$16,063
Telephone -----	\$6,176
Salaries & Benefits -----	\$340,341
Travel -----	\$10,713
Vehicles -----	\$6,210
Contracted Services -----	\$37,169
Publications -----	\$1,310
Coop/Education Programs -----	\$3,930
Administrative -----	\$16,066
Equipment -----	\$2,241
Facility -----	\$23,698
ITI Expenses -----	\$41,459
Reserve for contingency -----	\$1,004
Foundation -----	\$0

TOTAL 2025 EXPENDITURES \$508,372

Assets

	<u>Approx Value</u>
Office Building	200,000
Office Equipment	
Computers, printers, TVs, furniture, etc.	31,400
Field Supplies	
Panametrics Ultrasonic Flow Meter	11,781
2020 Yamaha Kodiak 4-Wheeler	6,000
2025 Yamaha Kodiak 4- Wheeler	8,000
Storage Shed	376
Tablets, GPS, tools, etc.	18,000
Vehicles	
2006 Ford F-150	17,195
2010 Mercury Mountaineer	8,000
2014 Dodge Ram 1500	<u>18,340</u>
Total:	319,092

Audit

The audit of the 2025 expenditures will not be available until February or March. The 2024 audit is included as an attachment to this report as it is the most recent.

2026 BUDGET

	2026 Revised	
110 POSTAGE		\$2,000.00
112 General	\$2,000.00	
120 PRINTING		\$1,500.00
122 Administrative	\$1,500.00	
130 DUES	\$300.00	\$300.00
140 SUBSCRIPTIONS	\$600.00	\$600.00
150 INSURANCE	\$17,000.00	\$17,000.00
151 Office		
153 Auto		
154 Workmans' Comp.		
160 TECHNOLOGY	\$13,500.00	\$13,500.00
170 SALARIES AND BENEFITS		\$455,581.00
171 Gross Sal, Kpers, SS, Etc.	\$429,211.00	
172 Health Insurance	\$26,370.00	
173 Unemployment	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00
180 TRAVEL		
181 Board	\$10,000.00	\$18,000.00
182 Staff	\$8,000.00	
190 VEHICLES		
191 Repairs/Maintenance	\$6,000.00	\$14,200.00
192 Operation	\$8,000.00	
193 Tags	\$200.00	
194 Purchase/Lease		
200 CONTRACTED SERVICES		\$47,500.00
201 Accounting	\$8,500.00	
202 Legal	\$18,000.00	
203 Misc. Support	\$6,000.00	
204 Legislative Support	\$15,000.00	
205 Water Sampling		
206 Drilling		
210 PUBLICATIONS		\$800.00
211 Legal Notices	\$800.00	
220 EDUCATION PROGRAMS		\$5,000.00
221 Administrative	\$1,000.00	
222 Equipment/Supplies	\$4,000.00	
223 Education Programs Other		
230 ADMINISTRATIVE		\$10,000.00
231 Office Supplies	\$5,000.00	
232 Copy Machine	\$2,000.00	
233 Computer Maint		
235 Bank Charges		
236 Field Supplies	\$3,000.00	
240 NEW EQUIPMENT		\$8,000.00
241 Field	\$3,000.00	
242 Office	\$5,000.00	
250 CONTINGENCY RESERVE		\$0.00
260 FACILITY		\$23,000.00
261 Rent		
262 Maintenance	\$15,000.00	
264 Building Utilities	\$8,000.00	

270 DOC EXPENSES		\$425,000.00
271 Equipment	\$40,000.00	
272 Operation	\$30,000.00	
275 Administrative	\$116,000.00	
276 Cost-Share Payments	\$200,000.00	
277 Crop Uniformity Packet Stipend	\$39,000.00	
REIMBURSED EXPENSES		\$0.00
300 FOUNDATION		\$0.00
305 Foundation Subscriptions		
325 Foundation Telephone		
345 Foundation Accounting		
350 Foundation Legal		
370 Foundation Tech Support		
	\$1,043,481.00	\$1,043,481.00

2026 Assessed for	420,975
2025 Carryover	493,977
2026 DOC ITI	425,000
2026 Budget Cap	1,339,952

Assessed: \$0.05 per acre (2,899,377 acres) = \$144,968

\$0.35 per acre-foot (847,883 acre-feet appropriated) = \$296,759

ACTIVITIES

INTRODUCTION

The experience of Groundwater Management District No. 4 (GMD 4) continues to demonstrate that locally driven water management through Local Enhanced Management Areas (LEMA) is not only effective, but essential to achieving meaningful conservation while maintaining economic stability in northwest Kansas.

The success of the Sheridan 6 LEMA (SD 6) and the GMD 4 LEMA is rooted in decisions made by local producers, the GMD 4 Board of Directors, and local stakeholders who understand the hydrology, economics, and operational realities of our region. These management areas were not imposed from outside the district; they were developed through extensive public engagement, producer input, and adaptive management based on local data.

As GMD 4 enters the fourth year of both LEMAs, participation and compliance remain strong, and water users continue to adapt their operations in ways that reduce consumptive use while preserving agricultural viability. This outcome would not be achievable under a uniform, statewide regulatory framework that lacks the ability to account for local aquifer conditions, cropping systems, and regional economic constraints.

Local control allows GMDs to:

- Tailor conservation strategies to specific aquifer conditions
- Adjust management tools as conditions change
- Maintain producer buy-in through transparency and trust
- Balance conservation with economic stability

The Legislature's continued support of locally governed groundwater management remains critical. The progress achieved in GMD 4 illustrates that when local districts are empowered, conservation occurs voluntarily, efficiently, and sustainably.

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES

LEMAs

GMD 4 finished the third year of both the Sheridan 6 LEMA and the GMD 4 LEMA in 2025. SD 6 is on the third five-year renewal of the LEMA and the GMD 4 LEMA is in the second five-year

renewal. LEMAs have become a way of life in GMD 4 because they were developed locally, with direct input from water users who are responsible for implementing them. As GMD 4 enters year four of both LEMAs, continued public conversations with producers about challenges, successes, and future management strategies remain central to this process.

Much time was spent on public outreach and education. GMD 4 conducted public outreach meetings in each of the four major counties within the district during the winter and summer months. These meetings provided updated aquifer information to the attendees but mainly focused on future LEMA planning. Responses from those meetings were provided to the GMD 4 Board of Directors. Collaboration with the Division of Water Resources continued in the discussion of renewal on both LEMAs. Based on the outcomes of those public meetings we are currently drafting the next LEMAs to begin in 2028 that include additional reductions in current LEMA allocations as well as expansion of both the SD 6 LEMA and the GMD 4 LEMA.

The adaptability of these locally developed LEMAs has allowed for meaningful reductions in water use while maintaining operational flexibility for producers. This adaptability is a direct result of local governance and ongoing communication between the GMD 4 Board, water users, and the Division of Water Resources.

Irrigation Technology Initiative

This year we started the Irrigation Technology Initiative (ITI) in collaboration with the Division of Conservation (DOC). The money for the program allowed us to hire a full-time ITI Specialist that conducts Irrigation System Assessments. These assessments review a producer's well, pump, the irrigation system as a whole, and the practice of irrigation water management. The ITI Specialist then provides them with a report that evaluates the performance of the system, details energy costs and projects, and identifies opportunities for improvement including cost-share opportunities through the DOC as part of the State Water Plan Fund.

Moratorium Policy Change

In 2024, GMD 4 requested a moratorium from the Division of Water Resources on changes in points of diversion exceeding 300 feet to address concerns related to "chasing water." This

request was informed by localized knowledge gained through the Aerial Electromagnetic Mapping (AEM) project conducted by the Kansas Geological Survey.

The moratorium reflects the importance of allowing time for data-driven, locally appropriate regulatory responses rather than implementing broad statewide changes that may not reflect on-the-ground conditions. GMD 4 continues to evaluate potential local regulatory solutions while coordinating with DWR.

Irrigation Water Day

We held the first ever Irrigation Water Day in January of 2025 with the assistance of the Kansas Water Office (KWO). We had three concurrent sessions to learn about water rights, aquifer, and irrigation efficiency. Many of the attendees requested another day to learn more so we had a second day in March that expanded on the knowledge gained from the January event. We plan to expand this event to include the Kansas Rural Water Association (KRWA) for 2026.

HOW EXPENDITURES CONSERVE AND REDUCE CONSUMPTIVE USE OF WATER

Most of the expenditures presented conserve and reduce consumptive use of water in an indirect way through salaries of four full-time employees, their assigned duties, and through partnerships with other agencies and entities. Time was spent in 2025 on public outreach and education activities as well as funds dedicated to those efforts through postage, printing, travel, etc. Education and discussion at those meetings provide a flow of information to and from GMD 4 and water users that foster positive attitudes and action toward continuing conservation and reduction of water usage.

PREVENTION OF ECONOMIC DETERIORATION

Previous studies have shown that drying up acres in GMD 4 would have a drastic economic deterioration of the region. Ideally, we need continued irrigation with little to no decline of the aquifer. Continued use of public education in a variety of delivery forms is continually developing. We learned with the SD 6 LEMA that using less water can be profitable. Work is ongoing to expand that knowledge throughout GMD 4.

STABILIZATION OF AGRICULTURE

The stabilization of agriculture in GMD 4 is also the prevention of economic deterioration. Agriculture is the industry of Northwest Kansas and must be preserved if the region is to prosper economically. Local groundwater management allows conservation to occur without forcing abrupt economic disruption in rural communities.

OTHER ACTIVITIES FROM MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

The meat of our management program is the development, review, and implementation of LEMAs. In 2025 we updated our management program, and it was approved by DWR. We have had more in-depth discussion about water quality moving forward and then identifying areas that may need attention. We are very fortunate in GMD 4 to not have many water quality concerns but as we have, and continue to address water quantity issues, our attentions can begin to focus on where water quality concerns may be.

CONCLUSION

The experience of GMD 4 continues to show that groundwater conservation is most effective when it is locally led, data driven, and developed in partnership with water users. The progress achieved through LEMAs, education initiatives, and technical assistance programs would not be possible without the authority and flexibility provided to local groundwater management districts. Continued legislative support for local control in groundwater management is essential to sustaining both the Ogallala Aquifer and the economic future of northwest Kansas.