

A twice yearly publication of the **Northwest Kansas Groundwater Management District No. 4**  
1290 West 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Colby, KS 67701 ♦ Tel: (785) 462-3915 ♦ Fax: (785) 462-2693 ♦ Web: [www.gmd4.org](http://www.gmd4.org)

## GOVERNOR'S 50 YR VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF WATER IN KANSAS DRAFT RELEASED

In October of 2013, at the Governor's Water Conference in Manhattan Kansas, Governor Brownback charged his administration including the Kansas Water Office, The Kansas Department of Agriculture, and the Kansas Water Authority to embark on a one year mission to seek community input, compile research, and to draft an official Vision for the Future of Water in Kansas. They were also to work with The Kansas Department of Health and Environment, and Wildlife Parks and Tourism. Finally the Governor called upon his Council of Economic Advisors to participate in the planning process due to the fact that water and the economy are closely linked. The long term goal of the Vision was to address several plans to ensure a reliable water supply sufficient enough to meet the needs of a growing Kansas population and economy. The Vision Team's hope, was to conserve and extend the useful life of the High Plains Ogallala Aquifer as well as to secure, protect and restore reservoir storage. Stakeholder outreach and input was a big part of the Vision planning process, the Vision team held a series of meetings all across the State, approximately 250 meetings in total reaching more than 10,000 people. The initial drafting process took place in May of 2014 and the Vision Team then began working on compiling all of the received input into what will become the Final Vision Draft, to be completed by early October, this draft will then be presented at the 2014 Governors Water Conference in Manhattan this coming November. Following the 2014 conference in Manhattan the Vision team will present the final completed Vision to the Kansas Legislature in December and January of 2015. In addition to the meetings held across the State building stakeholder input, the Kansas Water Office has also made an input survey available to the public, where anyone can express their personal opinions on all four sections of the proposed Vision Draft. The four main sections of the Vision Draft focus around Technology and Crop Varieties, Water Conservation, Water Management and New Sources of Supply. A few of the main themes seen from stakeholder feedback in the section for Technology and Crop Varieties are the promotion of irrigation efficiency technologies, the adoption of less water intensive crop varieties, the promotion of technologies for the treatment of alternative lower quality sources of water, and finally the implementation of research-based technology aimed at improving and understanding the state's water supply. The main theme for the Water Conservation section is that even if not deemed a significant source of additional supply, conservation has to be part of the future vision for water in Kansas. Other key themes are to reduce barriers and increase the development of locally driven conservation and management plans, to implement greater water conservation policies and practices, both voluntary and non-voluntary, to increase the adoption of watershed practices that reduce future water supply loss and lastly, that informative outreach and education are key elements to increasing the adoption of water conservational practices. The main themes for the Water Management section are to modify reservoir operations and downstream targets to most effectively operate reservoirs for water supply, to identify opportunities to increase the regionalization of water supply where doing so would improve the long-term water supply's reliability, and to propose changes to the Water Appropriations act as well as rules and regulations to promote a better balance between efficient water use and economic benefits. Lastly the key themes from the New Sources of Supply section are to restore water supply lost to sedimentation through dredging and other "in-lake" sediment management techniques (where feasible and cost effective), to allow for the transfer of water supplies between basins in order to increase the adoption of existing policies and to develop new policies and incentives that will increase the reuse of water, and

## 50 YR VISION CONTINUED

to reallocate water storage at any federal reservoir where such actions are possible recognizing that this is often the cheapest alternative for securing additional water storage. Lastly this section addresses possibly increasing other sources of storage that may be available for water supply.

There is an abundance of information that can be found on the 50 yr. Vision for the Future of Water in Kansas by visiting the Kansas Water Office website at [www.KWO.org](http://www.KWO.org). The input survey is also still open to the public, if you feel that you would like to contribute input or feedback to these issues and several others please visit the Kansas Water Office website and on the front page you will see a link that will lead you to the Vision Page, from there simply select the Survey option underneath Recent News. This provides an opportunity to give questionnaire feedback on the entire 50 yr. Vision Draft Document.

## FRIENDLY REMINDERS

- 1) **Re-drilling a non-domestic well? Make sure you have a permit!**
- 2) Meters are getting more and more important - keep them up;
- 3) Remember your water right terms & conditions & honor them;
- 4) GMD4 40<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting February 11<sup>th</sup> 2015
- 5) Need a speaker on groundwater? Contact the office; and
- 6) All you need to know about GMD 4 (24/7) = [www.gmd4.org](http://www.gmd4.org).
- 7) Next Board Meeting – November 6<sup>th</sup>, 2014
- 8) **Tampering with your meter is against the law and can result in a permanently losing the water right!! Don't do it.**

## ALL GMD BOARD MEETINGS ARE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Northwest Kansas Groundwater  
Management District No. 4  
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Colby, KS 67701-0905

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**WATERS OF THE USA: EPA**

Puddles, ponds, ditches and isolated wetlands can be found across the nation’s rural farm land and are considered to be very vital to the landscape. On March 25, 2014 The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers issued a proposal that would possibly expand their regulatory authority under the Clean Water Act (CWA) to encompass these types of land features and waters, giving the two agencies the power to dictate and monitor several types of land-use decisions and farming practices in or near those designated areas. Two major sections of the law that have particular impacts on agriculture are Section 404 which would require anyone wanting to discharge “dredge and fill” material into navigable waters to first obtain a federal permit, it essentially deals with any discharge that would result from moving the soil. The second, Section 402 would establish the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permitting Program which would enforce discharge mitigation requirements and limit point source discharges into navigable waters. The EPA and the Army Corps of Engineers have been very involved in testing the jurisdictional limits of the Clean Water Act for many years in similar instances such as the “Migratory Bird Rule” of 1986. The American Farm Bureau Federation, the Kansas Department of Agriculture and many other state and federal agencies have been incredibly involved in providing

**WATERS OF THE USA**

extensive feedback regarding the proposed changes. Currently anyone may submit feedback to EPA by visiting the American Farm Bureau Website and filling out a comment form to be submitted to the EPA and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers by the October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2014 Deadline. As this issue progresses, the Groundwater Management District No. 4 Staff will keep information posted to our website [www.gmd4.org](http://www.gmd4.org) Please see the links below to access the EPA comment tools, and the American Farm Bureau website.

- 1.) <http://www.kfb.org/>
- 2.) <http://www.kfb.org/ditchtherule>



EPA/Army Corps of Engineers Current Jurisdiction



Proposed Changes to EPA/Army Corps of Engineers Jurisdiction

Photos courtesy of The Kansas Farm Bureau September, 2014

**The Water Table**

Sponsored by the NW Kansas Groundwater Management District No. 4, 1290 West 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Colby, KS 67701-0905. Office hours: 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday (except the noon hour) - closed for State holidays.

**DIRECTORS:** Roger Zweygardt - St Francis, CN Cty; Monty Biggs - Atwood, RA/DC Cty; Jeff Deeds - Secretary, Goodland, SH/WA Cty; Dave Rietcheck - Treasurer, Goodland, SH/WA Cty; Justin Sloan - Colby, TH Cty; Mitch Baalman - Menlo, SD Cty; Brent Rogers - Vice President, Hoxie, SD Cty; Doug David - Hill City, GH Cty; Scott Maurath -Oakley, LG Cty; Shane Mann - Quinter, GO Cty.

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ADDRESS CORRECTIONS ARE APPRECIATED

**REPUBLICAN RIVER COMPACT ADMINISTRATION ANNUAL MEETING AND UPDATE**

The 54<sup>th</sup> annual meeting of the Republican River Compact Administration took place on August 28<sup>th</sup>, 2014 in Lincoln Nebraska. Among the agenda items were annual reports given from each state’s Chairman, Commissioners, and updates from the Bureau of Reclamation, The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the U.S. Geological Survey. The discussion centered around attempting to resolve conflicts that had been brought forth by each state; Kansas, Colorado and Nebraska including the Compliance Pipeline. The \$60 million dollar pipeline project was constructed to deliver water from wells located between 8 and 15 miles north of the North Fork of the Republican River to that same stream at the Colorado/Nebraska State line just above the measuring point. Colorado is receiving credit for this water delivery in the accounting for the Republican River Compact between Colorado, Kansas and Nebraska. From January 2014 to March 2014 the pipeline delivered 4000 AF(more than 1.3 billion gallons) and it plans to deliver 3000 more AF in November through December. Only 2014 was approved for operation and negotiation sessions continue between the states.

**\*\*POSITION ANNOUNCEMENTS\*\***

-The GMD4 Board of Directors is looking to fill the un-filled Thomas County Board Position. If you live in Thomas County and own land within the District Boundary please contact the District main office at 785-462-3915 before October 31<sup>st</sup> 2014.

-The GMD4 office is currently seeking to fill the position of Assistant District Manager/Agricultural Policy-Groundwater Specialist. If you are interested in learning more about this position, or would like to apply please contact the GMD4 office in Colby before October 31<sup>st</sup> 2014.

**Pumping the Tailwater**

**IRELAND’S WATER ISSUES REACH A BOILING POINT**

The Emerald Isle, with its damp climate, extensive greenery and abundant water supply has truly never experienced a true water shortage, and has many local thriving fish and wildlife habitats. But currently, people of the town of Boyle, in County Roscommon in the western part of Ireland are having to boil their tap water due to the fact that it is practically toxic to drink. The water supply has been contaminated by a new bacteria that the town’s out-of-date water treatment plants cannot purify. The consequence to drinking the water, “You’re going to be violently sick for 24 hours-it’s as simple as that. It happened to me twice. But not a third time” Sean O’Dowd was quoted saying as he and many others were photographed stalking up on bottled water supplies. The contamination is caused by a severe downfall in the quality of local water infrastructures, due mostly to the lack of investment on part of the local government following the 2010 economic collapse of Ireland. Irish Water, the company chosen to take over the once locally operated water system plans on spending over 2 billion Euros or 2.5 billion US dollars to bring the waterworks up to safe standards. This project is going to be supported by issuing a never before seen water fee for all water usage. Up until now water infrastructure and management was funded from central and local government taxes, now households will be responsible for paying for the water that they use in their homes and businesses, a procedure we have long become accustomed to in the U.S. “We have a big problem in terms of our infrastructure-it’s not at a state that’s fit to meet the needs of a modern economy,” says Irish Water’s Elizabeth Arnett.