

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

GOAL STATEMENT ADOPTED

The NW KS GMD 4 Board voted to adopt the following goal statement at the January 13th Board Meeting:

“By 2016, the GMD 4 Board will have in place a system that establishes conservation water use amounts” for all of GMD 4. This system will include clearly defined areas and triggers under which current pumpage levels will be required to be reduced in order to come into compliance with these established conservation water use amounts. This system will be established by BOARD ACTION and will be included in the GMD 4 Management Program. The system will replace the current high priority area protocol, but will continue to ensure that any needed controls are based on hydrologic and water use parameters. If possible, flexibility shall be afforded so that various allocation alternatives are available for use in any given area.”

The Board is moving forward with this goal. Please provide any input you have to a Board member or contact the office.

CLOSING THE DISTRICT

A moratorium on **new appropriations**, has been put in place to assist with closing the district to new appropriations. The moratorium was approved by the Chief Engineer and is effective until February 3, 2016. All new applications to appropriate water for beneficial use with the exception of domestic, term and temporary applications. The Board has one year to change the current rules and regulations to close the district. This does not include changes to your existing water rights in point of diversion, change in place of use, or use made of water.

NEW WEBPAGE AND FACEBOOK

We are excited to have a new webpage! It is a work in progress as we try to constantly improve it and keep it up to date. Please check us out at www.gmd4.org and provide us with your feedback!

We also have started a Facebook page to help those of you who like our page with the most up to date information available. Also a place for you to ask questions, or clarify any coffee shop rumors. Of course, you're welcome to call or email us as well. We are “NW KS Groundwater Management District 4” on Facebook. Come “like” us!

CALLING ALL AMATEUR PHOTOGRAPHERS!

The K-State Research and Extension office has displayed some photos taken by local 4-H'ers in our office. We, and all the visitors, have really enjoyed looking at the great work these kids have displayed. If you haven't been in to see them, I encourage you to do so.

We would also enjoy a variety of photos taken from our readers and members of anything related to water and/or agriculture in Northwest Kansas. Please send your photos to scain@gmd4.org. Please include with your email who took the photo and where it was taken so we can give credit where it's due. For the younger photographers, we would love to publish your age as well, but it is not required.

REGIONAL PLANNING TEAMS

The 50 Year Vision released the Final Draft in January 2015. As part of the Plan, Regional Planning Teams have been meeting regularly to discuss the issues for each region. There are a total of 14 regions encompassing the entire State of Kansas.

The Upper Republican Regional Planning Team includes all of the GMD 4 District. We have been participating in these meetings and working closely with the Regional Planning Teams to understand the issues our producers discuss. In April, each Team will meet to review input from these meetings and create a set of draft goals that will be presented to the Kansas Water Authority on May 20th.

If you were unable to attend one of these meetings and still want your voice heard, please contact any member of the Regional Planning Team, the Kansas Water Office or the GMD 4 Office. The recommended goals and Kansas Water Authority feedback will be posted to the web for more public comment in June/July.

More information on the 50 Year Vision and the Regional Planning Teams can be found at: www.kwo.org.

FRIENDLY REMINDERS

- 1) **Re-drilling a non-domestic well? Make sure you have an approved change in point of diversion!**
- 2) Meters are getting more and more important - keep them up;
- 3) Remember your water right terms & conditions & honor them;
- 4) Check us out on Facebook and “Like” our page for updates;
- 5) Need a speaker on groundwater? Contact the office; and
- 6) All you need to know about GMD 4 (24/7) = www.gmd4.org.
- 7) Next Board Meeting – April 2, 2015, 9 am

Northwest Kansas Groundwater
Management District No. 4
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1290 West 4th Street
Colby, KS 67701-0905

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

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NEW MANAGER AND ASSISTANT MANAGER

Ray Luhman, former Assistant Manager, has taken the position of Manager for GMD 4. Ray has been with the district for many years and we look forward to his leadership as the district moves forward.

Shannon Cain was hired for the Assistant Manager position in January. She was previously an Environmental Scientist for the Division of Water Resources in Stockton and comes to GMD 4 with extensive water right knowledge and hydrology experience. She also teaches online college courses for University of Phoenix. Shannon earned her Master’s degree in Geoscience from Mississippi State University, lives in Bogue, is engaged, has one adult son and a schnauzer. We encourage you to stop in to meet her.

The Water Table

Sponsored by the NW Kansas Groundwater Management District No. 4, 1290 West 4th 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 Zwegardt - 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 - President, Hoxie, SD Cty; Doug David - Hill City, GH Cty; Scott Maurath -Oakley, LG Cty; Shane Mann - Vice President, Quinter, GO Cty.

STAFF: Ray Luhman - Manager; Shannon Cain - Assistant Manager; Dan Simmering - Field Technician; Rita Wade - Secretary/Receptionist; Jeff Mason - Attorney.

ADDRESS CORRECTIONS ARE APPRECIATED

MALFUNCTIONING METER????

Meter maintenance and documentation is necessary. As a majority of meters in the district are approaching 10 years old, malfunctioning meters are increasing. It is **extremely important** that you monitor your meter frequently to make sure it is working properly.

If the Division of Water Resource conducts a compliance inspection and finds it not working, while it is pumping, they can make the assumption you have pumped your full quantity for the year and you could be **turned off** for the remainder of the year.

In the event you find your meter not working properly and it needs to be taken in for service, you need to notify the Division of Water Resources or GMD 4 promptly and provide the proper form with documentation within 30 days of getting the meter repaired or replaced. The form can be found online at <http://agriculture.ks.gov/docs> or contact the Division of Water Resources by telephone to obtain the form. We can also assist you at our office.

In the event you have a meter sealed or chained to the pipe, you need permission from the Division of Water Resources prior to removing it. You can obtain permission by calling the Stockton Field Office.

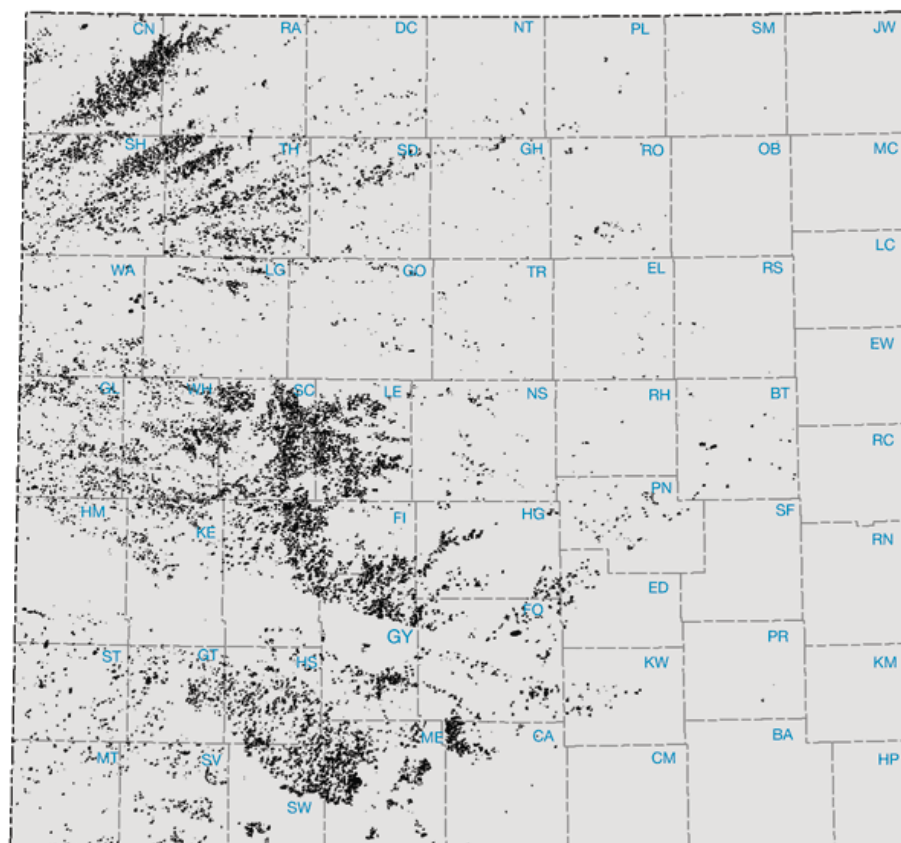
PLAYA LAKES

Yes, I typed “lakes”, it’s not a joke. They are in many areas of NW KS. Playas are round hollows in the ground that may contain water during certain times of the year when normal to above precipitation occurs.

Playas play an extremely important part of the region in many ways. One is for wildlife as they can support a great variety. Many water waterfowl, insects and critters can be found in these locations. Another important aspect of playa lakes is they recharge the Ogallala within our district. KGS website implies playas are a significant source of recharge in the Ogallala. University of Kansas (KU) researchers have identified 22,000 + playas in Kansas recently.

...continued PLAYA LAKES

The following map shows the distribution of those playas in Western Kansas. (created from data in Johnson et al., 2009; modified from map by John Dunham, Kansas Geological Survey). For more information please visit <http://www.kgs.ku.edu/Publications/PIC/pic30.html>



SCALE 1:3 500 000
0 25 50 MI
25 0 25 50 KM
LAMBERT CONFORMAL CONIC PROJECTION
NORTH AMERICAN DATUM OF 1983

Map from <http://www.kgs.ku.edu/Publications/PIC/pic30.html> taken on March 13,

ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER

If you would like to receive this mailing by e-mail instead of paper version we’d much appreciate it to help save on costs. Please email scain@gmd4.org and state that you’d like to be added to the newsletter mailing.

Pumping the Tailwater

Water and Water Policy Move Slowly

by Ray Luhman

GMD4 began the current High Priority Area aquifer management project in 2004. Since that time, many meetings have been held, state laws have been changed to accommodate the District’s needs, accusations and counter-accusations have been exchanged, etc, etc, etc. After all of this time only 1 meaningful management area (SD-6) has been established. Meanwhile district water levels have continued to drop.

As one member of the regional management team expressed it, “it is hard to strike a balance between those that want to stabilize the water table and those who want to maintain the status quo.” While both extremes are probably unreasonable, finding the middle ground is vital.

I don’t think that any one position on these water management questions is right or wrong, but without coming to some sort of a meaningful compromise there is a good chance that the years of cussing and discussing will continue long into the future.

Can the aquifer stand this continued procrastination? That is the real question.