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**Kansas Reservoir Protection Initiative Now Accepting Applications**

*Lands eligible for assistance to enhance reservoir sedimentation reduction*

Kansas Water Office Director Connie Owen announced today applications are now being accepted for the Kansas Reservoir Protection Initiative (KPRI).

This program provides financial assistance to landowners in priority watersheds to implement sediment-reducing conservation practices to enhance efforts above federal reservoirs where water supply storage is impacted by reservoir sedimentation. Initiative funding is currently targeted above Kanopolis, Fall River, John Redmond and Tuttle Creek reservoirs where 37, 38, 40 and 49 percent of water supply storage has been lost to sedimentation, respectively. Lands located in targeted sub-watersheds in portions of Barton, Butler, Coffey, Ellsworth, Greenwood, Lyon, Marshall, Nemaha, Russell and Washington counties are eligible for assistance.

The KPRI was funded by the 2020 Kansas Legislature as part of a partial restoration of the State Water Plan Fund to address priority water resource projects recommended by the Kansas Water Authority.

“The Kansas reservoir system is critical infrastructure for our citizens during both flood and drought as storage is being diminished over time by sedimentation,” said Owen. “Watershed protection is the most economical means of protecting our surface water supplies. This Initiative provides an opportunity for producers above some of our key federal reservoirs to improve their land while also benefiting downstream water resources.”

Under this Initiative, the Kansas Department of Agriculture – Division of Conservation, the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, Kansas Water Office and the Kansas, Neosho, Smoky Hill-Saline and Verdigris Regional Advisory Committees will collaborate to prioritize projects for funding which yield the greatest sediment reduction per dollar invested.

Landowners interested in participating are encouraged to contact their local county conservation district or Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategy (WRAPS) Coordinator to apply. Many sediment-reducing conservation practices are eligible through this initiative, however, projects focusing on large gully repair and soil health practices such as reduced tillage, nutrient management, and cover crops are highly encouraged. Applications for the initial round of funding will be accepted through Thursday, April

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15. It is not guaranteed that adequate funding will be available to provide financial assistance to all eligible applications.

For additional information, please visit [kwo.ks.gov/projects/kansas-reservoir-protection-initiative](http://kwo.ks.gov/projects/kansas-reservoir-protection-initiative).

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*As the state's water office, KWO conducts water planning, policy coordination and water marketing as well as facilitates public input throughout the state.*

*The agency prepares the KANSAS WATER PLAN, a plan for water resources development, management and conservation.*