

**1:30 pm Tuesday, February 23, 2021  
GoTo Meeting and Conference Call**

**Members Attendance:**

Name	City	Category	Term	Present
Dawn Buehler, Chair	Eudora, KS	Recreation	2023	Yes
Heath Horyna, V-Chair	Topeka, KS	Industry/Commerce (cc)	2021	Yes
Adam Bauer	Milford, KS	WRAPs	2023	Yes
Rick Bean	Topeka, KS	At Large Public (cc)	2023	Yes
Marlene Bosworth	Sabetha, KS	Conservation/Environment (cc)	2023	Yes
Brad Bradley	Overland Park, KS	Fish and Wildlife	2021	Yes
Glenn Brunkow	Westmoreland, KS	Agriculture (cc)	2021	Yes
Sarah Hill-Nelson	Lawrence, KS	Industry/Commerce	2023	Yes
Leslie Holthaus	Beattie, KS	Conservation/Environment	2023	Yes
Daniel Howell	Frankfort, KS	Agriculture	2021	Yes
Darci Meese	Lenexa, KS	Public Water Supply (cc)	2023	Yes
William Ramsey	Leawood, KS	Planning, Restoration and Protection	2021	No
Greg Wilson	Olathe, KS	Water Assurance District	2021	Yes

**Others in attendance:**

Name	Representing	Name	Representing
Josh Olson	KWO	Andrew Lyon	KDA-DOC
Sara Maguire	KWO	Katie Tietsort	KDA-DWR
Richard Rockel	KWO	Amanda Reed	KDHE
Kirk Tjelmeland	KWO	Dustin Mengarelli	KDWPT
Taylor Herman	KCC	John Reinke	KDWPT

- I) **Welcome and Introductions:** The meeting was called to order at 1:33 pm by Chair, Dawn Buehler. Self-introductions were given with RAC roll call completed on the conference call line.

**Announcements:** Josh Olson (KWO) noted that Connie Owen was the new director of the Kansas Water Office and shared a message from Connie to the Kansas RAC. Josh also mentioned preparations for an upcoming presentation on the structure and role of the RACs to the House Water Committee.

- II) **Review of October 29<sup>th</sup> meeting notes:** The meeting notes were reviewed and approved as written.

III) **RAC Business:**

- a. **RAC Activities Update:** Dawn shared that she, as chair of the Kansas RAC, and Connie Owen had a discussion with the Kansas Farm Bureau about the role of the RACs and how they fit into the overall water management structure. Dawn noted that the KFB was excited about the ongoing Kansas RAC BMP Subcommittee efforts to put together a directory of conservation and BMP opportunities.
- b. **Project Prioritization Matrix:** Greg Wilson provided an update on the project prioritization matrix the RAC has been developing, outlining what had been accomplished and asking for feedback. Greg reviewed the five levels of matrix weighting criteria and shared a definition of prioritization. Rick Bean

stated that he thought the weighting factors made sense, except for the lower weighting of a project that addresses a major need or emergency, noting that a weighting of three seemed low. Greg noted that the criteria have been developed, but they are not set in stone. Greg expressed a desire for input from the group. Josh noted that a pressing, water-related need may not explicitly be a RAC goal, which may not necessarily make it a top priority to the RAC. Josh stated that, if a project was a RAC goal that was also a pressing need, the various criteria of the matrix should still score it as a high priority. Dawn added that, if there truly was an emergency situation, it probably wouldn't be in the hands of the RAC. Brad noted that the weighting and scoring values seemed duplicative. Marlene explained that the combination gives a range of scores for the various criteria. Greg added that the range of values help define the areas of gray when considering projects, which is particularly important when you need to prioritize limited funds. Greg used the Water Injection Dredging (WID) demonstration at Tuttle Creek Lake as an example of how to score a project using the matrix, noting that the matrix provides a tool for some level of subjective analysis. Heath questioned how to ensure prioritization is data-driven, asking how the group could deal with decision bias and how to assess the priority level of projects based on their scored values. Greg noted that there will be competing projects whose prioritization needs to be resolved. Greg stated that this matrix would allow the Kansas RAC to give recommendations to the KWA for such situations.

Brad asked if the matrix evaluation should be done as a group or individually with results averaged. Greg suggested having individual RAC members complete the matrix and then averaging the results. Brad agreed with this approach. Dawn asked if, when RAC budget recommendations come up, the RAC could use the matrix to evaluate recommendations. Josh noted that it would likely be difficult to come to a group consensus for scoring values, and that an average of evaluations done by individual RAC members was likely the most effective way to ensure all RAC members' opinions were represented. Heath asked how the group should bracket priority level of projects after they are scored, suggesting using the total possible score as a reference point. The group discussed whether only KWO projects should be considered in the evaluation or if all SWPF projects should be included. Sarah noted that, depending on a RAC member's expertise and experiences, they may be a bit out of their depth for some evaluation criteria, particularly for projects outside of the Kansas region. Josh agreed and suggested the RAC focus on regionally-impactful projects. Dawn noted that it might be beneficial to have a conversation about the projects being considered prior to the evaluations. Greg suggested that the project list be limited to those the RAC thinks should be considered for funding. Leslie stated that she would prefer to do the evaluation as a group to take advantage of the different strengths of RAC members. Marlene noted that the matrix is just a tool, detailed with enough objectivity and some subjectivity, to be useful when the RAC is asked for an opinion. Greg suggested having the KWO complete the evaluation. Josh responded that the KWO could complete the evaluation, but questioned if the results would represent the RAC's prioritization if it was not completed by the RAC. Dawn suggested sending out three projects through an online survey for RAC members to evaluate as a test run of the matrix. Rick and Heath supported the plan. Heath asked if the criteria with the greatest bias had been identified. Josh suggested that, after the trial run, the range of scored values would help reveal which criteria were the most subjective, as their ranges would be greatest. Dawn noted this provided further value to doing a test run.

- c. **BMP Subcommittee:** Marlene Bosworth provided an update on the recent work of the Kansas RAC BMP Subcommittee. Marlene noted that the subcommittee has been meeting to work on creating a list/directory of BMP and conservation opportunities and funding, as a tool for producers and landowners. Marlene summarized how the group has approached creating the document and shared that Amanda Reed and Chris Janssen of KDHE had met with the subcommittee to talk about how to develop the resource.

Marlene noted that KDHE had recently hired a new staff member, Jaide Allenbrand, who has been working with the RAC and creating the document. Marlene shared several pages of a draft directory that Jaide provided to her, including the cover, table of contents, getting started, and project example pages. Marlene noted the importance of having a document available to help individuals implement BMPs that benefit water, stressing the need for it to be user friendly and from the perspective of the producer, so it was effective in pointing them where they need to go. Marlene stated that, once the paper directory is complete, the goal is to expand to an online resource. Marlene, Dawn, and Heath all thanked Amanda Reed, Jaide Allenbrand, and the KDHE team for their efforts. Heath asked if the information was being provided for all regions of the state. Marlene responded that the subcommittee was starting with just the Kansas region, but there is interest in going beyond. Marlene stated that she felt the effort should eventually go beyond the Kansas region. Sarah noted that the directory helps decomplexify a complex system and is a great step in the right direction.

- d. Funding and Governance Subcommittee:** Sarah Hill-Nelson gave an update on recent activities of the Kansas RAC Funding and Governance Subcommittee. Sarah noted that the subcommittee has been in a bit of a holding pattern. Sarah shared that the House Water Committee had requested a presentation about the Regional Advisory Committees, and the Kansas RAC had recommended Marlene as a representative for that presentation. Sarah stated that the Funding and Governance Subcommittee recommends that, based on the complexity of water management in Kansas, an interim summer session be utilized to continue studying the topic and that a standing committee on water be considered. Sarah noted that the subcommittee hoped to have those recommendations mentioned at the upcoming presentation. Dawn commented that the first RAC presentation was focused on the what RACs do and how they are structured. Sarah explained that a potential second presentation could have more recommendations, but the subcommittee had hoped that Marlene could share their interim session and standing committee recommendations at the first presentation. Darci asked if a second presentation had been confirmed, and Josh replied that there was nothing definitive. It was suggested that the Kansas RAC get a consensus and vote on a statement they supported being shared at the presentation. After further discussion, Brad moved, Heath seconded, and the RAC voted unanimously that the Kansas RAC was supportive of sharing the following message with the House Water Committee:

*“The Kansas Regional Advisory Committee (RAC) would like to offer assistance, as appropriate, to the House Water Committee in its process of learning about water resource management in the state of Kansas. Further, given the complexity and seriousness of the issue, the Kansas RAC recommends that, at a minimum, an interim summer session be utilized for further study. Additionally, the Kansas RAC endorses the creation of a standing committee on water.”*

- e. Kansas Water Plan Update:** Josh Olson shared a draft example of the Neosho regional section of the Kansas Water Plan to provide RAC members an idea of what the Kansas section will look like. Josh noted that the KWO is currently working on regional sections and hopes to have them completed in the coming months. Additionally, Josh stated that the draft Guiding Principles sections of the Kansas Water Plan are posted for review on the KWO website, available [here](#), and feedback for those sections can be emailed to [kwo-info@kwo.ks.gov](mailto:kwo-info@kwo.ks.gov) or sent to Josh directly at [josh.olson@kwo.ks.gov](mailto:josh.olson@kwo.ks.gov).

#### IV) Agency or Public Comments

- a.** Allyn Lockner (public) was unable to attend the meeting, so he emailed several questions and comments for Josh to share with the RAC:

- “Has the House Water Committee made any decisions that affect KRAC?”
- “Does KRAC want to increase funding for projects in the region? If “yes,” what are the funding plans?”
- “I continue to believe that a substantial increase in stable and long-term funding is essential for all regions to achieve their goals in a timely manner and for Kansas to realize its vision. I’m aware of the budget and tax issues facing the Governor and Legislature and the impacts of COVID 19 virus on Kansans. It seems that the vital role of water for life and death and for all natural and human activities is not sufficiently known to spontaneously generate support for additional funding for water projects and personnel. One strategy is all RACs reach agreement on funding and they lobby their legislators to support the agreed funding. This strategy would be joined with a companion strategy to increase funding for Kansas Runs on Water to assist in developing the funding support by expanding its role in a public and school water information campaign. What are the better ways to increase funding?”

- b. Katie Tietsort (KDA-DWR) shared that DWR is still working remotely. Katie noted that water use reporting is due by March 1, so there have been lots of phones ringing.
- c. Andrew Lyon (KDA-DOC) shared that there are ongoing sign-ups for a number of conservation efforts (tillage, cover crops) and that some innovative strategies, such as temporary fencing, were also being included. Andrew noted sign-up would continue through the first of April with allocations going out again in July. Andrew shared that there are discussions about a spring sign-up for the Kansas Reservoir Protection Initiative (KRPI) and an upcoming stakeholder meeting. Andrew also stated that on-farm-field trials were being implemented through the water resources program. Andrew noted that the hope was to collect yield and economic data from those trials. Andrew stated that projects must focus on the highest water resource concerns in each county. Andrew recommended that those interested in these efforts contact their local conservation districts. Greg asked if the projects would be included in the BMP resource list. Andrew noted that some of the funding may not be available every year, but that they could discuss what would be appropriate to include on the resource list.
- d. Tj (KWO) shared that Dawn is going through the KWA Chair confirmation process and has done a great job representing and explaining the RACs. Tj noted that the next KWA meeting (TBD) is somewhat dependent on Dawn’s confirmation process.
- e. Dawn covered several RAC topics to close the meeting. Dawn noted that the RAC is still planning to do the Perry field tour with KDWPT in the spring. Additionally, Dawn shared that the Kansas RAC will be providing their Goals and Action Plans to the Kansas River Reservoirs Flood and Sediment Study (KRRFSS) once they are confirmed by the KWA. Dawn also stated that the RAC will be going over the project prioritization test at the next meeting.

### V) Upcoming Meetings:

- a. Kansas Water Authority meeting (TBD – GoTo Meeting)
- b. Next Kansas RAC meeting (April/May – Doodle Poll)

### VI) Adjourn: Dawn adjourned the meeting with no further business at 3:32 pm.