

Kansas Regional Advisory Committee Meeting Notes

Monday June 24, 2019
Trails End Café, 601 Arizona Ave.,
Holton, Kansas 66436

Members Attendance:

<i>Name</i>	<i>City</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>Term</i>	<i>Present</i>
Brad Bradley, Chair	Overland Park, KS	Fish and Wildlife	2021	Yes
Katie Miller, Vice-Chair	Junction City, KS	Conservation/Environment	2019	No
Marlene Bosworth	Sabetha, KS	Conservation/Environment (cc)	2019	Yes
Glenn Brunkow	Westmoreland, KS	Agriculture (cc)	2021	Yes
Dawn Buehler	Eudora, KS	Recreation	2019	Yes
Blake Follis	Topeka, KS	At Large Public (cc)	2019	No
Sarah Hill-Nelson	Lawrence, KS	Industry/Commerce	2019	Yes
Heath Horyna	Topeka, KS	Industry/Commerce (cc)	2021	No
Daniel Howell	Frankfort, KS	Agriculture	2021	Yes
Darci Meese	Lenexa, KS	Public Water Supply (cc)	2019	Yes
William Ramsey	Leawood, KS	Planning, Restoration and Protection	2021	No
Sharon Schwartz	Washington, KS	WRAPs	2019	No
Greg Wilson	Olathe, KS	Water Assurance District	2021	Yes

Others in attendance:

<i>Name</i>	<i>Representing</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Representing</i>
Judy Boltman	SN Co. Con. Dist.	Katie Tietsort	KDA-DWR
Rob Reschke	KDA-DOC	Allyn Lockner	Public
Carla Greisen	Tuttle Creek WRAPS	Kent Askren	KFB
Ginny Moore	The Conservation foundation	Shane New	Soil Health
Herb Graves	SAKW	Tracy Streeter	Burns & Mac
Amanda Reed	KDHE	Andy Lyon	KDHE
Jackie Craine	KWO	Earl Lewis	KWO
Cara Hendricks	KWO	Kirk Tjelmeland	KWO
John Wonder	JF Co. Con. Dist.		

- I) **Welcome and Introductions:** The meeting was called to order at 12:55 pm by Chair Brad Bradley. Self-introductions were given around the room.
- II) **Review of April 9th Meeting notes:** The meeting notes were reviewed and approved as written.
- III) **Follow up from the April 9th Meeting:**
 - a. **Watershed Districts Update 2020** was given by Herb Graves, Executive Director of the State Association of Kansas Watersheds (SAKW). The presentation is available [here](#) Herb mentioned that most of the Watershed Districts began in the 1960's and were a combination of state and federally funded structures. These structures were meant to reduce not eliminate flooding and there are over 1,500 structures across the state. There are 75 Watershed Districts in the state with the majority of these in the eastern half of the state. Herb stated that \$150 million was appropriate nationwide in the omnibus bill and currently 9 dams in the construction phase using that funding. The Watershed Districts that received

funding for these structures include: Upper Black Vermillion, Delaware 10 and Wolf River. In the FY2020 State Water Plan Fund (SWPF) budget there was \$550,000 approved for Watershed Dam construction or rehabilitation however this is insufficient to address all the concerns. Greg asked if the Districts had taxing authority and Herb stated they do. Herb mentioned some challenges moving forward: Federal and State support, Rehabilitation of Dams and Environmental Compliance to name a few. Marlene brought up the breached dam at Sabetha and Herb was quick to point out it was a failed tube and not the failed dam.

- b. **Soil Health on a Jackson Co. Farm** was given by Shane New, local producer. The presentation is available [here](#). He stated that the great plains use to be this lush area and we have turned it into a monoculture which causes us problems like serious mineral depletion in fruits, vegetables and meats. These mineral losses are directly related to increased rates of numerous diseases. The goal on his farm is to improve soil health to a level where the system is functioning the way it was meant to, “iron doesn’t build soil plants do.” Shane showed a slide of the upper end of Perry Reservoir and the large amount of silt that had accumulated, “cover crops are essential.” The use of cover crops helps eliminate chemical use improving the producers bottom line. He mentioned that soil organics should be above 7% showing a slide from Colorado 2014 compared to 1935, the 1935 dust cloud was much darker, more organics. Below the soil surface it is a water film environment that functions best when there is surface protection to reduce soil temperature. It is assumed that haying is good because it keeps the ground covered most of the year however soil tests prove otherwise. The use of cows with rotational grazing is a must as well, helps cycle nutrients making them available for organisms in the soil. Healthy soil provides nutrients to plants that a normal producer would need to apply, increasing their production costs. Shane has seen a 73% reduction in input costs over the last several years making him a more sustainable producer. Healthier soil provides for a healthier environment for all types of animals, from frogs to birds. Shane has achieved an infiltration rate of 8+ inches/hour using regenerative grazing which would have a profound impact if we consider the flooding we’ve been experiencing lately.
- c. **Update on Kansas River Reservoirs Flood and Sediment Study** was given by Cara Hendricks, Kansas Water Office (KWO). She mentioned that this is a \$3 million study in conjunction with the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) with KWO and the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism (KDWPT) as co-sponsors. USACE, KWO and KDWPT are working on a Project Management Plan which will help guide the groups toward the overall goal of developing a Comprehensive Watershed Study. We have begun to reach out to individuals to put together an advisory committee with the intent of having their first meeting in August. She said some people in this room have been contacted and Brad asked if this was something the RAC should be handling. Cara said this committee will be made up of a broader group of individuals. Sarah asked about the adjustment to the manuals to provide more beneficial reservoir releases, this is something that could be advocated for once the plan is completed. Greg wanted to make sure that the results of the study are applicable, study produces something tangible.
- a. **Information on The Conservation Fund** was presented by Ginny Moore, Midwest Field Representative. She gave a ppt that is available [here](#) and a handout that can be found [here](#). In her presentation she talked about the Blue River Watershed which is in Kansas and Missouri and has water quality impairments for bacteria, nutrients and oxygen. The upper Blue River has experienced a considerable amount of development: housing, businesses and impervious surfacing. The Conservation Fund is working with willing landowners to purchase particular pieces of property within the watershed that will have the greatest impact. She said they are working with Kansas Land Trust and Heartland Conservation Land Trust to hold these small parcels of property. Better management of these will provide a better way of life for Johnson County residents by providing outdoor experiences and helping to eliminate inputs into the system. This is a multi-million dollar project that will take years to complete.

IV) RAC Business:

- a. **April 18th KWA meeting:** Darci attended this meeting for Brad and led this discussion. She mentioned the information that Matt had presented on the 5-year Vision review that will be talked about later in this meeting and also the membership application process. Leo Henning gave a report on potential Perfluorocarbon (PFC's) regulation and contamination, "there is a lot of bad chemicals out there." There was a message by the Upper Ark RAC on Inter-basin transfer and the aqueduct, moving water from the Missouri River to south west Kansas. The old train depot was right by the tracks and a train came by twice, stopping the meeting for a bit.
- b. **Subcommittee Reports:**
 1. **Funding and Governance:** Sarah said we are in a wait and see position with no progress on the funding from the Blue-Ribbon Task Force. Funding must be secured on a regional level however there is no authority to do this. There was discussion about the KWA and the new members and what kind of impact they might have on the future of water in Kansas. Sarah believes an equitable tax would be some sort of drinking water tax. The committee will provide some recommendations at the next RAC meeting.
 2. **BMP and KBWM system:** Marlene said her committee had met with Dustin from KDWPT and visited about the letter the USACE had drafted for them to use when conducting leasing last winter. The bulk of the priority leases are around Milford Reservoir. She also mentioned the 2nd year of the Kansas Reservoir Protection Initiative (KRPI), which was funded to the tune of \$700,000 for this year. There has been a good deal of interest generated and with less money there are likely to be more applications than funds.
 3. **Education and Outreach:** There was no report from this committee however Brad wanted to make sure this group was working towards presenting the State of the Resource document at some Annual Conservation District meetings this winter.
- c. **Update on the State Water Plan Fund (SWPF) Budget:** Jackie led this with the spreadsheet available [here](#). The goal of this item is to solicit budget recommendations from the RAC that will be passed onto the Kansas Water Authority (KWA). She went through the spreadsheet of agency requests and her and Earl provided additional information on each of the items as questions were raised. There was a good deal of discussion about reservoir storage, sedimentation rates and the use of Water Injection Dredging (WID). A motion was unanimously adopted to send a message to the KWA, the following items were listed off by RAC members to be put into the memo to the KWA:
 - Conservation BMPs in watersheds to reduce sedimentation and improve water quality
 - Purchase of storage in Reservoirs (with the suggestion that an appeal be made to obtain a lump-sum payment for half or more of the cost, from the arrearage in the State Water Plan Fund now approaching \$80 million)
 - Continued funding of experimental Water Injection Dredging (WID)

- d. **Review of RAC Goals and Action Plans:** Tj started this discussion with a memo that Matt presented to the KWA at their April meeting. This is basically a 5-year review of the Goals and Action Plans to make sure they are lined up with the Vision and make any changes necessary to make the Action Plan more pertinent. The ppt that he presented is available [here](#). In the ppt there was a timeline laid out for moving forward, which included public meeting to review Goals and Action Plans coupled with the RACs input on improving/modifying these with a completion date of summer 2020. In the ppt there are two links, one to a spreadsheet for tracking Action Plan and the other for a state-wide dashboard showing all 14 RACs and their progress on their Action Plans, both provide valuable details.
 - e. **Feedback from RAC members:** Brad thought this was a lot of information to cover in one day especially after our streambank tour in the morning. He suggested that the RAC look at Goals #1 & #2 at the next meeting in September. He also suggested seeing soil health in action at Shane's farm, which will be the afternoon of September 9th.
- V) **Agency or Public Comments:** Andy Klein and Tim McCoy led the stream bank tours and their handout is available [here](#).
- VI) **Upcoming Meetings:**
- a. KWA meeting, August, 2019, Goodland, KS
 - b. Next Kansas RAC meeting, Monday, September 9th
- VII) **Meeting Adjourned:** Brad adjourned the meeting at 3:40 pm.