

Kansas Water Plan Budget Guidelines June 2023

Water Plan Funds should be allocated to maximize accomplishing the goals and objectives established by the Kansas Statutes, the Kansas Water Authority and the Regional Advisory Committees.

Fundamental to the budget process shall be a prioritization of expenditures that are required to do legally, necessary to implement the Kansas Water Plan, and discretionary expenditures that can be justified based upon defined benefits.

In particular, budgeted funds should be allocated with the following principles:

- Statutory Obligations shall be met first.
 - For instance, K.S.A. 82a-2101 requires that proceeds from the Clean Drinking Water Fee be allocated by providing not less than 15% to provide on-site technical assistance for public water supply systems, with the remainder being used to renovate and protect lakes which are used directly as a source of water for such public water supply systems
- All budgeted funds should be tied to one of the projects and initiatives established by the Kansas Water Plan. Allocation of funds should be supported by appropriate metrics and benchmarks, which clearly demonstrate the past (where applicable), current and future benefit of such expenditures.
- Per K.S.A. 82a-951, State Water Plan funding “shall not be used for . . . replacing full-time equivalent positions of any state agency.” Chapter 59 of the 2023 Session Laws of Kansas allows the Kansas Water Authority to recommend to the Legislature to appropriate up to 10% of the unencumbered balance of the State Water Plan fund to supplement salaries of existing state agency FTE positions and for funding new FTE positions created to implement the Kansas Water Plan. Such appropriations will not replace State General Fund, fee fund or other funding for positions existing on July 1, 2023. However, the Kansas Water Authority should continue to encourage funding for staff positions supporting State Water Plan programs and projects to be from the State General Fund removing any confusion and allowing additional funds to be used for implementation activities.
- Funds raised through fees on specific users, such as K.S.A. 82a-954, K.S.A. 2-1205 and K.S.A. 2-2204 should be used to fund projects or initiatives that benefit the users paying those fees, or mitigate environmental impacts caused by said users, including:
 - Agricultural users
 - Public water supply systems
 - Industrial users
 - Stock watering

Specifically, Chapter 59 of the 2023 Kansas Session Laws states the Kansas Water Authority shall encourage the creation of grant programs for stock water conservation projects and such grant programs shall prioritize the use of stock water fees allocated to the State Water Plan Fund.

- Allocation of funds should be reasonably related to:
 - The source of the funds,
 - Geographical balance (i.e. NE, NW, SE & SW), including consideration for RAC Regional balance
 - Hydrological (ground water vs. surface water) resource balance
 - An equitable mix of rural vs. urban interests.Exceptions will be considered for high-priority or time-sensitive cases requiring significant funding for the implementation of an individual priority project.
- Priority must be given to long term contractual, or multi-year obligations such as:
 - Contracts with the Corps of Engineers for O&M costs of federal reservoirs
 - Contracts with the USGS for stream gages

- Consideration may be given to projects or initiatives that involve cost shares from other sources, such as Federal, state, local and private funding.
- Consideration may be given to expenditures that can be justified based upon emerging threats to water resources, including appropriate research initiatives.
- Chapter 59 of the 2023 Kansas Session Laws states the Kansas Water Authority will encourage requests from state and local entities that cooperate with qualified non-profit entities.
- Chapter 59 of the 2023 Kansas Session Laws states if at least two conservation districts present a joint proposal for position(s) to provide shared services to those districts, funds may be recommended to supplement the salaries of those position(s).