

Missouri Regional Advisory Committee Meeting Notes

Missouri Regional Advisory Committee Meeting
Thursday, November 21, 2019, 9:00 am
USD 409 Community Meeting Room, 626 Commercial,
Atchison, Kansas 66002

Members in Attendance:

Name	City	Category	Term	Present
Carl Johnson (Chair)	Leavenworth, KS	Conservation/Environment (cc)	2023	Yes
John Bishop	Atchison, KS	Recreation	2023	Yes
Neil Coufal	Troy, KS	At Large Public (cc)	2021	Yes
Stephen Glaser	Atchison, KS	Industry/Commerce (cc)	2023	Yes
Jeffrey Grossenbacher	Bern, KS	Agriculture (cc)	2023	No
Chris Griffin	Troy, KS	WRAPs	2021	Yes
Lisa Montgomery	Reserve, KS	Iowa Tribe of Kansas and NE	2023	No
Joel Mahnken	Leavenworth, KS	Public Water Supply (cc)	2021	Yes
Brett Neibling (VC)	Highland, KS	Agriculture 2	2023	Yes
Vacant		Agriculture Industry	2021	No
Vacant		Public Water Supply 2	2019	No
Luke Terry	Robinson, KS	Fish and Wildlife	2021	No
Michelle Wirth	Kansas City, KS	Public Water Supply 3	2021	No

Others in attendance:

Name	Representing	Name	Representing
Rob Reschke	KDA-DOC	Mike Stec	City of Atchison
Julie Meng	DP. Co. EMA	Alan Larson	AT Co. NRCS
Mary Meyers	Atchison Globe	Kirk Tjelmeland	KWO

- I) **Welcome and Introductions:** Carl started the meeting at 9:05 am, with self-introductions starting with himself and then everyone else around the tables.
- II) **Chair Transition: Carl to Chris:** Carl was asked to give the committee a few thoughts. He thought the work they were doing is important, they have good Goals, good projects through the KGS groundwater study and the DP County RCPP and Tech Farm. Tj thanked Carl for his efforts in promoting the needs of the Missouri RAC and presented him with a small token of appreciation. Chris then assumed the Chair and Joel the Vice-Chair positions.
- III) **Review of the Governor’s Water Conference Nov. 7-8th:** Carl and Chris commented that the keynote speakers, Jill Wheeler and Dr. Rollin Hotchkiss, provided some good information and set the stage for the conference. Carl enjoyed the Breakfast with Barfield, Streambank Stabilization and flooding on the Kansas and Missouri Rivers sessions. Chris thought this conference is a great pull for agencies getting them all in one place at one time. She thought there needs to be an effort to see what is going on upstream of Kansas related to cover-crops/sedimentation/infiltration. John added in

that the Kansas River Protection Initiative (KRPI) is good effort by Kansas to address those issues and the money went fast. Chris thought the chairs could have been spaced a little further apart. Tj reminded everyone that the conference will be in Wichita next year (November 9-10) and encouraged everyone to supply some input into next years conference since the planning will be starting shortly. Also, for those that attended there was a survey sent out, please take a few minutes and fill it out.

IV) **RAC Business:**

- a. The September 26th meeting notes were reviewed and moved by Carl and seconded by John they be accepted as written.
- b. The Missouri River Subcommittee: Joel mentioned that the City of Leavenworth had several projects planned including a collector well which are on hold until the groundwater level drops. They are still releasing 80,000 cfs from Gavin's Point and which is expected to continue into the middle of December. The ground continues to dry out however it will be a while with the river remaining high.
- c. The Ag Subcommittee: Brett mentioned that he has completed harvest however there are still crops in the fields especially in some areas. He also said that Darci Gallagher, the new Ag instructor at Highland Community College is going to be spending some time on his farm with her class. Several in the group thought it would be good to have her present at the February 13th RAC meeting.

- V) **Review of Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Programs:** Alan Larson, Supervisory District Conservationist, works a four-county area (AT, DP, JF and LV) and stated there has been a dramatic shift in the agency from dealing with soil erosion to soil health. He mentioned that Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) is the workhorse in his area with this voluntary program spends millions of dollars on conservation practices. He talked about the use of cover-crops to improve soil health while possibly improving the producers bottom line by reducing chemical applications or providing acres of grazing. The second program that he talked about was the Emergency Conservation Program (ECP) with Farm Service Agency for flooding in AT, DP, LV and WY counties. The money is used for sand and woody debris removal and ditch draining however no levee repairs can be completed with this funding. Another Farm Service Program, Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) was the next topic and with rental rates being decreased by 20-30% it is expected that many more acres will be pulled out of the program and put back into production. Chris asked Alan if he could also visit about the NRCS Flood Recovery program that offered cost share for cover crops on ground that was categorized as prevented plant due to flooding. He explained that while there were many of these contracts several were not able to be planted due to continued flooding through the summer. NRCS staffing was brought up and Alan responded that half of the NRCS employees will be eligible to retire in a couple of years. They are able to use Tech positions to assist with work and those people filling those positions will probably have the opportunity to become fulltime NRCS employees, there is a staffing need. There was some discussion about land designation specific to CRP. Alan was asked about input to the NRCS on several issues and he thought this would be a good time to offer comments.

- VI) Update from DP Co. Emergency Preparedness:** Julie Meng mentioned that the Missouri River reached a new record level and has remained high since March. She mentioned their communication with the KC District USACE was good however the Omaha District USACE was not quite to the same level. She felt very fortunate to have the air base there to provide support through manpower and equipment especially when the peck developed and they used bags and baskets to hold the river in. The County has expended \$145,000 to date operating pumps to keep the towns of Elwood and Wathena from flooding. The amount of vehicle traffic was another thing the flooding caused, increasing traffic from 20,000 cars/day to 55,000 cars/day. There were no major accidents but it was a little “scary!” Julie mentioned they have an agreement for mutual aid on fire suppression however they were very conservative when burning was allowed in the County. Chris asked what was the biggest need? Julie responded better communication about water north of Kansas.
- VII) Update from LV Co. Emergency Preparedness:** Chuck was not able to attend the meeting but is on the agenda for the February 13th meeting.
- VIII) Review of RAC Goals #2 and #4:** Tj started the extended discussion which led to a couple additions. For Goal #2, first action step was rewritten to say, *Collection sites will be: tile outlet terrace runoff, grass waterway runoff, land with no conservation work or no conservation tillage and land with no conservations work but using no-till.* A fifth Action Step was added that said: *Encourage communication in the Missouri River Region through a developed communication network.* The rewrite was moved by John and seconded by Joel with no discussion, passed unanimously. For Goal #4, Education Goal, Tj encouraged members to visit the Kansas Runs on Water website and provide some feedback. It appears in the current form it not the product that was promised. More information will be gathered on this however the RAC would like to send a message to the KWA.
- IX) Narrated PPT for Conservation District Meetings:** Tj started this discussion stating that he had a recording of one slide from John and that he plans on visiting other willing RAC members in the next couple of weeks to get a recording of a slide or two. Chris encourage Tj to reach out to the Conservation Districts since they are in the process of planning their Annual meetings now. These meetings are great locations to meet producers and visit about the RAC and where it fits in the scheme of things.
- X) Other Issues or Agency Updates:** Chris mentioned the DP County Conservation District Annual Meeting is January 27th in Troy.
- XI) Public Comments:** These were voiced earlier in the meeting.
- XII) Messages to the Kansas Water Authority:** There were two.

- a. As education is a goal of multiple Regional Advisory Committee, the Missouri RAC encourages further development/funding of the Kansas Runs on Water website to be the “one-stop shop” for water education materials.
- b. The Missouri RAC encourages the KWA and KWO to endorse one cover crop NRCS practice change and testing for one NRCS practice change in Doniphan County:
 1. Setting a specific planting date for cover crops and not using the “30 days of growing time before a killing freeze.”
 2. Testing for the use of broad-based slope terraces on land with 12% slope that are using contour farming, no-till farming and in some instances cover crops.

XIII) Upcoming Meetings:

- a. **KWA meeting, December 19th, Salina**
- b. **Legislative Visits & KWA meeting, January 28-29, 2020, Topeka**
- c. **Vision Meetings – on hold at this point using website to gather input on RAC Goals and Action Plans.** There was considerable amount of discussion on how to get people to a public meeting, no real solutions were discovered.
- d. **Next Missouri RAC meeting, February 13th, 9-noon, USD 409 meeting room**
- e. **Meeting adjourned at 11:35 am**