Upper Republican Regional Advisory Committee (RAC) Meeting Notes

Upper Republican Regional Advisory Committee (RAC) Meeting
1:00 pm, Tuesday, October 11, 2016
Northwest Kansas GMD #4, 1290 W. 4th, Colby, KS
DRAFT

Members in Attendance:

Name	City	Category	Term	Present
Sid Metcalf (Chair)	Oberlin, KS	At Large Public (cc)	2019	**Yes**
Brian Baalman	Menlo, KS	Industry/Commerce (cc)	2017	**No**
Shannon Kenyon	Colby, KS	Groundwater Management	2019	**Yes**
Gary Fisher	Atwood, KS	Local Government	2017	**Yes**
Mike Frakes	Morland, KS	At Large Public 2	2017	**No**
Jered Johnson	Colby, KS	Conservation/Environment (cc)	2017	**No**
Ken McCarty	Rexford, KS	Agriculture Industry	2019	**No**
Mike Schultz	Brewster, KS	Public Water Supply (cc)	2019	**Yes**
Justin Sloan	Colby, KS	Agriculture 2	2017	**No**
Tyson McGreer	Colby, KS	Public Water Supply 2	2017	**No**
Ian de Waal	Saint Francis, KS	Agriculture (cc)	2019	**Yes**

Others in attendance:

Name	Agency
Steven Walters	KDA/DWR
Weston McCary	NW Tech
Ray Luhman	GMD No. 4
Richard Rockel	KWO
Dana Ladner	KDA
Gary Boldt	Public
Dan Wells	KDHE
Brian Schulze	NRCS
Matt Palmquist	NRCS
Lou Frahm	Public

1. **Welcome and Introductions:** The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m. by Chairperson, Sid Metcalf. All present provided self-introductions. A quorum was not present, five of the eleven Committee members were present.

2. **Review and Approval of July Meeting Minutes**: Notes from the July meeting were reviewed, no issues or modifications were noted as being needed. .

3. **Water Vision Education and Public Outreach update (Goal 2):** Dana Ladner of the Kansas Department of Agriculture presented Draft #2 of the Vision Education and Public Outreach plan to the Committee. Some points of the plan and Committee discussion are:

    a. Grants for Regional Advisory Committee education initiatives

b. Creation of a centralized website for water related resources and information
c. Developing a grant program for water education groups and educators
d. Cost of $10 million for first three years
e. Ray Luhman commented that he would like to see more education for decision makers and to expose them to Western Kansas issues

4. **Republican River Compact Update (Goal 3):** David Barfield (KDA-DWR) gave the Committee an update on the August 2016 Republican River Compact settlement between Colorado, Kansas, and Nebraska. Some of the key points that will impact the Upper Republican region:
   a) Colorado has retired most surface water rights on the South Fork Republican River
   b) Colorado has previously retired 23,000 irrigated acres to help with compliance and restoring base flow
   c) Colorado drained Bonny Reservoir in 2012
   d) Colorado will retire an additional 23,000 irrigated acres, to reduce groundwater use and return base flows

5. **Regional Action Plan Goal Updates and discussion:** Goal1: Shannon Kenyon of Groundwater Management District (GMD) No. 4 presented the districtwide Local Enhanced Management Area (LEMA) being proposed. The GMD No. 4 is looking for a 2018 implementation date and will hold four public information sessions, which will be November 29th, November 30th, December 1st, and December 5th. Some comments from the Committee were:

   a) Provides a place to start
   b) Gets people talking and thinking about water
   c) Can adjust plan in five years
   d) Current Sheridan 6 LEMA can renew in the future
   e) Water Conservation Areas (WCA) can be present within the LEMA area.

   Goal 2: Weston McCary of the Northwest Kansas Technical College presented to the RAC the plan for Northwest Kansas Technology Farms. The plan would involve rolling out irrigation technology and technical support to willing NW KS landowners and utilizing the Northwest Tech Precision Agriculture program's resources to do soil sampling, mapping, and additional field work. The plan would provide NW Tech students additional opportunities to do work outside of the classroom, benefit NW Kansas landowners interested in irrigation technology and further conservation, and provide the foundation for a system that could be expanded when additional future funds are received.

   Goal 2: An update was given on the plan to hold a Winter Water Informational Event in the Upper Republican region. The event will be called the "2017 Water Talk Series" and be held in conjunction with the GMD No. 4 Annual Meeting on February 1, 2017 at the Northwest Kansas Technical College auditorium in Goodland, Kansas. The event is sponsored through a United States Dept. of Agriculture Risk Management Agency (USDA-RMA) grant that was received by the Kansas Water Office. The event will be focused on providing information about tool and resources available to support reduced irrigation water usage into the future. Information will be provided on irrigation technology, Limited Irrigation crop insurance options to be offered by the USDA-RMA in 2017, the GMD No. 4 LEMA, and NW KS Water Technology Farms.

   4. Update on Rules & Regulations: Steven Walters (DWR-KDA) provided an update on Water Conservation Areas (WCA) and proposed changes for 2017. On change would be basing WCA's more on a water management plan instead of requiring term permits for water use flexibilities.

5. **Update on Brewster:** Dan Wells (KDHE) provided the Committee an update on Brewster and the monitoring of nitrate movement within the city. Some key points were that KDHE installed seven additional monitoring wells in August 2016 to better document nitrate plume movement and is working with the City of Brewster to conduct pump tests of the city's public water supply wells to determine impacts on plume movement.

6. **Finalization of Action Plan:** The Committee did a final review of the Action Plan before the October 19th presentation to the Kansas Water Authority for final approval.

7. **Public Input:** None

8. **Future Meetings:**
    a. Blue Ribbon Funding Task Force: October 31, Topeka, KS
    b. Kansas Water Authority: December 15, Wichita, KS
    c. Upper Republican RAC: TBD January 2017 (Poll will be sent out)