

PUBLIC COMMENTS

To: Kansas Water Authority

From: Ryan A. Hoffman, Director, Conservation Division

RAH

Date: 10/15/21

Re: Public Comments on the Draft Kansas Water Plan

I am writing these comments in my capacity as Director of the Conservation Division of the Kansas Corporation Commission. The Conservation Division is charged with protecting usable waters of the State of Kansas by regulating oil and natural gas activities that impact those waters. I offer these comments to highlight areas of the Draft Kansas Water Plan (Draft) that are supported by efforts of the Conservation Division and request revision of the Draft to include recognition of these efforts as outlined below.

Improve the State's Water Quality

On page 47, there is a mention of the Equus Beds chloride plume and efforts by the KDHE and KWO to evaluate the extent of the plume. I would request that paragraph note that the past practices leading to the creation of the plume are no longer allowed under Kansas Corporation Commission regulations. Further, I request inserting the following sentences: "The Kansas Corporation Commission and Groundwater Management District #2 have jointly worked together to sample, analyze, and map plume concentrations within the Burrton Oil Field on a yearly basis. Current work includes the identification and replacement of older USGS monitoring wells within the network."

General Comments

One topic absent from the Draft is the issue of abandoned oil and gas wells. Abandoned oil and gas wells are a potential threat to the usable waters of Kansas and efforts to mitigate their threat should be included in any State Water Plan. The Kansas Corporation Commission conducted outreach efforts to increase the pool of available plugging contractors and in the process plugged 342 abandoned wells in FY 2021, an increase of 181 abandoned wells over FY 2020. Further, the Kansas Corporation Commission focused their abandoned well plugging efforts on wells in River Basins and floodplains. During FY 2021, 255 abandoned wells were plugged in River Basins – with 101 of the abandoned wells classified as Priority 1A or 1B, which are the most significant pollution threats. These efforts will continue to reduce the potential pollution sources within the River Basins to mitigate potential pollution problems resulting from flooding. Actions like these support the Guiding Principles of Improving the State's Water Quality and Reducing Vulnerability to Extreme

Events such as flooding. Future Kansas Water Plans should include a mention of the efforts related to the plugging of abandoned oil and gas wells that further the Guiding Principles of the Kansas Water Plan.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit these comments.