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**866 RIVKEEP to  
REPORT POLLUTION**

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October 15, 2021

Kansas Water Office  
900 SW Jackson  
Topeka, KS 88812

Re: Public Comment  
Kansas State Water Plan

Dear Kansas Water Office:

I represent the Friends of the Kaw, Inc., a 501(c)(3), grassroots, conservation organization, the mission of which is to protect and preserve the Kansas River (locally known as the Kaw) for present and future generations.

It is very important that we take this opportunity to comment on the Kansas State Water Plan. For protection of our rivers and streams, we believe the State Water Plan should incorporate more of the following:

- In the section, "Reduce Our Vulnerability to Extreme Events", we would like to see the State Water Plan encourage nature-based solutions that have multiple benefits including giving our rivers room to expand during times of flood, store water in times of drought, filter stormwater that protects drinking water quality from anything that runs off of the landscape, such as oil, pesticides, fertilizers, bacteria and soil that carries nitrogen and phosphorous. Additionally, native vegetation is important also and acts as a buffer for flood control, minimizing flooding as the water moves within the flood plain. Cities are especially vulnerable due to their higher-than-average proportion of impermeable surfaces.
- Climate change is a real and immediate threat to our water supply and we believe that this section should be more robust with plans to implement nature-based solutions.
- In regards to water quality initiatives, we believe that there should be more discussion of protecting groundwater supplies from oil and gas activities.



**Protect. Advocate. Discover.**



- In regards to the education section, we believe there should be more of an emphasis on local water education including locations of rivers and streams. This education should also include how what we do on the landscape impacts our drinking water supplies. We would encourage the Kansas Water Office to develop an interactive map that all Kansans can use to find their local water supplier and where their water comes from. This would be a very valuable educational tool for not just adults but teachers could use it in the classroom.

The Kansas River is a drinking water source for over 800,000 Kansans. We all must do what we can to protect our communities, the watershed and this valuable resource. The Kansas State Water Plan is an important document to provide a path forward for our state. It is critical that the plan include a robust path forward in the face of Climate Change. We recommend that the Kansas Water Office make sure that as a state, we are doing all that we can to mitigate the impacts.

Thank you for your hard work on the Kansas State Water Plan. We agree with the inclusion of the Regional Advisory Committee goals and action plans as an addendum. The local voice and perspective are important to the understand the needs of our state.

Thank you for your time, thank you for serving the state and thank you for the opportunity to provide public comment,

Sincerely,  
FRIENDS OF THE KAW,

Dawn Buehler  
Kansas Riverkeeper® & Executive Director

