

# Regional Advisory Committee Meeting

## Strategic Implementation Planning and FY 2026 Budget Input

### Region: Cimarron

#### Shared Criteria Discussion

- Are there any criteria you would add to the list? [RACs were provided the list of initial 6 criteria utilized during Local Consult meetings]
  - Education.
  - Innovations with Technology and Crop Varieties.
- What are your top criteria (ranked in order) and why?
  - Cost Effectiveness & Economic Impact because that drives why and how things are done.
  - Irrigation is what drives everything in the region.
- Other comments about the shared criteria?
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#### Budget Discussion: \$140 million Investment Scenario

- What is your reaction to this proposed investment scenario?
  - The proposed additional increase percentage for Aquifer (38%) compared to Reservoir (409%) and Water Quality (186%) is much lower in comparison.
  - Funding for education is much lower.
  - In western KS, education is an important key, whereas infrastructure is the need in the east.
- What activities, programs, or areas are your highest priority including those not listed on the handout?
  - Education for different crop varieties and technologies.
  - Funding to help establish a baseline data for water monitoring and quality in the region.
  - Alternative Sources of supply opportunities.
- Are the proposed levels of funding per area appropriate?
  - Do not feel like they are in a position to be able to comment on the needs for reservoir or water quality as it is not something that is familiar to them in their region.
  - Recognize the other categories do need funding.

## Reasonability Discussion: Is it reasonable for the state to. . .

- Make an outcome be that all Kansas communities will have 50 years or more water supply for their communities/economic base in 10 years?
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- Require a community seeking grants or loans to evaluate whether it's possible to connect its water system to another water system in the region; increasing the resiliency of its water supply? If it is possible, part of the project should include connecting those water systems.
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- Require a community or region seeking grants or loans to undergo some long-term water supply planning, including evaluating its assets and projects its water supply needs as it relates to future economic development?
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- Require cost share programs that provide funding for irrigation systems can only receive funding if their farms are in an area which has adopted a LEMA, WAC or IGUCA. This means some conservation measures are in place - otherwise there is no guarantee that improved technology will result in less water usage?
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- Require all programs be evaluated every 2 years based on their ability to a make measurable progress on the state water plan goals. The results will be shared with stakeholders during the local consult process. Programs underperforming will be required to be revamped or discontinued based on stakeholder input and agency expertise/judgement?
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## Revenue Source Discussion

- What do you like or dislike about these revenue sources and why?
  - Everyone needs to help pay but the burden needs to be evenly distributed amongst the user groups. Be mindful not to overtax the end users.
  - It's reasonable for everyone to pay, but the fees being paid need to go back to benefit the users paying them. Don't single out the farmers.
  - Favoring sources that are more reliable year to year.
- Are there other revenue sources that should be considered?
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## Other Feedback

- Any other RAC feedback for the Strategic Implementation Team or Kansas Water Authority?
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# Regional Advisory Committee

## Strategic Implementation Planning and FY 2026 Budget Input

### Region: Equus Walnut

#### Shared Criteria Discussion

- In addition to the 6 criteria listed on the first page, what additional 2 do you think should be considered when evaluating water investments?
  - Local stakeholder input/ local control.
  - Public health/ Safety.
- From the list of 8 criteria (the original 6 plus the 2 you chose), what would be your top 4 from the list? What order would you rank those 4? Why did you choose that ranking of 4?
  - Local input.
  - Resiliency/ cost effectiveness- need to be cost effective to start change and contributes to resiliency.
  - Public Health- Focus on Public health can help with communities that can't afford new programs/ technology upgrades.
- Other comments about the shared criteria?
  - A lot of criteria go hand in hand. Need resiliency and cost effectiveness together.
  - Public health and safety do not take backseat to economic impact.
  - Want to make sure environmental impact is addressed.

#### Budget Discussion: \$140 million Investment Scenario

- What is your reaction to this proposed investment scenario?
  - 140 million not efficient enough to cover the demand and need for water issues across State.
  - Would look to see more go towards aquifer.
  - Use money for more long-term solutions than short term solutions.
  - Want to make sure money put in for sedimentation issue, has a long-term sustainable impact (Resiliency).
  - Use other sources of funding, ex.) those causing impairments
  - Need funding for personal waste water systems (septic, and urban sewer line). Repairs for personal waste systems is very expensive and causes public health issues as well as environmental.
  - Added expenses to the repair from tickets/court.

- What activities, programs, or areas are your highest priority including those not listed on the handout?
  - Streambank Stabilization
  - Improved Dam safety
  - Funding for private waste systems
  - Emphasis on aquifer investments
  
- Are the proposed levels of funding per area appropriate?
  - Need more funding for aquifer, 18 mil is not enough to cover water issues across State.
  - Need technology improvements for long term solutions but 18 million cannot cover the need for technology improvements.
  - Seems the funding isn't hitting the goal of resiliency and long term economic/environmental impact.

### Reasonability Discussion: Is it reasonable for the state to. . . .

- Should an outcome be that all Kansas communities will have 50 years or more water supply for their communities/economic base in 10 years?
  - Concern with areas/communities expected to last less than 50 years of water supply with aquifer, what investments to help those communities to last longer than 50 years?
  - How to compare different areas with different water supply levels?
  - Municipalities should have plan in place to extend water supply.
  
- Is it reasonable for the state to require a community seeking state grants or loans to undergo some long-term water supply planning?
  - Reasonable to evaluate, not easy to require, due to lots of variables in place.
  - Difficult to require do to funding and staffing.
  
- Is it reasonable to require a community seeking grants or loans to evaluate whether it's possible to connect Water system to another water system in region to increase resiliency?
  - Should have a long-term water plan as community and municipality
  - Reasonable to ask irrigator as well to have some type of long-term plan.
    - How to incorporate irrigators into discussion?
    - Might need groundwater districts to help with task

- Is it reasonable for the state only to provide cost share programs for irrigation efficiency in areas which have adopted conservation measure through a Local Enhanced Management Area (LEMA), Water Conservation Area (WCA), or Intensive Groundwater Use Control Area (IGUCA)?
  - Shouldn't be requirement but can be used as ranking criteria.
  - Can take several years to get LEMA, IGUCA approved.
  - Can come into political conflicts.
  - Shouldn't penalize those who want to save water on their own because cannot get LEMA, WCA, or IGUCA for reasons above.
  
- Is it reasonable for the state to require all programs be evaluated every 2 years based on their ability to make measurable progress on the state water plan goals?
  - Is the cost to complete 2-year evaluations worth it?
  - Staffing cost, etc.
  - Can take over 2 years for a project to even start.
  - Can be more efficient with focus group to do evaluations instead of multiple subgroups.

### Revenue Source Discussion

- What do you like or dislike about these revenue sources and why?
  - Agree with revenue being a sales tax.
    - Everyone uses water across the state.
      - No Ag or irrigation fees.
  - In the context of general funds, make funding water a dedicated, non-discretionary priority and reduce discretionary spending across the board.
  
- Are there other revenue sources that should be considered?
  - Put a small fee on boat registrations.
  - Higher education.
  - Regarding severance tax- reasonable for a higher tax for those contributing to pollution.
  - Have go into state water plan fund.
  - Look at Missouri sales tax for conservation.
  - Irrigated land is taxed at a higher rate, can that revenue be deflected towards the State Water Plan.
  - Cost per unit/ charge for use to cover project cost.
    - Water user is paying their fair share.
  - How can we secure our revenue and funding mechanism from the future?
  - Constitutional amendment?

# Regional Advisory Committee Meeting

## Strategic Implementation Planning and FY 2026 Budget Input

### Region: Great Bend Prairie

#### Shared Criteria Discussion

- In addition to the 6 criteria listed on the first page, what additional 2 do you think should be considered when evaluating water investments?
  - Align with local/ regional goals (Stakeholder input).
  - Leverage federal funds.
  - Geographic balance for funding, money is spent in regional areas.
- From the list of 8 criteria (the original 6 plus the 2 you chose), what would be your top 4 from the list? What order would you rank those 4? Why did you choose that ranking of 4?
  - Resiliency
  - Stakeholder input
  - Consistent funding
  - Communication/Education
- Other comments about the shared criteria?
  - Need a combination of all criteria.
  - People have different definitions for some criteria.
  - Can't prioritize one criteria over another.

#### Budget Discussion: \$140 million Investment Scenario

- What is your reaction to this proposed investment scenario?
  - Heavy focus on reservoirs, just responding to sedimentation so will be ongoing cost.
    - Need more sustainable solution for reservoir sedimentation.
    - Need to be more proactive vs reactive.
  - Not well-balanced funding across State.
  - Need priority for upstream programs for reservoirs.
  - Need outreach and education as a component with funding.
  - Need more context on how the funding amounts were chosen.
  - More specific on what kind of technology referenced.
  - Need more funding for the aquifers, takes longer for recharge/ benefit of groundwater in comparison to surface waters.

- What activities, programs, or areas are your highest priority including those not listed on the handout?
- Education and outreach from irrigators and aquifer experts.
- Monitoring and modeling- provide funding opportunities across multiple agencies and across state.

### Reasonability Discussion: Is it reasonable for the state to . . .

- Should an outcome be that all Kansas communities will have 50 years or more water supply for their communities/economic base in 10 years?
  - Need at least 50 years of supplies
    - Need certainty to provide growth and investment
  - From Municipal standpoint, there is not enough staffing in smaller communities.
    - Need a metric, what data is being used? How are the metrics being set?
- Do you think it is reasonable for the state to require a community seeking state grants or loans to undergo some long-term water supply planning?
  - Small towns do not have the staff to be able to make requirements.
  - Can be part of process not prerequisite for funding.
    - Preliminary report and then used for acquisition for planning components.
  - Need consistency across planning and for funding requests.
  - Some consumption gets passed the municipal infrastructure.
- Possible to connect its water system to another water system in the region, increasing the resiliency of its water supply?
  - Need to look at resiliency and cost efficiency from technical standpoint.
  - Might be difficult to get communities on board.
- Do you think it is reasonable for the state only to provide cost share programs for irrigation efficiency in areas which have adopted conservation measure through a Local Enhanced Management Area (LEMA), Water Conservation Area (WCA), or Intensive Groundwater Use Control Area (IGUCA)?
  - Conservation is being done even without the irrigation systems.
  - Not eligible for cost share if not adopting new processes even if conservation practices are already being done.
  - No way to document individual conservation work.
  - Can hold some people back from moving forward.



- Hard to overcome “if I don’t use it, I’ll lose it” cause all programs look at historical usage
- Do you think it is reasonable for the state to require all programs be evaluated every 2 years based on their ability to make measurable progress on the state water plan goals?
  - In aquifer, 2 years is too narrow of a window, can be impossible to hit those goals in two years. Need minimum of 5 years for review because just takes longer with aquifer.
  - Difficult with lots of staff turnovers across different agencies and state.
  - Difficult with staffing and timely results.
  - 2 years can be more doable for educational programs.
  - Can take 1 year to get program running and then only have 1 year to look at for effectiveness. Need to consider start up and learning phase of a program.
  - Need frequent check ins but not reasonable timeline in 2 years.
  - Still need measurable progress for accountability so programs can be successful.

### Revenue Source Discussion

- What do you like or dislike about these revenue sources?
  - Some of these funds need to be matched with federal dollars.
  - Need to ensure what funding dedicated toward new program is protected from year to year and legislative changes.
  - Encourage to look at programs that are already working and shape around that instead of reinventing the wheel.
  - Not efficient to get people to try new technologies and practices if they have to eventually pay a fee.
    - Need some balance between usage of ag and municipal.
    - Need more info on the what is the right criteria on the balance between usage, economics, and population.

# Regional Advisory Committee Meeting

## Strategic Implementation Planning and FY 2026 Budget Input

### Region: Kansas

#### Shared Criteria Discussion

- Are there any criteria you would add to the list? [RACs were provided the list of initial 6 criteria utilized during Local Consult meetings]
  - - Does this comply with the principle of prior appropriation (first in time, first in right)? Could some of the issues be resolved by enforcing already-established state laws/tools/principles?
  - - Compliance with existing statutory goals and objectives for the management of water in the state.
  - - Considerations for nature-based solutions: projects can be lower cost with higher effectiveness.
  - - Sustainability of projects in terms of financing and resiliency.
- What are your top criteria (ranked in order) and why?
  - Resiliency - Sustainable solutions that consider the present and future needs in terms of water quantity and quality. Ensuring the resource for the future.
  - Cost Effectiveness - funding is currently our greatest shortcoming, important to prioritize cost effective projects. economic Impact - Prioritizing projects that positively impact the state's economy.
  - Environmental impact - Encompasses a lot of the other criteria. This includes resiliency, cost effectiveness, local input, etc. stakeholder input - Important to have the local input to best solve issues. leveraging federal funds (all types - private, public, federal, local, etc.) - Important to leverage all available funding.
  - Measurable impact of Principle Progress - looking further than the number of Guiding Principles impacted, but how they are impacted.
- Other comments about the shared criteria?
  -

#### Budget Discussion: \$140 million Investment Scenario

- What is your reaction to this proposed investment scenario?
  - This proposed investment scenario needs more context for RAC members to be able to comment thoughtfully on.

- Does not seem like enough money to tackle all projects in the entire state
- What activities, programs, or areas are your highest priority including those not listed on the handout?
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- Are the proposed levels of funding per area appropriate?
  - The amount of funding allocated to research and education does not seem like enough.

### Reasonability Discussion: Is it reasonable for the state to. . . .

- Make an outcome be that all Kansas communities will have 50 years or more water supply for their communities/economic base in 10 years?
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- Require a community seeking grants or loans to evaluate whether it's possible to connect its water system to another water system in the region; increasing the resiliency of its water supply? If it is possible, part of the project should include connecting those water systems.
  -
- Require a community or region seeking grants or loans to undergo some long-term water supply planning, including evaluating its assets and projects its water supply needs as it relates to future economic development?
  -
- Require cost share programs that provide funding for irrigation systems can only receive funding if their farms are in an area which has adopted a LEMA, WAC or IGUCA. This means some conservation measures are in place - otherwise there is no guarantee that improved technology will result in less water usage?
  -
- Require all programs be evaluated every 2 years based on their ability to a make measurable progress on the state water plan goals. The results will be shared with stakeholders during the local consult process. Programs underperforming will be required to be revamped or discontinued based on stakeholder input and agency expertise/judgement?
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## Revenue Source Discussion

- What do you like or dislike about these revenue sources and why?
  - Some RAC members are in favor of irrigation water use fees with irrigation & agriculture being high water users, other RAC members are opposed to this because of the economic impacts to irrigators.
  - Irrigation fees can help pay for the irrigation technologies needed in the high-use areas where fees are collected. The money raised from fees should be applied back to the area where it originates.
  - Some support shared for bonding, but there are concerns with having to pay this back in the future.
  - Support for a sales tax specific to plastic-bottled liquids to support water resource resiliency.
  - The approach should be broad with all water users bearing some burden.
- Are there other revenue sources that should be considered?
  - A sales tax should not be a general tax, it should be specific to the plastic-bottle liquids.

## Other Feedback

- Any other RAC feedback for the Strategic Implementation Team or Kansas Water Authority?
  - Felt like this process was rushed and RACs were not provided enough context/background to fully understand the developments in this process.

# Regional Advisory Committee Meeting

## Strategic Implementation Planning and FY 2026 Budget Input

### Region: Marais des Cygnes

#### Shared Criteria Discussion

- Are there any criteria you would add to the list? [RACs were provided the list of initial 6 criteria utilized during Local Consult meetings]
  - Public-Private-Partnerships.
  - Measurable Impact on Principle Progress.
- What are your top criteria (ranked in order) and why?
  - 1. Resiliency.
  - 2. Public-Private-Partnerships.
  - 3. Cost-effectiveness.
  - 4. Number of Guiding Principles Impacted.
- Other comments about the shared criteria?
  - Cost-effectiveness should have matching federal funds considered.
  - Close call on prioritizing "Cost-effectiveness" and "Number of Guiding Principles Impacted".
  - Discussion on overlapping ideas within each 8 criteria.

#### Budget Discussion: \$140 million Investment Scenario

- What is your reaction to this proposed investment scenario?
  - May need a ramp up period since an additional \$80million is a lot of money. - Stepping up to the \$140million/year.
  - Need the technical staff/assistance to be able to implement all of the proposed activities.
  - Difficult to know what exactly is reasonable even for water stakeholders and experts.
  - Overall positive reaction, with ramp up period, with caveats on some activities.
  - Water has been generationally underfunded and it will take generations to fix the problem.
- What activities, programs, or areas are your highest priority including those not listed on the handout?
  - Resiliency in sediment management - moving the sediment that is accumulating each year.

- Keeping resiliency in mind - put money into activities that will improve status of water resources, not just make it more efficient to use the resource and extend the problem.
- Are the proposed levels of funding per area appropriate?
  - Comment: Does the amounts identified include the technical assistance necessary to implement and/or ramp up to implementation?
  - Not inclined to spend more public dollars on orphan wells without conversation on bonding requirements and risk of more abandoned wells.
  - Math breakdown of \$46.6 per person per year, big jump but reasonable.

### Reasonability Discussion: Is it reasonable for the state to . . .

- Make an outcome be that all Kansas communities will have 50 years or more water supply for their communities/economic base in 10 years?
  - Yes, this is a good goal.
  - The party (developer) responsible for the methods and means of providing this water. The burden should not be on the community.
  - Water intensive industries are looking at Kansas to move into. Need to plan accordingly when engaging with these industries and committing huge amounts of water.
  - Careful coordination between water agencies, developers, and communities on this topic.
- Require a community seeking grants or loans to evaluate whether it's possible to connect its water system to another water system in the region; increasing the resiliency of its water supply? If it is possible, part of the project should include connecting those water systems.
  - Overall, yes, it is reasonable, but also would require help with funding and technical assistance.
  - Overall, yes, it is reasonable. Communities may need help funding this kind of study. This ties to resiliency.
- Require a community or region seeking grants or loans to undergo some long-term water supply planning, including evaluating its assets and projects its water supply needs as it relates to future economic development?
  - Overall, yes, it is reasonable, but also would require help with funding and technical assistance.
- Require cost share programs that provide funding for irrigation systems can only receive funding if their farms are in an area which has adopted a LEMA, WAC or IGUCA. This means some conservation measures are in place - otherwise there is no guarantee that improved technology will result in less water usage?

- Eastern Kansas does not have these options, so this would discriminate against farms in Eastern Kansas.
- Expand verbiage to "if these water conservation measurement areas are available in your area" then it could be a requirement. Helps protect against Eastern Kansas farms not receiving cost share funding.
- May need to be more location specific.
- Require all programs be evaluated every 2 years based on their ability to make measurable progress on the state water plan goals. The results will be shared with stakeholders during the local consult process. Programs underperforming will be required to be revamped or discontinued based on stakeholder input and agency expertise/judgement?
  - Overall reevaluation timeframes may need to be variable based on the goal.
  - Regularly, not every 2 years.
  - Need metrics/definitions around an "underperforming program".

### Revenue Source Discussion

- What do you like or dislike about these revenue sources and why?
  - State general fund source is not a dependable source; more subject to political sways of the legislature.
- Are there other revenue sources that should be considered?
  - Sales tax - works well with Missouri Department of Conservation. More stable source of revenue/funding.
  - Dedicated conservation fund to have funds available to federal match - Need more clarification on the definition of sales tax. New sales tax is scary and may be met with opposition.
  - Per-gallon tax on irrigation may need to be considered statewide.

### Other Feedback

- Any other RAC feedback for the Strategic Implementation Team or Kansas Water Authority?
  - Question on underlying assumption to raise \$35million in sales tax, what kind of increase does that assume?
  - Conservation Districts are important to continue funding for education and state program implementation. They have been around for a long time and are a staple in every county in the state.

# Regional Advisory Committee Meeting

## Strategic Implementation Planning and FY 2026 Budget Input

### Region: Missouri

#### Shared Criteria Discussion

- Are there any criteria you would add to the list? [RACs were provided the list of initial 6 criteria utilized during Local Consult meetings]
  - The additional criteria that have been added from the input received from the Local Consult Meetings seems to be adequate.
  - All criteria listed on the 2 pages should be considered in the decision-making process.
- What are your top criteria (ranked in order) and why?
  - Resiliency.
  - Geographic distribution.
  - Measurable impact on the goals of the State Water Plan.
- Other comments about the shared criteria?
  - The criteria should be tied directly to the impact on the goals of the State Water Plan.

#### Budget Discussion: \$140 million Investment Scenario

- What is your reaction to this proposed investment scenario?
  - Sedimentation should be considered as a water quality & agricultural (in terms of soil loss) concern.
  - In the proposed investment scenario, it seems that sedimentation is only listed for watersheds with reservoirs and is not including non-reservoir watersheds (such as the Missouri), and it should be included within the water quality section as well.
  - For water quality, the efforts to address the TMDL concerns need to be clearer.
  - Concerns for upstream, out of state reservoirs (USACE) impacts (such as degradation brought on by low flows that interfere with Kansas diversions from the Missouri River).
- What activities, programs, or areas are your highest priority including those not listed on the handout?
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- Are the proposed levels of funding per area appropriate?
  - There should be an increase in funding for the education & outreach and grant funding - technical assistance & water projects sections.
  - To demonstrate the necessity of funding and consequences of not funding, there should be a description of the cost of inaction for each listed category.

### Reasonability Discussion: Is it reasonable for the state to . . .

- Make an outcome be that all Kansas communities will have 50 years or more water supply for their communities/economic base in 10 years?
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- Require a community seeking grants or loans to evaluate whether it's possible to connect its water system to another water system in the region; increasing the resiliency of its water supply? If it is possible, part of the project should include connecting those water systems.
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- Require a community or region seeking grants or loans to undergo some long-term water supply planning, including evaluating its assets and projects its water supply needs as it relates to future economic development?
  -
- Require cost share programs that provide funding for irrigation systems can only receive funding if their farms are in an area which has adopted a LEMA, WAC or IGUCA. This means some conservation measures are in place - otherwise there is no guarantee that improved technology will result in less water usage?
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- Require all programs be evaluated every 2 years based on their ability to a make measurable progress on the state water plan goals. The results will be shared with stakeholders during the local consult process. Programs underperforming will be required to be revamped or discontinued based on stakeholder input and agency expertise/judgement?
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### Revenue Source Discussion

- What do you like or dislike about these revenue sources and why?
  - Some RAC members are for increasing sand royalty fees.
  - Some RAC members are for increasing water user fees, but there should be a slow ramp period up to these increases.
  - Bond funds should only be used for long-term investments and not operation and maintenance costs.
  - Some RAC members are concerned that irrigators will shoulder the majority of the needed funding.
  - If there is an irrigation fee (within the MO Region), it should not be applied to the surface water/run-off capture.
- Are there other revenue sources that should be considered?
  - Tax on plastic-bottled liquids.
  - Additional tax carve-off which aligns with the State of Missouri and how they fund water.
  - Add a flat-rate charge of \$1/year on all water meters in the state.
  - Casino profits.
  - Fee on industrial discharge.
  - Dedicated portion/carve off of the fishing & boating license fees to the water plan fund.

### Other Feedback

- Any other RAC feedback for the Strategic Implementation Team or Kansas Water Authority?
  - Concerns communicated from the agricultural community about the timing of the LCMs.

# Regional Advisory Committee Meeting

## Strategic Implementation Planning and FY 2026 Budget Input

### Region: Neosho

#### Shared Criteria Discussion

- Are there any criteria you would add to the list? [RACs were provided the list of initial 6 criteria utilized during Local Consult meetings]
  - Environmental Impact
  - Geographic Balance
- What are your top criteria (ranked in order) and why?
  - Resiliency,
  - Environmental Impact,
  - Regional Partnership Impact,
  - Geographic Balance
- Other comments about the shared criteria?
  - Resiliency relates more to the Neosho goals in reference to droughts and floods.
  - Environmental Impact/Geographic balance are big.
  - Stakeholder input is something that must be done throughout the entire process. (The group was disappointed in the lack of stakeholder input throughout the entire process.)
  - At the Pittsburg meeting, Regional Partnership/Impact and Guiding Principles Impacted was also strongly considered. Education will be a key factor tied on to it all.
  - There seems to be a movement away from the consideration of what is causing all of the issues. There are ways of reducing aquifer depletion and sedimentation of the reservoirs. We are now focusing on responding to the effects instead of the cause. There needs to be a long-term focus on the root cause. Resiliency and environmental impact might help mitigate these issues. It's a political failure to not do this.

#### Budget Discussion: \$140 million Investment Scenario

- What is your reaction to this proposed investment scenario?
  - Encouraged by the funding amount and the appearance to address our priorities.
  - Disappointed to see such a high number on in-reservoir sedimentation and no other methods. Yes, streambank stabilization is whack-a-mole, but we need to expand the methods.

- The additional investment outcomes seemed like arbitrary numbers and outcomes. What actual data is behind those numbers? At the current funding level, we don't go anywhere. We don't get anything we already have. How practical is actually getting the \$140 million, but we have to go there because the current funding gets us nowhere and we have to make progress.
  - Throwing more money at what we are doing is good, but we have to look at other ways to address the issues.
  - From a RAC standpoint of reducing sedimentation, two of them are in the Neosho and two more are close, so that actually affects our RAC.
- What activities, programs, or areas are your highest priority including those not listed on the handout?
    - We need to figure out how to stop the sedimentation from getting into our streams and reservoirs. If we have floodgates we use that can be arranged with local producers, might be a way other than scooping out the sediment out of the reservoir. Many alternative measures of prevention seem easy to do, it just takes political will to actually do it.
    - We need to get to the point of dealing with as much sediment as what is coming in. It isn't the point to get to zero, but to keep the reservoirs at the level they are at (not get worse) – to be at net zero and not lose ground for in lake sediment management.
  - Are the proposed levels of funding per area appropriate?
    - The big jump is with the reservoirs more than the aquifer and it makes sense when you think of the root causes. The root causes of the aquifer would be lower cost than solving direct reservoir issues.
    - Other than what is actually listed as to what will be done with the funds, the amount seems realistic to solving our goals and issues in Kansas.
    - There is not a good capture of the externalities, but the issues from the feedlots should be paid by the feedlots. There should be a way of capturing those that are causing the issue should be paying for the issue, not Kansans as a whole.

### Reasonability Discussion: Is it reasonable for the state to . . .

- Make an outcome be that all Kansas communities will have 50 years or more water supply for their communities/economic base in 10 years?
  - It's a great goal.
  - Think it is something we should do in everything we do.

o Think all of them are favorable – unanimous agreement.

- Require a community seeking grants or loans to evaluate whether it's possible to connect its water system to another water system in the region; increasing the resiliency of its water supply? If it is possible, part of the project should include connecting those water systems.
  - o Huge supporter of regional connections for times of drought will help sustain each other and having state support is great.
  
- Require a community or region seeking grants or loans to undergo some long-term water supply planning, including evaluating its assets and projects its water supply needs as it relates to future economic development?
  - o Everyone should be working towards this goal.
  
- Require cost share programs that provide funding for irrigation systems can only receive funding if their farms are in an area which has adopted a LEMA, WAC or IGUCA. This means some conservation measures are in place - otherwise there is no guarantee that improved technology will result in less water usage?
  - o If those drawing water from the aquifer should be paying a maintenance fee and a base charge for pulling water out just like the east has to with pulling water out of the river.
  - o The problems we are having is because we haven't held people accountable for the issues they have caused. This is something we need to do and it will create accountability.
  - o We must have accountability when we are talking about 50 years. It is very important.
  
- Require all programs be evaluated every 2 years based on their ability to make measurable progress on the state water plan goals. The results will be shared with stakeholders during the local consult process. Programs underperforming will be required to be revamped or discontinued based on stakeholder input and agency expertise/judgement?
  - o This would create the bang for your buck effects that may create issues for small communities. It would get the common citizen involved.
  - o Does the state have the personnel to be able to do this?

## Revenue Source Discussion

- What do you like or dislike about these revenue sources and why?
  - The sales tax is the quickest and easiest, yet the one that will get the most pushback by the public. That probably won't be popular enough to be supported. Bonding may be better with this issue. Like the idea of a severance tax, but are not sure the rest of them could be sold to the public.
  - We have not explored all of the externalities of the current sources, especially on the \$8M for the Ag Irrigation Water Use Fee. (This is a drop in the bucket for the irrigation sector.) We need to explore expanding the impact fee.
  
- Are there other revenue sources that should be considered?
  - Has anybody looked at doing a tax on the retail sale of water (purchase of water from stores) that would be earmarked to go specifically to the SWPF? This might be an easier sell to the public. Others thought this was a great idea, especially for bottled water that contains water from another state, so Kansas wasn't able to benefit from selling that water to the bottling company.
  - If you are able to do it on the retail side, if you are able to track it, it is better than charging on the municipal side.
  - All of the irrigation water usage is metered, there is not base rate per gallon or a base rate for taking out of the aquifer.
  - There is a glaring hole with the no fee for 83% of the water usage in Kansas.

## Other Feedback

- Any other RAC feedback for the Strategic Implementation Team or Kansas Water Authority?
  - None

# Regional Advisory Committee Meeting

## Strategic Implementation Planning and FY 2026 Budget Input

### Region: Red Hills

#### Shared Criteria Discussion

- Are there any criteria you would add to the list? [RACs were provided the list of initial 6 criteria utilized during Local Consult meetings]
  - Leveraging federal funds.
  - Geographic balance.
  - Local contributions.
  - Environmental Impact.
- What are your top criteria (ranked in order) and why?
  - 1. Resiliency
  - 2. Economic Impact
  - 3. Environmental Impact
  - 4. Geographic Balance
- Other comments about the shared criteria?

#### Budget Discussion: \$140 million Investment Scenario

- What is your reaction to this proposed investment scenario?
  - Seems to be general consensus and an overall positive reaction to \$140 million per year.
  - There may be room to move money around to different activities within the \$140 million.
  - Want to spend money on activities that will fix problems.
- What activities, programs, or areas are your highest priority including those not listed on the handout?
  - More focus on Aquifer, Water Quality, Research & Education, and grant programs buckets.
  - Research money towards activities that advance Red Hills goals (research, regionalization, consultation, technical assistance) (i.e. building a reservoir, invasive species...etc.).
  - Stream gauging data collection should be included in overall investment related package, particularly expansion of program into the Red Hills area.
- Are the proposed levels of funding per area appropriate?
  - Agreeance on want for more effort in erosion/sediment prevention activities to address sedimentation rather than a focus on reservoirs.

## Reasonability Discussion: Is it reasonable for the state to. . .

- Make an outcome be that all Kansas communities will have 50 years or more water supply for their communities/economic base in 10 years?
  - 50 years should be the minimum, but overall, this goal needs to be revisited on a regular basis.
  - At least 50 years or more of water supply for their communities.
- Require a community seeking grants or loans to evaluate whether it's possible to connect its water system to another water system in the region; increasing the resiliency of its water supply? If it is possible, part of the project should include connecting those water systems.
  - Small communities with some distance away from larger communities may not be interested in paying for interconnection.
  - Evaluation may not be a bad thing though.
- Require a community or region seeking grants or loans to undergo some long-term water supply planning, including evaluating its assets and projects its water supply needs as it relates to future economic development?
  - It would be up to the community.
  - Some grants may already require this.
- Require cost share programs that provide funding for irrigation systems can only receive funding if their farms are in an area which has adopted a LEMA, WAC or IGUCA. This means some conservation measures are in place - otherwise there is no guarantee that improved technology will result in less water usage?
  - This does not seem reasonable since it would limit the potential for conservation.
  - This would actually seem to discourage conservation to require an area to be in a LEMA, WAC, or IGUCA.
- Require all programs be evaluated every 2 years based on their ability to make measurable progress on the state water plan goals. The results will be shared with stakeholders during the local consult process. Programs underperforming will be required to be revamped or discontinued based on stakeholder input and agency expertise/judgement?
  - Bigger question is who is evaluating (specifically the locality) and what is the cost of evaluated.
  - Need to evaluate if a program is doing what it is supposed to do.
  - 2-year timeframe seems appropriate, but some programs may move at slower speeds than others. Development timeframe needs to be considered.

## Revenue Source Discussion



- What do you like or dislike about these revenue sources and why?
- Are there other revenue sources that should be considered?
  - Sales tax on food was reduced and now discussing a sales tax on water (also a necessity to life). This would be an argument against a sales tax increase.
  - Favorable to bonding - similar to the highway plan - need to take debt service into consideration.
  - Fees are difficult since it puts the burden on a smaller portion of people, but the whole state sees the benefit.

### Other Feedback

- Any other RAC feedback for the Strategic Implementation Team or Kansas Water Authority?
  -

## Advisory Committee Member

### Strategic Implementation Planning and FY 2026 Budget Input

#### Region: Smoky Hill Saline

#### Shared Criteria Discussion

- In addition to the 6 criteria listed on the first page, what additional 2 do you think should be considered when evaluating water investments?
  - Geographical Balance
  - Environmental Impact
  - Resiliency
  - Local Contribution
  
- From the list of 8 criteria (the original 6 plus the 2 you chose), what would be your top 4 from the list? What order would you rank those 4? Why did you choose that ranking of 4?
  - 1. Geographical balance/ local contribution, need to have an even balanced funding for water issues in the state. Would like to see issues in every part of state be addressed.
  - 2. Cost Effectiveness, need funding before anything can get done. Can't have environmental impact without cost effectiveness.
  - 3. Resiliency.
  - 4. Environmental Impact.
  - Some environmental issues aren't being addressed due to geographical balance.
  
- Do you have any other comments about the shared criteria?
  - Many of the criteria are already combined. Ex.) Geographical balance also includes local contribution.

#### Budget Discussion: \$140 million Investment Scenario

- What is your reaction to this proposed investment scenario?
  - Don't see a lot of emphasis on anything urban for efficiency systems
    - Ex.) lawn, golf course, and parks irrigation systems.
  - Education is not prioritized enough.
  - Lots of funding towards dredging without seeing the long-term effects or have enough information on how resilient they are.

- What activities, programs, or areas are your highest priority including those not listed on the handout?
  - General public education at all levels.
    - Start with education and research and then work way up to projects.
  - Need adequate conservation treatment to maintain reservoir storage.
- Are the proposed levels of funding per area appropriate?
  - Lots of funding up front for Reservoirs without knowing if projects are resilient.
  - Five years seems reasonable but will need to hire more staff and training to implement which will need more funding.

### Reasonability Discussion: Is it reasonable for the state to. . . .

- Should an outcome be that all Kansas communities will have 50 years or more water supply for their communities/economic base in 10 years?
  - Is unreasonable; every small population on rural water and domestic well seems like an impossible task.
  - Is reasonable due to rainfall and reservoir in some areas.
  - Unreasonable in Western side of state due to limited water resources and rain.
- Do you think it is reasonable for the state to require a community seeking state grants or loans to undergo some long-term water supply planning?
  - Its reasonable but would the staff offer resources for communities that do not have the resources to implement plan.
  - Needs accountability and results on if the plan is working
    - Ex. Need results and information shared from irrigation. Are their water conservation plans working?
    - Need to make sure practices and infrastructure is working.
  - Should have communities share water saved and how much water is wasted for accountability.
- Require a community seeking grants or loans to evaluate whether it's possible to connect Water system to another water system in region to increase resiliency.
  - One of the main goals of RAC is interconnectivity and is reasonable for State to require.
  - Should be explored but may get difficult politically.
- Do you think it is reasonable for the state only to provide cost share programs for irrigation efficiency in areas which have adopted conservation measure through a Local Enhanced Management Area (LEMA), Water Conservation Area (WCA), or Intensive Groundwater Use Control Area (IGUCA)?
  - Ties back to geographical balance, everybody should be able to receive funding.

- Want people to see the benefits of conservation and investments.
    - Should not be limited to these areas
  - Need to add golf courses to follow the same guidelines, can't just limit to Ag
  - Need to include municipal irrigation to be able to update to better conservation technology as well. This requirement will limit funding going to other sources outside of Ag.
- Do you think it is reasonable for the state to require all programs be evaluated every 2 years based on their ability to make measurable progress on the state water plan goals?
  - 2 years is too short of time, rain levels can cause variances in data.
    - Can't see trends.
  - Some metrics are not reasonable for 2 years, some are long term metrics some are immediate and really depends on the project.
  - Needs to be flexible for different projects that have its own metrics and nuances in program.

### Revenue Source Discussion

- What do you like or dislike about these revenue sources and why? Are there other revenue sources that should be considered?
  - How much money would the state save with updated water efficient systems in government owned facilities and building?
  - General fund increase is reasonable. All water users need to support slight cost increases
  - Water bottle fees
  - Ag irrigation is already taxed so not reasonable to just tax ag irrigation more.
    - If you tax one irrigation source need to tax all irrigation sources
    - Producers are already paying additional taxes and fees to support ground management districts
  - Incentive water conservation and usage by lower taxes
    - Tier system determined by usage

### Other Feedback

- Any other RAC feedback for the Strategic Implementation Team or Kansas Water Authority?
  - Greater effort to go after specific groups.
    - Coordinate with other groups to reach more demographics

# Regional Advisory Committee Meeting

## Strategic Implementation Planning and FY 2026 Budget Input

### Region: Solomon-Republican

#### Shared Criteria Discussion

- Are there any criteria you would add to the list? [RACs were provided the list of initial 6 criteria utilized during Local Consult meetings]
  - \*Input not from a quorum\*
  - Cost effectiveness/economic impact
  - Geographic balance
  - Stakeholder input (defining it as informed stakeholders - RACs, GMDs, Rural Water District members, etc.)
- What are your top criteria (ranked in order) and why?
  -
- Other comments about the shared criteria?
  -

#### Budget Discussion: \$140 million Investment Scenario

- What is your reaction to this proposed investment scenario?
  - \*Input not from a quorum\*
  - Would this increase in funding be feasible in terms of maintaining the funding long-term, ability to implement/use all of the funding, not wanting to burden communities with increased fees/taxes.
  - Seems necessary to ensure that the current funding levels are effect enough to warrant this increase.
- What activities, programs, or areas are your highest priority including those not listed on the handout?
  - \*Input not from a quorum\*
  - Increase the funding level for research & education to be able to further reach entities that are not currently involved in water education such as HOAs, businesses, etc.
  - Contaminated site clean-up & repairs/replacements for residential septic systems & drinking water wells are highly important as well.
- Are the proposed levels of funding per area appropriate?

- \*Input not from a quorum\*
- Make the funding levels for the Aquifer & Reservoir more equitable.

### Reasonability Discussion: Is it reasonable for the state to . . .

- Make an outcome be that all Kansas communities will have 50 years or more water supply for their communities/economic base in 10 years?
  - \*Input not from a quorum\*
  - 50 years is a good goal, but we need to take changing (declining) populations into consideration when planning for 50 (or more years).
- Require a community seeking grants or loans to evaluate whether it's possible to connect its water system to another water system in the region; increasing the resiliency of its water supply? If it is possible, part of the project should include connecting those water systems.
  - \*Input not from a quorum\*
  - Communities need help to be able to apply for grants & loans.
  - Technical assistance is needed to accomplish this.
  - In north-central Kansas, several communities purchase water from RWDs, so it seems feasible for the RWDs to further interconnect, but considering the cost of the interconnects seems concerning.
  - There are also concerns with communities being so interconnected, that within a catastrophe, this makes the system/communities more vulnerable.
- Require a community or region seeking grants or loans to undergo some long-term water supply planning, including evaluating its assets and projects its water supply needs as it relates to future economic development?
  - \*Input not from a quorum\*
  - How are communities able to do this without technical assistance or manpower?
- Require cost share programs that provide funding for irrigation systems can only receive funding if their farms are in an area which has adopted a LEMA, WAC or IGUCA. This means some conservation measures are in place - otherwise there is no guarantee that improved technology will result in less water usage?
  - \*Input not from a quorum\*
  - Internal (conservation district) boards can prioritize locally through a ranking system.

- Would not want irrigators in our region to miss out because we do not have these mechanisms in place.
- Require all programs be evaluated every 2 years based on their ability to make measurable progress on the state water plan goals. The results will be shared with stakeholders during the local consult process. Programs underperforming will be required to be revamped or discontinued based on stakeholder input and agency expertise/judgement?
  - \*Input not from a quorum\*
  - This is reasonable and should apply to all state programs, not just water.

### Revenue Source Discussion

- What do you like or dislike about these revenue sources and why?
  - \*Input not from a quorum\*
  - Have heard objections for the irrigation fees due to producers' property tax already being higher.
  - Concerns with the public being able to afford the doubled water use fees as well as the increasing water prices locally to fund infrastructure projects.
  - Bonding makes sense for infrastructure.
  - Not in favor of increased sales taxes.
  - State K12 funding should be audited, and some of that funding should be reallocated to water.
- Are there other revenue sources that should be considered?
  - \* Input not from a quorum\*
  - There is a lot of overlap between the state agencies that deal with water.
  - Streamline water agencies to ensure the money going towards them is spent most efficiently.

### Other Feedback

- Any other RAC feedback for the Strategic Implementation Team or Kansas Water Authority?
  -

# Regional Advisory Committee Meeting

## Strategic Implementation Planning and FY 2026 Budget Input

### Region: Upper Arkansas

#### Shared Criteria Discussion

- Are there any criteria you would add to the list? [RACs were provided the list of initial 6 criteria utilized during Local Consult meetings]
  - Top two are Economic Impact and Resiliency.
    - Other discussion:
      - Population, Prioritize Under-Represented Communities.
      - Private Property rights.
      - Number of Guiding Principles.
      - Geographic balance.
      - Limited else wear.
      - Best Management Practices/Measurable Impacts.
      - Alternative Supply Sources.
  - A lot of the criteria are similar.
    - Can they be grouped?
- What are your top criteria (ranked in order) and why?
  - Top picks:
    - 1) Resiliency/Economic Impact (we see that these two criteria work hand in hand).
    - 2) Stakeholder Input.
  - Other comments and/or votes for other criteria:
  - Number of guiding principles impacted.
  - Leveraging federal funds.
- Other comments about the shared criteria?
  -

#### Budget Discussion: \$140 million Investment Scenario



- What is your reaction to this proposed investment scenario?
  - General Comments:
    - More money is needed \$140 million is not enough.
    - At first glance, the \$18 million seems a little low for the aquifer, and have heard from others in different regions that they also feel the aquifer amount is also very low.
    - Not sure exactly what can really be accomplished with only \$18 million for aquifer.
    - The money should be split equally between aquifer and reservoirs and water quality.
      - \$56 million would be used up very quickly by reservoirs.
      - Why is there so much state money going towards federal reservoirs?
      - Shouldn't Feds already put \$ towards upkeep and/or restoration of Reservoirs vs State funds?
      - We as Kansans should be spending money on State owned Reservoirs vs Fed Reservoirs.
      - Need to know how much money KS is spending for drinking water in these Federal Reservoirs before making decisions.
    - Today's dollar value is more than a dollar in 10 years and especially 100 years from now.
  
- What activities, programs, or areas are your highest priority including those not listed on the handout?
  - Past Conservation practices that water users have incorporated/ installed in their water consumption/use should be a higher priority when awarding cost-share funds to show/share that using less water is beneficial to our water resources as well as the producer and the economy for Kansas.
  - Funding for cost-share and/or match for additional staffing for Fed, State, and NGO programs & positions should be looked at if not already.
  - Encourage looking more at the federal funding sources (via USDA programs, matching grants (RCPP), and potentially Bonding for very large projects.) that can turn this \$1 KS dollar into \$5 KS project dollars.
  - Promote more funding for Programs that advocate irrigation systems to be more efficient and system audits and making sure Kansas is pumping less ground water.

- Looking at efficiencies, use less water but still make the same number of crops (IE being efficient and pumping less water but produce same amount of yield... take burden off of producer to do research).
  - Encourage more Eco-systems service infrastructure to include buffer strips, wetland construction/restoration, playa restoration, etc, that will help with water quality and quantity with additional green space and wildlife habitat that may help to stretch these dollars and have a greater effect on a region while providing an area for education.
  - Additional funding/research to cover-crops.
  - Grow funding for watershed restoration.
- Are the proposed levels of funding per area appropriate?
  - - No: Aquifer, Reservoir and Quality need to be more evenly split.

#### Reasonability Discussion: Is it reasonable for the state to. . . .

- Make an outcome be that all Kansas communities will have 50 years or more water supply for their communities/economic base in 10 years?
  - Disagree: 50 years is too short. You will not create any new business with only a 50 yr plan. Planning for centuries vs decades to maintain and grow regional economy.
- Require a community seeking grants or loans to evaluate whether it's possible to connect its water system to another water system in the region; increasing the resiliency of its water supply? If it is possible, part of the project should include connecting those water systems.
  - Disagree: (going off of point #1) Yes, it is reasonable. It needs to be done on a regional basis. Keeping the size reasonable. Work with smaller communities to develop a rural water district and finding ways to meet their needs.
- Require a community or region seeking grants or loans to undergo some long-term water supply planning, including evaluating its assets and projects its water supply needs as it relates to future economic development?
  - Disagree: (going off of point # 1 & #2) Yes definitely that 10-50 years is too short.
- Require cost share programs that provide funding for irrigation systems can only receive funding if their farms are in an area which has adopted a LEMA, WAC or IGUCA. This

means some conservation measures are in place - otherwise there is no guarantee that improved technology will result in less water usage?

- Disagree. Let anyone that wants to conserve water obtain cost-share opportunities. If they are in a WCA or something similar they could receive priority. And if they are receiving funding assistance there needs to be a metric of some kind to evaluate how they are doing. Past conservation practices need to also be taken in as priority.
- Require all programs be evaluated every 2 years based on their ability to make measurable progress on the state water plan goals. The results will be shared with stakeholders during the local consult process. Programs underperforming will be required to be revamped or discontinued based on stakeholder input and agency expertise/judgement?
  - Disagree: Two years is not enough. You need longer to be able to effectively evaluate how things are doing.

### Revenue Source Discussion

- What do you like or dislike about these revenue sources and why?
  - Every Kansan uses water so every Kansan needs to pay for it.
    - The sales tax is the obvious choice. It's fair. Everyone joins in.
  - Use the sales tax like what Minnesota does ( Like the one in KS, IE : HB 2514).
    - The irrigation water use fee is definitely not going fly.
    - Tax on irrigation usage is not a good idea.
    - If there is an irrigation fee then there also needs to be a municipal fee, golf course fee.... All water uses need to have a fee.
    - Any irrigation tax taken, needs to go back to directly benefit the region it is taken from.
  - Bonding needs to be limited to the communities/regions to go towards a larger project, but does not need to be covered by the state.
- Are there other revenue sources that should be considered?
  - Percentage of sales tax could cover the entire need for the state.

### Other Feedback

- Any other RAC feedback for the Strategic Implementation Team or Kansas Water Authority?
  - Consider the Upper Ark RAC's goal.
  - Look at combining some of the shared criteria.
  - Some of these meetings felt rushed to make decisions. Decisions that may not be the best due to several factors... rushed, herd mentality, not knowing/having correct information, ETC.
  - Would like to thank the team for trying to tackle this issue. This is not an easy thing to do.

# Regional Advisory Committee Meeting

## Strategic Implementation Planning and FY 2026 Budget Input

### Region: Upper Republican

#### Shared Criteria Discussion

- Are there any criteria you would add to the list? [RACs were provided the list of initial 6 criteria utilized during Local Consult meetings]
  - Programs that are already in a LEMA/WCA/IGUGA.
  - Priority given to areas that are already demonstrating conservation.
- What are your top criteria (ranked in order) and why?
  - Economic Impact.
  - Cost-Effectiveness.
  - Measurable Impact.
  - Regional Partnership/Impact.
  - Stakeholder Input.
  - Top picks:
    - 1) Economic Impact, an evaluation process needs to be developed to fully access this is cost-effectiveness (cost-effectiveness is embedded in Economic impact).
    - 2) Regional Partnership/Impact, opportunities to access how things are going, a form of checks and balances.
- Other comments about the shared criteria?
  -

#### Budget Discussion: \$140 million Investment Scenario

- What is your reaction to this proposed investment scenario?
  - Aquifer is the one that affects our region the greatest of the 3. There needs to be a greater focus on how we cut water use more. Not sure how to spend the funding to address that. Possibly offset a possible loss of income.

- Not sure if it is a simple solution. The challenge is changing the mindset and getting people to reduce use. \$18 mil is not a lot of money for the region to do all that is needed.
  - Buying water rights would not be a good use of funds. Opportunity to spend money. Additional funding needs for education and research.
  - Education is very important. Need information on how to reduce use.
  - Concern with money leaving the region or being paid from the region and not coming back to benefit it.
  - Look at the obvious problem and throw money at it.
- What activities, programs, or areas are your highest priority including those not listed on the handout?
    -
  - Are the proposed levels of funding per area appropriate?
    -

### Reasonability Discussion: Is it reasonable for the state to . . .

- Make an outcome be that all Kansas communities will have 50 years or more water supply for their communities/economic base in 10 years?
  - 50 years is a long time. A planning/evaluation for every 5 years but make a plan on a 20 to 25 year basis.
- Require a community seeking grants or loans to evaluate whether it's possible to connect its water system to another water system in the region; increasing the resiliency of its water supply? If it is possible, part of the project should include connecting those water systems.
  - Too many "what ifs" in that question. Too many hypotheticals. Yes to requiring the evaluations to determine.
- Require a community or region seeking grants or loans to undergo some long-term water supply planning, including evaluating its assets and projects its water supply needs as it relates to future economic development?
  - Yes, with the same conditions as the first question with being mindful that smaller communities would need assistance in doing this and providing a mechanism for them to do so.
- Require cost share programs that provide funding for irrigation systems can only receive funding if their farms are in an area which has adopted a LEMA, WAC or IGUCA. This means some conservation measures are in place - otherwise there is no guarantee that improved technology will result in less water usage?

- Shouldn't require any cost-share programs. If fundings available, then it's available. Rather than require a LEMA/WCA/IGUCA, a priority should be given to those in those regions, but you do not want to prohibit those not in those regions to participate and seek assistance. Cost-share programs need to help producers pursue the assistance needed and not limit them due to them not having the "newest" equipment.
- Require all programs be evaluated every 2 years based on their ability to a make measurable progress on the state water plan goals. The results will be shared with stakeholders during the local consult process. Programs underperforming will be required to be revamped or discontinued based on stakeholder input and agency expertise/judgement?
  - Is two years long enough? They need to be revisited instead evaluated. A scoring mechanism, a "grade card" of some kind to let individuals know how they are doing along the way and make adjustments as needed during the evaluation process. 2 years is not long enough.

### Revenue Source Discussion

- What do you like or dislike about these revenue sources and why?
  - If Irrigator fees are obtained, then those funds need to go to directly benefit the region is comes from. The money paid needs to come back.
  - Irrigation use fee would be a horrible idea with the producers within GMD4.
  - If a bunch of money is being sought from an irrigation use fee, then the funding for Aquifer needs to increase significantly.
  - The only way to address the water concern is to pump less than we have been. We need to be careful when we make taxes or programs that do not benefit prior conservation.
  - Water across KS is a statewide concern. a .1 percent increase in sales tax would give the state \$80 mil. That is more than what they need.
- Are there other revenue sources that should be considered?
  - Put a fee on the amount of water on that water right vs an irrigation fee.
  - GMD4 accesses fees based on authorized quantity.

### Other Feedback

- Any other RAC feedback for the Strategic Implementation Team or Kansas Water Authority?
  - Reward areas that have conservation areas/programs in place. Everyone in state should be under some sort of conservation agreement. We don't need to penalize the farmer that is already cutting back. Looking at the state sales tax would require all Kansans to pay.
  - Financial institutions need to be targeted because there are bankers that are advising producers on what to grow and how much to pump.
  - Absentee landowners also need to be targeted for education on conservation.
  - Education for anyone that owns land within the state on conservation and water use on a regional level need.



# Regional Advisory Committee Meeting

## Strategic Implementation Planning and FY 2026 Budget Input

### Region: Upper Smoky Hill

#### Shared Criteria Discussion

- Are there any criteria you would add to the list? [RACs were provided the list of initial 6 criteria utilized during Local Consult meetings]
  - Stacked with Existing Conservation Efforts.
  - Public Private Partnership.
  - Economic Impact.
  - Resiliency ... How do you define this? The word sustainable would be a better fit.
  - Public Private Partnership with regional partnership focus to include GMDs, Conservation Districts, Economic Developments, and others.
  - Stakeholder Impact.
- What are your top criteria (ranked in order) and why?
  - 1) Stakeholder Impact.
  - 2) Public Private Partnerships with Regional Focus (including GMDs, Conservation Districts, Economic Developments, and others).
  - 3) Economic Impact.
  - 4) Resiliency
- Other comments about the shared criteria?
  -

#### Budget Discussion: \$140 million Investment Scenario

- What is your reaction to this proposed investment scenario?
  - The increase that is being requested would barely be 1% of the overall budget for the entire state. It would not be “greedy” by any means to request an increase.
  - Had thought the jump for Aquifer would have been more than \$5 mil.
  - The current breakout doesn’t seem to rank the Aquifer as high a priority as what had previously been perceived.

- What activities, programs, or areas are your highest priority including those not listed on the handout?
  - Water reuse/reclamation and scaling it to fit a variety of users/uses in our region.
  - Partnering with research entities to have better irrigation efficiency data and research.
  - Continuing to fund and expand funding of WISE projects and other similar programs.
  - Funding for cost-share and resources for producers to help streamline different practices and technologies that could help them be more efficient and cost-effective.
  
- Are the proposed levels of funding per area appropriate?
  - Aquifer should be increased to reflect it being a priority. Yes \$18 mil is a lot but with the current listed line items, that money will be gone through very quickly.

#### Reasonability Discussion: Is it reasonable for the state to . . .

- Make an outcome be that all Kansas communities will have 50 years or more water supply for their communities/economic base in 10 years?
  - Needs to be evaluated on localized bases.
  - Dual accountability for State and Communities.
  - It takes 10 years to develop this 50 year plan.
  
- Require a community seeking grants or loans to evaluate whether it's possible to connect its water system to another water system in the region; increasing the resiliency of its water supply? If it is possible, part of the project should include connecting those water systems.
  - Very reasonable for regions that have more than one local water source.
  - Geographic limitation in different regions.
  
- Require a community or region seeking grants or loans to undergo some long-term water supply planning, including evaluating its assets and projects its water supply needs as it relates to future economic development?
  - It is reasonable. Think that often in the past, communities could not afford to make the costly updates needed and just had to make due with what they could

afford in the short-term. With putting effort and funding towards long term planning this could help those communities plan for the future.

- Require cost share programs that provide funding for irrigation systems can only receive funding if their farms are in an area which has adopted a LEMA, WAC or IGUCA. This means some conservation measures are in place - otherwise there is no guarantee that improved technology will result in less water usage?
  - It should be available to all.
  - There could be a priority ranking, but does not need to exclude or discourage anyone from conserving.
  - Make it open to everyone.
  
- Require all programs be evaluated every 2 years based on their ability to make measurable progress on the state water plan goals. The results will be shared with stakeholders during the local consult process. Programs underperforming will be required to be revamped or discontinued based on stakeholder input and agency expertise/judgement?
  - Why would we not evaluate every year vs every two.
  - Having an annual review to help make sure that tax payer dollars are being used adequately and providing that consistent evaluation.
  - What makes up the evaluation? That could determine the matrix to how the information is looked at and what is needed as far as frequency for how it is reported and other evaluating data.

### Revenue Source Discussion

- What do you like or dislike about these revenue sources and why?
  - Taking a .1% sales tax makes the most sense.
  - Recommend to shy away from placing any kind of tax on irrigation.
  - Not a fan at all of taking a fee from irrigation.
  - If you absolutely do have to take an irrigation tax, those funds should go back to the regions they are obtained from.
  - If you are only increasing the aquifer funding from \$13 mil to \$18 mil and the number of fees that potentially could be collected from this region from irrigator fees, the math doesn't add up. The amount paid in from a region/sector should get that much back.

- The fees that are being collected should go to directly to benefit that sector that paid them.
- Are there other revenue sources that should be considered?
  - Additional SGF transfers.
  - Utilizing some of the budget surplus for funding source.

### Other Feedback

- Any other RAC feedback for the Strategic Implementation Team or Kansas Water Authority?
  - Appreciate the effort the offices are making to get stakeholder input.

# Regional Advisory Committee Meeting

## Strategic Implementation Planning and FY 2026 Budget Input

### Region: Verdigris

#### Shared Criteria Discussion

- Are there any criteria you would add to the list? [RACs were provided the list of initial 6 criteria utilized during Local Consult meetings]
  - Urgency
  - Community Demographics
- What are your top criteria (ranked in order) and why?
  - 1. Resiliency
  - 2. Regional Partnership Impact
  - 3. Economic Impact
  - 4. Cost-effectiveness
- Other comments about the shared criteria?
  - There is overlap in concept and these criteria include aspects of other criteria that worthy of consideration. Ex: resiliency builds in regional partnerships especially in the eastern part of the state.

#### Budget Discussion: \$140 million Investment Scenario

- What is your reaction to this proposed investment scenario?
  - Overall positive reaction to current split and seems to keep the needs of Kansans in mind.
  - Question to keep in mind: what is an appropriate role/responsibility for the state to play with private wells with water quality issues?
  - A lot of the water quality issues have been there for a long-time and developed overtime - Breakdown of dollars per Kansans - per family, per month it is roughly \$11 per person per month. Industry would pick up big chunk, so with this figure in mind, \$140 million per year seems to be very reasonable.
  - Need to get public caught up and educated about what is being done with this kind of money and the benefit they are seeing from this kind of spending.
  - Capacity building phase is needed.
- What activities, programs, or areas are your highest priority including those not listed on the handout?
  - Reservoirs need to be a priority for the SE part of the state since that is the vast majority of the water supply.

- Are the proposed levels of funding per area appropriate?
  - Yes, overall agreement that \$140 million is very reasonable.

### Reasonability Discussion: Is it reasonable for the state to . . .

- Make an outcome be that all Kansas communities will have 50 years or more water supply for their communities/economic base in 10 years?
  - Reasonable, but it is feasible for some parts of the state? Connecting water systems would help.
  - Some disagreement on the necessity and reasonability of this outcome. The outcome of the bottom questions will allow a community to evaluate whether they will have 50 years' worth of water. A mandate will just create division.
- Require a community seeking grants or loans to evaluate whether it's possible to connect its water system to another water system in the region; increasing the resiliency of its water supply? If it is possible, part of the project should include connecting those water systems.
  - It is reasonable to have communities evaluate connection with other systems.
- Require a community or region seeking grants or loans to undergo some long-term water supply planning, including evaluating its assets and projects its water supply needs as it relates to future economic development?
  - Regional long-term water supply planning may be a more appropriate path forward. Working with neighboring communities may be more difficult than anticipated. Not every investment needs to be viewed in this lens, but planning should be encouraged.
- Require cost share programs that provide funding for irrigation systems can only receive funding if their farms are in an area which has adopted a LEMA, WAC or IGUCA. This means some conservation measures are in place - otherwise there is no guarantee that improved technology will result in less water usage?
  - It is reasonable. A lot of subsidies are more beneficial to an individual than a community, so this would be a good hoop to jump through before providing a subsidy to improve chances of benefiting a community.
- Require all programs be evaluated every 2 years based on their ability to a make measurable progress on the state water plan goals. The results will be shared with stakeholders during the local consult process. Programs underperforming will be required to be revamped or discontinued based on stakeholder input and agency expertise/judgement?
  - This is needed for transparency and results in accountability to see if the program is working or not.
  - Maybe needs to be more flexible based on the project.

## Revenue Source Discussion

- What do you like or dislike about these revenue sources and why?
  - Recommend looking at other states and see how they are funding water.
  - Keep fee increasing to a minimum. Get perspective from other states on how fee increasing has gone.
- Are there other revenue sources that should be considered?
  - Positive feeling to bonding long-term projects.

## Other Feedback

- Any other RAC feedback for the Strategic Implementation Team or Kansas Water Authority?
  - Team needs to include producers to include public perspective on the process (agricultural, livestock, industrial, municipal).