

## **James Hoffman, Conservation Specialist, KAWS/NRCS**

Hello – I attended the KWO meeting this morning in Salina. I'd like to give a few comments.

1. I felt the morning was well structured and kept most of us focused and positive with such varied and potentially emotional topics. Not an easy venue and I thought it was handled well.
  2. I also felt the exercise to place green, yellow, blue tickets in rank order for funding allocation was creative and had merit. What I did not like about this exercise was the lack of time or preparation to truly review the information. Our decisions and choices are only as good as the information we are using to make such decisions, and I felt this was compromised.
  3. Education and outreach were definitely strong themes from my group and I completely agree, this needs to be a significant focus.
  4. PFAS issues were briefly touched on in my group. I believe PFAS issues are a much larger problem than society is recognizing and we need to get a handle on PFAS usage in our lives, sooner than later.
  5. I am wondering if the PowerPoint presentation used at the beginning of the meeting would be available as a link for attendees to review.
- Thank you.

## **Constance Gehring**

I was told your office is accepting information and concerns from the public about water. Attached is a presentation I made to the Harvey County Commissioners on April 30, 2024, on algae at East Lake. It just seems like there is a tremendous amount of monitoring of blue green algae in the State and very little action. Or, is it a lack of transparency and perhaps a lot of action is going on?

April 30, 2024

Harvey County Commissioners:

My name is Constance Gehring. I am a resident of Harvey County and Newton. For years, I have been watching it be reported that East Lake is infected by algae blooms so most activities are curtailed and the health of all who might drink that water may be at issue. And that would be people and dogs but also include the rest of the natural world: insects, birds, other animals, trees, and plants.

It sounds like it is an incurable situation that is caused by drought. Or it is an incurable condition brought on by whatever the farmers upstream are dumping or using. It just goes on year after year. I know there are a great number of agencies and personnel working on this issue, a great amount of information about possible causes, and many possible solutions.

Not being privy to the scientific research going on to ascertain the causes or locations of the problems in Harvey County within the watershed area, or what solutions are being pondered, as a citizen I am here today to ask that Harvey County make the cleanup of East Lake a top priority and spend the time and resources needed to clean up East Lake.

Everyone wants clean water. I am suggesting it is time the County takes on more of a leadership role for the purpose of making our county attractive to businesses, residences, and those who play in water by coming up with solutions, and funding those solutions if necessary to ensure this is a healthier place to live.

The attached handout document from our local conservation district, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Services, Conservation Practice Standard Filter Strip, Code 393, recommends a filter strip 30' wide around a body of water using warm season tall grasses such as bluestem, indiagrass, little bluestem, and switchgrass. It has been suggested that the Army Corp of Engineers would be a resource to build a consistent filter strip to the width recommended. That would help reduce the sediment and poisonous flow into the lake from the farmland surrounding the lake. The issues of resolving toxic water coming into East Lake from the tributaries of the Walnut River watershed would still remain.

Constance Gehring  
725 N High  
Newton, KS 67114

330 SW 12<sup>th</sup>  
Newton KS 67114

4/29/24

Ms. Connie Owens  
Kansas Water Office

Regarding your water district meetings  
you are holding.

I encourage you to get the word out  
directly to producers & land owners & not  
just your gov. officials & by whip!

I am against buying water rights  
by gov. entities. I am against using  
federal money w/ strings attached.

I will stay aware of these meetings  
& try to do my share. Had to hear about  
the 1st one thru a private citizen. That  
is not a good look!

Sincerely,  
Carol Garner  
Past land owner  
Tax Payer