

Solomon Basin Advisory Committee
Rooks County Health Department, 426 Main, Stockton, KS
Meeting Room 2nd Floor
7:00 p.m., Monday, June 19, 2006

Basin Advisory Committee Members Present

Paul Best (Chairman), Tom Jamison, Kelvin Kolb, Dee Blubaugh, Fred Landis

Basin Advisory Committee Members Absent

Myron Abbott, John (Bruce) Wyrill, Raymond DeBey

Others in Attendance

Kent Askren (KFB), Robin Blubaugh, Robin Bailey (Webster Lake Assoc.), Chris Berens (KDWP/KAWS), Mike Nyhoff (NRCS), Dan Wells (KDHE), Scott Ross (DWR), Mark Billinger (DWR), Mindy Sieck (DWR), Kim Christensen (KWO), Diane Coe (KWO)

Minutes

Motion to approve the meeting notes from March 1, 2006 was made by Dee Blubaugh and seconded by Kelvin Kolb. Motion Carried.

Agency Updates (5 minute updates)

DWR – Scott Ross reported that many communities are having water supply difficulties, but the north and south forks of the Solomon River are not under administration yet. DWR does have application in for Glen Elder and are working on water issues with the City of Beloit.

There were no other agency reports.

Public Comments

No public comments were offered.

Basin Activities/Updates- Diane Coe updated the committee on activities in the basin.

EQIP will continue next year similarly to the past year since it was very successful. The GMDs are in the process of determining the areas they want targeted. DWR is keeping the same areas.

Funding for an **Ogallala High Plains Aquifer Special Study** is available with the Bureau of Reclamation. This Study will provide information to assist decision makers in setting water use goals and management strategies to achieve those goals within GMD4 and the North and South Forks of the Solomon River. The study will involve the development of hydrologic system models and management scenarios in northwest Kansas, focused on the Ogallala – High Plains aquifer, and the interconnected alluvial aquifer and stream system of the Solomon River. It is hoped this will provide a tool for the management of aquifer sub units. Two studies are planned for year one. One is refinements to the Republican River Compact Administration (RRCA) model in areas of GMD4 and the other is two small models outside

the RRCA, along the north and south forks of the Solomon River, down to the Kirwin and Webster Reservoirs. The ground water modeling will provide additional aquifer characterization, determination of water budgets, and allow for testing of aquifer response to management scenarios.

Two studies related to irrigation efficiency have been completed. The first is “Effects of Irrigation Practices on Water Use in the Groundwater Management Districts within the Kansas High Plains, 1991–2003” by USGS. The full report is available on line at <http://pubs.usgs.gov/sir/2006/5069/>.

The second study is the “EVALUATION OF WATER CONSERVATION FROM MORE EFFICIENT IRRIGATION SYSTEMS” completed by KSU. This study evaluated the effects of irrigation technology adoption on groundwater use in western Kansas. Evidence from this research suggests that the SCC cost share program had a limited effect on groundwater consumption, and may have been counterproductive in this regard in certain cases.

Ogallala fringe sub units update - Mindy Sieck and Mark Billinger, (DWR) presented a progress report on the work to define prioritize and eventually develop management for the fringe area of the Ogallala-High Plains aquifer. Ms Sieck reported that they are in the process of verifying data and shared maps recently developed that illustrate water use density and other information.

The Committee did not offer any issues or concerns for the areas of the Ogallala-High Plains aquifer outside the GMDs.

Kansas Water Plan Policy Issues - Kim Christensen presented the status the draft to *Kansas Water Plan* Water Quality Policy Section- Watershed Restoration and Protection Issue. On June 2nd, the Kansas Water Authority released two *Kansas Water Plan* Working Draft documents for public review. These are the Water Quality Policy Section and the Kansas-Lower Republican Basin Section – Basin Priority Issue: Watershed Restoration and Protection.

Both drafts sections reflect a planned transition of the *Kansas Water Plan* to a web-based electronic document format and are intended to provide a template for enhanced integration between the policy and basin sections. There is extensive use of links to information on the Internet. These links are indicated in **BLUE** in the drafts. The primary change is the inclusion of the nutrient management plans and watershed restoration and protection program (WRAPS) in the section. There will be a public hearing on July 6, 2006 at 1 pm at the Kansas Water Office on these Water Plan sections. Public comments will also be accepted until July 17, 2006, 5pm.

Economic Development at Federal Reservoirs - Kim Christensen presented a summary of the policy section released for comment by the KWA on development at federal reservoirs. The goal is to determine how to encourage use of Kansas reservoirs while protecting them. A Commerce Study was undertaken in summer of 2005 funded by Commerce, the Kansas Water Office, the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks, and the Kansas Department of Transportation, conducted by an independent consulting firm to provide the information needed to make the judicious use of our state's reservoirs, preserve their long term integrity, and meet marketplace demands. Eight of the 24 federal reservoirs were evaluated.

BAC Operations – Kim Christensen presented information related to the KWA internal policy memorandum (IPM#04) approved June 2nd. Key is the purpose of the Basin Advisory Committees as a link to the citizens in the basin.

Membership on each committee is the choice of the committee of either nine or eleven members. Core categories are: Municipal Public Water Suppliers; Industry/Commerce; Agriculture; Fish and Wildlife; Conservation/Environment; and at Large Public. In addition each BAC can recommend 2 or 4 additional categories for approval by the KWA. Criteria and initial nominating groups for core categories are included in Appendix A of the IPM. Some suggested groups and criteria for the basin specific categories are made in Appendix A also. Basin specific groups can be changed with term expiration if the BAC determines and KWA approves a need to adjust the categories.

The IPM also emphasizes the importance of attendance by committee member. Three consecutive absences will automatically place that position on the agenda of the next meeting for consideration and by the committee.

Ms Christensen also reviewed the time frame for this transition and filling of positions. (Those expiring June 30, 2006 are extended to December 31, 2006.

Discussion of the number of committee members occurred.

Dee Blubaugh made the **motion to have membership on the Solomon–Saline BAC be 9 members**. Kelvin Kolb seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Discussion of the categories for the four (4) basin specific categories, nominating groups and criteria for the categories occurred.

Kelvin Kolb made **the motion to recommend that the Solomon BAC basin specific membership categories be one at large, and dryland agriculture**. Dee Blubaugh seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Discussion occurred on nominating organizations and basin specific category eligibility criteria.

Dee Blubaugh made the **motion to move the nominating groups and criteria forward. The criterion for the dryland position is for the member to own or lease land for dryland production or dryland livestock**. Tommy Jamison seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Discussion occurred on the transition of the BAC to the new categories to determine which categories to fill December 2006.

Kelvin Kolb made the motion to recommend that Paul Best be Chair of the Solomon BAC. Dee Blubaugh seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Dee Blubaugh made the **motion to recommend that Kelvin Kolb as Vice Chair of the committee. Fred Landis seconded the motion.** The motion carried.

Fred Landis made the **motion to recommend soliciting to fill the positions of municipal public water supply, recreation, at large, and industrial/commerce in 2006.** Tommy Jamison seconded. The motion carried.

Other Business - Legislative and budget update: Kim Christensen provided overview of legislative activities and status of budget for water projects.

Water Plan got approval for 2.3 million in state general fund transfers, completing the effort to reinstate the funding of agency operations out of the general fund freeing up water plan funds for programs.

The Water Transition Assistance Program (HB2710) received approval by the Legislature as a pilot program, limited to \$1.5 million per year for up to five years. The targeted areas for the first years of the program include the Rattlesnake Creek and Prairie Dog Creek subbasins. This Legislation also includes a requirement for the State Conservation Commission and the Kansas Water Office to prepare a program for the retirement of water rights under the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) to be submitted to the senate committee on natural resources and the house committee on environment during the 2007 regular session prior to expenditure of any funds.

CREP funding was included in the Omnibus Appropriations Budget (HB2968). SCC received an appropriation of \$4,000,000 from a combination of the Water Conservation Projects Reserve Account of the State Water Plan Fund, as well as \$588,429 from the ending balance of the State Water Plan Fund. An additional amount of monies up to \$411,571 of released encumbrances is also earmarked for CREP bringing the total available resources for this effort to \$5,000,000. These monies further are restricted from expenditure by a proviso requiring a negotiated CREP proposal be presented to and approved by the Legislature.

The Omnibus Appropriations bill increased the appropriated amount of funds from the Water Conservation Projects Fund for reimbursement to the ditch irrigation companies by line item; provided language for feasibility studies to not exceed \$552,000; appropriated \$100,000 for a temporary position for oversight of water conservation projects; and specified eligible projects for the affected area along the Arkansas River corridor.

Salt Cedar Control work will involve some projects and a water consumption study.

The KWO has the authority to install a stream gage below Cedar Bluff.

Lake Restoration start up funding was approved.

Multipurpose Small Lakes Program was also funded. This includes Horsethief Reservoir for \$1.1 million in FY2007 and more in years that follow.

BAC messages to the KWA- none except motions

Upcoming Meetings:

Kansas Water Authority: August 3-4, Norton; November 16-17, Great Bend

The next BAC meeting should occur in late September or early October 2006.

Tommy Jamison made the **motion to adjourn the meeting**. Motion was seconded by Dee Blubaugh. Motion Carried.

Meeting adjourned at 9:10 pm.