

**Walnut Basin Advisory Committee
Wednesday June 14, 2006
The Ridge Restaurant, Winfield, KS**

Meeting Notes

Attendance:

Basin Advisory Committee Members Present

Jim Fry (Chairman), Harold Taylor, John Bailey, Warren Porter, Clay Randel, John Provorse, Robert Wilson

Basin Advisory Committee Members Absent

Stan Ahlerich, David Jackman, Kurt Bookout

Others in Attendance

Sandy Koontz (Butler County Conservation District), Betty Criss (KWA), Michael Jones (KDHE SCDO), Steve Bond (DWR Stafford), Deb Baker (KWO), Ken Grotewiel (KWO), Karma Mason (KWA), Mary Provorse

Welcome and Introductions: Chairman Jim Fry opened the meeting at 6:30 p.m. Self introductions were made by all attending.

Agency Reports: Steve Bond (DWR) reported that the certification of water rights in the Pawnee-Buckner area to satisfy the meter order has been completed. They are now back to regular summer activities in the District. Sandy Koontz reported that the Butler County Conservation District received supplemental funding from the State Conservation Commission to host an educational tour and field day about El Dorado Reservoir. The theme of the tour was "From El Dorado Reservoir to Your Home: The Journey of Water. About 40 members of the public attended. On Friday June 9 and Saturday June 10 the public was invited to tour the water treatment plant (Friday) and the control tower (Saturday). Presentations were made about the importance of good quality water going into the treatment process to minimize the need for additional treatment, Zebra Mussels in the intake structure, and stream assessment techniques. The shoreline stabilization project was included on the tour.

Water Quality Policy Section of the *Kansas Water Plan*: Deb Baker provided an update on the Water Quality Policy Section that has been released for public review by the Kansas Water Authority. There were no comments. A public hearing will be held on Thursday July 6 at the Kansas Water Office at 1:00 p.m. which is another opportunity to provide comments.

Economic Development Opportunities at Federal Reservoirs: Ken Grotewiel provided an overview of the policy paper that was approved for public release by the Kansas Water Authority at their June meeting. He summarized the high points of the findings and described specifically how El Dorado Reservoir came out in the rankings. The market study shows a demand for residential housing, resort development, and additional recreational activities around El Dorado Reservoir. A question was asked if we have incorporated lessons learned from other lakes/reservoirs, such as Lake Tahoe, regarding the potential for pollution of these water bodies as a result of development activities. It was discussed that much of this development occurred in an unplanned manner and that the Kansas policy strives to address these concerns up front by providing state oversight of

development activities. Some committee members expressed concern that government agencies, either local or state, may not have the will to enforce pollution minimizing activities. It was noted that the City of El Dorado has already extended a sewer line to the boundary of the reservoir.

Legislative Update: Ken discussed the successes that the Kansas Water Authority had in the legislative session this year as many proposed projects were approved as planned. Additional funds (\$2.3 million) have been recovered and redirected to the State Water Plan Fund to be used for project implementation. The challenge now is for everyone to continue to work together to get results. Important entities include the Governor, KWA, KWO, the BACs, the Sub-cabinet, other agencies and the public.

Zebra Mussel Task Force Update: Jim Fry recalled to the committee that Kurt Bookout had brought the issue of a lake level drawdown before the committee last year. As a result, facilitated discussions have been ongoing for six months to develop a plan to respond to future problems and activities that may be affected by Zebra Mussel populations. A beneficial outcome of these discussions was identification of additional stakeholders. Of note is the inclusion of the Chamber of Commerce. This group brought to the table the more “human issues” of the infestation such as cut feet and public concerns about health issues. As a result, some good information was developed to be distributed to the public concerning how to protect one’s self from mussel exposure.

The veliger count is up dramatically this year. Zebra Mussels are prevalent around the entire shoreline. Many are attached to the water intake structure. The City and COE are working on a plan to address this. So far, problems have not developed in getting water through the structure though. A meeting to update all stakeholders will occur at the end of 2006, Chaired by Jim Fry.

The intentional and unintentional drawdowns of the lake level in the past three years have had no measurable effect on the mussel populations, according to the KDWP. There are some legal issues about drawdowns concerning who has authority to do this. Jim Fry expressed concern that a drawdown that would have a significant negative effect on mussel populations would likely also negatively impact recreational users, particularly the Sailing Club and the marina. All of these impacts must be taken into account when making future decisions about management.

El Dorado COE Feasibility Study Update: There has not been much activity on this project since our last meeting. A coordination meeting between KWO and Tulsa District COE Engineering staff will occur the third week of June and Deb will report on the discussion about the El Dorado study at the next BAC meeting.

COE Projects in the Basin Update: Deb provided an overview of the levee project in Augusta and the Riparian Restoration Project in Arkansas City.

Proposed Changes to Operations of Basin Advisory Committees: Ken delivered a presentation about the KWA approved changes to the BAC structure. The BAC then discussed how many members they would like to have, what basin specific member categories should be included, and who would be likely nominating groups for the basin specific members.

For the core group of municipal, public water suppliers, a suggestion was made to include the Kansas section of the American Public Works Association and the Kansas Water Environment Association as nominating groups.

It was decided that the Walnut BAC should continue to have an 11 member committee to ensure adequate representation from user groups and for geographic considerations.

There was a great deal of discussion concerning the basin specific categories. After much consideration, the following categories were agreed upon to be presented to the Water Authority for the basin specific groups: Watershed Protection, Agriculture, Integrated Planning, and At Large Public.

Discussion began on the appropriate nominating groups for these categories. Because of time constraints, the following nominating groups are considered draft and open to additional discussion by the BAC.

- Watershed Protection: Watershed Districts, Watershed Restoration and Protection Groups, and local Conservation Districts.
- Agriculture: The same nominating organizations specified in the Core Group category will be used for this member.
- Integrated Planning: Regional Economic Area Partnership, local Rural Water District, Planning Commissions, and the Kansas Association of Local Planning and Zoning Officials.

BAC Resignation: Harold Taylor announced his resignation effective June 14, 2006. Mr. Taylor has been with the committee since it formed and has provided valuable input into basin and policy issues for 20 years. He will continue to be informed of BAC meeting dates and locations and will hopefully be able to continue providing input as a member of the public. The committee thanked Mr. Taylor for his long service.

Next Meeting Date: The next meeting date was proposed to be September 26 or 27. However, due to the BAC restructuring and the time frame involved to seat new members, the committee will not meet again until after the August Water Authority meeting. At this meeting, basin specific categories will be approved and solicitations begun to recruit new members until October. The committee will meet again in November or December (not September) to vote on new members. New members will be seated at the January meeting and a new Chair will be voted on at that time.

We will attempt to identify a meeting location in Douglas, Augusta, or Burden.

Meeting adjourned at 10:00 p.m.

Note to Committee: Please let me know of any conflicts you have during October or November that would affect your ability to attend a BAC meeting during these months!