

**Walnut Basin Advisory Committee  
Wednesday December 6, 2006  
Butler County Community College, El Dorado**

**Meeting Notes**

**Attendance:**

Basin Advisory Committee Members Present

Jim Fry (Chairman), John Bailey, John Provorse, Robert Wilson, Stan Ahlerich, Kurt Bookout, Tom Dixon

Basin Advisory Committee Members Absent

Clay Randel

Others in Attendance

Sandy Koontz (Butler County Conservation District), Betty Criss (KWA), Deb Baker, Kim Christiansen, (KWO), Rodger Maechtlen, David Brazil (Cowley County Health Department), Dale R. Shaffer, City of Benton, Jessica Caylor, KCGA, KGSPA, Bill Johnson (KCC), Kirk Hayden (City of Rose Hill), Steve Bond (DWR).

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

**Total Maximum Daily Loads Update:** Tom Stiles, KDHE Watershed Planning Section, provided an update on TMDLs in the Walnut Basin. A handout was provided summarizing the information discussed. TMDLs will be updated in the Walnut Basin in FY 2008. During the first round of TMDL development in 2002, the main issues were bacteria, eutrophication, and siltation. This has not changed. The committee may want to revisit the TMDLs previously set as medium priority next year and elevate their status.

The sampling site at the Whitewater-Walnut confluence shows high nutrient concentrations. There are two TMDLs for biology due to low O<sub>2</sub> concentrations. Streams in general run high in Total Phosphorus and may need additional work next year.

A new listing will be for sulfate in Four Mile Creek. The Walnut River below the Whitewater confluence shows high sulfate but it dilutes out further down the river. Atrazine concentrations are typically high between April and July during runoff events. There haven't been any large detects recently. EPA may raise the Atrazine maximum contaminant level to 20 to 25 ppb. Until they make a decision on what the level will be. KDHE is staying with 3 ppb for evaluation. Atrazine in the Whitewater drainage is flagged because of its concentration and frequency; it shows the highest concentrations in the basin. Developing a TMDL would help to identify the source of the Atrazine. The committee recommended that no TMDL for Atrazine be developed at this time. Instead, efforts will be directed towards education about application timing and method.

El Dorado Reservoir is high priority for eutrophication and siltation due to its public water supply function. Winfield City Lake is right on the edge of impairment and a TMDL will be developed next year to both protect and restore water quality if the lake. There are other small lakes in the area that don't have much turnover that are eutrophic; however these are low priority from the state perspective.

The Category 5 waters on the 303d list will be sent to EPA the week of December 11. Copper is widespread throughout the state, for example the Neosho Basin has several copper TMDLs. The occurrence is runoff related. During runoff events, the pH is higher which allows copper normally attached to sediment to become soluble. It is an artificial impairment since it only occurs during runoff events. The committee also recommended that the TMDL for Copper in the Lower Walnut be dropped for now. Lead in Santa Fe Lake is coming from urban runoff.

**Kim Christiansen, KWO Legal Counsel - Discussion of Process for Selection of New BAC Members:** Kim explained the process of how to evaluate applicants with a PowerPoint presentation. Following the presentation, all applicants were given the opportunity to provide a two minute summary of why they are interested in being nominated to represent their categories of interest on the BAC. Attendees who gave presentations were: Dale Shaffer, Kirk Hayden, Roger Maechtlen, Kurt Bookout, John Bailey, Tom Dixon and David Brazil.

The following applicants and the category to which they were recommended to represent are: John Bailey, Recreation; Kurt Bookout, Fish and Wildlife; Wayne Kachel, Industry and Commerce; Tom Dixon, Agriculture; Dale Shaffer, Municipal; and Rodger Maechtlen, At Large Public. These recommendations will be forwarded to the Kansas Water Authority for ratification. Those nominees that are ratified will be seated at the next meeting in March 2007. Deb will meet with each new member before the March meeting to discuss BAC procedures.

Agency Reports: Bill Johnson from KCC advised the BAC and members of the audience to call the KCC office if anyone notices unplugged gas/oil wells. Development in the rural areas is leading to the discovery of increasing numbers of unplugged wells. There may be a hazard if development occurs and the wells are not plugged correctly. Some may be leaking gas.

Steve Bond, DWR, reported that they are again cooperating with KGS to do annual water well level measurements. Measuring will begin during the first week of January 2007. All of the wells sampled are permitted and the same ones are measured every year to develop long term trends. DWR will measure about 500 wells. The results will be available on the KGS website about four weeks after the measuring is complete.

**Basin Updates:** Deb Baker gave an update on the El Dorado Feasibility Study being conducted jointly by the KWO, the City of El Dorado, and the Corps of Engineers. The required local cost share is on track. A stakeholder meeting will be called after the first of the year. The study is scheduled to be completed during the third quarter of 2007.

Kurt Bookout reported that El Dorado Reservoir is 5' 2/10" below normal conservation pool which means that about 75% of the conservation pool is full. He indicated that if the water level comes up slowly following spring rains, it could benefit establishment of plants on the shoreline that could reduce shoreline erosion. The continuing presence of Zebra mussels in the reservoir has resulted in substantially lower hardness and alkalinity levels. Hardness now is usually in the range of 60 to 90 mg/L; before Zebra mussel infestation it was more typically 120 mg/L. This actually is beneficial for water supply treatment.

Zebra mussels have been thought to not colonize on mud flats. However, Kurt has surveyed exposed areas of the shoreline and mudflat area and has found that the mussels can colonize on just a small pebble and continue to attach to each other, resulting in pinecone shaped colonies. He noted that native mussels are being increasingly impacted as Zebra mussels colonize their shells and smother them. They will be killed off eventually. Zebra mussels are not colonizing sandy areas which is good for recreation. There was no noticeable decrease in recreational use related to Zebra mussels during 06.

John Bailey announced the KU Environmental Engineering Conference to be held on February 7, 2007, at the KU Student Union in Lawrence. One topic on the program is Zebra mussels. The overall theme of this year's conference is sustainable energy. Attendees can register at the door.

**Public Comments:** There were no comments from the public.

**Messages to the Kansas Water Authority:** There were no messages to the KWA.

Chairman Jim Fry thanked all of the applicants for positions on the BAC for taking the time to apply and attend the meeting. Stan Ahlerich thanked Chairman Fry for his leadership during some difficult issues during the past several years. Stan is not seeking another BAC membership term.

The next meeting will be in March 2007. BAC members are asked to notify Deb of any dates during March that they would not be able to attend a meeting and Deb will try to work around those dates when setting the next meeting date. Meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.