

M E M O R A N D U M

DATE: October 20, 2008
TO: Kansas Water Authority
FROM: Earl Lewis
SUBJECT: Reservoir Sustainability Initiative: *Kansas Water Plan* Policy Issues

Two policy issues related to the Reservoir Sustainability Initiative, *Enhanced Stream Corridor and Wetland Management to Address Reservoir Sedimentation* and *Surface Water Management: Access to Storage*, have been reviewed through the water planning process. In August, the Kansas Water Authority (KWA) released for public hearing the working draft of the Issue: "Enhanced Stream Corridor and Wetland Management to Address Reservoir Sedimentation." This issue was discussed during the September/October meetings of the Basin advisory committee. Public meetings will be held in December and a final draft will be presented to the KWA in January.

The following budget items necessary to implement this policy have been incorporated into the FY 2010 budgets:

Enhanced Lottery Act Revenue Funds

- \$300,000 in the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks budget for the purchase of conservation easements in priority wetland and riparian areas.
- \$150,000 requested in the Kansas Water Office Budget for the development of a Stream Stabilization Plan and initial targeting of project implementation.
- \$1,000,000 in the State Conservation Commission budget for streambank stabilization projects.

State General Funds

- \$383,573 for Kansas Water Office staff, equipment and supplies for the initiation of the Wetland and Stream Management Team.

The issue, *Surface Water Management: Access to Storage* was released in August for continued discussion, with an emphasis soliciting input on a new option that had been added – Option 4: State Purchase and Operation of Storage in the Public Interest." This issue was also discussed with the basin advisory committees during the September/October meetings. KWO staff attended the annual meeting of the board of the Kansas River Water Assurance District No. 1 on October 10th and is scheduled to attend the annual meetings of the Neosho/Cottonwood Rivers Water Assurance District No. 3 and the Marais des Cygnes River Water Assurance District No 2 on October 23rd and 24th, respectively.

The Director has also met with multiple other stakeholder groups, including the League of Kansas Municipalities, Kansas Farm Bureau, Kansas Association of Counties, Kansas Livestock Association, among others. While the focus of these meetings has been on the proposal to obtain a portion of the Expanded Lottery Funds (ELARF) and fee increases for the State Water Plan Fund support, the proposal to buy storage is one component of the enhanced revenue package.

Staff recommends that this issue continue to be discussed over the next several months. Possible outcomes might be to table the issue, develop a pilot approach in either the Smoky Hill River or Verdigris River System, or continue to work towards finding a consensus on an approach to broaden access to storage.

No action is needed at this time on *Enhanced Stream Corridor and Wetland Management to Address Reservoir Sedimentation*. Public hearings will be held in December 2008.

It is recommended that the KWA approve continued discussion of *Surface Water Management: Access to Storage*.