

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Governor Sam Brownback issues statement on attainability of sustainable yield from the Ogallala Aquifer

TOPEKA – Kansas Governor Sam Brownback today issued the following statement about new data revealing attainability of sustainable yield from the Ogallala Aquifer. Joined by the Kansas Geological Survey and Lt. Governor Jeff Colyer, Governor Brownback yesterday completed a Water Tour visiting Hoxie and Garden City casting a vision for the future of water use in Kansas. A full news release covering details of the [Governor's Water Tour is available here](#).

“Earlier in my Administration I called for a 50 year vision for water in Kansas. Preserving our water resources is vital to the success of our state. Without water, there is no future.

“That call has been met with enthusiasm and action. It’s spurred debate and discussion. It resulted in Kansans coming together, discussing how to make changes, how to make a lasting impact, and how to secure this precious resource of water for future generations.

“A significant focus has been on the Ogallala Aquifer, and this focus has been rewarded. A recent study found that the Aquifer is replenishing itself faster than we previously realized. This means that with some reduction in water usage, we can reach sustainable aquifer levels for the next one to two decades over about two-thirds of the Aquifer. This bears repeating: sustainable water use is attainable in the near term over much of the Ogallala Aquifer!

“This news is phenomenal because it means that future generations will have access to the water resources that we enjoy today. We’ve changed our mentality towards water in this state to a sustainable resource, not one we are just going to use up.

“So today, we are announcing a new and achievable vision for much of the Ogallala Aquifer region in Kansas. We are moving from a ‘conserve and extend’ vision to sustainability.

“With water management tools like Local Enhanced Management Areas, to Water Conservation Areas, to Water Banking, with the repeal of ‘use it or lose it’ water laws, coupled with new irrigation techniques like deep soil moisture probes, drop nozzle and mobile drip irrigation and sophisticated irrigation water management, it is possible to reduce our demands on the Aquifer to a level of sustainability and still grow our crops to feed the world.

“I congratulate and thank all of those who have made this new vision and new day possible. It is our legacy to future generations to take this information and put it to productive use in the conservation of this precious resource. We want to be remembered as the generation who took the proactive steps and not the generation who didn’t. In twenty, thirty, forty years or more, we will be judged by what we did, or did not do.”

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