

Immediate Release

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Governor Updates Drought Emergency, Warnings and Watches in Kansas Counties

Topeka – Increasing drought conditions in south central and southwestern Kansas have led Governor Sam Brownback to update the Drought Declaration for Kansas counties he issued earlier this year. The update includes moving three counties from warning status up to emergency status.

“Continued dry and hot conditions in southwest Kansas have led to a Drought Emergency declaration for Stanton, Morton and Stevens County,” Governor Brownback said. “Below normal precipitation patterns continue in south-central Kansas which are not only depleting available soil moisture, but have resulted in the decline of stream flow conditions.”

The updated drought declaration moves five counties from watch status up to warning status. It also adds 14 counties to warning status and another eight to watch status. Tracy Streeter, Director of the Kansas Water Office and Chair of the Governor’s Drought Response Team recommended this action.

“The insidious effects of the continued drought across much of the state have caused stream flow in many areas to drop below median levels,” Streeter said. “While surface water concerns are currently in south central Kansas, without improved precipitation patterns in the coming weeks, these shortage problems may soon migrate eastward.”

This Executive Order shall remain in effect for those counties so identified until rescinded by Executive Order or superseded by a subsequent Executive Order revising the drought stage status of those counties affected. Effective immediately:

- Declare a Drought Emergency, Warning or Drought Watch for the counties identified below;
- Authorize and direct all agencies under the jurisdiction of the Governor to implement the appropriate watch or warning level-drought response actions assigned in the Operations Plan of the Governor’s Drought Response Team.

The Governor's Drought Response Team will continue to watch the situation closely and work to minimize the effects the drought has on Kansans.

For more detailed information about current conditions, see the Kansas Climate Summary and Drought Report on the Kansas Water Office website at: www.kwo.org

County Drought Stage Declarations:

Drought Emergency: Morton, Stanton, Stevens (*moved up from warning status*)

Drought Warning: Barber, **Barton**, **Clark**, **Comanche**, **Edwards**, **Finney**, **Ford**, **Gove**, **Grant**, **Gray**, **Greeley**, **Hamilton**, **Harper**, **Harvey**, **Haskell**, **Hodgeman**, **Kearny**, **Kingman**, **Kiowa**, **Lane**, **Logan**, **McPherson**, **Meade**, **Ness**, **Pawnee**, **Pratt**, **Reno**, **Rice**, **Scott**, **Sedgwick**, **Seward**, **Stafford**, **Sumner**, **Trego**, **Wallace**, **Wichita**

Drought Watch: **Butler**, **Chase**, **Cheyenne**, **Cowley**, **Decatur**, **Dickinson**, **Ellis**, **Ellsworth**, **Graham**, **Greenwood**, **Lincoln**, **Marion**, **Norton**, **Ottawa**, **Phillips**, **Rawlins**, **Rooks**, **Rush**, **Russell**, **Saline**, **Sheridan**, **Sherman**, **Thomas**

*Counties in **blue** were included in the original declaration*

*Counties in **black** are new to the warning list.*

*Counties in **red** had their status move from watch to warning.*

*Counties highlighted in **yellow** are new to the watch list.*

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Note to Editor: The Americans with Disabilities Act, (42 U.S.C. 12101), requires the Kansas Water Office to print the reasonable accommodations messages.

As the state's water office, KWO conducts water planning, policy coordination and water marketing as well as facilitates public input throughout the state.

The agency prepares the KANSAS WATER PLAN, a plan for water resources development, management and conservation. KWO also reviews all water laws and makes recommendations to the Governor and Legislature for needed legislation.