



WaterWise

From the REAP Water Resources Committee

January /
February
2010



Looking Ahead

January 11
8:00 a.m.
REAP Meeting
WSU Metroplex

January 11
9:30 a.m.
WRC Meeting
WSU Metroplex

January 27 & 28
KS Water Authority
Meeting
Topeka, KS

February 3
8:30 a.m.
KS Water Issues Forum
SG CO Extension Center

February 4 & 5
KS Natural Resources
Conference
Wichita Airport Hilton

February 8-10
KS Dam Safety
Conference
Hutchinson

Roberts Signs Letter Opposing Clean Water Restoration Act

Kansas Senator Pat Roberts was one of 28 senators and representatives from Western states who signed a letter December 8 to the senate majority leader and speaker of the house opposing the Clean Water Restoration Act and a to-be-introduced companion bill. The proposed legislation would expand the federal governments regulation of surface water and potentially groundwater, which is concerning because it would limit state's rights and increase costs with few proven benefits. The Kansas Natural Resources Subcabinet and the Kansas Water Authority urged the congressional delegation to oppose the legislation, noting that alternative protection measures were already in place in Kansas and stressed the burden additional legislation would place on Kansas's resources strapped water regulatory agencies. More information is online at <http://www.ksda.gov/dwr/content/314/cid/1638>



WRCP Discontinued Dec. 31, 2009

The Water Rights Conservation Program (WRCP) operated by the KS Department of Agriculture was initiated In 1992 to protect unused water rights from being declared abandoned for non-use. Chief Engineer David Barfield held a public meeting Nov. 30 to receive public comment on the proposal to discontinue accepting applications for the program, and despite letters of support from REAP and several communities, Barfield adopted the proposal. The action stems from the economic recession, and as a non-statutorily required program, the discontinuation of the WRCP is seen as a viable cost-cutting measure. The Division of Water Resources is supportive of any legislative efforts to get the program reinstated with an appropriate fee attached to provide funding for staff. More information can be found online at <http://www.ksda.gov/appropriation/cid/1360>



NY Times reports American Tap Water is Legal but Questionably Safe

In an ongoing series titled "Toxic Waters" regarding the pollution of American waters and the response of regulators, the New York Times reported December 17 that the 35 year-old Federal Safe Drinking Water Act is so out of date that only 91 contaminants are regulated in a country were 60,000 chemicals are used. Moreover, not one chemical has been added to the list of those regulated by the act since 2000. The article uses several independent studies which assert that millions of Americans become sick annually from drinking contaminated

water. Although E.P.A. Director Lisa Jackson has asked Congress to amend laws governing how the agency assesses chemicals and limit the influence of outside pressures on the agencies scientific reviews, former regulators believe that significant risks regarding drinking water remain and that those risks should be addressed. The complete story is available on www.nytimes.com by searching for key words "tap water."

KS Water Office's Annual Report to the Governor Stresses Reservoir Roadmap

The Kansas Water Authority's 2009 Annual Report to the Governor begins with highlights of the State Water Plan's 2009 major accomplishments, specifically noting the successful dredging of Mission Lake near Horton, KS; the continuation of the ASR Project in Wichita; as well as the completion of Horse Thief Reservoir. In a summary of the Reservoir Sustainability Initiative, the report describes a recent study of the John Redmond Reservoir in the Neosho River Basin where capacity has reportedly



decreased from 82,230 acre feet in 1963 to 53,927 acre feet in 2007, a rate that is considerably faster than anticipated. The reallocation and construction of replacement items has been delayed until issues with the Hartford Levee north of the reservoir have been addressed. The report continues by including the proposed Reservoir Sustainability Act and explains its ability to provide the KWA with the

resources needed to secure, protect and restore Kansas' water supply through appropriate funding. The report concludes with a Capital Development Plan, which reiterates the need for additional money to leverage against local, state and federal funds through the dedication of 10% of the Expanded Lottery Act Revenues Fund. Adoption of the Capital Dvlp. Plan will require \$1.9 billion dollars in funding over the next 5 years. A complete copy of the report is online at <http://www.kwo.org/>

Policy Summit Review of Water Related Legislative Issues for 2010 Session

The 2009 REAP Legislative Policy Summit was held December 3 and 4 in Wichita and provided the opportunity for legislators to get an update on water issues of regional and statewide importance for the upcoming 2010 session. Director of Wichita Water Utilities David Warren educated legislators regarding the purpose and progress of the

Aquifer Storage & Recovery Project and also discussed the WRC's recent efforts to address territorial disputes between Rural Water Districts and cities. Additional updates on Water related topics were provided in hard copy form, including the recommendations of the Reservoir



Roadmap; purpose of the State Water Plan Fund; Enhanced Stream Corridor and Wetland Management strategies; as well as the Lower Arkansas and Walnut Basin priority issues. Meeting materials are online at <http://www.reap-ks.org/policy.html>

Chief Engineer Barfield Urges Increased Federal Funding for Streamgages

Division of Water Resources Chief Engineer David Barfield is one of 38 state officials in 27 states who signed a December 14 letter to the U.S. Department of the Interior Secretary Ken Salazar urging full implementation and funding for the U.S. Geological Survey's streamgaging programs. Streamgages measure the depth of

water in streams and are used to compute flow rates. The letter was prepared by the Interstate Council on Water Policy, who believes that the full funding of the National Streamflow Information Program and Cooperative Water Program would require federal appropriations totaling \$205 million per year. The FY 2010 allocation is \$93 million

dollars. Data collected by streamgages are important for flood forecasting and monitoring, determining compliance with interstate compacts, regulating water rights and more. Current Kansas steamgauge information is available online at <http://waterdata.usgs.gov/ks/nwis/current/?type=flow>

Upcoming Water and Natural Resources Related Conferences

Early February will play host to multiple water-related conferences, including the (rescheduled) Kansas Water Office's Kansas Water Issues Forum February 3rd in Wichita at the Sedgwick County Extension Center and February 4 at the KSU Agricultural Center in Hays.

Attendees who registered for the original dates of December 3 and 4 for the forum are not required to

re-register and additional attendees are still welcome. The registration fee for the forum is \$15, which covers snacks, lunch and meeting materials.

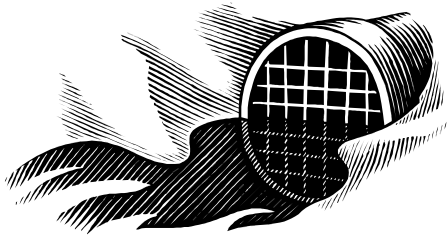


Overlapping with the Kansas Water Issues Forum will be the Kansas Natural Resources Conference on

February 4 and 5 at the Wichita Airport Hilton, where the plenary session will focus on "Kansas Waters- Signs of Prosperity and Health". Early registration is \$75 and due by January 15; after that registration is \$95. Information on both conferences can be found online at <http://www.kwo.org> and <http://www.kansasnrc.com> respectively.

Wichita Receives Flood Drainage Study Grant

In late November the City of Wichita announced it had received a \$550,000 federal grant for a Wichita area drainage master plan which will impact flood management practices and planning across the city. Fourth District Congressional Representative Todd Tiahrt submitted the appropriations request on behalf of the city, which was one of the top five federal funding requests submitted in March by the Wichita City Council. Engineers with the City of Wichita's Public Works Department will now meet with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to develop a prioritized project list. The project is



analyze the most economical solutions for flood prone properties, which could include buyouts and/or drainage projects. As an added benefit, the analysis will allow for water quality improvements within the watershed areas in compliance with state and federal standards. The grant will build on the success of the recently completed Cowskin project in West Wichita which was dedicated in September and also benefitted from a federal grant to reduce flood risk in the area.

What is the REAP Water Resources Committee?

In 2007, the Water Resources Committee was formed as a subset committee of REAP with the purpose of serving as a regional forum and informational resource for water quality and quantity issues in South Central Kansas. The Committee is currently comprised of 26 cities and counties. The WRC also serves as a regional voice on behalf of the members before federal, state and regional agencies. Interested communities are encouraged to attend our meetings and contact the Committee's Executive Officer, Angela Buzard, at the information below to learn more about the Committee.



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Feedback and topic suggestions are welcome!
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