

WATER CONSERVATION - DRAFT

Key themes from stakeholder outreach:

- Even if not deemed a significant source of additional supply, conservation has to be a part of the future vision for water in Kansas
- Reduce barriers and increase development of locally driven conservation and management plans
- Implement greater water conservation policies and practices, both voluntary and non-voluntary
- Increase adoption of watershed practices that reduce future water supply loss
- Information and education is key to increased adoption of water conservation practices

Questions and Common Themes

What can be done to increase the adoption and success of locally-driven conservation and management plans?

- Local and state organizations partner with k-12 education to share the importance and the value of conservation at an early age.
- More actively engage youth in water management issues at the local, regional and state level.
- Develop and distribute a best management practices guide that is geared at both the urban consumer and the rural agricultural consumer of Kansas water resources keeping in mind the economic impact.
 - This should involve a scale of expectations. BMP's take decades to take effect
- Develop a consistent process to relay information to all media outlets to effectively share timely updates and messages regarding the value of water conservation and initiatives in a format that is relatable to all water consumers.
- Increase the construction of weirs or low water dams to slow down water in high flow events.
- Create a measurable state goal of water usage reduction.
- Create funding to support the achievement of a measurable state goal of water usage.
- State support for a declining rate structure that would be non-voluntary/required.
- Create a mindset change of those who sell water to focus on correctly pricing their service of providing water, opposed to the sales and price of water.
- Conservation should be invisible to consumers .i.e. Low flow shower head
- Municipalities should promote conservation not encourage water use by certain requirements.
- Increase funding sources to invest in the local conservation groups and BMP's (i.e. streambank stabilization)
- Continual support of research about what BMP's work best in what regions.

- Develop incentives to keep riparian forest.
- Increase work and partnership of the Irrigation Association by supporting their residential irrigators program.
- Promote opportunities for use of runoff water.
- Personnel is currently limited and there should be an adequate budget to support for those individuals so they can adequately promote the best practices.
- Develop a market for alternative crops that are substituted.
- Let the economy dictate what Kansas farmers grow.
- Where there is water, promote appropriate industries that can use that water to drive economic growth.
- Crop insurance needs to provide the correct incentives regarding water conservation practices.
- Need to document and measure the improvements.
- Improve channels of communication between county CD's/NRCS Field Offices. We still need cooperation between Fed State and Local entities to ensure all legislatures are on board.
- Find a way to tap into corporate funding for municipalities.
- Address watershed variability - No one size fits all

What are the barriers to the adoption of locally-driven conservation (best management practices) measures?

- There is a contradiction between the rates of conservation and cost structures.
- The debate between the value of increased production of crops/livestock versus the value increase of water conservation.
- Currently the value of water is not equal to what the user is charged for.
- The current comprehension level of Kansans regarding the value of water in Kansas.
- The current cost associated with streambank stabilization.
- The perception that conservation, such as no till and cover crops won't work on my farm.
- Resistance to change by current water consumers, including agriculture, private industry, municipalities, tourism and recreation.
- Lack of local technical resources for all water consumers.
- No sense of urgency among Kansans because water always comes out of the faucet.
- Few individuals are taking responsibility and ownership of the problems associated with the lack of water conservation.

- Businesses need a tangible incentive to conserve water.
- Building a system to meet peak demand then the cost to pay for it is not equal and is a disincentive to conservation
- There is a reluctance/lack of courage to pass regulation to encourage water conserve at the state and local level.
- The bills do not break down the specific costs of water (infrastructure costs)..
- Currently the state work on limited irrigation insurance issues that surround irrigation issues.
- The gap between the cost and accepting of technology that improves water conservation and usage.
- Refer to the example of a large grey water reuse.
- Water rate structure inconsistencies throughout the state; some rates encourage conservation and some do not. Those should be evaluated.
- If you have to pay a value for water, there is no place for the money to go.
- Develop more ways to recognize the diversity in the state.
- Develop incentives for cost share programs to reduce cost of the technology.
- Public perception of LEMAs is bad because people believe it is mandatory.
- Working together between Federal State Local officials is difficult.
- Rattlesnake Creek was penalized because they were efficient conservers of water, this cannot happen.
- Landowners need to be shown where the sediment is coming from
- It is cheaper to pump water than conserve, water is too cheap.
 - Value or lack of value placed on our riparian areas above the federal reservoirs
- Make water conservation plans a requirement

What consistent, long-term measures can be employed to increase public information and education to better promote water resource conditions and water conservation opportunities?

- Statewide event, cooperation between ag and industry.
- Model water conservation outreach and campaigns on a large scale such as the non-smoking campaign that was launched in the 1950s.
- Increase the awareness of the need for investment in water conservation infrastructure.
- Partner with universities to ensure there is a properly trained workforce.
- Radio messages and public service announcements that are 1 minute long and focus on the state water conservation; similar to the national Farm Bureau radio 1 minute PSAs.

- Target specific information.
- Recognize the successes, share results.
- State owned facilities should lead by example from anything such as awareness to ensuring low flow toilets are installed.
- Consider if STEM funding should be involved in education of water conservation among education of youth, K-12.
- Should education among youth K-12 be in schools when teachers are probably not trained to teach water conservation/issues? Consider after school education programs.
- Develop drought exercises to bring diverse users together and simulate a drought.
- There is no water education program right now, there was the project WET.
- We need to ensure we have good information.
- Somehow make people go without water to help spread awareness and appreciation of water.
- Maximize use of existing groups that are already in place such as K-State extension and conservation districts.
- Find leader in the community to increase BMP implementation
- Pay farmers and communities in water.
- Nothing immoral about overuse except that we know better
- Increase peer to peer communication (Municipal to Municipal, Ag to Ag, etc.)
- Share new information with consumers, low flow toilets have been promoted for years, people need to hear about new opportunities to increase conservation.

Of the feedback you have heard related to Water Conservation, which do you feel would lead to the greatest probability of achieving the Vision?

- Developing measurable state, regional and local water conservation goals.
- Continued use and development of all university research and studies.
- Leverage the current understanding of water conservation experts.
- Ensure that when money is used for conservation, best management practices are maintained.
- Through a public campaign get urban and municipal consumers to realize their stewardship role to increase water conservation.
 - Develop a narrative of where people live and how their lifestyle, similar to feature/success stories.
 - Create the connection between conserving water and conserving energy.
- Developing a rewards and incentives to recognition successful Kansas water conservation programs and regions.

- Support those who have taken a step forward (innovation /conservation)
- Use desalination technologies.
- Maximize storage of existing water conservation efforts efficiently before measurably restricting water use.
- Correctly value water needs in Kansas to encourage economic development.
- Sort out the difference between the different uses of water (ag, Industrial, municipal).
- Putting a price on water that is correct to the value of water.
- Adequately fund water conservation programs.
- Build the aqueduct.
- Consider all of the other benefits of BMP's.

Other ideas related to Water Conservation that the Vision Team should consider?

- Prevention opportunities need to be increased.
- Talking points need to be developed to convince the local leaders and decision makers to encourage change and start conversations about water conservation ideas that would work for their local communities.
- Develop list of ideas to create increased public buy-in.
- Create a public campaign to municipal consumers focused on the value of water.
- Develop a statewide program to assist water consumers find leaks. The loss of water in municipal systems is 20%.
- The individuals involved in the system need to be able to recognize a problem and have the tools and the sense of urgency and willingness to act upon it.
- Different messages and talking points need to be developed for each unique audience.
- Financially support universities and the resources they currently and could provide.
- Provide people understandable data, water information, on their water resource (reservoirs, aquifers, etc.)
- Emphasize the conservation piece on the recreational part of water usage (economics)
- Funding How do you pay for the things that are talked about here today
- Long term funding solution
- Conservation can lead to water being more valuable (thats a good thing)
- We charge for surface water. Do we need to charge for ground water?
- What will the cost and value of water be 50 years from now?

- Encourage more emphasis on the LEMA process in western Kansas.
- Water quality standards for potable water in municipalities.
- During a drought is no time to develop a drought response plan, there should be more proactive work of the state to execute during droughts.
- Develop economic incentive to use less water in irrigation.
- Install meters inside the house to show water usage to increase awareness and improve quantity of conservation.
- Answer the question of how do we reduce the cost of water but increase its value.
- Aging infrastructure is as big of concern as water supply the water vision should address this.
- Individuals who do not follow regulations and best practices should be penalized publically.
- New regulations should be geographical.
- Zero use is not recognized as water conservation.
- Hold Kansas waters in the federal reservoirs.
- Does the Corps of Engineers recognize the federal compacts we have?
- What are the cost of not taking extreme measures
- Do we need a sediment standard (reg)?
- We need Policy in place to protect existing riparian forest.
- Reward and pay landowner to leave the riparian area there instead of dredging.