

## MINUTES OF THE STATE CONSERVATION COMMISSION

1. The State Conservation Commission meeting was called to order by Rod Vorhees, Chairman and Area V Commissioner, at 10:04 a.m., Wednesday, April 15, 2020, via teleconference.

2. **ATTENDANCE:**

**Elected Commissioners:**

Ted Nighswonger, Area I Commissioner  
Andy Larson, Area II Commissioner  
Brad Shogren, Area III Commissioner  
John Wunder, Area IV Commissioner  
Rod Vorhees, Area V Commissioner

**Ex-Officio & Appointed Members:**

Peter Tomlinson, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Extension Specialist for Environmental Quality  
Agronomy Department, Kansas State University  
Dan Devlin, Director, Kansas Center for Agricultural Resources and the Environment (KCARE), K-  
State Research and Extension  
Terry Medley, P.E., Water Structures Program Manager, Division of Water Resources, Kansas  
Department of Agriculture  
Troy Munsch, Assistant State Conservationist for Partnerships, Natural Resources Conservation  
Service in place of Karen Woodrich, State Conservationist, Natural Resources Conservation  
Service

**Division of Conservation, Kansas Department of Agriculture Staff:**

Scott Carlson, Acting Executive Director  
Steve Frost, Administrative Manager  
Dave Jones, Water Quality Program Manager  
Cindy Pulse, Conservation District Program Coordinator  
Tim McCoy, Riparian Wetlands Program Manager  
Cathy Thompson, Program Consultant (not in attendance due to working with KDOL Phone Bank –  
COVID)  
Hakim Saadi, Watershed Program Manager (not in attendance due to working with KDOL Phone Bank  
– COVID)  
Christy Koelzer, Administrative Specialist

**Guests:**

Kelsey Olson, Assistant Secretary Kansas Department of Agriculture (arrived at 10:50, left at 11:18)  
Dan Meyerhoff, Executive Director, KACD

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Amanda Scott, President, KACD-EO  
Stephanie Royer, Member, KACD-EO  
Jason Hartman, State Forester, Kansas Forest Service (KFS)  
Herb Graves, Executive Director, State Association of Kansas Watersheds (SAKW)

### 3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

**A motion was made by Brad Shogren to approve the agenda as emailed. The motion was seconded by Andy Larson. Motion carried.**

### 4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING:

**A motion was made by John Wunder to approve the February 3, 2020, minutes as corrected to include the addition of cover crop as eligible practice under non-point source moved by John Wunder and seconded by Ted Nighswonger; motion carried. The motion was seconded by Brad Shogren. Motion carried.**

### 5. COMMUNICATIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

#### a. KDA COVID-19 operations

- i. Scott Carlson shared details on continuity of operations at KDA including: limited staff in the building; working from home; communicating via phone, email and Zoom; DOC staff Zoom meetings Mondays at 8:30; Cindy checks mail and sends checks to Fiscal on Wednesdays; keeping Conservation Districts informed with regular updates.
- ii. Kelsey Olson, Assistant Secretary—KDA COVID-19 Update. Since March 11 she has been covering COVID-19 issues. State agencies were on a two-week administrative essential leave from March 23-April 3. KDA is the only agency fully equipped to work from home. Priority concerns include responsibilities to fulfill programs, COVID-19's impact on the food supply chains, food processing facilities, food companies, and food producers and to mitigate concerns. She has been in contact with FEMA and USDA sharing Kansas concerns and perspective. She thanked Cathy Thompson for helping coordinate KDA's assistance with the Department of Labor's phone bank. 64 KDA employees have helped with the phone bank. Interviews for the Executive Director position have been postponed until further notice. In the legislature, the DOC statute revisions passed in the House and the Senate committee with no changes. The bill is awaiting a full Senate vote, but it is uncertain if/when the Senate will return due to COVID-19 and the need to remain distanced.

#### b. New DOC Employee—Christy Koelzer

- i. Scott Carlson introduced new Administrative Specialist, Christy Koelzer, and she gave a brief background of her experience.

### 6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

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- a. Statute revision update
  - i. Kelsey Olson spoke to statute revisions in her update.
- b. Irrigation Technology Initiative update
  - i. Dave Jones shared that under Rattlesnake Creek, they were able to fund all \$85,000 in applications. There is \$26,000 still available for allocation for soil and moisture probe systems.
- c. Other Program Updates
  - i. Scott Carlson shared the deadline for receiving and approving Annual Mine Reports in Land Reclamation has been extended to May 1 and may be extended again.
  - ii. Steve Frost shared that CREP will expand to the Rattlesnake Creek Basin project.

### 7. NEW BUSINESS:

- a. Scott Carlson outlined future SCC meeting dates.

**A motion was made by John Wunder to approve the FY 2021 meeting dates as outlined below. The motion was seconded by Andy Larson. Motion carried.**

Possible August meeting/teleconference

September 17, 2020\*(Joint meeting the day before, need to discuss with KACD)

November 22, 2020

January 19, 2021

February meeting in conjunction with legislature day at capitol

April 12, 2021

May 17, 2021

- b. FY 2021 budget update (Attachment A)
  - i. Scott Carlson provided a handout detailing FY 2021 appropriations and highlighted there is an increase of approximately \$1,250,000 in enhancements. District aid increased \$150,000.
  - ii. Steve Frost shared that DOC received additional funding. Irrigation technology is a growing program. Water resources received an additional \$250,000. Dan Devlin asked if Steve would put together an informational paragraph on how DOC funding is used for the next Water Authority meeting.
- c. FY 2018, FY 2019 and FY 2020 cost-share encumbrance and cancellation policy (Attachment B)
  - i. In light of COVID-19, Dave Jones outlined a plan for FY18 and FY19 cost share funds to be encumbered to FY21 and FY20 cost share funds to be encumbered to FY22 as well as a

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cancellation of FY20 non-point source funds making them available for reallocation allowing anything under new contract to be encumbrance eligible.

**A motion was made by John Wunder to encumber FY18 and FY19 cost share funds to FY21, encumber FY20 cost share funds to FY22, and accept the cancellation policy of FY20 funds for reallocation and anything under contract to be encumbrance eligible. The motion was seconded by Andy Larson. Motion carried.**

### 8. UPDATES:

#### a. Comments from Guests

- i. Kelsey Olson (Assistant Secretary) provided an update on KDA COVID-19 operations.
- ii. Herb Graves (SAKW) shared they are trying to get state and locally funded into the dam watch program and there is continuation of work on projects.
- iii. Amanda Scott (KACD/EO) shared most districts are working remotely. Keila Sherman was recognized by KACEE for an excellence award. (Attachment C)
- iv. Stephanie Royer (KACD/EO) shared districts that sell trees have been in the field delivering.
- v. Jason Hartman (KFS) shared seedlings are going out for a multitude of purposes. Foresters have not been out in the field much, mainly working from home. There is interest in the RQEI program, waiting on the foresters to be able to get into the field. Shane Neal was moved to KFS state office from the DOC office.
- vi. Dan Meyerhoff (KACD) has been able to get caught up on things. There is work on scheduling ATV and UTV trainings for NRCS employees. He is optimistic about the increased funding for conservation. He has sent letters of thanks to legislators. KACD is going into the second year of the WRAPS funding partnership. A seventh DOC technician position will be added. Several educational materials are being developed. NACD sent a letter to the congressional district, funding was addressed in the letter. The springboard meeting via Zoom is next Thursday. He is also working on the convention.

#### b. DOC Staff Updates

- i. Scott Carlson shared that the DOC will be sending out additional information to conservation districts about encumbrance, etc.
- ii. Cindy Pulse is pleased to have Christy on board. While training her remotely has challenges, it is going well.
- iii. Steve Frost appreciates the effort of Dan Meyerhoff's work with the legislature.

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### c. Ex-Officio and Appointed Member Updates:

- i. Troy Munsch (USDA, NRCS) is currently in telework mode at the field office level. They can have one NRCS employee in the office at a time. Movement is going forward with program activities. CCGA grants were announced yesterday; there will be \$4 million available. CIG should be announced soon. RCPP Chief will announce approved agreements on Thursday. EQIP is still moving forward and they have a high number of applications. Kansas had second most acres in the nation available for renewal. There is current game planning for workload on CRP. He appreciates the DOC and KACD technician agreement for the positions. They have been able to hire some NRCS personnel as well. He will be the acting state conservationist until July.
- ii. Dan Devlin (KSU, KCARE) shared that the KSU shut down is going to go through the end of July. There are no in-person meetings. County fairs could be cancelled or delayed this year, there has not been an announcement yet. All new hires are on hold.
- iii. Terry Medley (KDA, DWR) is adjusting to working remotely. Work is generally going ok. There has been no movement on hiring of the new chief engineer. Five staff members are helping with the DOL phone bank.

### d. Elected Commissioner Area Updates:

- i. Ted Nighswonger (Area I): No report.
- ii. Andy Larson (Area II): No rain in their area and road traffic has decreased.
- iii. Brad Shogren (Area III): It is pretty slow, and they are dry.
- iv. John Wunder (Area IV): There is a small window for field work and construction to happen. There is a need for many terrace repairs. Some planting has started. More snow is possible. Their district had a zoom meeting yesterday. John read a statement from Pam Walker in Wilson county.
- v. Rod Vorhees (Area V): Rod reported that John was quoted in the Fredonia paper. Their area has been very wet, but it is starting to dry out. Contractors are reporting that some jobs have been cancelled due to economic uncertainty.

## 9. ADJOURNMENT:

The next regular Commission meeting date TBA (waiting to see what happens with extension of COVID-19 stay at home order extensions, possibly teleconference in May).

**A motion was made by Andy Larson to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Brad Shogren. Motion carried.**

**The meeting was adjourned at 12:23 p.m.**

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Scott Carlson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "S" and "C".

Scott Carlson  
Acting Executive Director

# Kansas Association of Conservation Districts Employees' Organization

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AMANDA SCOTT, President



April 2020

- I attended the Kansas Technical Committee meeting in Salina on February 25, 2020.
- I joined the Northern Plains NACD teleconference on March 12, 2020.
- Kelia Sherman, Greenwood County District Manager received a 2020 Excellence award from KACEE.
- Most districts are currently operating from home, working on budgets, audits, state cost-share and county average cost reviews. This has definitely been a time of uncertainty, adapting our ways to reach producers in our new environments. Some districts are promoting educational activities and outreach through social media.
- Many KACD-EO area meetings have been postponed to later dates.
- The KACD-EO Executive Board did postpone our meeting in Salina, scheduled on April 16, 2020. We will determine a date once the current restrictions are lifted.

As always, if anyone has any questions, concerns or needs assistance please contact myself or any of the Area KACD-EO Representatives for assistance.

## DOC Cost-Share Funds Update - as of March 31, 2020

Program	Fund Source	Allocation	Committed	Expenditures	Uncommitted
<b>Aid to Conservation Districts</b>		<b>\$2,192,637.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$2,192,637.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>Water Resources</b>	DNA	\$2,292,612.48	\$1,618,307.87	\$447,751.51	\$226,553.10
	TMDL's	\$108,283.32	\$63,358.42	\$29,621.10	\$15,303.80
	Milford RCPP	\$29,626.52	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$29,626.52
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,430,522.32</b>	<b>\$1,681,666.29</b>	<b>\$477,372.61</b>	<b>\$271,483.42</b>
<b>Non-Point Source</b>	NPS	\$1,540,970.21	\$635,875.35	\$475,202.14	\$429,892.72
	TMDL's	\$50,000.00	\$11,225.50	\$8,253.90	\$30,520.60
	NPS AFO	\$50,000.00	\$0.00	\$20,000.00	\$30,000.00
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,640,970.21</b>	<b>\$647,100.85</b>	<b>\$503,456.04</b>	<b>\$490,413.32</b>
<b>CREP-WTAP</b>	CREP	\$260,368.54	\$0.00	\$202,900.72	\$57,467.82
	CREP-Rattlesnake	\$100,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$100,000.00
	WTAP	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$360,368.54</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$202,900.72</b>	<b>\$157,467.82</b>
<b>Riparian &amp; Wetland</b>	RW	\$50,000.00	\$19,491.24	\$0.00	\$30,508.76
	Sed. & Nut. Red. Init.	\$281,312.00	\$1,590.75	\$6,901.01	\$272,820.24
	Rip. Quality Enhan. Init.	\$94,024.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$94,024.00
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$425,336.00</b>	<b>\$21,081.99</b>	<b>\$6,901.01</b>	<b>\$397,353.00</b>
<b>Kansas Water Quality Buffer Initiative</b>	<b>Buffer</b>	<b>\$414,515.39</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$85,061.79</b>	<b>\$329,453.60</b>
<b>Kansas Reservoir Protection Initiative</b>	KWO	\$700,000.00	\$107,847.12	\$435,629.01	\$156,523.87
	Ks. Res. Prot. Init. Carryover	\$55,573.39	\$0.00	\$55,570.41	\$2.98
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$755,573.39</b>	<b>\$107,847.12</b>	<b>\$491,199.42</b>	<b>\$156,526.85</b>
<b>KACD WRAPS</b>	<b>WRAPS</b>	<b>\$300,000.00</b>	<b>\$77,060.79</b>	<b>\$142,363.44</b>	<b>\$80,575.77</b>
<b>Irrigation Technology</b>		<b>\$132,540.00</b>	<b>\$12,797.40</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$119,742.60</b>
<b>Watershed Dam Construction</b>		<b>\$550,000.00</b>	<b>\$550,000.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>



<b>Fund</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Appropriation</b>	<b>Notations</b>
1800-0088	Irrigation technology	\$100,000.00	Same as FY20 appropriation
1800-1205	Water resources cost share	\$2,698,289.00	FY20 appropriation + \$250k
1800-1210	Nonpoint source pollution assistance	\$1,857,836.00	KWA recommendation for FY21
1800-1220	Conservation district aid	\$2,342,637.00	FY20 appropriation + \$150k
1800-1225	Conservation reserve enhancement program fund	\$699,745.00	FY20 appropriation + \$397,699
1800-1240	Watershed dam construction	\$750,000.00	FY20 appropriation + \$200k
1800-1250	Kansas water quality buffer initiatives	\$200,000.00	Same as FY20 appropriation
1800-1260	Riparian and wetland program	\$154,024.00	Same as FY20 appropriation
1800-1290	Streambank stabilization projects	\$750,000.00	FY20 appropriation + 250k
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$9,552,531.00</b>	<b>\$1,247,699 in enhancements</b>