

Testimony

Submitted To: David Barfield, Chief Engineer & Hearing Officer
Division of Water Resources, Kansas Department of Agriculture

From: Tracy Streeter, Director, Kansas Water Office

RE: Proposed District-Wide Local Enhanced Management Area
Northwest Kansas Groundwater Management District #4

Date: November 14, 2017

The State Water Resource Planning Act lays out long range goals for the state of Kansas in K.S.A. 82a-927. Four of those goals have some applicability to the efforts and actions identified in the proposed LEMA. Those are:

- (d) the sound management, both public and private, of the atmospheric, surface, and groundwater supplies of the state;
- (e) the prevention of the waste of the water supplies of the state;
- (h) the sound coordination of the development of the water resources of the state with the development of the other resources of the state; and
- (i) the protection of the public interest through the conservation of the water resources of the state in a technologically and economically feasible manner.

K.S.A. 82a-928 identifies policies “that are deemed desirable for the achievement of the long-range goals and objectives”, including:

- (l) the management of the groundwaters of the state as provided by the Kansas water appropriation act and the provisions of K.S.A. 82a-1020 to 82a-1040, inclusive, and amendments thereto;
- (p) the encouragement of local initiative in the planning, implementation, funding and operation of local water programs to the extent that the same are supportive of state water programs;

The Kansas Water Authority was created by the Kansas Legislature in 1981 to consult with and be advisory to the governor, the legislature, and the director of the Kansas Water Office. The Kansas Water Office and Kansas Water Authority have since conducted water planning activities for the State of Kansas through development of the State Water Plan, with input and direction received from local advisory committees.

In January 2009, after public input and public hearing, the Kansas Water Authority adopted a goal related to the Ogallala-High Plains Aquifer. That goal is to “Conserve and extend the life of the Ogallala-High Plains Aquifer.” Basin sections for the Upper Republican and Solomon river Basins, which cover the GMD 4 area, had

companion language and actions related to conserving and extending the life of the aquifer. The proposed GMD 4 LEMA is consistent with the Kansas Water Plan goals and actions.

In 2013 there was a call to make a 50 Year water plan for the state of Kansas and in 2014 fourteen regional planning areas were established by the Kansas Water Authority, with the Upper Republican regional planning area covering the entirety of the concerned GMD4 area.

Regional Advisory Committees of local stakeholders, representing multiple varied interests were established in August 2015 to establish Regional Goals, Implementation Action Plans, and represent the regional planning areas to the Kansas Water Authority, for the Upper Republican there were three positions representing Agriculture, two positions representing Public Water Supply, two At Large Public positions, one representing Local Government, one representing Groundwater Management, one representing Industry/Commerce, and one representing Conservation/Environment. The Upper Republican Regional Advisory Committee held meetings in January 2016, April 2016, July 2016, and October 2016 to develop the Regional Goals and Implementation Action Plan for the region, the GMD4 LEMA proposal was discussed at each of these public Regional Advisory Committee meetings and public comments were accepted.

On October 19, 2016 the Upper Republican Regional Advisory Committee presented its Regional Goals and Implementation Action Plan to the Kansas Water Authority for approval and adoption. The Kansas Water Authority voted on and approved the Upper Republican Regional Advisory Committee's Regional Goals and Implementation Action Plan with no dissenting votes or modifications. The approved Priority Goal #1 of the Upper Republican Regional Advisory Committee is to develop and adopt a water conservation management plan that provides maximum flexibility while reducing overall actual use, in concert with GMD4, to extend the aquifer life and economic well-being by January 1, 2017. With an action step of: "Support GMD4 in continuation of district-wide LEMA plan."

Staff of the Kansas Water Office attended several of the multiple LEMA public information meetings and observed the modification of the proposed LEMA plan over the last year as a result of public and GMD4 Board Member input on the plan.

It is the opinion of the Kansas Water Office that the GMD4 LEMA Management Plan Proposal is consistent with the Upper Republican Regional Advisory Committee's Priority Goal #1 for the region as approved by the Kansas Water Authority and the current proposal is the result of the input received from multiple GMD4 public information meetings, GMD4 public board meetings, and consistent with public input received at Upper Republican Regional Advisory Committee Meetings, and that the Chief Engineer should issue an Order of Decision Accepting the LEMA Management Plan Proposal proposed by the GMD4.

Respectfully submitted,



Tracy Streeter, Director
Kansas Water Office