

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT.

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Joann Freeborn at 3:30 p.m. on January 29, 2002 in Room 231-N of the Capitol.

All members were present except: Representative Tom Sloan - excused
Representative Jeff Peterson - excused
Representative Laura McClure - excused
Representative Clay Aurand - excused

Committee staff present: Raney Gilliland, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Mary Torrence, Revisor of Statute's Office
Mary Ann Graham, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee: Earl Lewis, Kansas Water Office, 901 SW Kansas Ave.,
Topeka, KS 66612
Maurice Korphage, Director, Conservation Division, Kansas
Corporation Commission, 130 S. Market, Room 2078,
Wichita, KS 67202

Others attending: See Attached Sheet

Chairperson Joann Freeborn called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m. She opened the floor for bill introductions and asked if anyone wished to make a bill request. No one came forward. She called the committee's attention to a map that had been distributed from the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, which was requested by Representative Sharon Schwartz, concerning Proposed Designations for Streams Surveyed in 2001. (See attachment 1)

The Chairperson welcomed Earl Lewis, Kansas Water Office, to the committee. Mr. Lewis introduced staff members; Kent Lamb, Kansas Water Authority; Paul Tobia, Kansas Water Office and Kansas Water Authority; Kent Weatherby, Kansas River Water Assurance District; and Iona Branscum, Department of Agriculture, Division of Water Resources. He briefed the committee on a Reservoir Operations and Drought Exercise, with the use of an overhead viewer and slides. The State of Kansas through the Kansas Water Office has worked with local public water suppliers and the federal government for nearly 30 years to improve reservoir operations and minimize the effects of drought. The state has purchased water supply storage in 13 federal lakes and developed two operational programs related to these issues. They feel they must continue to learn from experiences and put new practices into place to meet the changing population and water demand base. The State of Kansas really became involved with water supply from federal lakes in the 1950's. The flood of 1951, followed by the drought of 1952-1957 pointed out the need for development of flood control and water supply reservoirs in Kansas. With passage of the Federal Water Supply Act of 1958, the state had a mechanism to participate in the process of reservoir development. As Mr. Lewis walked the committee through the information from the drought exercise he called attention to three basic things; participant decisions, the storage in the federal reservoirs, and the flow in the river at Topeka at each time step. He showed how the participant decisions and operational rules affected the storage in the reservoirs and the flow in the river. He showed information and graphs at each time step to correlate the decisions to the effect on water available both in storage and for diversion by water users. (See attachment 2) Discussion followed.

Chairperson Freeborn thanked Mr. Lewis for his presentation and welcomed Maurice Korphage, Director, Conservation Division, Kansas Corporation Commission. He gave an update on Well Plugging and Remediation Activities with the use of an overhead viewer and slides. During the 1996 legislative session **House Substitute for SB755** was passed. As a result of that legislation the Abandoned Oil and Gas Well/Remediation Fund was created for the expressed purpose of providing funding to the KCC with which to address the problem of abandoned exploration and production wells located within the state. The legislation requires in part that the Commission prepare and maintain an inventory of all abandoned wells with a special focus on wells which, (1) the State of Kansas has assumed the plugging liability because of the lack of a potentially responsible party (No PRP); and (2) pose either an ongoing or potential threat to the environment (Priority 1). The Commission was further directed to develop and maintain such an inventory on a computer database and report to the office of the Governor and certain legislative committees the status of the inventory as well as the Commission's efforts towards plugging those wells which pose a threat to the public safety and/or environment. Mr. Korphage had slides showing sites of abandoned wells that the

CONTINUATION SHEET

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Commission had plugged. (See attachment 3) Discussion followed.

The Chairperson thanked Mr. Korphage for his presentation and thanked the committee for their attention.

The meeting adjourned at 5:10 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, January 31, 2002.