

Testimony in Support of SB 194
Western KS GMD #1, SW Kansas GMD #3 & NW Kansas GMD #4
By Sean Miller
To the House Agriculture Committee
Monday, March 5, 2018

Chairman Hoffman and members of the committee, my name is Sean Miller and I thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of Western Kansas GMD #1, Southwest Kansas GMD #3 and Northwest Kansas GMD #4 in support of SB 194.

After the Senate hearing on SB 194 last year stakeholders, notably the City of Wichita and Equus Beds GMD#2, worked through the summer to achieve a reasonable compromise on this issue. The original language of this bill contained three moving parts, increasing assessment caps for water used in-district, increased caps for water transported for use out-of-district, and an increase in the per acre assessment on land within the district. The amended language being provided to the committee today eliminates the differential between in-district and out-of-district use, increases the assessment cap on all water from \$1 to \$2 per acre foot, and makes no changes to the current statutory land assessment cap of \$0.05 per acre.

It is important to note that each groundwater management district in the state is faced with unique challenges and opportunities in the long term management of their water resources. Because of their varying geographic size, water quantity, water quality, depth to water, surface water interaction, and a myriad of other factors each GMD management plan allows for locally elected boards to develop water management plans to protect and extend this valuable resource in ways best suited to their specific area.

The Kansas Water Vision has re-energized the water community in many ways, encouraging them to look critically at technology and management plans that can allow for continued economic development while helping to preserve and protect our groundwater supplies. Improved crop and irrigation technologies are allowing Kansas farmers to produce more crops with less water but the implementation and ongoing research on these technologies can be costly. Western Kansas GMD #1 has implemented a cost share program (see attached "GMD1 Water Conservation Fund" signup form) to assist district members that seek to adopt water efficiency measures including installation of soil moisture probes, retrofitting their irrigation equipment to mobile drip irrigation, bubblers, or sub-surface drip irrigation measures, and other emerging technologies. They also have the first county-wide water conservation area (WCA) in Wichita County to help address depleting water conditions across a larger segment of the community. Northwest Kansas GMD #4 currently has the only active local enhanced management area (LEMA), commonly referred to as "Sheridan-6" (SD-6). With the demonstrated success of this local program, GMD#4 is currently pursuing a district-wide LEMA. While none of the western Kansas GMDs are at the assessment cap today it is possible increases will be required to help take full advantage of innovative technology through expansion of cost-share programs, or new staff required to implement and monitor WCA and LEMA programs. Keep in mind these assessment levels are set annually at meetings open to the public.

Once again, I thank the committee for the opportunity to provide written testimony and we ask that you support SB 194.

Kansas Groundwater Management Districts
Authorized by the Kansas Legislature in 1972 (K.S.A 82a-1020 et seq.)

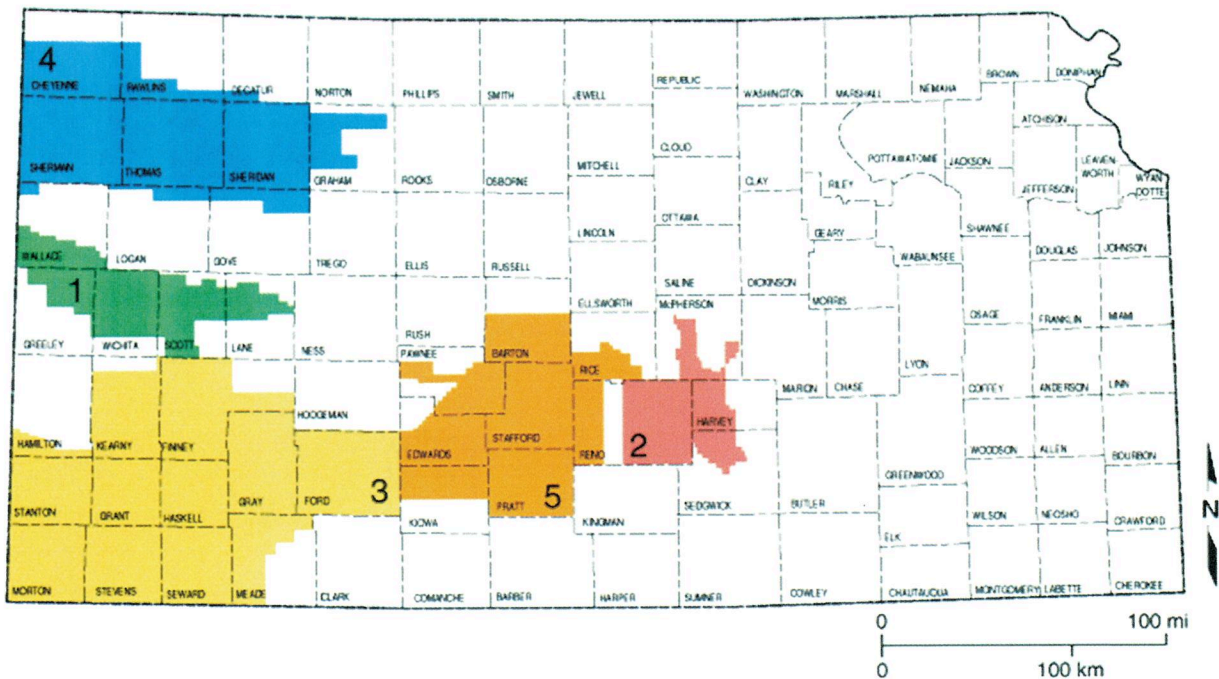
K.S.A. 82a-1020. Legislative declaration. It is hereby recognized that a need exists for the creation of special districts *for the proper management of the groundwater resources of the state; for the conservation of groundwater resources; for the prevention of economic deterioration; for associated endeavors within the state of Kansas through the stabilization of agriculture; and to secure for Kansas the benefit of its fertile soils and favorable location with respect to national and world markets.* It is the policy of this act to preserve basic water use doctrine and to establish the right of local water users to determine their destiny with respect to the use of the groundwater insofar as it does not conflict with the basic laws and policies of the state of Kansas. It is, therefore, declared that in the public interest it is necessary and advisable to permit the establishment of groundwater management districts. (*emphasis added*)

Eligible Voters: Natural person of 18+ years of age, corporation, municipality, or any other legal entity that: (a) owns 40 or more contiguous acres outside the city limits; or (b) withdraws or uses one acre-foot or more

- Non water using landowners may choose to be excluded from land assessments but abandon their status as an eligible voter

Local Assessing Authority: Up to \$1/acre-foot of water used in district, up to \$1.50/acre-foot of water used out of district. \$0.05/acre for any contiguous tract of land 40 acres or more and located outside the city limits of any municipality.

Note: 1 acre-foot = 325,851 gallons of water – generally referred to as the amount needed to cover one acre of land, 1 foot deep with water.



Kansas Current Groundwater Management Districts

Western Kansas Groundwater Management District No. 1 (GMD1) – founded 1973

Headquarters: Scott City, KS – www.gmd1.org

Size: All/part of 5 counties in Western Kansas. 1.17M acres, 3200 wells

Board Make-up: 5 board members serving staggered 3 year terms; 1 member from each county

GMD Assessment: \$0.60/acre-foot and \$0.05/acre

Notable: The most limited water resource of the existing GMDs. 22 Water Conservation Area (WCA) participants; Cost-share program available for members adopting soil moisture probes or other approved conservation technology initiatives

Equus Beds Groundwater Management District No. 2 (GMD2) – founded 1975

Headquarters: Halstead, KS – www.gmd2.org

Size: All/part of 4 counties in central Kansas. 879,000 acres

Board Make-up: 9 board members serving staggered 3 year terms

GMD Assessment: \$1/acre-foot; \$0.05/acre

Notable: Eastern most GMD also serves as a source of water for the City of Wichita. Shallow water table leads to more critical water pollution monitoring. Also home to the Aquifer Storage and Recharge Project (ASR) near Sedgwick, KS.

Southwest Kansas Groundwater Management District No. 3 (GMD3) – founded 1976

Headquarters: Garden City, KS – www.gmd3.org

Size: All/part of 12 counties in SW Kansas. 5.392M acres, 10,600 wells – 1.5M irrigated acres

Board Make-up: 15 Board members serving staggered 3 year terms: 1 from each county and 3 at-large members representing (1) municipal, (2) industrial, & (3) surface water users

GMD Assessment: \$0.14/acre-foot; \$0.05/acre

Notable: More than 12,900 members; almost ½ of all irrigated acres in Kansas

Northwest Kansas Groundwater Management District No. 4 (GMD4) – founded 1976

Headquarters: Colby, KS – www.gmd4.org

Size: All/part of 10 counties in NW Kansas. 3.11 Million acres, 3500 wells

Board Make-up: 11 members serving staggered 3 year terms; 2 from Sherman/Wallace, 2 from Thomas, 2 from Sheridan, 1 each from the remaining counties

GMD Assessment: \$0.37/acre-foot; \$0.05/acre

Notable: Manages the state's first, and currently only, Local Enhanced Management Area (LEMA), the Sheridan-6 LEMA near Hoxie. Currently proposing District-wide LEMA.

Big Bend Groundwater Management District No. 5 (GMD5) – founded 1976

Headquarters: Stafford, KS – www.gmd5.org

Size: All or part of 8 counties in central Kansas. 2,500,000 acres, 4781 wells

Board Make-up: 9 members serving staggered 3 year terms; 1 member per county; one at-large

GMD Assessment: \$1/acre-foot; \$0.05/acre

Notable: Cheyenne Bottoms and Quivira NWR are both within the GMDs boundaries creating a unique resource and management challenge. GMD5 has the only Water Bank in the state.

GMD1 Water Conservation Fund

2018 Efficient Technologies Cost-Share Application

- All applicants must be within GMD 1 boundaries
- Applications awarded on 1st come 1st serve basis
- Priority given to Applicants enrolled in an Approved Water Conservation Area (WCA)
- Limit of 5 Technologies per Applicant: (with the exception of previously approved technologies for the same location)
- Installation of at least 1 Soil Moisture Probe at each location is Recommended
- \$2000 per any of the listed technologies: WCA Applicants \$2500 for 1st Technology
 - MDI - mobile drip irrigation
 - Bubblers
 - SDI – sub-surface drip irrigation
- \$1000 per any of the listed technologies:
 - Pivot Control Systems
 - EC Soil Field Mapping
 - Aerial Field Imagery
- \$750 per weather station
- Unlisted Technologies considered at Board discretion
- GMD 1 Board of Directors have final approval for all applications
- Applications will be accepted via mail, email, fax or in person
- Application period – September 18, 2017 – May 31, 2018 @ 5pm. If funds remain after the 1st application period, a second application period may be established.

1. Applicant: (Print or type)

Name _____ Address _____

City & State _____ Zip Code _____ Phone _____

E-Mail _____ Landowner ___ Tenant ___ WCA Participant _____

2. Provide Land Location(s) and technology type(s) on page 2:

Approved Applicant agrees a new technology system to be installed at the location(s) indicated on this application. Payment will be made to Vendor upon receipt of invoice at the District Office. Data collected from these technologies to be available to WKGMD1 upon request.

Signature _____ Date _____

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