

MINUTES OF THE JOINT MEETING OF THE SENATE AGRICULTURE AND THE SENATE  
NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEES

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Derek Schmidt at 8:30 a.m. on January 17, 2001 in Room 423-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except: All present

Committee staff present: Raney Gilliland, Legislative Research Department  
Jill Wolters, Revisor of Statutes  
Betty Bomar, Secretary  
Judy Krase, Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Al LeDoux, Director, Kansas Water Office  
Kent Lamb, Chairman, Kansas Water Authority  
Cliff Mayo, Member, Kansas Water Authority  
Jerry Blain, Member, Kansas Water Authority  
Clark Duffy, Assistant Director, Kansas Water Office

Others attending: See attached list

Senator Robert Tyson, Chairman, Senate Natural Resources Committee introduced Al LeDoux, Director, Kansas Water Office.

Al LeDoux introduced, to the Committee, the members of the Kansas Water Authority who were present. (Attachment 1) A copy of *Key Water Documents* was distributed to members of the Committees. (A copy is on file in the Office of the Legislative Research Department)

Kent Lamb, Chairman, Kansas Water Authority, testified that only through the faithful exercise of sound data collection and evaluation, the participation of all affected stakeholders, and the unbiased commitment of everyone to the development of achievable goals and policies will Kansas have the quantity and quality of water necessary to sustain itself in the years to come. Each of the twelve river basins have their own identifiable needs and resources to be addressed. The "one size fits all" concept does not produce acceptable outcomes.

The Kansas Water Authority believes the planning process established by the Legislature and the Governor to formulate and initiate best management practices will secure the sound and stable water policies for all Kansans for the future. (Attachment 2)

Cliff Mayo, Member, Kansas Water Authority, stated he is from Garden City, and an irrigator. One of the biggest issues facing Kansans in western Kansas is groundwater depletion. The Ogallala portion of the High Plains Aquifer is being withdrawn faster than it is being recharged. It is necessary that a workable plan for conserving water be achieved and the Kansas Water Authority is working on the challenge. The 2000 report for House Substitute for Senate Bill 287 addressed aquifer resources in the reports: 1) aquifer resources, surface water and long-term prospects for transition to dryland farming; and 2) the potential for competing water needs and the means to address that competition. The Kansas Geological Survey developed an atlas to the Kansas High Plains Aquifer, to answer questions posed by the 1999 legislation. The atlas has been extremely helpful in determining the state of groundwater resources. (Attachment 3)

Included in the Kansas Water Authority recommendations is the need to develop a new management approach for managing the Ogallala Aquifer that addresses the rate of groundwater depletion in western Kansas and protects water for future generations.

Mr. Mayo stated he chaired an ad hoc committee, appointed by Al LeDoux, which met last fall and recommended that specific federal actions be taken to conserve the High Plains Aquifer through the eight states it underlies: Texas, Oklahoma, New Mexico, and parts of Colorado, Wyoming and Nebraska, which all face

severe decline areas in the aquifer. The Committee agreed that action is needed at the federal, state, local and individual levels to manage this depleting resource.

Jerry Blain, Member, Kansas Water Authority, and Superintendent, City of Wichita Water Department, testified that the public water supplies, including municipal water suppliers, rural water districts, wholesale water districts and assurance districts, are crucial to the state. Kansas has approximately 900 public water suppliers. It is necessary to develop water goals: 1) to develop water reservoir storage to meet current and future needs; 2) to assure that municipal water systems can meet drought conditions; 3) to assure that water suppliers meet safe drinking water standards; 4) to assure that water suppliers have technical, financial and managerial capacity; and 5) to encourage local planning to support state water programs. (Attachment 4)

Mr. LeDoux showed a 9-minute video emphasizing the Kansas approach to the implementation of water quality, narrated by Bill Kurtis.

Clark Duffy, Kansas Water Office, reviewed the Kansas Water Authority recommendation to the 2001 Legislature: 1) Amend the Multipurpose Small Lakes Act; 2) provide funding for the State Water Plan, and 3) to approve the Water Marketing Contract for Miami County Rural Water District #1 from Hillsdale Reservoir. (Attachment 5)

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 a.m.