

# Kansas Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategy Work Group

June 4th, 2013 Meeting Notes – 9:30 AM

Azure Conference Room, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Curtis State Office Bldg, 10<sup>th</sup> & Jackson St, Topeka, KS

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## Meeting Notes

1. Call to Order and Introductions – In attendance Harold Klaege, KAWS, Matt Unruh, KWO, Jeff Gross, NRCS William Zung, Marios Sophocleus, KGS, Dan Devlin, KSU, Jim Putnam, USGS, Paul Liechti, KBS, Don Jones, DOC, Andrea Brookfield, KGS, Billy Beck, KFS.
2. Previous meeting notes – No comments/questions. Concurrence.
3. Update of SFY 14-16 Grant Allocation Process – KDHE – We are currently executing contracts for SFY 14 grants to be started on July 1, there are approximately 21 July 1 contracts. The remaining grants awarded for SFY 14 have October 1 start dates and will be contracted in next few weeks.
  - a. 319 Budget Update (Post Sequestration and FY 14 Planning) – KDHE – 5.1% reduction in funding required through sequestration, this equals \$144,500 in overall budget reductions from KDHE's 319 allocation. We will absorb by not filling staff vacancies, other staff budget modifications have been made (BEFS, WPS). Thought we might have to reduce funding support funded projects – but due to old remaining funds we were able to fund all projects originally recommended in March. KDHE has been told by EPA to plan for an additional 5% cut in FFY14 and FFY15 – we will try to hold projects harmless and continue to reduce agency costs. Question: KSU: How many staff is Watershed Management Section down? KDHE: In the last few years of budget reductions, we have reduced staff, and we are down 4 FTE's.
  - b. SWP Budget Update – KWO – For state WRAPS funding it appears that the Governor's recommended budget will probably be upheld. Slight reductions in Ag and weather reduction made it through – wondering if governor will veto. 2 year budget – both years adopted – salary cap also going to be upheld. Could be some issues with agencies meeting salary cap. Year 1 SWP allocation recommendation is \$625,000 and the Year 2 SWP allocation recommendation \$562,500.
4. Work Group Role Evaluation: KDHE Proposal –2 documents discussed going through the proposal to shift Work Group role. Several major points: Due to program success and stability, Work Group input has been needed less and less over the years; 3 year allocation recently completed; All agencies are facing reduced budgets and staff time. Agendas would include project officer updates, water quality research findings from any/all Work Group agencies, updates on project performance and score matrix updates, research projects from Work group agencies, etc. Comments/questions from Work Group: DOC – fine with 6 month meetings, hot button issues are usually taken care of through one-on-one interaction among Work Group agencies. NRCS – fine with 6 month timeline, program interaction concerns can be discussed through the state technical committee. KWO – The idea of having half the project officers give project updates each meeting would be good. KSU – recommend giving some time on agenda for going over new matrix scores, performance over last year, did projects last time with funding stipulations make it for SFY 15 allocation? Good projects still high performance? KBS – Water quality monitoring is something we need to learn more about, want to see this on future agendas, what kind of water quality improvements are we seeing. Be good to look at our plans/interim water quality milestones/report out on what we see in terms of getting closer to water quality goals. Support gained. Meetings will be 9:00am to 3:00pm. Next meetings will be held November 19, 2013, May 20, 2014.
5. NWQI Update:
  - a. FY 13 Report – KDHE – National Water Quality Initiative history – 3 HUC 12's identified in Kansas through this national initiative, Emma, Big Creek and Grasshopper. Year 2 of NWQI – got some preliminary info from Chad Volkman - \$1.3 million in applications for FFY

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13 – approx. \$750,000 available to be split between the 3 watersheds. Big Creek got \$1.1 in applications, grasshopper has \$200,000 in applications and not sure on amount of funding requested through Emma Creek yet, waiting on local office. After some comparison, KDHE was pleased to find that the NWQI BMPs being installed generally match the BMPs from the watershed plans of these HUC 12s. Also load reduction totals were very similar to what has been outlined in the watershed plans per HUC 12. It appears that NWQI is aligning with the water quality/load reduction goals of our planning efforts. Work Group questions: KWO - In FFY12, Kansas allocated 95% of allocation, how did other states perform? KDHE - Some states couldn't spend all but the funding went back into community pot and states who had additional applications got to take funding from pot. Texas ended up getting approximately \$5 million. KWO - Are there any contiguous watershed that could be added to our 3 chosen. KDHE – yes but takes a lot to get contiguous watersheds added, we are working on proposals for these.

- b. Update on Monitoring (NRCS Edge of Field and 319 Monitoring) – NRCS offering edge of field monitoring from BMPs implemented in a HUC 12 within a select list of states. NRCS feels we need to collect data from these practices funded through the NWQI. How it will work: NRCS will pay producer to contract with water quality analyst – contract will last for 9 years, so some challenges. Grasshopper Creek chosen in Kansas. KDHE provided list of potential water quality analyzers producer could sign up with that included KSU, USGS, KBS, and KDHE. There is a \$300,000 limit per producer – this will be done as a paired watershed comparison. Another component of monitoring for this program – 319 webinar – not much new information shared at this point. NRCS doing field scale monitoring, 319 will be looking at watershed data for 2 points: 1. BMPs installed showing any change at all? 2. Are they showing an improvement in water quality?

6. WRAPS Monitoring Update - 2011 and 2012: KDHE – Tony Stahl of KDHE's Watershed Planning and Assessment Section gave a presentation summarizing the data collected during last 2.5 years of monitoring. Information was presented on each of the sampling locations including parameters measured and where applicable, information was shared regarding the data collected in relation to older baseline data collected in the area or at the sampling location nearest.
7. WRAPS Work Group Assessment Subcommittee Final Report: KDHE – overview of toolbox and results given to WRAPS projects was given, summary of report that will be generated for our WRAPS projects was given, preliminary ranking sheet has been developed to help us choose which of the 300+ HP targeted HUC 12's within Kansas will be assessed for our WRAPS projects first. Comments: KWO – helpful to be in touch with sister agencies in order to see what has been done or is being done in these watersheds to avoid duplication of efforts and strengthen partnerships/goal accomplishments. KDHE – Agreed, we will add to the HUC 12 ranking sheet - what assessments have already been completed regarding assessment information, potential for assessment information, etc.
8. Benedictine Bottoms: Shallow Habitat Missouri River Restoration Project – KDHE –Location is on the Missouri River in Atchison County, KS and the size of the project is approximately 2,111 acres. The KDWP&T will manage and oversee the project which will consist of implementing two flow through chutes requiring the removal of dredge material that will be deposited as a slurry on the Missouri River at Benedictine Bottoms. Through this deposition, 33 acres of shallow habitat will be established. – KDHE will review all aspects of the project and determine whether or not to approve certification and/or add conditions to the project.
9. John Redmond Dredging Update – KWO – Over past 6 months, KWO has been beginning the process for planning and implementation of dredging of John Redmond Reservoir. This is a reservoir in KS in need of renewed capacity. RFP has been put out and awarded to Great Lakes

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Dredge and Dock, an Illinois company who coming to the area June 7, 2013 to look at potential disposal areas, etc. Even though there are no funds available at this time, the KWO is trying to get the whole process planned. KWO staff working on a 408 certification request as well as a potential impact proposal. By the time funding becomes available, all details will be completed and in place to begin dredging. Governor Brownback has started an advisory group to look into future dredging needs and impacts to begin in next few months. NRCS - How much land needed for disposal? KWO - 500 acres needed for confined disposal facilities. Will be composed of many small acre sites – currently trying to identify all sites to equal 500 acres.

### 10. Announcements

#### a. Work Group Members

- i. KFS – Tree removal is growing issue. Not only are producers pulling riparian areas out because of crop prices, counties are changing classification of riparian areas, going to be more expensive to have so people will want to pull up riparian areas. Walnut Council Field day June 13 in Abilene.
- ii. KAWS – Harold is retiring at the end of June and the KAWS board may be hiring a part time Executive Director to do administrative work and hire a part time grant funds coordinator as well but no decisions are final at this time.

#### b. Visitors – No announcements from visitors.

#### c. Future

- i. New meeting dates will be November 19, 2013 and May 20, 2014.

