

WATER DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

SOUTHWEST KANSAS GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT (GMD3)
A GOVERNING BODY CONTROLLED BY LOCAL PEOPLE

Volume 4, Issue 7

July, 2004

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MEETINGS:

2ND WED. EACH MONTH

9:00 A.M. - DISTRICT OFFICE

409 CAMPUS DR., SUITE 108

GARDEN CITY, KS 67846

<http://www.gmd3.org>

SEPT. 8, 2004 REVISED MANAGEMENT PROGRAM PUBLIC HEARING

On September 8, 2004 at 10 AM CST the District will host a public hearing for the purpose of receiving public comments and testimony regarding the latest draft version of the June 9, 2004 version of the Revised Management Program. This program contains a written report describing the characteristics of the District and the nature and method of dealing with groundwater supply problems within the District. It also includes information as to the groundwater management program to be undertaken by the District and such maps, geological information, and other data necessary for the formulation of the revised program. David Pope, Chief Engineer of the Division of Water Resources (DWR) provided written approval of the Revised Management Program on June 4, 2004. Then on June 9, 2004 the GMD3 Board of Directors approved the same version to be the focus of a formal public hearing scheduled for September 8, 2004. The public hearing will take place at the District's office located at 409 Campus Drive, Suite 108, Garden City, KS 67846. An opportunity will also be provided during the public hearing to receive written and oral comments specific to the June 9, 2004 version of the Revised Management Program. A copy of the proposed Revised Management Program is also available for public inspection in the District office as well as can be viewed by visiting the District's Internet web site at: <http://www.gmd3.org>. Upon adoption by the GMD3 Board of Directors following the September 8, 2004 public hearing, this Revised Management Program will supercede the Revised Management Program that became effective on September 1, 1991.

CONCEPT, NOT CUTBACKS DEFINED IN NEW MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

As of June 9, 2004 the Board of Directors has not defined or predicted regulatory enforced reductions in water usage. On the other hand, they support water conserving incentive-based farm programs and other voluntary reductions in water consumption. You may recall from previous newsletters that on November 19, 2003 David Pope, Chief Engineer, recommended the District pursue voluntary measures in lieu of depending solely on regulatory means to reduce the rate of decline.

KANSAS WATER CONGRESS SUMMER CONFERENCE AUGUST 12 - 13

The Kansas Water Congress will conduct a 2-day summer conference on August 12 and 13 at the Garden City Community College (GCCC). Panelists and participants cover a wide-range of interests including state legislators, directors of state agencies, and private sector leaders. US Senator Sam Brownback is listed as among those speaking. Panel discussions include the following topics: Ogallala Aquifer Management & Protocol; The Importance of Commerce Relative to Public Policy on Water; Public Water Supplies, Water Marketing and Enhancement Programs; and Irrigated Land Transition. The pre-registration deadline is August 2, 2004. A registration brochure can be found on our web site at: <http://www.gmd3.org>.

SOUTHWEST KANSAS GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT NO. 3

409 Campus Drive, Suite 108
Garden City KS 67846

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RETURN SERVICES REQUESTED**CONTROLLING PHREATOPHYTES**

According to information provided by the Kansas Water Office, during their June 23, 2004 KS Water Authority meeting, Salt Cedar (Tamarisk) and other non-native phreatophytes like Russian Olive trees are “non-native invasive plant species that crowd out native vegetation, change stream morphology, and affect both water quantity and quality”. The Upper Arkansas River Basin and the Cimarron River Basin located in GMD3 are considered to have infestations of both Salt Cedar and Russian Olive. The Kansas Department of Agriculture is conducting a limited aerial (helicopter) survey of these river basins to assess the extent of the infestation. The proposed timeline of the helicopter survey is from May through October of 2004. According to the KS Water Office: “removal of these plants would help restore streamflow, provide more efficient delivery of irrigation water, and lead to healthy riparian systems”. More information is available on the KS Water Office web site at www.kwo.org.

FLOW METER INSPECTIONS CONTINUE

Contract Flow Meter inspections began earlier this year on May 15, 2004 and will continue through August 31, 2004. There have been 1039 meters inspected by the 4 contractors at this time. Of those inspected, there have been only 75 that have been found non-compliant. Corrective action has been taken or is pending. Each point of diversion located within the GMD3 boundaries is required to be equipped with a properly functioning water flow meter that is installed according to State specifications. Whenever a flow meter is newly installed, repaired, or replaced, written notification must be provided to the Division of Water Resources (DWR) within 30 days. GMD3 developed a form intended to help water users comply with this regulation and it is available upon request from our office, or by copying it from our Internet Web Site address: <http://www.gmd3.org>. A list of certified water flow meters that meet the State’s specifications can be obtained through the DWR’s Web Site: <http://www.accesskansas.org/kda/dwr/Forms/1-204-7.pdf>.

“OVERPUMPING” PROGRAM TO BE CONTINUED

During the May 12, 2004 Board Meeting, it was the general consensus of the GMD3 Board of Directors to continue the “Overpumping” Program as a deterrent to the unlawful use of water. The Program was started in 2003 in accordance with a resolution that was passed by the Board in November 2002 whereby GMD3 Staff and Contractors began the preliminary work to curtail overpumping according to current Rules and Regulations. GMD3 is coordinating with the DWR in this effort as the 2004 irrigation season progresses. Enforcement action will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

KANSAS DAIRY ROUNDTABLE MEETING

The Kansas Water Congress Executive Director, David Brenn, facilitated a roundtable meeting on July 8, 2004 that was hosted by Chris Wilson on behalf of both the Kansas Dairy Association and the Kansas Dairy Commission. Chris Wilson is a professional lobbyist with Ag Resources and Communication of Wamego, Kansas. The theme of the meeting was “Kansas Dairy Policy Initiative”. Dairy producer concerns were addressed by two separate panels of speakers. Dan Senestraro, Steve Irsik, and Donnie Young made up the Dairy Producer Panel. A State Agency Panel consisted of David Pope, DWR, John Harsch, KDHE, Ray Hammarlund, Dept of Commerce, Steve Parkin, NRCS, Dr. Joe Harner, KSU, and Dr. Joel DeRouchey, KSU. Concerns were expressed suggesting Kansas regulations might seem discouraging to a prospective dairy. The Chief Engineer, David Pope, explained that these regulations provide protection for property owners, which is a positive selling point to be promoted to prospective investors. Both panels agreed it’s much easier to design a facility to accommodate the regulations prior to construction, then afterwards. Producers also expressed concerns about state taxes collected from dairies as water protection fees might be viewed as a deterrent to economic development when compared to the positive economic impact dairies provide.