

WATER DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

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

Volume 4, Issue 3

March, 2004

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

HANK HANSEN

hhansen@gmd3.org

ASSISTANT MANAGER

JANET L. KING

jking@gmd3.org

CONSERVATIONIST

KENT SHAW

kshaw@gmd3.org

CONSERVATIONIST

JASON NORQUEST

norquest@gmd3.org

CLERK

SHARON SCHIFFELBEIN

sschiffe@gmd3.org

BOARD PRESIDENT

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Stanton County

VICE PRESIDENT

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Seward County

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STEVE STONE Finney

THOMAS FORD Industrial

SHANNON CRAWFORD

Stevens

PHONE (620) 275-7147

FAX (620) 275-1431

MEETINGS:

2ND WED. EACH MONTH

9:00 A.M. - DISTRICT OFFICE

409 CAMPUS DR., SUITE 106

GARDEN CITY, KS 67846

<http://www.gmd3.org>

THE 3RD ANNUAL TOPEKA LEGISLATIVE RETREAT WAS THE BEST, YET!

More than 32 Guests and Board Members participated in enthusiastic round-table discussions of current water related issues during the first 2 hours of the 3rd Annual Topeka Legislative Retreat hosted by the District on February 10, 2004. In addition to and immediately following the "round-table" discussions, there was another beneficial hour of open group discussion. David Pope, the Division of Water Resources Chief Engineer, provided a few opening comments that resulted in a well-participated discussion focused on current water issues. The event concluded shortly after 8:00 PM. Those in attendance included GMD3 Board Members and Staff who had also been present during the earlier board meeting. Special guests in attendance included: Adrian Polansky, Secretary of the Kansas Department of Agriculture, Chris Wilson, Ag Resources & Communications, David Pope, DWR Chief Engineer, Mark Rude, DWR, Tom Huntzinger, DWR, Susan Stover, KS Water Office, Scott Carlson, State Conservation Commission, Sharon Falk, Big Bend GMD5 Manager and Vernon Hirt, GMD5 Board Member. Also present were the following Legislators: Senator Christine Downey, Senator Tim Huelskamp, Senator Janis Lee, Senator Larry Salmans, Representative Geraldine Flaharty, Representative Vaughn Flora, Representative Carl Holmes, Representative Larry Powell, Representative H. Jan Scoggins-Waite, and Representative Daniel Thimescah. Representative Bill Light was present during the luncheon held earlier in the day.

RATE OF DECLINE & BUDGET DISCUSSED AT 29TH ANNUAL MEETING

The Southwest Kansas Groundwater Management District's 29th Annual Meeting was held on February 25, 2004 at the 4-H Building in Cimarron, Kansas. Approximately 46 people were in attendance. During the Annual Meeting, five Board of Director positions were voted on. Those elected to serve on the Board include: Incumbent **Steve Stone**, Finney County; **Tom Bogner** (defeating Joe Finley) (Incumbent Arlen Eaton declined to run); Incumbent **Mike O'Brate**, Gray County; Incumbent **Kirk Maddux**, Kearny County and Incumbent **David Brenn**, Surface Water (At Large). Executive Director Hank Hansen presented an overview of the previous year's programs and reported on the progress being made on the 2004 Revised Management Program. He also reported that the Chief Engineer advised the Board of Directors during the November 19, 2003 Fall Water Summit that the District had 3 years to reduce the rate of decline without detrimentally affecting the economy or he will achieve the reduction with regulation. Mr. Hansen encouraged local stakeholders to provide the District with their input concerning the 2004 Revised Management Program, sub-unit delineation, reduction in the rate of decline and other challenges facing the District. Also during the Annual Meeting the proposed 2005 Budget in the amount of \$912,980 was reviewed and accepted. The taxes assessed by the District have not increased for the 3rd year in a row and are the lowest such taxes in the state. The tax is 5 cents per acre of land on parcels over 40 acres and 10 cents per acre foot of water authorized by a water right. A formal budget hearing will be held on July 14, 2004.

SOUTHWEST KANSAS GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT NO. 3

409 Campus Drive, Suite 106,
Garden City KS 67846

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RETURN SERVICES REQUESTED**TOM BOGNER ELECTED TO REPRESENT FORD COUNTY**

Having served on the GMD3 Board of Directors previously between 1992 and 2000, Tom Bogner offers a variety of public service experience and knowledge. Tom is a lifelong rancher and farmer from Ford and Gray Counties. He has also served a term on the Kansas Water Authority (KWA) that ended in February of 2000. Later, in April of 2001 Tom was appointed by the KWA to Chair the Ogallala Aquifer Management Advisory Committee that became commonly called the "MAC" committee.

FAREWELL TO ARLEN EATON, RETIRED FORD COUNTY DIRECTOR

Arlen Eaton became the Ford County Board Member on April 12, 2000 and decided not to run for re-election on February 25, 2004 when his term of office expired. Arlen was typically the first or second director arriving early for each monthly board meeting and was a very enthusiastic person to work with. He returned to Ford County after a career in building construction that spanned 13 or more states, including Hawaii. We benefited immensely from his experience, professional attitude, and personal integrity. We're especially thankful for the extra effort Arlen put into serving the District, and more importantly, for having the opportunity to get acquainted with him.

SUBUNIT MANAGEMENT WILL SOON BECOME PUBLIC POLICY

The expression "subunit" has been used to describe a method to identify clusters of land in Western Kansas that have similar hydrogeologic and groundwater characteristics, or parameters. Hydrologic parameters include: water level decline, land surface and bedrock elevation, aquifer storage coefficient, precipitation, soil type, saturated thickness, withdrawal rate, aquifer discharge estimates, and hydraulic conductivity. The 3 Western Kansas GMDs were required by the state to adopt aquifer Subunit protocols by July of 2003 that would specifically address the recommendations of the Ogallala Aquifer Management Advisory Committee (commonly called: "MAC"). MAC was established in April of 2001 and its members were appointed by the Kansas Water Authority (KWA) to address the rate of decline of the aquifer in Western Kansas. This committee was made up predominantly of stakeholders from Western Kansas, along with a few key state agency personnel. One of the first actions taken by the MAC committee was to "terminate" the "2-Pools" water management concept being considered by the state. The "2-Pools" concept would have established thresholds throughout Western Kansas at which only the highest priority of water rights would be allowed to continue pumping once a certain pre-established water level was reached. By November of 2001 the committee authored a report containing recommendations aimed at "extending the usable life of the aquifer" that was adopted in 2002 into the Kansas Water Plan. The Kansas Water Plan is a strategic water planning guide reproduced annually by the Kansas Water Office. A subunit protocol was approved by the Division of Water Resources (DWR) on November 14, 2003 for GMD3. Accordingly, all 3 western Kansas GMDs have been required by the Chief Engineer to incorporate such Subunit Protocols into their Management Programs by November of 2004. An administrative public hearing will be scheduled in August or September to receive public comments on the proposed changes to GMD3's Revised Management Program. A preliminary version of the Revised Management Program may be viewed at the District's Internet Web Site address: www.gmd3.org or by requesting a copy from the District.

DISTRICT HOSTED FLOW METER INSPECTION TRAINING SEMINAR

On February 5, 2004 the District hosted a 1-day training seminar sponsored by Great Plains Meter of Aurora, Nebraska. The seminar focused on training inspectors how to identify mechanical problems associated with installed flow meters. Lonnie Nunnenkamp of the Great Plains Meter Company conducted the training. 10 persons received training during the program. Of those in attendance, 4 are GMD3 Contract Inspectors: David Rust, Robert Landon, Ronnie Schmidt and Ron Grauberger. GMD3 employees in attendance were Jan King, Kent Shaw, Jason Norquest and Sharon Schiffelbein Mishler. Also attending were Chandler Cupp, Scott City GMD1 and Morgan Pearman, Garden City DWR Field Office.