

# WATER DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

FORMERLY KNOWN AS  
"the Pipeline"

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

*Volume 3, Issue 10*

[www.gmd3.org](http://www.gmd3.org)

*October, 2003*

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Stevens

PHONE (620) 275-7147

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## MEETINGS:

2ND WED. EACH MONTH

9:00 A.M. - DISTRICT OFFICE

409 CAMPUS DR., SUITE 106

GARDEN CITY, KS 67846

<http://www.gmd3.org>

## EXPERTS EXAMINE AQUIFER MANAGEMENT METHODOLOGY

Jonathan E. Jones, P.E., Gary D. Witt, P.G., and Edwin Gutentag, A.I.H. of Wright Water Engineers, Inc. (WWE) from Denver, CO met with GMD3's Board of Directors during their regular Board Meeting on October 8, 2003. WWE provided an informative historic overview of the District and how Kansas water law compares to neighboring states. The dominant theme was a comparison of water management strategies that are based upon either the aquifer's "Rate of Decline" or "Useable Aquifer Lifetime". WWE agreed with the Board of Directors that the fundamental premise of our current aquifer management protocol is that it shall remain open to change or modification as better information is available or as changes occur in the hydrological, economical, legal or policy making process. During a Special GMD3 Board Meeting held on October 20, 2003, the Board voted to approve and submit the Ogallala High Plains Aquifer Protocol (Fourth Edition: Version 10-20-03) to the Chief Engineer and the Kansas Water Office. This current version can be viewed on GMD3's web-site: <http://www.gmd3.org>.

## ARKANSAS RIVER SHINER UPDATE

Ken Collins from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service recently affirmed to GMD3 that there has been a ruling by the District Court of New Mexico instructing the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFW) to revise their critical habitat determination/economic analysis of the "threatened" Arkansas River Shiner. The USFW had previously agreed to a revision of the economic analysis, but had hoped to be able to do so according to and within their budgetary limits. However, the Court has ordered the revision to be completed as soon as possible and within one year of September 30, 2003. During this time of revision, there is to be no enforcement of critical habitat.

## RESULTS OF THE 2003 INITIATIVE TO CURTAIL OVERPUMPING

304 Irrigation wells located within GMD3 were closely monitored during 2003 because of a past history of allegedly exceeding their water right limits. Of the original 304 wells monitored, 218 stayed within their limits during 2003. However, 31 wells appeared to exceed their limits during 2003 and the District immediately issued legal notices of non-compliance to the landowners. A corrective course of action has been established or is in the process of being established for those cases in which the unlawful use of water has been identified. In addition to those, nearly 55 other wells have circumstances that require further evaluation before making a final determination. Such circumstances can include, but are not limited to the following conditions: the well wasn't pumped this year; a malfunctioning flow meter provided insufficient results (typically resulted in enforcement of meter requirements); required further interpretation of the water right; and /or pending water right administration affecting the water right limits may change the outcome of the investigation. Approximately 50 of the 304 locations will continue to be monitored by the District during next year and beyond.

**SOUTHWEST KANSAS GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT NO. 3**

409 Campus Drive, Suite 106,  
Garden City KS 67846

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**MONITORING RATE OF DECLINE**

In response to above normal water level declines that were identified by the Kansas Geological Survey in 7 different geographic areas from 1998 through 2001, the District initiated an annual water level measurement program that targets approximately 95 wells located inside or near those 7 areas. The water level for each well will be measured at the beginning of every year and will eventually be used to determine an average rate of decline for the respective areas. The District intends to more accurately verify the average rate of decline before attempting to identify the cause. A summary of the water level measurements can be viewed on the GMD3 web-site.

**WATER QUALITY SAMPLING DONE FOR 2003**

Approximately 250 water quality samples were taken throughout the District by Servi-tech laboratories of Dodge City, Kansas. This is an on-going annual water quality trend analysis conducted by the District for over a decade. Results of the sampling program can be viewed on the GMD3 web-site.

**FLOW METER INSPECTIONS & OTHER FIELD OPERATIONS DURING 2003**

Four self-employed contract inspectors completed 1,666 flow meter inspections for the District during 2003. Compliant flow meter installations were identified at 1,581 sites. In comparison, 85 non-compliant flow meters were identified and were put on a corrective course of action. Accordingly, 67 of the 85 were back in compliance before the end of the 2003 irrigation season. The remaining 18 meters are on a corrective course of action beginning next irrigation season, since the wells have finished pumping for the 2003 irrigation season. A proper flow meter installation is not required if the water right is not exercised. The District also performed over 60 flow rate accuracy tests in the field during 2003. In addition to flow meter inspections, at least 22 separate irrigation operations were carefully monitored for compliance with unique water right limitations. This is a long-term pledge made by the District to specific landowners that is necessary to accommodate their uniquely qualified water rights. It is also sanctified by a complex agreement, or memorandum of understanding, made in 1996 between the District and the KS Division of Water Resources (DWR).

**DATES TO REMEMBER**

- November 19, 2003: First Annual Fall Water Summit with Chief Engineer of the Division of Water Resources (DWR), David Pope, will be held at Finnup Center for Conservation Education, 312 E. Finnup Drive Garden City, Kansas 9:00 a.m. (CST)
- December 10, 2003: December Board Meeting will be held at Sunnyland Bed & Breakfast, 501 N. 5<sup>th</sup> Street, Garden City, Kansas 9:00 a.m. (CST)  
Requests for handicap accommodations should be made 20 days in advance by contacting Jan King at (620) 275-7147
- February 10, 2004: 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Topeka Water Retreat will be held at the Topeka Capital Plaza Hotel in Topeka, Kansas 5:00 p.m. (CST) Invited guests include the Chief Engineer and other state dignitaries as well as area Legislators.