

GROUNDWATER HI - LITES

August 2018

Big Bend Groundwater Management District No. 5

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UPCOMING DATES

District Board Meeting
August 27 at 6:00pm

Public Informational Meeting
August 27 at 7:00pm

GMD # 5 WEATHER STATIONS

1	GREENSBURG	(620) 723-2193
2	LEWIS	(620) 324-5866
3	ROZEL	(620) 527-4531
4	CULLISON	(620) 895-6505
5	MACKSVILLE	(620) 348-2238
6	RADIUM	(620) 285-2796
7	GREAT BEND	(620) 793-5798
8	STERLING	(620) 278-2632
9	CAIRO	(620) 672-3359
10	STAFFORD	(620) 234-5667

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Phillip Martin, Barton County
Tom Taylor, Director at Large
Darrell Wood, Edwards County
John Janssen, Kiowa County
Kerry Froetschner, Pawnee County
Fred Grunder, Pratt County
Justin Gatz, Reno County
Jerry Cullop, Rice County
Kent Lamb, Stafford County

DISTRICT STAFF

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John Hildebrand, Conservation Spec.
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Proposed Rattlesnake Creek / Quivira NWR LEMA

At the District annual meeting, the LEMA committee provided the initial draft for a potential Local Enhanced Management Area (LEMA) in the Rattlesnake Creek region to the public. The proposed LEMA includes end gun removal, irrigation technology enhancements, streamflow augmentation, and water bank incentives. Following the annual meeting, the LEMA committee has received several comments from concerned stakeholders. The LEMA committee has gone through these comments and has attempted to implement as many as possible into the latest draft documents. Over the past two months, the LEMA committee has presented two drafts of the proposed LEMA document to the Board of Directors and public at the board meetings. These drafts as well as the background documents and public comments have been posted to the District's website at <https://gmd5.org/proposed-rsc-lemma>.

The proposed LEMA has three primary goals: 1) to address the USFWS impairment complaint on Water Right File No. 7571, 2) to reduce water-use in the LEMA area to a degree that will temper the growth of future streamflow depletion, and 3) to restore the useful supply to diversion points in the Rattlesnake Creek region. The proposed LEMA will have effect through calendar year 2029 and will have impact on all water users with a priority date after August 15, 1957. The LEMA committee has worked hard to put together a LEMA plan that will minimize the economic impact to the region while providing a remedy to the alleged impairment of Water Right File No. 7571. The District encourages all water users potentially effected by this LEMA plan to get involved and provide feedback to the LEMA committee as soon as possible.

The District will be having another public informational meeting dedicated to the discussion of the latest revision to the draft document on **August 27 at 7:00 pm in St John at the Stafford County Annex**. There will be a presentation from the LEMA committee on the highlights of the proposed plan followed by a thorough question and answer session. Details for this meeting can also be found on our website and social media pages.

Cities of Hays & Russell / R9 Ranch

In June 2015, the Cities of Hays and Russell (Cities) filed thirty (30) applications to change the water rights for the R9 Ranch from irrigation use to municipal use. In April 2018, the Cities filed an additional two applications for two water rights that were created as the result of divided water rights. These thirty-two change applications have been reviewed by KDA-DWR staff according to the same procedures and criteria for all other water rights. KDA-DWR recently supplied these change applications and draft change orders for public review and comment. KDA discussed these documents at an informational meeting in June.

The District is in the process of reviewing the change applications for compliance with all existing rules and regulations. The District Board of Directors was presented with the Cities of Hays and Russell's presentation as well as the Keller-Bliesner presentation at the July board meeting. In the August regular board meeting, the District staff provided its recommendation to the board for

consideration. The board recessed the board meeting on August 9 with the intent to reconvene on **August 27 at 6:00 pm in St John at the Stafford County Annex** to continue its consideration of these change applications. The District will be providing its recommendation to the Chief Engineer soon.

If the Chief Engineer determines the change applications should be approved, the next step will be the Kansas Water Transfer Act. The Kansas Water Transfer Act (K.S.A. 82a-1501 et seq.) allows for the transfer of 2000 Acre-Feet (AF) or more per year beyond a 35-mile radius from the original source of water. This process will include a formal public hearing to consider the proposed transfer.

Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program *by Steve Frost*

The Kansas Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) has been re-authorized for July 1 – June 30, 2019. The project provides incentive payments for irrigation water right transitions and enrollment in CRP. The federal Farm Service Agency (FSA) is paying irrigated rental rates up to \$193 per acre for 15 years, and the state's Division of Conservation (DOC) pays a one-time incentive payment up to \$55 per irrigated acre on eligible water rights. The project area includes the Middle Arkansas River Basin in the District through Barton and Rice counties. There are only 7,353 acres left to fill within the entire project area in Western and South-Central Kansas. Please contact your local FSA office or Steve Frost at the DOC (785-215-2865).

Multi-Year Flex Accounts

Over the past several years, the Multi-Year Flex Account (MYFA) program has been adapted to be an option that should be considered by water users for their operation. In 2015, the MYFA statute was updated to allow for carry over of water between consecutive allocation periods as long as the application for the new MYFA is filed prior to the expiration of the initial MYFA term. In 2016, the District implemented K.S.A. 82a-736 to promote their own calculation method for the allocation within these accounts. K.A.R. 5-25-21 allows water rights within the District boundaries to calculate the new MYFA 5-year allocations as 450% of the water user's certified appropriation. The key to this option is that the water user must remove the end gun from the center pivot system and provide KDA–DWR with an affidavit of this change. In 2018, the Kansas legislature modified the MYFA statute to change the deadline to December 31. With that modification, a water user can determine if a MYFA is the best choice for their operation all the way until the end of the first calendar year. If you are interested in this program, check with the District office or KDA–DWR office for additional details.

Updated District Website

District staff has been working to increase communication with the public. Recently, the District created a Facebook page dedicated to the activities of the District. Additionally, the District's webpage is newly redesigned to be more functional as well. We encourage feedback on the features you like and dislike. The weather station page is still being constructed and we appreciate your patience. The website is <https://gmd5.org/>.

**Do we have your correct mailing address?
Let us know at 125 S. Main St., Stafford, Kansas 67578 or call 620-234-5352.**