



# Preliminary Discussion Draft of Vision for the Future of Water in Kansas Released

**D**uring the week of July 7 – 11, 2014, the Kansas Water Office (KWO) and Department of Agriculture’s (KDA) Water Vision Team toured the state of Kansas, making 12 stops to conduct public meetings to begin the discussion stage of the Water Vision process. The meetings focused on the Preliminary Discussion Draft of the Vision for the Future of Water in Kansas, which was presented by Tracy Streeter, KWO Director, Jackie McClaskey, KDA Secretary, and other members of the Water Vision Team. The Draft is a culmination of six months of input that the Water Vision Team received from water-related organizations and entities at over 160 meetings across the state, reaching more than 9,000 Kansans. It is intended to provide a framework for ensuring that Kansans have a reliable supply of water, for all beneficial uses, for the next 50 years.

The Draft is a 46-page document, beginning with vision and mission statements, leading into examples of statewide and regional general and specific goals. The general goals are more philosophical, for example, “conserve and extend the usable

lifetime of the Ogallala Aquifer.” The specific goals are measureable with numeric values, for example, “reduce statewide water consumption by 20% by 2065...” and “achieve a 20% reduction per capita in municipal water demand...” The bulk of the document is divided into four themes: Water Conservation, Water Management, Technology and Crop Varieties, and New Sources of Water Supply. Within each theme, there are three to five specific strategies identified and within each strategy, there are potential action items (over 170 in all) listed under short-term, mid-term, and long-term milestones.

While each theme, strategy, and potential action item may be of importance to a variety of water-related organizations, the following is a

summary of items that may be of particular interest to public water and wastewater utilities. Please note that the subsection numbering is taken directly from the draft plan.

- Theme: Water Conservation
  - Strategy: Implement greater water conservation policies and practices, both voluntary and non-voluntary. (Pages 14-15)
  - Potential Action Items:
    - Short-Term Milestone Action Items
4. Evaluate local and state water rate structures and how they impact conservation
    - a. Review information on effectiveness of rate structures and conservation including recent work done by local water suppliers (such as Wichita).
    - b. Design bills to break down the individual cost components for the water (infrastructure, chemicals, labor, et cetera).
  5. Increase assistance for the identification and repair of leaks leading to unaccounted for water use in public water supply systems.

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## Vision for the Future of Water in Kansas

On July 1, 2014, the state released its first draft of the *Vision for the Future of Water in Kansas*. The draft can be found on the Kansas Water Office Web site [www.kwo.org](http://www.kwo.org).

There are numerous findings, themes, and potential action items that relate directly and indirectly to municipal governments. The final discussion draft will be shared at the Future of Water in Kansas Conference, November 12-13, in Manhattan.

- Long-Term Milestone Action Item

4. Implement water conservation and management plans for all public water supplies and coordinate within basins or regions.

■ Theme: Water Management

■ Strategy: Increase the regionalization of water supply, where doing so would improve the long-term supply reliability. (Page 23)

- Short-Term Milestone Action Item

1. Enhance public water supply planning funding assistance, including technical and engineering reviews of preliminary water supply proposals.
2. Conduct planning workshops that highlight successful case studies on development of regional water systems that provide examples of various approaches for implementation.
3. Provide planning and financial

assistance to water systems to facilitate interconnection opportunities among water supply systems to help address drought vulnerability.

4. Identify and recommend changes needed to state statutes and regulations that impede or prohibit regionalization and partnerships.
5. Seek and promote opportunities for regional economic development planning and regional water supply planning to be developed, based on water resource boundaries.

- Mid-Term Milestone Action Items

1. Identify public water supplies with a single source of supply and, where appropriate, provide planning and financial assistance to develop secondary sources.
2. Work with emergency and public water supply funding agencies to encourage proactive development of secondary sources by limiting or prohibiting funding for single source entities during an emergency.

- Long-Term Milestone Action Item

1. Require preliminary engineering reports to include regionalization alternatives when new water supplies are under consideration.

■ Theme: New Sources of Supply

■ Strategy: Allow for the transfer of water supplies between basins where feasible and cost effective. (Page 37)

- Short-Term Milestone Action Item

4. Eliminate statutory prohibition to use drinking water State Revolving Loan Fund (SRF) funds for water transfers.

■ Strategy: Evaluate the sources and potential uses of lower quality sources of water. (Pages 39-40)

- Short-Term Milestone Action Items

1. Develop an inventory of lower quality waters, including type, quantity and location, as well as, an assessment of potential uses and contaminants contained in water.

- a. Lower quality waters include:
  - i. Treated wastewater effluent

5. Develop an education/training strategy

- a. Implement pilot projects, in partnership with public water suppliers and other water users to demonstrate the potential uses of lower quality water.

■ Strategy: Increase other sources of storage available for water supply. (Page 43)

- Short-Term Milestone Action Item

8. Consider the development of rural water districts in areas where domestic groundwater supplies have been depleted or are unusable.

Additional public outreach to discuss the plan was held in September and October. The Final Draft of the Vision for the Future of Water in Kansas is to be presented at the Governor's Conference, November 12 and 13, 2014. To learn more about the Vision, read the Preliminary Discussion Draft, and/or provide feedback, visit:

[http://www.kwo.org/50\\_Year\\_Vision/50\\_Year\\_Vision.htm](http://www.kwo.org/50_Year_Vision/50_Year_Vision.htm).

**The specific goals are measurable with numeric values, for example, “reduce statewide water consumption by 20% by 2065...” and “achieve a 20% reduction per capita in municipal water demand...”**

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