

Surplus Water is Available from Federal Reservoirs in Kansas

In April 2018, the Kansas Water Authority (KWA) met in Lenexa, Kansas. The KWA meets about five or six times a year to consider legislation to propose to the legislature, to make recommendations to state agencies regarding water resources, to approve policy changes proposed by the Kansas Water Office (KWO) concerning the pricing of water for sale pursuant to the State Water Plan Storage Act, etc. It was at this meeting that the Water Authority set the Water Marketing Program Variable Rate at 40.5 cents per 1,000 gallons for 2019.

An article that explains the Kansas Water Marketing Program is needed, and will appear in this publication in the future. In the meantime, to begin an understanding of the importance of this function of state government, the following is presented.

One part of this program is the annual “disposal” of surplus water in storage. Surplus water is defined as waters in the conservation water supply capacity in the federal reservoirs committed to the state, but not required to satisfy any of the existing long-term contracts. Individuals can contract with the Kansas Water Office on an annual basis for at least the same price as the Marketing Variable Rate for an amount of water that does not exceed the calculated 10 percent yield capacity of the storage. The Kansas Water Office prepares a Surplus Water Report annually for approval by the Kansas Water Authority at the last meeting of every calendar year. This report is available on the Kansas Water Office web site, www.kwo.org.

Unfortunately, scale is a problem for the efficient disposal of surplus water. Individuals (and cities, industries, water districts, etc.) have long-term needs to water and in most instances do not have the flexibility to decide to use or not use water considered to be surplus. Usually the infrastructure to move and treat surface water has fixed costs that need a dependable supply.

The rate for surplus water is to be the same as the rate for long-term contracts if the surplus is used to maintain public health. If the surplus water is used for a purpose that does

Lake	Water Supply Yield		Surplus Yield Available in 2018	
	mgd	Af/yr	mgd	Af/yr
Big Hill	8.0	8,983	0.80	898
Clinton	18.4	20,580	0.00	0
Council Grove	8.4	9,388	0.84	939
Elk City	14.1	15,770	1.41	1,577
Hillsdale	15.5	17,399	0.00	0
John Redmond	32.2	36,093	3.20	3,609
Kanopolis	8.2	9,135	0.82	914
Marion	5.2	5,790	0.52	579
Melvorn	8.7	9,739	0.87	974
Milford	111.1	124,486	0.00	0
Perry	68.5	76,753	0.00	0
Pomona	7.9	8,901	0.79	890
Tuttle Creek	176.2	197,450	17.60	19,745

not include the maintenance of public health, it can be higher. In 2008 and 2009, the contract rate was \$0.18516 per 1,000 gallons. For 2019, the rate is up 219 percent in ten years to \$0.405 per 1,000 gallons. Increases in the rate since 2017 have been 3.16 percent and 3.32 percent per year, respectively.

For 2018, the Kansas Water Office has determined the amount of surplus water available from the 13 federal reservoirs in which the state has conservation water supply capacity. The accompanying table from the surplus water report lists the reservoirs and the quantities available.

Note that no surplus water is available from Clinton, Hillsdale, Milford and Perry Reservoirs in 2018. Tuttle Creek Reservoir has 19,745 acre-feet of water available. The total amount of surplus water for 2018 is 30,125 acre feet.

Additional information about the Kansas Water Marketing Program will be presented in the future. A past article regarding the Kansas Water Assurance Districts was published in 2002 and can be accessed at <https://krwa.net/portals/krwa/lifeline/archives/0203assurance-districts.html>.

The peak year for surplus water contracts occurred in 2012, when 11 contracts were signed. One contract was for industrial use; the other ten were for irrigation. The number of signed contracts declined every year since then, with none being signed in 2016. Last year, one irrigation use contract was signed to directly pump water from the Marion Reservoir Conservation Pool.

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