

GROUNDWATER HI - LITES

June 2018

Big Bend Groundwater Management District No. 5

IN THIS ISSUE:

Proposed Rattlesnake
Creek LEMA

Cities of Hays & Russell /
R9 Ranch

Conservation Reserve
Enhancement Program

Multi-Year Flex Accounts

Staff Changes

Proposed 2019 Budget Hearing
Set for July 12, 2018

Annual Meeting Recap

UPCOMING DATES

District Board Meeting
July 12 at 7:00pm

District Budget Hearing
July 12 at 8:00pm

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

Orrin Feril, Manager
John Hildebrand, Conservation Spec.
Michaela Kirmer, Admin. Assistant

Phone: 620-234-5352
Fax: 620-234-5718
www.gmd5.org
Twitter: @bigbendgmd5

Proposed Rattlesnake Creek 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. These strategies will not work if the local water users do not understand them. The LEMA committee is continuing to review the comments and suggestions received from the public after the annual meeting. We encourage all interested parties to stay engaged in the process. We are hoping to have the next draft ready soon and to present it at another public meeting.

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 on June 21 in Greensburg, KS.

The District is reviewing these documents in preparation for the required recommendation to the Chief Engineer prior to the final determination on the change application process. 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.

District Staff Changes

Michaela Kirmer has joined the District as Administrative Assistant. Michaela is a Stafford native and looks forward to assisting area water users in addressing their water resource concerns.

Budget Hearing

The public hearing to consider the 2019 budget for the District will be held July 12, 2018. The hearing will be held at the District office in Stafford beginning at 8:00 p.m. The Board has proposed a \$1,500,000 budget that includes funding for groundwater modeling and other hydrologic studies. There are several ongoing projects throughout the District that require extensive study using the District’s groundwater model. Following the hearing, the board will decide on the final budget and the assessment rates to fund the budget. Currently, the rates are at \$0.05/acre land assessment and \$1.00/acre-foot water use charge.

Annual Meeting Recap

The District’s annual meeting was held on February 18th in St John. There were approximately 180 in attendance for discussion on the activities of the District and for the election of three board member positions. Here are the election results: John Janssen—Kiowa County, Kerry Froetschner—Pawnee County, and Tom Taylor—At-Large. All were elected to three-year terms. At the March board meeting, the District board officers were appointed. Darrell Wood was re-elected as President. Fred Grunder was elected to Vice-President. John Janssen and Jerry Cullop were re-elected to Treasurer & Secretary respectively. The Board of Directors for Big Bend GMD5 serve to represent the interests of each county of the District.

Proposed Budget for 2019	
PERSONNEL SERVICES	
SALARIES	\$ 200,000
EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	40,000
PAYROLL TAXES	20,000
ADMINISTRATION	
TRAVEL & CONFERENCES	\$ 20,000
FIELD EQUIPMENT	10,000
UTILITIES	9,000
PRINTING & PUBLICATIONS	8,000
OFFICE SUPPLIES	5,000
OFFICE EQUIPMENT	4,000
BUILDING EXPENSES	3,000
OTHER EXPENSES	
WATER MANAGEMENT	\$ 850,000
PROFESSIONAL FEES	300,000
WEATHER STATIONS	15,000
INSURANCE	11,000
OTHER	1,500
BUSINESS DINNERS	1,500
POSTAGE	1,500
DUES & MEMBERSHIPS	500
TOTAL BUDGET	\$ 1,500,000