

GROUNDWATER HI - LITES

July 2022

Big Bend Groundwater Management District No. 5

Watershed Plan—Environmental Assessment

In 2020, Big Bend Groundwater Management District No. 5 was awarded funding from NRCS to prepare a Watershed Plan-Environmental Assessment (Watershed Plan-EA) for Rattlesnake Creek Watershed Improvement. The District's contractor (Olsson) is working with local, state and federal agencies to conduct the Watershed Plan-EA.

The Watershed Plan funded through this new grant will include the required federal National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) review, public engagement, and comment regarding the proposed project. In the fall of 2021, Olsson conducted a kickoff meeting with the District and NRCS to outline the process and approach to conduct the Watershed Plan-EA. Throughout the winter months of 2021, Olsson collected and compiled all existing pertinent data surrounding the project. In January 2022, Olsson held a scoping meeting with various state and federal cooperating agencies followed by a public open house. The purpose of these meetings was to share information about the Watershed Plan-EA process and to gather feedback from the agencies as well as public on how to improve agricultural water supply and fish and wildlife habitat within the Rattlesnake Creek Watershed in Stafford County. Several meaningful comments and suggestions were received.

Throughout the first half of 2022, Olsson has been working to complete an updated feasibility assessment for an augmented streamflow wellfield. This assessment has included the installation of a series of observation wells at various depths and locations as well as larger test wells. Test pumping of the large test wells has recently been completed and a wide array of data has been collected for the assessment. This data is being analyzed currently and will be integrated in a larger Watershed Plan-EA document when it is available.

Meanwhile, Olsson has been working to evaluate various alternatives being considered in the Watershed Plan-EA. When new information is available, it will be shared on the District's website: <https://gmd5.org/watershed-plan>

Annual Meeting Recap

This year's annual meeting was held on February 17, 2022 in St. John. There were approximately 50 in attendance for discussion on the activities of the District and for the election three board member positions for three-year terms: Marlyn Spare—Stafford County, Fred Grunder—Pratt County, Gary Hornbaker—Reno County. Following the elections, the 2021 financial statement and 2023 proposed budget were presented to the public for consideration and discussion. Significant discussion was had regarding proposed state legislation involving restructuring of water agencies, new fees, reporting requirements from the GMDs, and election process changes for GMDs. Updates on the Rattlesnake Creek Watershed Plan-EA and CIG project were provided to all in attendance.

Budget Hearing

You are hereby notified that on the 14th day of July 2022, at 8:00 p.m., in the conference room of the Big Bend Groundwater Management District No. 5, 125 S Main, Stafford, Stafford County, Kansas, a public hearing will be held, pursuant

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UPCOMING DATES

District Board Meeting
July 14

District Budget Hearing
July 14

CIG Field Day
July 22

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
11	HUDSON	(620) 458-3021
12	TROUSDALE	(620) 995-3219

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
Gary Hornbaker, Reno County
Craig Zwick, Rice County
Marlyn Spare, Stafford County

DISTRICT STAFF

Orrin Feril, Manager
John Hildebrand, Conservation Specialist
Veronica Whitlock, Conservation Specialist
Devan Cooper, Administrative Assistant

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to K.S.A. 82a-1030(b), for the purpose of submitting the proposed 2023 fiscal budget to the eligible voters of the District. Following the hearing, the District Board of Directors shall, by resolution, adopt either the proposed budget or a modified budget and determine the amount of land and water assessment rate needed to support the adopted 2023 fiscal budget. The public is invited to attend. Copies of the proposed FY 2023 budget are available at the District office.

CIG Field Day

How do I make the most use of my irrigation water? What technologies are available to help me extract more yield from the water I use? What will work best on my farm? Join us July 22, 2022, near Dillwyn, KS for a field day to explore how farmers in the Rattlesnake Creek watershed are using new irrigation technologies to improve their yields and better manage their water applications. Listen to a panel of farmers describe their experiences. Find out about the Rattlesnake Creek Approach to Irrigation that has been developed from local lessons learned with new technologies. Head to the field and see how new irrigation technology works and what benefits it can provide. Understand how to manage soils for water conservation. Visit with technology partners about how their equipment can improve your irrigation efficiency and decision making. Groundwater Management District 5 will provide an update on the current issues in the region. Start with FREE cinnamon rolls and coffee at 7:00 AM, and head out to your own fields by 9:40 AM. Brief and to-the-point: just what you need to stay informed about the latest in irrigation management. RSVP to Jeff Davidson jdaviso@ksu.edu by July 18. Location is at the Patrick Doran farm, 1 mile south and 1 mile east of the Dillwyn Grain Elevator (NW 60th Avenue and Highway 50), Dillwyn, KS.

District Staff Changes

Veronica Whitlock, Conservation Specialist, joined the District staff on June 6th. Veronica is originally from Kennett, Missouri where she gained first-hand experience in cropping practices on her family's farm. She is a Southeast Missouri State University graduate. While at Southeast Missouri State, Veronica earned a Bachelor's degree in Organismal, Ecological, and Evolutionary Biology. Veronica looks forward to learning more about the conservation issues that are faced by the District and hopes to provide solutions with her educational background as well as her knowledge in the agriculture industry. When you get an opportunity, stop by the office to meet Veronica.

