

GROUNDWATER HI - LITES

June 2025

Big Bend Groundwater Management District No. 5

Watershed Plan—EIS

The Rattlesnake Creek Watershed Plan Environmental Impact Statement (Plan-EIS) has been a priority project within the District for the past several years. The Plan-EIS is evaluating a variety of alternatives for dual purposes; to provide long-term agricultural water management and to meaningfully address the impairment of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's senior water right for Quivira National Wildlife Refuge. The District and coordinating agencies, including but not limited to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, KDA–DWR, and KDHE, have provided meaningful reviews and input into this process.

Most recently, NRCS and the District held a public meeting in St John for the purpose of sharing information about the Watershed Plan-EIS process with the public and to gather feedback on how to improve agricultural water supply and fish and wildlife habitat within the Rattlesnake Creek Watershed in Stafford County.

The public comment period is complete and well over 100 comments were received from state and federal agencies as well as special interest groups and individuals. The District's consultants are now reviewing those comments in preparation of the final review of the document by NRCS. As more information is available, it will be published: <https://gmd5.org/watershed-plan>.

Irrigation Technology Initiative

The District has entered into an agreement with Kansas Department of Agriculture's Division of Conservation (KDA–DOC) to bring a new initiative to this region. The Irrigation Technology Initiative (ITI) has two parts; 1) system evaluation and 2) cost share.

In the first part, funding is provided to complete system evaluations to help producers gain a better understanding of their water system's efficiency. Specifically, these evaluations identify issues impacting the overall irrigation system's efficiency. This approach utilizes techniques and lessons learned from similar technology projects previously focused on the Rattlesnake Creek region.

To get started, scan the QR code to the right and complete the onboarding steps that are broken down into nine categories. Upon completion and submission of the onboarding material, the water user may be eligible for compensation.



The second phase provides direct cost share for the system improvements identified in the system evaluations. Within the District, this cost share provides up to \$3,500 per system with a limit of \$7,000 per entity. These limits are intended to spread the cost share opportunity to more systems throughout the District. In order to qualify for the cost share, the system must first be evaluated in the first phase.

The ITI is available for any irrigator within the District boundaries and will be on a first-come-first-served basis. The ITI project is funded, in part, by the State of Kansas Water Plan Fund. Funding is limited for this project and will go fast. If you are interested, check: <https://gmd5.org/irrigation-technology>.

IN THIS ISSUE:

Watershed Plan-EIS

Irrigation Technology Initiative

Water Quality Testing

Budget Hearing

CKWBA

Water Available for Lease

June 30 Deadline

123.83 AF

\$150 reserve

UPCOMING DATES

Office Closed
July 4

District Board Meeting
July 10 @ 7:00 pm

FY2026 Budget Hearing
July 10 @ 8:00 pm

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

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DISTRICT STAFF

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John Hildebrand, Conservation Specialist
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Fay Reed, Administrative Assistant

Phone: 620-234-5352

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<https://gmd5.org>

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Water Quality Testing

The District has been collecting water quality data throughout the region for decades. Historically, this water quality monitoring has been focused on monitoring the chloride concentrations in the eastern half of the District. Within the past year, the District has taken action to broaden the scope of the monitoring. The District has upgraded its water quality lab to be able to analyze water samples for chloride and nitrate concentrations with high accuracy, but is not a KDHE-certified laboratory. We encourage all persons interested, to have their water well sampled and analyzed. The District is providing the water bottles, sampling instructions, and analysis at no cost.

Analysis results will be sent to you and a copy will be retained at the office for our reference. Over time, the District is compiling this water quality data together into a regional database to determine areas that have water quality concerns. If you have water quality analyses in your records, please provide them to the District. These additional records will help speed up this process and ensure complete data coverage in the region. Once compiled, the District will continue to maintain the database and develop pertinent programs to address the issue for future generations. Further information regarding water quality can be found: <https://gmd5.org/water-quality%2Flevels>.

Budget Hearing

You are hereby notified that on the 10th day of July 2025, 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 to K.S.A. 82a-1030 (b), for the purpose of submitting the proposed 2026 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 2026 fiscal budget. The public is invited and encouraged to attend.

Proposed Budget for 2026

| | |
|---------------------------|---------------------|
| PERSONNEL SERVICES | |
| SALARIES | \$ 310,000 |
| EMPLOYEE BENEFITS | 62,000 |
| PAYROLL TAXES | 31,000 |
| ADMINISTRATION | |
| TRAVEL & CONFERENCES | \$ 20,000 |
| PRINTING & PUBLICATIONS | 15,000 |
| UTILITIES | 15,000 |
| BUILDING EXPENSES | 15,000 |
| FIELD EQUIPMENT | 10,000 |
| OFFICE EQUIPMENT | 10,000 |
| OFFICE SUPPLIES | 5,000 |
| OTHER EXPENSES | |
| WATER MANAGEMENT | \$ 1,000,000 |
| WATERSHED PLAN | 750,000 |
| PROFESSIONAL FEES | 500,000 |
| CONSERVATION PROGRAMS | 400,000 |
| WEATHER STATION EXPENSE | 22,000 |
| INSURANCE | 20,000 |
| POSTAGE | 2,000 |
| OTHER | 2,000 |
| BUSINESS DINNERS | 2,000 |
| DUES & MEMBERSHIPS | 750 |
| TOTAL BUDGET | \$ 3,191,750 |

“If we move forward and don’t clean up the messes of the past, they’ll just get swept under the rug.”

Erin Brokovich

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