

KRWA Celebrates Earth Day with USDA, Bogue and Hill City



USDA Rural Development showcased the water supply improvement project at Bogue, Kansas on Earth Day, April 22, 2016.

As reported in the March 2016 issue of *The Kansas Lifeline*, the city of Bogue in Graham County in northwest Kansas, was recently awarded \$318,000 in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds by the Kansas Department of Commerce to replace 785 linear feet of water distribution lines. Bogue has also now been awarded an additional \$1.151 million grant and \$881,000 loan from the USDA Rural Development's Water and Environmental Program to build a new 8-mile water transmission line to allow the city to purchase water from Hill City and construct a new 120 ft. tall water storage tank to replace their aging storage built by the Works Progress Administration in the 1930s. While the existing water tower is to be demolished, the city's water rights and existing water supply wells on the Solomon River will be maintained as a backup source. These improvements are expected begin this year.

A ceremony and presentation of the award was held by USDA Rural Development on April 22, 2016, as part of an Earth Day celebration with elementary students at the Hill City Grade School. The primary justification for the grant and loan was deteriorating water quality from the city of Bogue's wells, which have exhibited increasing nitrates and naturally occurring arsenic. KRWA's Source Water Techs Douglas Helmke and Ken Kopp were also there with KRWA's groundwater model to demonstrate how groundwater behaves in the subsurface, how pollution can



KRWA's Doug Helmke demonstrates the groundwater model to students at Hill City Grade School.



Shane' Hastings, Community Programs Director and David Barber with USDA Rural Development in Hays, are joined by Michael Younger of Evans, Bierly, Hutchison & Assoc., Pratt, Kan. in distributing seeds to the school children at Hill City Grade School.

to the economic vitality of small communities,” said Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack in a press release. “Helping rural communities build and upgrade their water infrastructure is one more way USDA strengthens rural areas. Building and maintaining water infrastructure creates jobs, boosts the economy, and provides rural families with safe, reliable water and wastewater facilities that improve the environment.”

Funding from USDA Rural Development’s Water and Environmental Program helps small, financially distressed

migrate through many different types of aquifers and to highlight the importance of source water and wellhead protection. Students participated in other Earth Day activities, such as planting seeds with USDA staff.

The Bogue project is one of 60 water and wastewater infrastructure projects being funded nationwide by USDA as part of a \$183 million investment to develop drinking water and waste disposal systems for communities with fewer than 10,000 residents. “Safe drinking water and sanitary waste disposal systems are vital not only to public health, but also

rural communities to extend and improve water and waste treatment facilities. Applications for the Water & Waste Disposal Loan & Grant Program are accepted year round. More information can be obtained by contacting the Kansas office of USDA Rural Development Web site at <http://rd.usda.gov/ks>. More information about the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program for community facilities, including the KAN STEP Program, can be found on the Kansas Department of Commerce Web site at <http://kansascommerce.com>.



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