

State Water Plan funding issues likely to be considered in 2009

Anyone involved with water resources in Kansas is undoubtedly fully aware that we face many issues that require our attention. Ever increasing demands on our water resources are challenging the water planners as well as the Kansas Legislature. Will Kansas continue to have sufficient water available where it is most needed to sustain the needs of citizens and the economic viability that all Kansans are so dependent upon? Water quality concerns, especially for those of us in the public water supply industry, become an even greater priority given the increased demands of the regulatory environment.

The water needs of Kansans are in a constant state of change due to factors including



*Dennis Schwartz
KRWA President*

population shift, agricultural market conditions, energy needs and threats of global climate change. The need for wise decisions regarding water resources will continue to increase. Kansas has a well-established water planning process that solicits the input from a wide variety of stakeholders. We are fortunate to have many public water supply individuals engaged in that planning process. Hopefully that involvement will help ensure that the critical needs of all water supply systems in Kansas, and more importantly the populations that they serve, will continue to be well represented.

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We all need to work together to address the challenges that are present.

State Water Plan Fund – fee increase proposed

The State Water Plan Fund was established in 1989 to be a dedicated source of revenue to further the objectives of the Kansas Water Plan. KRWA supported that process which included municipal water use fees. Industrial users, the fertilizer and pesticide industry, stock water users and sand royalty fees also support the fund.

At its June 2008, meeting the Kansas Water Authority reviewed a tentative FY 2010 budget proposal that was commensurate with FY 2009 State Water Plan Fund appropriations approved by the 2008 Legislature. It was clear that existing revenue projections were insufficient to maintain similar levels for FY 2010. With that realization,

the Kansas Water Office staff was directed to research and compile additional revenue options.

Recommendations were presented to the Water Authority in August. Following considerable discussion and debate over the merits and justification for the fee increases, the Authority voted to

The enhanced revenue will be utilized to restore funding to the following programs . . .

Agency	Program	FY 2010 Request
KDHE	Contamination Remediation	\$175,022
KDA	Interstate Water Issues	\$62,032
SCC	Water Resources Cost-Share	\$150,000
SCC	Non-Point Source Pollution	\$150,000
SCC	Water Quality Buffer Initiative	\$50,000
SCC	Water Transition Assistance	\$83,595
SCC	Conservation Reserve Enhancement	\$150,000
KWO	Assessment and Evaluation	\$110,000
KWO	Weather Stations	\$20,000
KWO	Water Resource Education	\$6,093
KWO	Weather Modification	\$20,000
KWO	Aquifer Storage and Recovery	\$300,000
TOTAL		\$1,276,742

The proposed revenue enhancement will provide increased funding for the following programs . . .

Agency	Program	FY 2010 Request
KDA	Hydrologic Modeling	\$100,000
KDA	Dam Safety/Rehabilitation	\$500,000
SCC	WRAPS Implementation	\$594,796
SCC	Water Supply Restoration	\$1,950,597
KDWP	Minimum Pool Agreement/Webster Reservoir	\$250,000
TOTAL		\$3,395,393

propose the increase to the Legislature.

Municipal water users (all public water supply systems) contribute more than 40 percent of the total fees while using less than

use fees. Additional study will be conducted to try to determine whether it is appropriate for these types of users to be considered for user fees to help to support the State Water Plan Fund.

increasing need by the citizens of Kansas. With increasing demands for more water, coupled with ever more stringent requirements for improved water quality, the need for increased investment in our

Current and proposed Kansas Water Plan fees and their revenue

Agency/Program	Current Fee	Revenue Est.	Proposed Fee	Enhancement	Proposed Estimate
Water Protection Fee	\$.03/1000 gal.	\$3,785,991	\$.045/1000 gal.	\$1,892,996	\$5,678,987
Industrial Water Fees	\$.03/1,000 gal.	\$1,079,103	\$.045/1000 gal.	\$539,552	\$1,618,655
Stock Water Fees	\$.03/1,000 gal.	\$404,176	\$.045/1,000 gal.	\$202,088	\$606,264
Pesticide Registration Fees	\$100/product	\$965,000	\$150/product	\$482,500	\$1,447,500
Fertilizer Registration Fees	\$1.40/ton	\$2,940,000	\$2.10/ton	\$1,470,000	\$4,410,000
Sand Royalty Receipts	\$.15/ton	\$170,000	\$.225/ton	\$85,000	\$255,000

20 percent of the total water used in the state. There are some non-consumptive water users that make no direct contribution to the State Water Plan fund. The largest water users – irrigators – make no direct contributions based on their use of water, though they do contribute indirectly through payment of fertilizer and pesticide

Public water system support

I believe that public water supply systems should support the proposed increase in fees. Public water systems have much to gain from increased funding for the programs that the State Water Plan Fund provides. We are all aware that our water resources are going to be called upon to meet an ever-

valuable water resources is more than evident.

Water systems do their part

Public water systems contribute about \$3.8 million annually to the “Water Protection Fee.” They contribute a similar amount to the Clean Drinking Water Fee – however that Fee is

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an offset to systems that no longer pay sales tax on their purchases, which then in effect, makes the Clean Drinking Water Fee not a financial liability to most systems. KRWA was instrumental in

as those systems do not generally purchase many materials. But the Clean Drinking Water Fee was generally less about the fee than it was relief from dealing with sales tax. The main goal of having

KRWA members to be aware of any new legislative proposals. I ask that you share your thoughts on the issue of State Water Plan funding and other important matters that are sure to be



A circle of winter wheat under center pivot irrigation near Scott City, Kan.

proposing the Clean Drinking Water Fee as a way to end the arduous application of sales tax on purchases. The smaller systems are no doubt paying more than they would have paid in sales tax

making significant purchases likely come out ahead paying the fee vs. sales tax.

KRWA will stay engaged in the discussions and development of any legislation. I encourage

addressed in the 2009 Kansas Legislative Session.

The Association board of directors will be holding their annual legislative planning meeting on November 15. I ask that if you have any issues or concerns that KRWA might address, to please let me or our staff know of them so that they can be considered.

The main goal of having clarification of sales tax application was achieved – still, likely at a savings or break even for most cities and RWDs. Systems making significant purchases likely come out ahead paying the fee vs. sales tax.

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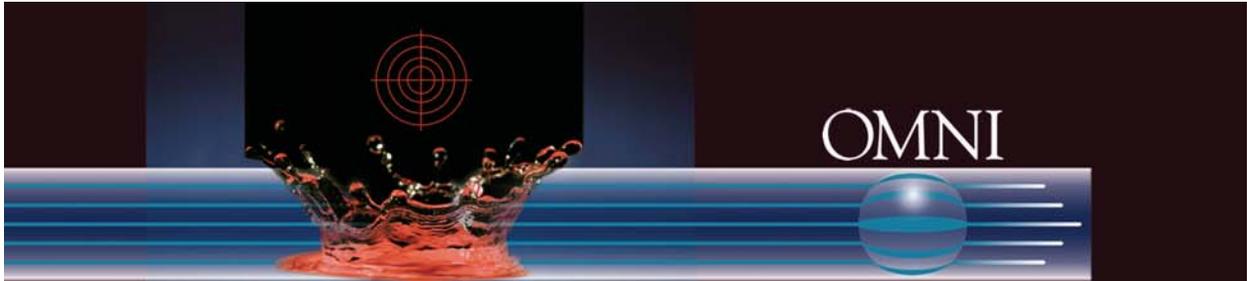
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