

# **Water Conservation: Public Involvement**

**Presented by:  
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Chair, Kansas Water Authority**

# Kansas Water Authority

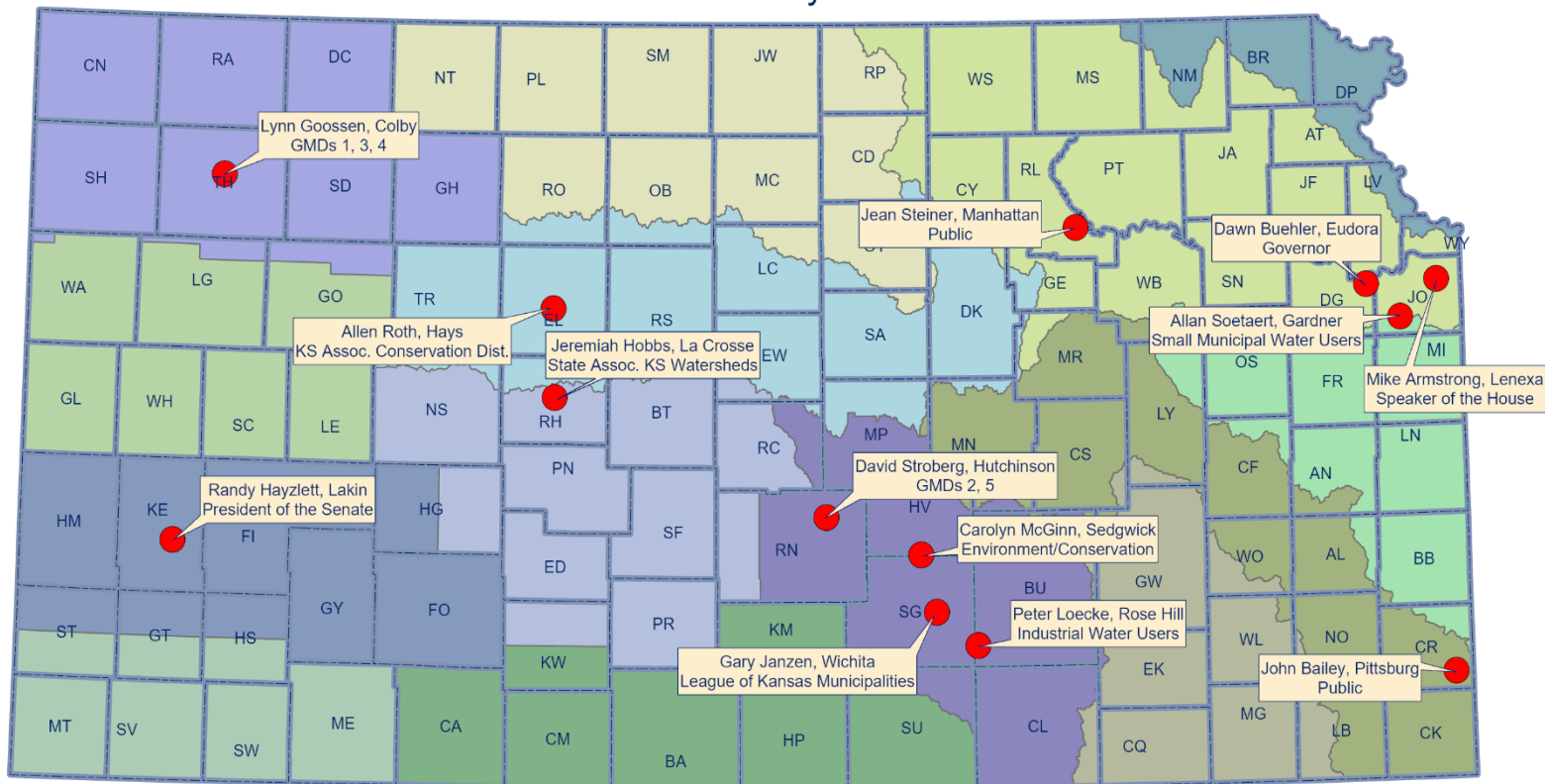
- Established in 1981
- Statutorily within and a part of the KWO
- Provides leadership to ensure that water policies and programs address the needs of all Kansans
- Responsible for:
  - *Advising the Governor, Legislature and Director of the Kansas Water Office on water policy issues*
  - *Approving Kansas Water Plan*
  - *Approving federal contracts, administration regulations and legislation proposed by the KWO*
  - *Prepare and Issue the Annual Report to Governor and Legislature*



Kansas Water Authority consists of 13 voting members who are appointed by the Governor or Legislative Leadership.

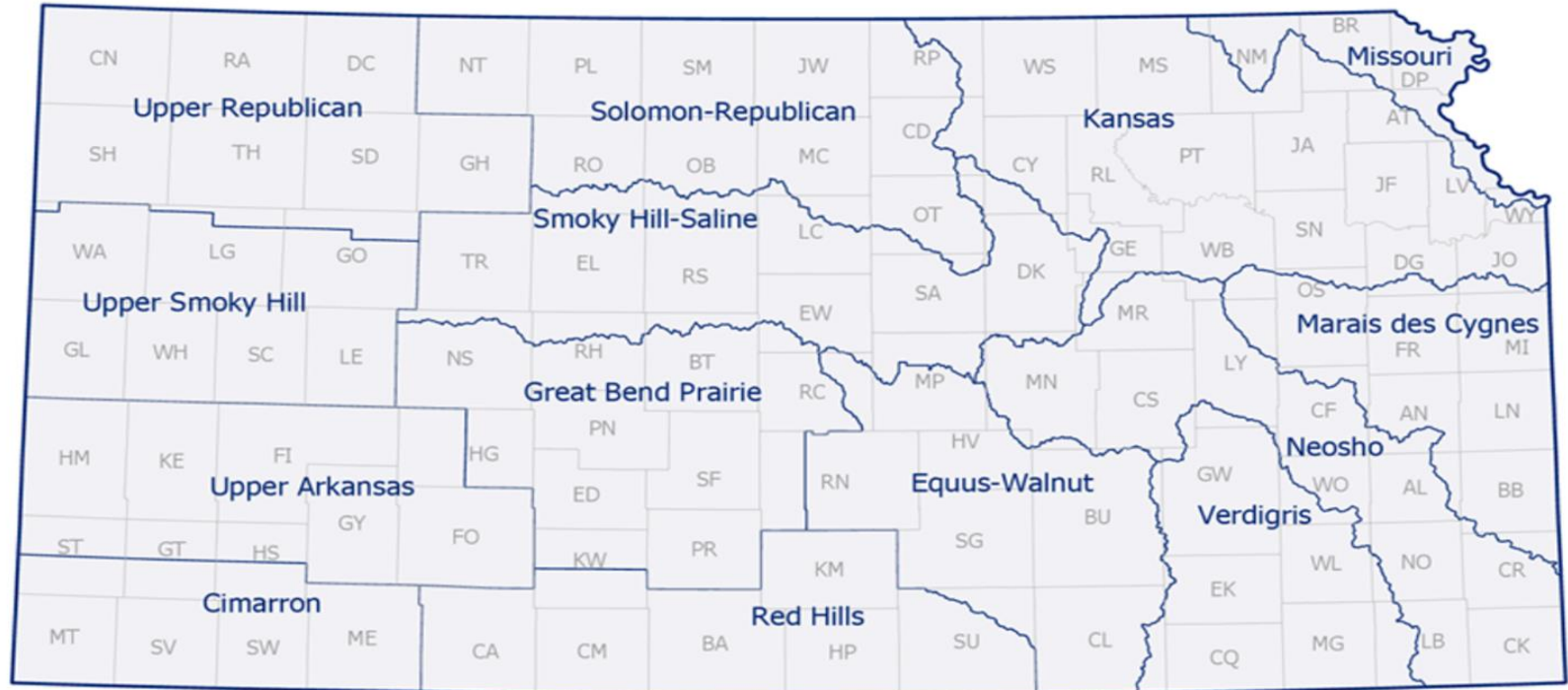
State agency directors or appointees serve as ex-officio members.

### Kansas Water Authority Members



# Regional Advisory Committees

- Advise KWO and KWA in identification of water-related problems, issues and concerns within their region
- Serve as a link to the public in the region.



2024

THE KANSAS WATER AUTHORITY'S  
**ANNUAL REPORT**  
TO THE GOVERNOR AND LEGISLATURE

## REPORT INCLUDES:

- KWA State Water Plan Fund Recommendations
- KWA Recommendations for State Policy
- Updates on SWPF Projects/Initiatives
  - Ogallala Aquifer
  - Reservoir Water Supply & Sediment Management
  - Water Quality Initiatives
- KWA Advocacy Day at Statehouse in January

*Final 2023 and Draft 2024 Reports available online at:*

<https://kwo.ks.gov/about-the-kwo/kansas-water-authority>



# KWA Recommendations for State Policy in 2023

## Critical Depletion of the Ogallala Aquifer:

1. The policy of planned depletion of the Ogallala Aquifer is no longer in the best interest of the State of Kansas.
2. A formal collaborative process is needed to establish data-driven goals, metrics, and actions to halt the decline of the Ogallala Aquifer while promoting flexible and innovative management within a timeframe that achieves agricultural productivity, thriving economies, and vibrant communities – now and for future generations of Kansans.
3. The collaborative process should engage state agencies, regional advisory committees, local stakeholders, groundwater management districts, and the Kansas Water Authority.

## Funding Deficiency:

The KWA notes that the current revenue of the State Water Plan Fund is not sufficient to meet all current program needs described in the Kansas Water Plan.

# KWA Recommendations for State Policy in 2024

## Funding Deficiency:

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## Kansas Water Transfer Act:

The KWA recommends that the Legislature review the Kansas Water Transfer Act to determine if the Act still provides an effective and efficient water management process and consider any amendments to the Act that may be appropriate, such as adding “interbasin transfer” to the list of the matters to be considered in approving a water transfer.

## Regionalization:

The KWA encourages the Legislature and Governor to consider the opportunities and challenges of regionalization (shared resources) for public water infrastructure in order to benefit our Kansas citizens.

# Water in the Kansas Legislature in 2023

- ❑ HB2302/Senate Sub HB2302
  - State Water Plan Funding transfer from SGF: \$35,000,000
    - SWPF Support: \$18M
    - Creation of Water Technical Assistance Fund: \$5M
    - Creation of Water Project Grant Fund: \$12M
  - Milford and Perry water supply storage payment: \$52,000,000
  
- ❑ HB2279
  - Groundwater Management Districts (GMD) annual reporting
  - GMD conservation & stabilization planning
  - Farmed land owned by GMDs





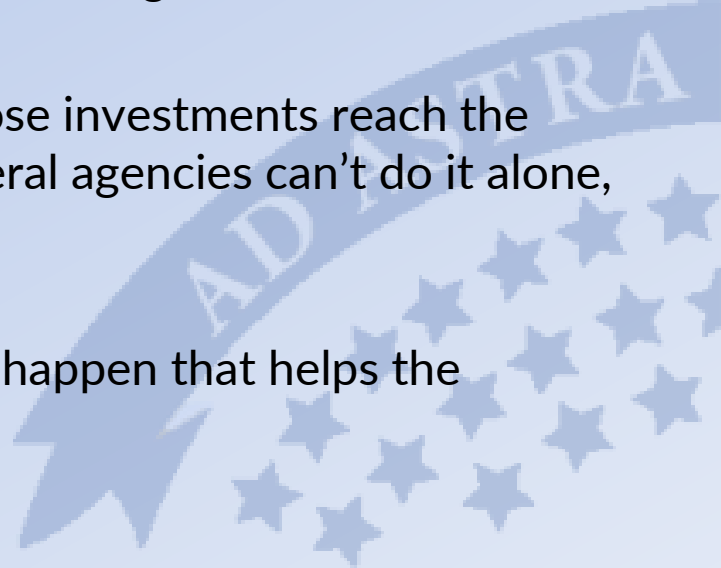
# SUCCESS STORIES....

- ❑ House Water Committee 2021
- ❑ Failed House Bill 2686 in 2022
- ❑ Water Policy Conversation in 2022
- ❑ Ogallala Policy Statement in 2022
- ❑ Funding Advocacy in 2023
- ❑ Kansas Water Authority's movement towards a Strategic Action Plan
- ❑ Governor Kelly's call to action in 2024
- ❑ And the key to all of it is relationships!



# Thoughts on some connections...

- ❑ Advocacy on behalf of the public is needed to make sure that our needs are being met.
- ❑ It is important to keep water at the top of the minds of legislators.
- ❑ Advocacy is critically important to making sure those investments reach the communities that need it the most. State and federal agencies can't do it alone, nor should they.
- ❑ When we all work together, we make great things happen that helps the communities in which we all live.



**Questions?**

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