

Olivia Bergmeier

State Association of Kansas Watersheds, Executive Director
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March 6, 2023

Kansas Attorney General Kris W. Kobach

120 SW 10th Ave., 2nd Floor
Topeka, KS 66612

Dear Attorney General Kris Kobach,

My name is Olivia Bergmeier, and I am the executive director of the State Association of Kansas Watersheds.

I am informing you on behalf of the executive board and the member districts of SAKW that we support your recent decision to join the now 24-state lawsuit against the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Waters of the United States or WOTUS. Since 1953, local citizens developed and maintained local watershed districts to reduce damage to agricultural lands, residential structures and commercial interests. These projects include dams, terraced systems, easements, dry ditches, farm ponds and more which are effectively assessed and maintained by local Kansas watershed boards.

Our grassroots organization implores you to pursue this lawsuit alongside our neighbor states, Nebraska, Oklahoma, Missouri, and the 20 states in agreement. We face significant challenges with federal regulations, and the introduction of WOTUS will continue to pressure our organization. By 2025, a third of our dams in Kansas will be 50 years old, and if WOTUS continues with its current rulings, it will only delay the operations and maintenance required for these structures.

Sincerely,

Olivia Bergmeier, State Association of Kansas Watersheds