

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE WATER COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Ron Highland at 9:00 am on Thursday, February 25, 2021, in room 152-S of the Capitol.

All members were present

Committee staff present:

Chris Waggoner, Office of Revisor of Statutes
Damien Gilbert, Committee Assistant
Meredith Fry, Legislative Research Department
Victoria Potts, Legislative Research Department
Zach Fridell, Office of Revisor of Statutes

Conferees appearing before the Committee:

Aaron Thompson - US Bureau of Reclamation, Nebraska-Kansas Area Office
Collins Balcombe - US Bureau of Reclamation, Oklahoma-Texas Area Office

Others in attendance:

No list available

Presentation on:

Aaron Thompson, Area Manager of the Nebraska-Kansas Area Office (NKAO) of the US Bureau of Reclamation, began a presentation to the committee about the role of his organization ([Attachment 1](#)). The Bureau of Reclamation is the largest wholesaler of water and the second largest provider of hydropower in the nation, and manage 245 recreation sites that average 90 million visitors per year. The NKAO manages 6 dams in Kansas and provides irrigation water for 264,000 acres of land across its entire jurisdiction. It is engaged in several enhancement and repair projects to water infrastructures in Kansas.

Collins Balcombe, Supervisor of the Oklahoma-Texas Area Office (OTAO), continued the presentation. The state of Kansas is divided roughly in half, north-south, between the NKAO and the OTAO. The OTAO only operates one facility in Kansas, the Cheney Reservoir, but it is of major importance because it supplies the drinking water for the City of Wichita. The OTAO is engaged in several projects in Kansas, including recreation enhancements at the Cheney Reservoir, water supply construction assistance for the Equus Beds Aquifer Storage and Recovery Program, and water supply planning in southwest Kansas. Balcombe went on to explore the WaterSMART federal grant program, which provides cost-shared grants and technical assistance to states, tribes, and local entities to plan and implement actions that modernize infrastructure and increase water supply reliability, as well as the Kansas projects in the OTAO which are currently receiving funding.

Thompson and Balcombe then stood for questions, including about the Bureau of Reclamation's

Unless specifically noted, the individual remarks recorded herein have not been transcribed verbatim. Individual remarks as reported herein have not been submitted to the individuals appearing before the committee for editing or corrections.

CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES of the Committee on Water at 9:00 am on Thursday, February 25, 2021, in room 152-S of the Capitol.

relationship with the Army Corps of Engineers and the possibility of hydropower generation in Kansas.

There being no further questions, Chairperson Highland adjourned the meeting at 9:46am.

Unless specifically noted, the individual remarks recorded herein have not been transcribed verbatim. Individual remarks as reported herein have not been submitted to the individuals appearing before the committee for editing or corrections.