

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE WATER COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Ron Highland at 9:00 am on Wednesday, March 24, 2021, in room 152-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except:

Representative Lindsay Vaughn – Excused

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:

Professor Tim Keane - Kansas State University
Earl Lewis - Division of Water Resources, Dept. of Agriculture
Lane Letourneau - Division of Water Resources, Dept. of Agriculture
Leo Henning - Division of Environment, KS Dept. of Health and Environment
Connie Owen - Kansas Water Office
Cara Hendricks - Kansas Water Office

Others in attendance:

No list available

Presentation on:

Dr. Tim Keane, Professor of Landscape Architecture and Regional & Community Planning at Kansas State University, delivered a presentation on urban water issues centered on the impacts of urbanization on stormwater runoff ([Attachment 1](#)). He began with basic definitions of watersheds and their boundaries, as well as how they are delineated. He then gave an overview on the discharge levels of streams and how they are measured. Several factors affect ground absorption of precipitation, including climate, vegetation, land use, soil properties, and rainfall characteristics. In urban areas, with less uncovered terrain than rural areas, several problems are presented by slow ground absorption, including increased storm runoff, difficulties in stormwater management, stream channel instability, decrease in water quality, and decrease in groundwater recharge. He then explored urbanization's impact on change in runoff before finishing with a discussion of "green" infrastructure, which aims to direct runoff into the soil, and "grey" infrastructure, which aims only to move the runoff elsewhere. Green infrastructure examples include bio-swales, rain gardens, infiltration basins, permeable pavements, and constructed wetlands.

Dr. Keane then stood for questions from the committee, which covered topics including the future of permeable concrete and clarification of the level of impermeable cover on natural stream flow.

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 Wednesday, March 24, 2021, in room 152-S of the Capitol.

With no further questions, Chairperson Highland adjourned the meeting at 9:57am.

Discussion on:

Earl Lewis and Lane Letourneau of the Department of Agriculture, Leo Henning of the Department of Health and Environment, and Connie Owen and Cara Hendricks - Kansas Water Office were on hand to answer the committee's questions, which covered topics including the impact of shopping malls on sewer systems, where sediment from water injection drainage settles, whether studies are being done about the needs of urban areas, whether grants are available to aid in covering the cost of replacing water infrastructure in urban areas.

Rep. Jennings lamented the lack of financial commitment to groundwater management districts and local governments to deal with water issues. He also recommended reviewing the state's 50-year water plan and assessing whether its recommendations are being followed and are being effective. Rep. Jennings then stressed the importance of putting pressure on Colorado to improve the quality of water that flows into Kansas.

With no further questions, Chairperson Highland adjourned the meeting at 10:20am.