

Equus Beds Groundwater Management District No. 2
Presentation to the House Committee on Water
 by
Tim Boese, Manager
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Thank you Chairman Highland and members of the Committee for the opportunity to provide information to you regarding the Equus Beds Groundwater Management District No. 2.

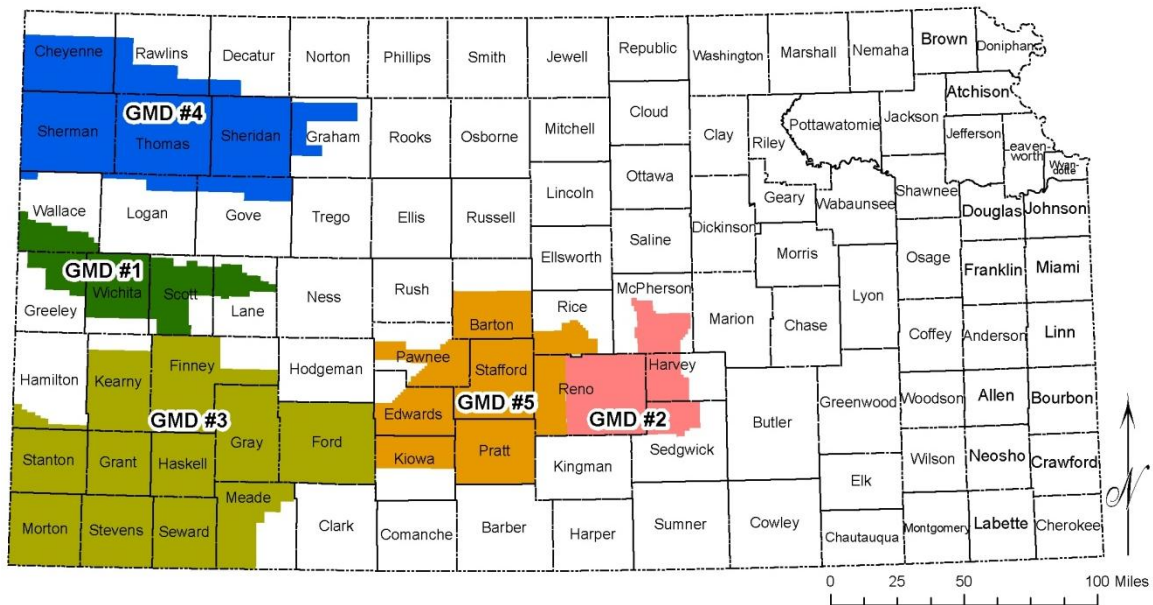
BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The Equus Beds Aquifer is the sole-source of fresh and usable groundwater for industrial, municipal, and irrigation uses throughout South Central Kansas. Over 2,000 permitted water wells and points of diversion withdraw an average of approximately 57 billion gallons of groundwater from the aquifer annually.

Over 550,000 people, or approximately 20 percent of the entire state's population, in Harvey, Sedgwick, McPherson and Reno counties rely on the aquifer for drinking water and other daily needs. Additionally, over 100,000 acres are irrigated using groundwater from the Equus Beds aquifer. The aquifer also supplies water for the area's livestock production, businesses, industries, and recreational activities. Irrigation use accounts for approximately 60% of the average use, municipal use is approximately 25%, and industrial use is about 12%. Certainly, the area's economy and way of life would be quite different without the aquifer's continued source of fresh and useable water.

To manage and protect this valuable water resource from depletion and contamination, the Equus Beds Groundwater Management District was created in 1975 by local people representing municipal, agricultural, industrial and domestic water users. An aquifer management program was developed and adopted by the District Board of Directors. The District boundaries were expanded in 1988, and again in 2017. The District limits new groundwater withdrawals or diversions to annual recharge and seeks to maintain the natural water quality of the aquifer through protection and remediation. The Equus Beds Groundwater Management District is the easternmost groundwater management district in the state and covers the eastern extent of the High Plains Aquifer in Kansas, as shown below.

Kansas Groundwater Management Districts



The Equus Beds Groundwater Management District does not receive any state funds and is funded locally by a special assessment on water users and landowners in the District. The water assessment is capped by law at \$2.00 per acre-foot for water users and the land assessment is capped at \$0.05 per acre. The Equus Beds Groundwater Management District nine-member Board of Directors collectively represents the water users and landowners in the District. The District Board sets the District's annual assessment rates, and also sets policies and directs the District staff in establishing aquifer management programs and rules and regulations.

The District has been proactive and remains active in establishing regulations, programs, and special management areas to properly manage the Equus Beds Aquifer. The District was one of the first areas in the state to establish safe yield criteria in 1980 for reviewing new water permit applications. Additionally, at the request of the District Board of Directors, the McPherson Intensive Groundwater Control Area (IGUCA) was established in 1980 to address declining groundwater levels in a portion of McPherson County. Two water quality areas were also established in the 1980s to deal with oil field salt water contamination – the Burrton IGUCA and the Hollow-Nikkel Special Water Quality Use Area. A special area was also established in a portion of Reno County to reduce impairment risks by requiring new non-domestic wells to be spaced farther away from existing wells. The only active aquifer recharge project in Kansas is located in the District. Currently, the District is working on reviewing the District's recharge rates and safe yield calculations and has proposed modifications to the safe yield regulation for parts of the District. Finally, the District has been supported of the Multi-Year Flex Account (MYFA) statutes and modifications over the recent years and currently there are over 40 approved MYFA permits in the District, with several more still pending.

In addition to major activities dealing with water permits and applications and working with the Division of Water Resources, the District also has programs and rules and regulations dealing with water quality. The District owns and maintains over 500 monitoring wells throughout the District and collects both water level and water quality data from the monitoring wells. The District has an active abandoned and inactive well program and established rules and regulations through the Kansas Department of Health and Environment regarding inspecting abandoned and inactive wells, and providing technical assistance to insure the wells are properly constructed or plugged. Additionally, the District permits and inspects cathodic protection boreholes in the District and has specific rules and regulations through the Kansas Corporation Commission in this regard.

Thank you Chairman Highland and Committee members for the opportunity to provide information to you about the Equus Beds Groundwater Management District No. 2.