

# Neosho Regional Advisory Committee Meeting Notes

## Neosho Regional Advisory Committee Meeting

11:00 a.m.

Thursday, May 26, 2022

Emporia State University Prophet Aquatic Research & Outreach Center/Hybrid

### Members in Attendance:

Name	City	Category	Term	Present
Wes Fleming (Chair)	Burlington, KS	Industry/Commerce (cc)	2023	YES
Lisa Suderman (Vice-Chair)	Hillsboro, KS	WRAPS	2023	YES
Kent Bacon	Council Grove, KS	Ranching/Grazing	2023	YES
Joe Buchanan	Council Grove, KS	Public Water Supply (cc)	2021	YES
Jay Byers	Pittsburg, KS	At Large Public (cc)	2025	YES
James Triplett	Pittsburg, KS	Conservation/Environment (cc)	2025	NO
Brian Obermeyer	Cottonwood Falls, KS	Conservation/Environment	2023	YES
Susan Hague	Cedar Point, KS	Agriculture (cc)	2025	NO
Dale Strickler	Iola, KS	Agriculture 2	2025	YES
Tisha Conard Richardson	Wilsey, KS	At Large Public 2	2023	YES
VACANT		At Large Public 3	2023	
VACANT		Industry/Commerce 2	2025	
Dean Grant		Water Assurance District	2023	NO

### Others in attendance:

Name	Agency
Angela Anderson	KWO
Lauren Campbell	KWO
Richard Rockel	KWO
Jack Mason	City of Emporia
Tara Lanzrath	KDA
Vanessa Salazar	KWP
Mick Migure	Public
Dan Haines	
Katie McLaughlin	KDHE
Terry Medley	KDA
Katie Tietz	KDHE
Elizabeth Hyland	Wichita State University

- I. **Welcome:** The meeting was called to order at by Vice- Chairperson, Lisa Suderman (WRAPS) at 11:04am. Lisa thanked everyone for attending the meeting.
- II. **Roll Call:** Roll call was taken by Lisa Suderman. There were RAC members present, in addition to others online in attendance.
- III. **Approval of Agenda:** The agenda was accepted as submitted.

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- IV. Review of January 2022 RAC Meeting Notes:** The meeting notes from the meeting were reviewed. There were no additions or corrections. The meeting notes were accepted as submitted.
- V. Neosho flood mapping update:** Richard Rockel (KWO) introduced Tara Lanzrath (KDA), the Floodplain Mapping Coordinator, and the Hazardous Mitigation Team. The state is in process of updating flood maps and the Hazardous Mitigation Team is in the process of updating the Hazardous Mitigation Plan. Tara introduced herself and gave an overview of floodplain mapping and technical assistance. Flooding has been the most dangerous natural disaster in the country, and to minimize flood damage, there needs to be an understanding of where that risk is. Part of this is updating the regulatory flood insurance rate maps (FIRMs) for counties. There are also non-regulatory components of modeling and audits. These tools are free for communities to use to help reduce the risk of flooding. Richard Rockel clarified what is meant by a Hazardous Mitigation Plan and emphasized that they are looking for local input on these plans. Tara went over the FEMA Floodplain Mapping Program, which supports the National Flood Insurance Program. FIRMs can be a long process and the maps can be in development for anywhere between 3-5 years. The flood risk data should inform the regional Hazardous Mitigation Plans. Tara showed that there is a project in the lower Neosho and she emphasized that they are looking for local input on these projects. Mapping has improved over the years, from 1D modeling techniques to 2D, which allows water to show how it flows in many different directions. It was asked if soil health practices can be integrated in the modeling, and Richard explained that the Silverjacket group is working on incorporating this kind of information into modeling efforts for flood information. Tara went over what has been done since 2019 for the lower Neosho Watershed. They are now working on Flood Risk Review Meetings which are going on July-October to gather public input on flooding in the area. She also introduced the web maps used in the process of the update of the floodplain maps. Joe Buchanan (Public Water Supply (cc)) asked if Coffey County has been completed and Tara explained that those maps will be effective July 5<sup>th</sup>, 2022. Tara and Richard explained the process if a floodplain map is published before a mitigation project is completed.

**VI. Discussion of Neosho RAC Goal 4 relation to flood mapping update:**

**Priority Goal #4: Reduce vulnerability to floods within the Region by 2050 to reduce impacts to water quality and infrastructure.**

**Action Steps:**

1. The RAC will work with the KWO, The Nature Conservancy (TNC), and USACE to evaluate and research the flooding within the Region to determine possible off-stream storage to utilize during flood events.
2. The KWO will determine the storage capacity within the floodplain.
3. The KWO will use Forecast Informed Reservoir Operations (FIRO) forecasting to control storage, to increase water supply, and to reduce flooding by looking at climate variability and long-term forecasting.

Jay Byers (At-Large Public) gave a background on the thought behind goal #4 for the region and the flooding issues. Richard Richard (KWO) asked about potential flood mitigation projects in the future. The question was posed in regards to raising the conservation pool and the flood pool. Richard brought up that this is a conversation that may take place with USACE. Tara Lanzrath introduced the nature-based feasibility study and she explained that they are looking to fund a pilot project. The Neosho RAC asked about infiltration before flooding happens and highlighted a project in Vermont where they are planting vegetation that can infiltrate water faster, i.e. eastern gamma grass, to prevent flooding and planting willows along streams to catch debris and flooding. Richard Rockel (KWO) then introduced FEMA BRIC (Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities) funding and how this can be used for some of the nature-based solutions

previously discussed. Tara talked about some ways the Flood Mapping Team can help with these projects with technical assistance, educational materials, and cost-benefit analysis for grants. Then she went through what the process of working with this team might look like. Tara gave some examples of technical assistance and other assistance given to communities, such as Pittsburg and looking at Future Conditions Modeling. Richard brought up the hazardous mitigation plan and examples of projects that can be incorporated into the plan. Richard demonstrated the process of getting flood project idea off the ground and completed.

Richard posed the question, “what are the impacts seen with recent rains in the region?” A question was asked about the grand lake flooding and if there is any benefit for the community. Richard answered that this is a question to discuss with the Tulsa District USACE office. A member of the public emphasized the point that more focus on the bigger picture of fixing the water cycle and remembering that conversations about drought and flood have the same underlying problem. Conversation and questions for Tara continued, including it was asked about what data they are looking at for making floodplain maps, and Tara explained that in larger scale maps they use the national landcover database but they can add more detail for a more local scale data. The Neosho RAC stated they were interested to see what results come from the silver jacket project. Richard then gave background on the Blue-Ribbon Funding Taskforce and funding history. The question “how can the state take advantage of non-Federal cost-share mitigation funds?” was discussed. This introduced the State Water Plan Fund insights webpage, which Richard demonstrated to the RAC.

- VII. Introduction and Overview of the State Water Plan Fund Insights webpage:** Richard demonstrated how to get to this webpage from the KWO website and get to the data dashboards. He gave an overview of the functions and details of the tool, going over an example of using each tab, appropriations, revenues, county expenditures, county revenues, and funding needs. A question was posed about the projects targeting HABs. Angela explained that the State Water Plan Fund webpage will be a useful tool for exploring before the next meeting dealing with budget recommendations. A RAC member indicated the importance of thinking about all regional goals before coming to the next RAC meeting for budget recommendations.
- VIII. Review of the April KWA Meeting:** Angela Anderson (KWO) highlighted the discussion from the April Kansas Water Authority (KWA) meeting. The discussion on the Upper Republican RAC message on rural communities paying for pollutant remediation. At the meeting, Nate and Richard gave an update on infrastructure updates. Richard described the process of updating the drought declarations maps and gave an update on the new round of drought declaration and how the rain or lack of around the state will impact that map update. Several RAC members were struck by the small municipality’s article on nitrate treatment.
- IX. RAC Membership Update:** Angela noted that there are currently two positions vacant:
  - a. At Large Public 3 (2023)
  - b. Industry/Commerce 2 (2025)
- X. Questions and Future Issues from RAC members:** Tisha Conard Richardson (Public Water Supply 2) said she would like to have background information on the HUCs and a general overview on watershed basins, especially as becoming a WRAPs coordinator. Jay Byers (At-Large Public (cc)) suggested getting information on issues the region is facing, like particulate matter in the water and streambank stabilization, etc. Results from studies would be of interest to him. Brian Obermeyer (Conservation/Environment) agreed that information on the results of streambank stabilization studies would be of interest. He also suggested a field trip for the RAC

to one of these sites. He emphasized that drought and flood problems are the same. He posed the question, “How is native grass from cropland impacting water issues in the basin.” Dale Strickler (Agriculture (2)) emphasized his interest in increasing infiltration for flood mitigation. Kent said there has been a lot of good comments, but as being a rancher, it is important to manage your grass. Infiltration is what they need to slow water down. Joe Buchanan (Public Water Supply (cc)) is interested in hearing about an update on the sedimentation project on Tuttle Creek reservoir. Richard provided an update and said they are in the middle of bidding out the equipment and the project kick off meeting is next week. Much of the money is going towards monitoring for impacts. This will be a conversation to have soon with the Neosho region as results from Tuttle come out. He encouraged the RAC to pay close attention to this project. He also reminded the RAC about invasive species, especially related to John Redmond.

- XI. Agency Input:** Vanessa Salazar (KDWP) gave an update that funding for Aquatic Nuisance Species (ANS) was funded and she thanked the RAC for the support for combating ANS.
- XII. Public Input:** Jack Mason (City of Emporia) said this has been a good conversation. He has seen many types of pollutant and sediment problems in the region. Compaction is an issue as well especially with row cropping popularity in the region. He also expressed interest in applying for the RAC member. Elizabeth Hyland (Wichita State University) that she is meeting with the Sunshine Coalition, she is proposing a state law change to tax open ground to end indecent exposure of soil.
- XIII. Adjournment:** The meeting was deemed adjourned at 12:43 pm.

**Future Meetings:** KWA – Wednesday, June 22, 2022