

# Verdigris Regional Advisory Committee Meeting Notes

## Verdigris Regional Advisory Committee Virtual Meeting

October 5, 2022 3:00pm via GoTo Meeting

### Members in Attendance:

Name	City	Category	Term	Present
John Ditmore (Chair)	Coffeyville, KS	Industry/Commerce (cc)	2023	YES
Bob Culbertson (Vice Chair)	New Strawn, KS	Conservation/Environment	2023	YES
Doug Blex	Independence, KS	WRAPS	2023	NO
Ken McNickle	Mound Valley, KS	Public Water Supply	2025	YES
Harold Engle	Madison, KS	Agriculture (cc)	2023	NO
Brian Graff	Neodesha, KS	At Large Public 2	2025	NO
Gary Kelley	Sedan, KS	Conservation/Environment (cc)	2025	YES
John Black	Howard, KS	Agriculture	2023	NO
Ron Smith	Fredonia, KS	Industry/Commerce	2025	YES
Pamela Walker	Altoona, KS	At Large Public (cc)	2025	YES
VACANT		Public Water Supply (cc)	2023	

### Others in attendance:

Name	Agency
Scott McCrone	USACE
Eugene Goff	USACE
Angela Anderson	KWO
Terry Medley	DWR
Chris Hammerschmidt	USACE
Nathan Westrup	KWO
Chris Steffen	USACE
Doug Cole	KDHE

- I. **Welcome and Introductions:** The meeting was called to order by Chairperson, John Ditmore (Industry/Commerce) at 3:01pm. John took roll call.
- II. **Approval of Agenda:** Gary Kelley (Conservation/Environment) moved to approve the agenda. Bob Culbertson (Conservation/Environment) seconded the motion. There was no discussion. Motion passed unanimously.
- III. **Review of the May 2022 RAC Meeting Notes:** The meeting notes from the May 2022 meeting were reviewed. There were no additions or corrections. The meeting notes were accepted as submitted.
- IV. **Updates**
  - a. **Kansas Water Plan:** Angela Anderson (KWO) announced completion of Kansas Water Plan (KWP), and the Kansas Water Authority officially approved it with minor changes and edits. The press release should come out within next couple of weeks. The last update of the KWP hadn't been officially approved since 2009. This will be the guiding document for water planning going forward the next five years for the

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whole state. The Verdigris region is highlighted in the appendix. The next stage is implementation where RACs will be heavily utilized.

- b. **Kansas Water Authority:** Angela summarized the recent Kansas Water Authority (KWA) meetings. The meeting on August 10<sup>th</sup> was a water policy discussion in Salina where legislatures, KWA members, and some RAC chairs discussed water policy and issues in the state as a whole. In the August 17<sup>th</sup> KWA meeting, the updated Kansas Water Plan was approved as well as the FY2024 State Water Plan Fund.
- c. **FY 2024 State Water Plan Fund:** Angela then summarized the FY2024 State Water Plan Fund budget. This is the budget that will be discussed with legislatures by KWA members and RAC chairs/representatives in January. Generally, the line items are similar to FY2023 budget, but with the addition of an enhancement package. Angela then gave an overview of the enhancement package line items for the KDHE, KDA, and KWO. The KWO also changed some of the titles of the line items within the enhancement package.

- V. **Drought Status Update:** Lauren Campbell (KWO) provided a drought status update to the RAC. Over the course of the summer the drought has worsened fairly quickly. The last official drought declarations map was released in late June, with drought emergency status contained with western Kansas. The new released drought declarations have 67 counties in drought emergency, 11 in drought warning, and 27 in drought watch. The vast majority of the Verdigris region is at the drought emergency level. The USDA has made funding available for counties in extreme drought. Lauren then introduced the Climate and Drought webpage on the KWO website to access maps, tools, and updates on drought in the state. Nathan Westrup (KWO) gave an overview of system operations during the current drought period. Storage capacity in the Verdigris basin is healthy, but there have been releases from Toronto, Fall River, and Elk City to support river flows. 25% of conservation pool from Toronto has been used, 15-16% has been used in Fall River, and about 14% in Elk City. Big Hill is down about 10% as well. The drought could continue, but there is a high chance of inflow in the spring in the Verdigris basin. The summer has brought record setting low precipitation and the DWR has issued orders for appropriated rights to stop pumping. Currently, 14-18 CFS of natural flows are divided up between the vested rights within the basin, and without the reservoirs making releases, the true natural flows would be around 5 CFS. PWWSD #23 has exhausted the vested water right and now there are releases from Fall River to support their appropriated water rights. The City of Independence may need to start getting water from their recently approved water marketing contract soon.
- VI. **Coffeyville Resources Low-Head Dam Update:** Lauren Campbell (KWO) announced the Coffeyville Resources technical assistance kick-off meeting taking place November 8<sup>th</sup> at 12:30pm. USACE, DWR, KWO, and RAC members will discuss the goal to reduce/improve target flows in the Verdigris for low-flow conditions. This aligns with the RAC goal #1 to increase drought tolerance in the basin. Nathan Westrup (KWO) explained that this meeting will discuss options and scope to a technical assistance study in the form of a Public Assistance Study (PAS) to increase the pool depth at Coffeyville Resources intake.
- VII. **Questions and Future Issues from RAC Members:** Ron Smith (Industry/Commerce) mentioned an issue about brush around the river near Neodesha and explained that now might good time to clean some of it out since the river levels are low. Gary Kelley (Conservation/Environment) said the City of Caney is undergoing a similar project to get rid of brush pile from river, and they might have some information on that kind of project. Gary Kelley (Conservation/Environment) mentioned that they have only had 2 inches of rain south of Sedan over the past four months. John Ditmore (Industry/Commerce) said around Coffeyville, they have had only about 0.2 inches since mid-May.

- VIII. Agency Input:** Eugene Goff (USACE) confirmed that both regulatory and hydrology staff will be attending the meeting November 8<sup>th</sup>. Chris Steffen (KDWP) said KDWP is taking advantage of the low water conditions to implement nuisance vegetation treatment and carp removal from the Kansas. Bob Culbertson (WRAPS) mentioned the Fall River Stakeholder Leadership Team (SLT) will be meeting next week to hear about oil well plugging and brine scar restoration. Terry Medley said he will be bringing some floodplain mapping staff to the meeting on November 8<sup>th</sup>.
- IX. Public Input:** There was no public input.
- X. Adjournment:** Ron Smith (Industry/Commerce) moved to adjourn the meeting. Bob Culbertson (Conservation/Environment) seconded the motion. Motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 3:55pm.
- XI. Future Meetings:**
- i. Coffeyville Resources low-head dam discussion – November 8th 12:30pm**
  - ii. KWA – Wednesday October 19, 2022 - Wichita, KS**
  - iii. Kansas Governor's Water Conference – November 16-17, 2022 – Manhattan, KS**