

Vision For the Future of Water in Kansas

Ogallala Research Initiative – March 2015



Governor Brownback's Call to Action

Issued a call to action to address the need for a Vision for Kansas water that meets the state's needs now and in the future.

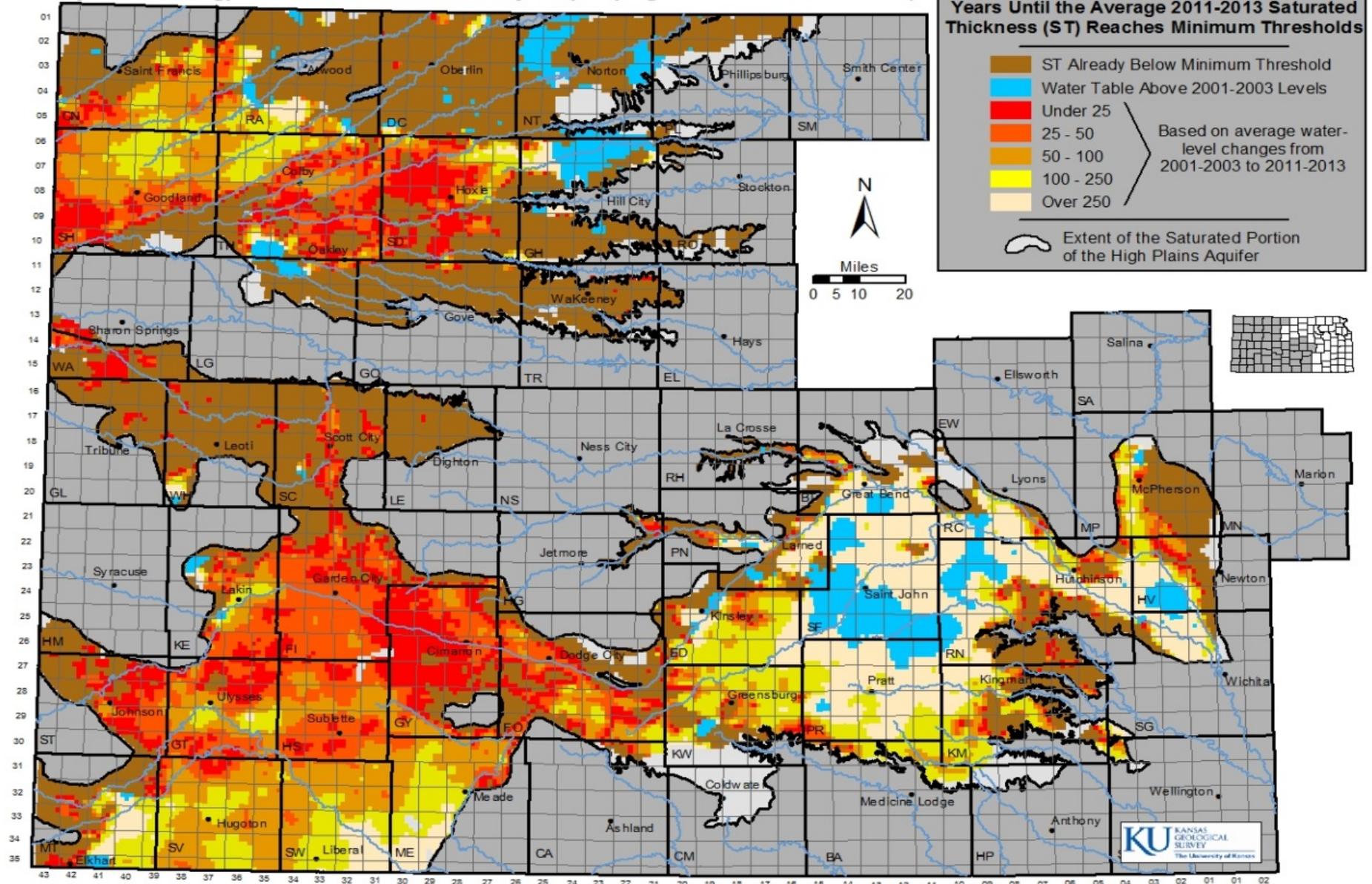


The screenshot shows the official website of the Governor of Kansas. At the top, there is a banner with the state seal and the text "Kansas Office of the Governor" and "Sam Brownback GOVERNOR". Below the banner is a navigation menu with links: HOME, ABOUT THE OFFICE, MEDIA ROOM, ROAD MAP, SERVING KANSANS, ABOUT KANSAS, CONTACT THE GOVERNOR, and LINKS. The main content area features a news article titled "Governor Issues a Call to Action for a 50-Year Vision for Kansas Water". The article includes a sub-headline "Kansas Water Priorities Must Be Addressed to Meet State's Current and Future Needs" and a dateline "Manhattan, Kan. – Governor Sam Brownback today issued a call to action to address the need for a 50-year vision for Kansas water that meets the state's needs now and in the future. More than 550 attendees representing diverse water interests are participating in the Governor's Conference on the Future of Water in Kansas." The article text continues with a quote from Governor Brownback: "We have been reminded of the importance of water with another year of extreme drought for our state, which is now beginning to ease in eastern Kansas, but continues to persist in the west," said Governor Sam Brownback. "Water and the Kansas economy are directly linked. Water is a finite resource and without further planning and action we will no longer be able to meet our state's current needs, let alone growth." The article also mentions that Governor Brownback articulated the need for a future vision for Kansas water management and issued a call to action for that work to begin immediately. He charged his administration, including the Kansas Water Office, Kansas Department of Agriculture, and Kansas Water Authority, along with the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, and Wildlife, Parks and Tourism, to lead the vision and called upon his Council of Economic Advisors to engage in the planning since water and the economy are closely linked. Another quote from Governor Brownback states: "We are at a pivotal moment in our state. We can talk these issues to death, but without vision we won't be able to address these priorities," said Governor Brownback. "Ensuring each citizen has a reliable water supply includes addressing both the groundwater decline in the Ogallala Aquifer as well as securing, protecting and restoring our reservoir storage." The article concludes by stating that the Vision will take the Kansas Water Plan to a new level with more intense work and cooperation with communities, affected industries and citizens throughout the state to develop this vision to ensure a reliable water supply for Kansas citizens. Governor Brownback directed the groups to deliver the 50-Year Vision for the Future of Water in Kansas.

If We Take No Action in the Next 50 Years...

- ▶ The Ogallala will be 70% depleted
- ▶ Another 40% of the area irrigated by the Ogallala won't support a 400 gal per minute well

Estimated Usable Lifetime for the High Plains Aquifer in Kansas (Based on ground-water trends from 2001-2003 to 2011-2013 and the minimum saturated thickness required to support well yields at 400 gpm under a scenario of 90 days of pumping with wells on 1/4 section)



Guiding Principles

- ▶ Locally driven solutions have the highest opportunity for long term success
- ▶ Policies and programs should not unintentionally penalize good conservation stewards
- ▶ Voluntary, incentive and market-based activities are preferred
- ▶ Action is necessary now

Draft Themes and Strategies

Water Conservation



Water Management



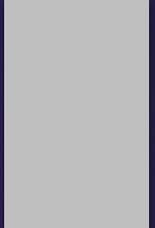
Technology & Crop Varieties



New Sources of Supply



Action Items

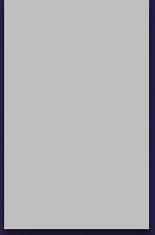


- ▶ Increase support for Local Enhanced Management Areas (LEMAs)
- ▶ Build economic assessments into water management research wherever feasible

Action Items

- ▶ Identify, develop and promote irrigation efficient technology
- ▶ Determine optimum plant development stages to maximize water application
- ▶ Support less-water intensive crop varieties and forage varieties

Action Items



- ▶ Develop ground and surface water maintenance team
- ▶ Expand observation well network
- ▶ Evaluate driller's logs to better characterize aquifer

Action Items

- ▶ Encourage research on the rate and volume of water moving from playas to aquifer
- ▶ Create a model to run “mock banks” to test banking concept in specific geographic areas
- ▶ Host a Governor’s Summit among the Ogallala states



““Water and the Kansas economy are directly linked. Water is a finite resource and without further planning and action we will no longer be able to meet our state’s current needs, let alone growth.””

- GOVERNOR SAM BROWNBACK

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