

Historic Water Agreement Signed

A historic agreement was reached today as Kansas, Nebraska and Colorado conducted a special meeting of the Republican River Compact in Manhattan, Kansas. Representatives of the States have signed a resolution, approving operational adjustments in 2014 and 2015 under the Republican River Compact, which will benefit water users throughout the Basin and set the Administration on a course to find long-term solutions to persistent problems.

Kansas Governor Sam Brownback noted that the agreement was positive for Kansas water users. "This resolution will protect a valuable water resource for Kansans. This agreement allows Harlan County Lake to serve as the destination for water legally due to Kansas and allows for the water to be delivered to Kansas water users when needed. Agreements like these can only be reached when neighboring states come together and are committed to meeting the needs of their water users.

"We appreciate the spirit of cooperation that has been shown by Nebraska and Colorado in this process. This is a strong beginning to developing a long-term future for water agreements between the states" said Kansas Secretary of Agriculture Jackie McClaskey. "We know there is additional work to do, including reaching out to our federal partners and others, but believe we are moving in the right direction to arrive at a workable solution that protects Kansas water users, but is balanced and fair to all parties and reflects good water management."

Kansas Water Office Director Tracy Streeter said that this agreement gives Kansas water more certainty. "Approving the resolutions will bring significant benefits to the States by preserving the remaining water supply in Harlan County Lake and providing additional certainty to water users throughout the Basin. This is one of the action items that water users asked for and was included in the second draft of the *Long-Term Vision for the Future of Water Supply in Kansas*."

Today's signed agreement addresses the operational adjustments of how water is administered for the benefit of irrigators in the Basin. It provides Nebraska with 100 percent credit for water delivered from augmentation projects to Harlan County Lake prior to June 1, 2015, and the delivered water is for exclusive use by Kansas irrigators.

Officials from the Kansas Department of Agriculture and the Kansas Water Office will be holding informational meetings in the areas affected in the Republican River Basin over the next few months to update local stakeholders on the current agreements between the states and to learn more about local needs and concerns.

The states will meet again in early January to further discussions, coordinate the implementation of these resolutions and continue to work on long-term solutions.

The recent agreements between the states can be found online at [HERE](#).