

**Policy Recommendations for Water
From “The Red Ribbon Task Force”
Presented by Zack Pistora, Kansas Sierra Club**



In the 2017 or 2018 Legislative Sessions:

- Fully fund the \$8 million in statutory transfers for the State Water Plan Fund.
- Create a voluntary, non-binding resolution calling upon all Kansans to conserve water; perhaps a challenge for everyone to save 5% each year for the next 5 years, or 20% by 2020.
- Debate and establish long-term funding strategies to implement the Water Vision.
- Exercise leadership in finding ways your community can reduce or reuse water.
- Enable and encourage expansion of water conservation tools, such as Water Conservation Areas through amended policy.
- Potentially through policy, encourage more in-state production and utilization of less water-intensive and higher-value foods and agriculture crops; i.e. more fruit, nut, and vegetable production, grasses for cellulosic biofuels, sorghum, and industrial hemp. Legalizing industrial hemp production and adopting recommendations from the Local Food and Farm Task Force may be appropriate.
- Double-down on funding for the Kansas Forest Service for Riparian / Streamside Forests.
- Draft legislation to direct the Chief Engineer to begin prioritizing beneficial uses of water in managing water rights and including sustainability into the definition of beneficial use.
- Pass capital financing legislation for water conservation.
- Institute a greater fee scale upon water users who remove water from the hydrological cycle, such as placing a higher fee for saltwater injection disposal.
- Encourage a water ‘checkoff’ program for agricultural producers, especially for irrigators.
- Begin insulating state programs, by leveraging state or private dollars, with expected reductions of federal monies and programs (USDA, EPA, etc.).
- Provide tax incentives, such as property tax exemptions, for farmers who retire their water rights.

Over the next five years:

- Phase-in the increased water costs for higher water use in five years’ time such as the Water Valuation Depletion Trust Fund.
- Use policy goals to expand in-state use of renewable energy; perhaps expand the Renewable Energy Goal for Kansas.
- Create a Kansas Climate Action Plan that joins the global community in taking responsibility for mitigating our greenhouse gas emissions and implements strategies to help Kansans adapt to changing climate effects.



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