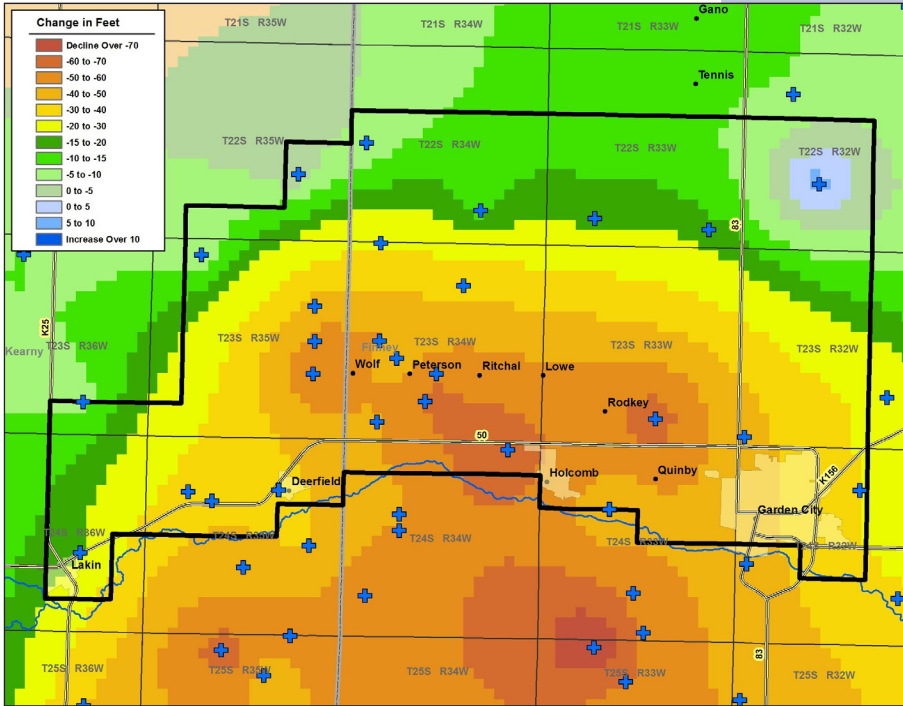


# KEARNY, FINNEY COUNTY

## PROPOSED LOCAL ENHANCED MANAGEMENT AREA

### PROPOSAL SUMMARY



#### What is a Local Enhanced Management Area (LEMA)?

A Local Enhanced Management Area, or LEMA, is a management plan to address local groundwater concerns. A Groundwater Management District (GMD) has the authority to recommend a LEMA to the chief engineer.

**The following provides a summary of discussions for a potential LEMA and does not represent a final proposal.**

Water level changes, 2005-2016  
(Kansas Geological Survey)  
(Black line indicates proposed LEMA boundary)

#### Why is a LEMA being considered for northern Finney and Kearny counties?

Local water right owners in northern Finney and Kearny counties are seeking ways to reduce the rate of decline in the Ogallala aquifer in this region. Areas in this region have seen declines of more than 70 feet in the water table in the past ten years. Reducing water use through a LEMA is one tool for extending the usable lifetime of the aquifer. By reviewing past water use and the impact on the aquifer, data shows that a reduction in use by 15 percent would significantly extend the life of the aquifer in this area.

#### What is being proposed?

If adopted, this proposed LEMA will restrict all appropriation water rights within boundaries to extend the usable water supplies throughout the region. LEMA allocations for a five-year period for irrigation use will be calculated based on a reduction of 15 percent from historical usage from 2006-2015. The reductions will only be assessed to groundwater rights.

#### What about vested rights?

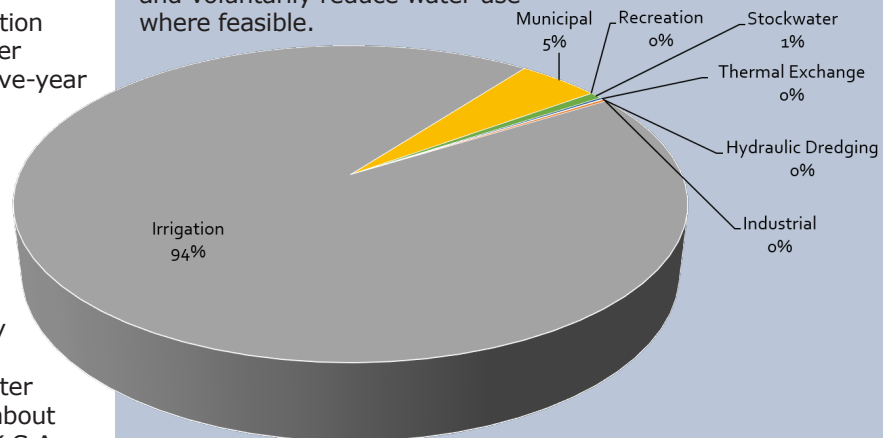
A vested right is the claim to continue use of water having been applied for on or before June 28, 1945. Any water right applied for after this date is considered an appropriated right. There are 137 total active vested water rights within the proposed LEMA boundary, comprising about 24 percent of the total average water use. Pursuant to K.S.A. 82a-703 nothing affects a vested water right; therefore, vested water rights will not be required to reduce their water use, but may participate voluntarily to benefit from the LEMA flexibilities.

#### When would this proposed LEMA take effect?

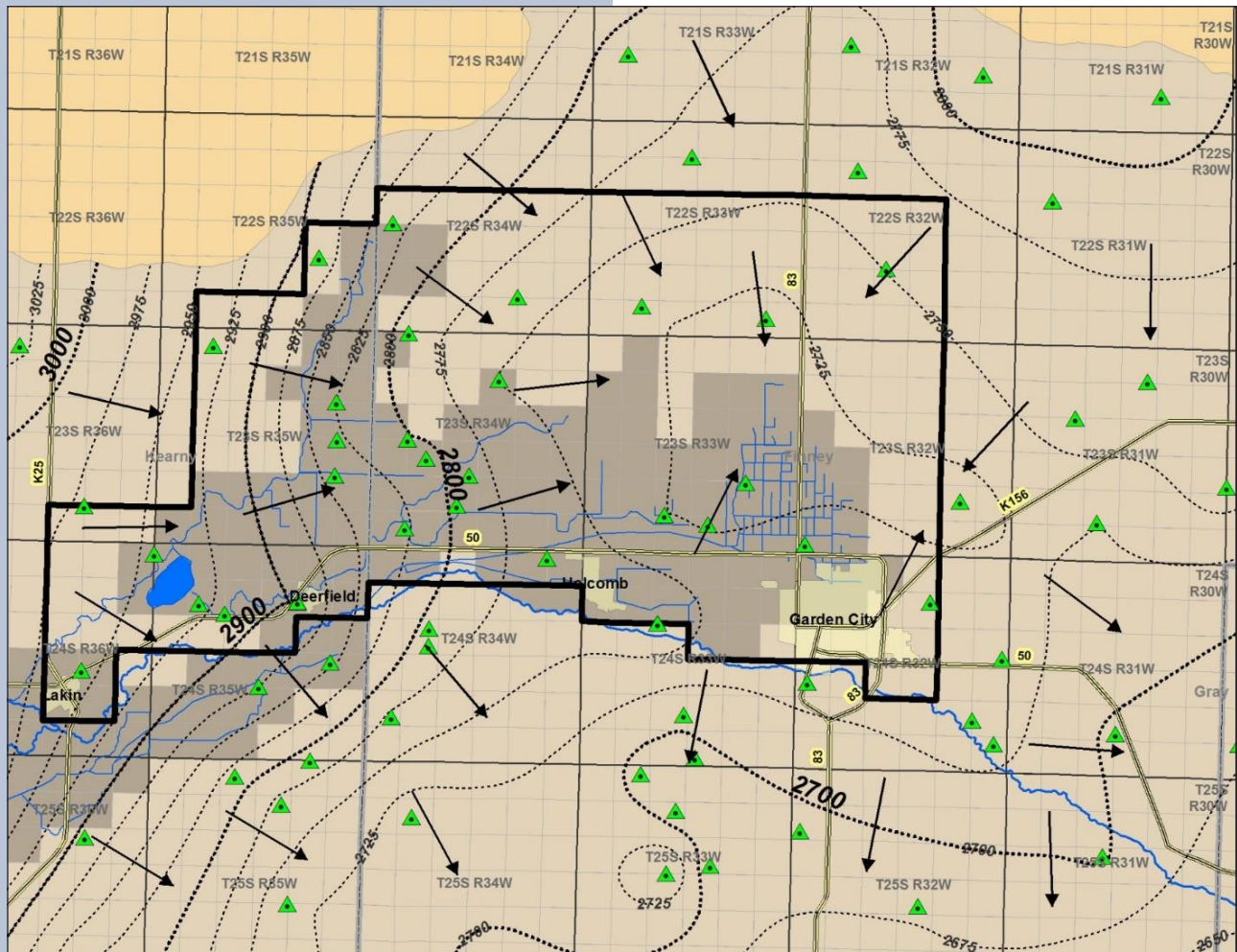
The goal is to have the proposed LEMA in place by January 1, 2018. By law, two public hearings are required to ensure the LEMA is needed and is in the public interest.

#### Will other non-irrigation uses be restricted?

Irrigation makes up 94 percent of the reported water use within the proposed LEMA boundaries and therefore provides the greatest opportunity for conservation. Other non-irrigation uses such as stockwater, municipal, industrial and recreation will be encouraged to conform to written conservation plans and voluntarily reduce water use where feasible.



Average reported water use per year within proposed LEMA boundary, 2006-2015  
(Kansas Department of Agriculture, Division of Water Resources)



Water table elevations and groundwater flow, 2014-2016 (Kansas Geological Survey)

### Are there any flexibilities and additional incentives offered in this LEMA?

Yes. Wells within a consolidated well unit (connected by pipe) or within a limited distance (2 miles) will be allowed to share the combined quantity of the individual LEMA allocated quantities as long as the annual authorized quantity of any individual well is not exceeded during any calendar year. Wells located at a distance greater than 2 miles will be allowed to share the combined LEMA allocated quantities as long as the annual average historical use of any individual well is not exceeded during any calendar year. Water right owners will be provided a 5-year allocation that may be flexibly used during the time period as long as the authorized quantity is not exceeded during any calendar year. A LEMA term permit may provide the option to exceed the annual authorized quantity in any calendar year in certain circumstances, provided the water use within the 5-year time period does not exceed the LEMA allocation. In addition, a portion of unused allocation may be rolled over after the 5-year period if the LEMA time frame is extended.

### Are there any additional incentives to forming a LEMA?

Yes. In addition to the flexibilities and the opportunity to extend the usable lifetime of the aquifer, available cost share for irrigation technology and soil moisture probes will be targeted to areas within a LEMA or Water Conservation Area.

### Will conservation actually benefit this area or will the savings flow to areas outside of the proposed LEMA boundary?

Groundwater within the proposed LEMA boundary generally flows from west to east at a rate of one foot or less per day. Conserving water within the boundary will benefit the water right owners with the LEMA.

### Will any credit be given for those who have already been voluntarily conserving?

Yes. By law, LEMAs must give due consideration for past voluntary conservation. A LEMA advisory committee and the GMD3 board will consider years of non-use and other voluntary conservation activities such as enrollment in the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and Water Right Conservation Area Program (WRCP), as well as site-specific information such as recent conversion to more efficient irrigation systems, when providing the LEMA allocations.

### Where can I find out more about this proposal and provide input?

Several informational meetings, along with formal public hearings, will be held to share additional information and hear feedback from the water right owners located within the proposed LEMA boundaries.

For information about the proposed Kearny Finney LEMA (KFL), visit [www.kfl2017.weebly.com](http://www.kfl2017.weebly.com)