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Local and State Partnerships Exemplified in Recent Contract *City of Alma and Wabaunsee County Secures Water Future*

Recently the Kansas Water Office (KWO) and the city of Alma entered into a contract to provide additional water supply and future water storage for their citizens.

The city of Alma's primary water supply is Mill Creek Reservoir which is funded through a combination of local funds and the State Water Plan Fund. About 25 years ago the KWO determined there would be a need for increased water supply based on available data for the city of Alma and Wabaunsee county residents.

"Mill Creek Reservoir is part of the Multipurpose Small Lake Program (MPSL) and this contract exemplifies what local and state partnerships can do to address local flood control and water supply needs through the program," said Tracy Streeter, Director of the KWO. "This agreement for the remaining water supply storage is the final chapter in a great success story not only for the city, but also the Mill Creek Watershed District and state of Kansas."

Funding for the MPSL projects are through local sources as well as through the Kansas Water Plan Fund. This program provides a mechanism to develop proposed flood control lakes into multipurpose lakes so they can also be utilized as a much needed water supply source. In addition, if costs are reasonable they can be designed with a recreation feature for boating and fishing.

Oftentimes municipalities and rural water districts can't afford the costs associated with financing additional water supply. The MPSL program allows the state to pay for the cost of storage over and above that needed immediately by a local sponsor if it is needed in the next 20 years. This comes with the option to purchase the additional water rights back from KWO when it was deemed necessary.

"We had reached a point where the city's water supply demand had increased as it was projected many years ago," said the Alma City Mayor Maurice Baker. "We worked with KWO to require the additional water rights capacity to meet the anticipated needs."

Alma and the state of Kansas each provided 50 percent of costs associated with the additional water supply storage. In March the city and KWO entered into a contract to reimburse the state of Kansas and take full ownership of the water supply storage in Mill Creek Reservoir to ensure their water supply future for the region.

There are 11 MPSL reservoirs in Kansas. This sort of partnership is the perfect example of goals and actions items pertaining to the Water Management section of the *Long-Term Vision for the Future of Water Supply in Kansas*. www.kwo.org.

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As the state's water office, KWO conducts water planning, policy coordination and water marketing as well as facilitates public input throughout the state.

The agency prepares the KANSAS WATER PLAN, a plan for water resources development, management and conservation. KWO also reviews all water laws and makes recommendations to the Governor and Legislature for needed legislation.