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John Redmond Reservoir Dredging Begins

Ceremony to Commemorate the Start of Dredging John Redmond Reservoir

Burlington, Kan. – Governor Sam Brownback today directed the official dredging of the John Redmond Reservoir to begin. At a ceremony commemorating the event, the Governor shared his thoughts for the necessity of this project.

“The drought of 2012 showed the critical importance of John Redmond Reservoir to the region,” said Governor Sam Brownback. “Dredging is a significant step in achieving the goals of our 50-Year Water Supply Vision as we work to preserve our state’s vital resource for future generations.”

Since 1964, John Redmond has lost an estimated 42 percent of its conservation pool storage capacity, 80 percent more than originally projected by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) at the time of construction. While there have been many short and midterm alternatives to reduce sediment or increase storage through streambank restoration projects and a two-foot pool raise and reallocation, these efforts alone will not remedy the effects of the sedimentation rate.

“The Kansas Water Office's data indicated sedimentation would hinder our ability to meet the demand for water in the region," said Col. Richard A. Pratt, commander, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Tulsa District. "We are pleased with the cooperation between our agencies as we are committed to delivering enduring and essential water resource solutions to meet demand."

The Kansas Water Office (KWO) has worked with the USACE on numerous projects around the state but knew this project’s 408 Request was something that hadn’t been done before. After the extensive review of alternatives, KWO saw no other choice but to dredge in order to ensure the water supply.

“The water stored in John Redmond Reservoir is provided, through a contract with the KWO, to 19 communities, six industrial users and the Wolf Creek Nuclear Operating Station,” said KWO Director Tracy Streeeter. “It is our job to ensure water supply is provided for our communities and businesses. As we looked forward to the future demand, we saw we fell short making this a top priority project for the past several years.”

Performing the dredge activity is Great Lakes Dredge & Dock Company, LLC. They were founded in 1890 and are the oldest and largest provider of dredging services in the United States. Dredging sediment from the conservation pool will restore water supply storage for the benefit of the regional water users. It will also restore the lost aquatic habitat for the benefit of public recreation and the lake ecosystem.

“GLDD appreciates the opportunity and trust to undertake this unique, one of a kind project. Our success through all the phases of work in large part will be due to the partnerships developed with KWO, USACE, state agencies and subcontractors,” said Stan Ekren, GLDD Director of Business Development. “We are proud to share all the subcontractors employed are Kansas based companies ensuring that more than 50 percent of the contract dollars will stay in the state.”

The ceremony marks the culmination of more than ten years of collaboration and significant environmental and technical review. It also demonstrates what can be achieved with determination and foresight to ensure water supply for Kansans. The John Redmond project has paved the path for future storage restoration projects, not only here in Kansas but across the nation.

Others who gave remarks at the ceremony were the Burlington and New Strawn City Mayors as well as the Coffey County Commission Chairman. For more information about the project visit www.kwo.org.

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