

September 13 2017

Written comments for proposed gmd 4 LEMA

Bert Stramel

Water right owner

Colby Kansas

I would like to start by stating that I am truly saddened by the fact that I have to submit written comments to Topeka when my local GMD board refuses to address them. I do not feel that this LEMA is representative of our local irrigators needs. This plan was submitted by the local GMD and will be forced upon water right holders who never requested such a plan. I worked with Farm Bureau to create a process that local grass root irrigators could petition the chief engineer without the concern of getting an overly burdensome IGUCA. A LEMA was never intended to be used by a GMD.

1. Water rights are a private property right. They have defined value. If this proposal goes through I will be denied access to my full right without my consent or compensation.

2. It changes current water law. I have made changes to my wettable acres and with this plan they will no longer be acceptable. They met every standard at the time but with the LEMA it goes retroactive. I am told that I would have to go through an appeal process in order to keep what I did legally. I also have a case where water is pumped across a township line. How will this be handled? This also removes a long standard of first in time first in right.

3. At nearly every meeting I have attended the public has wanted to vote on the LEMA. GMD staff refused to let one proceed. That's why it was so upsetting when GMD staff testified that a vote on board seats showed a public favor for a LEMA. I found it dissapointing that GMD 4 board president did not present testimony at the hearing but let staff give it.

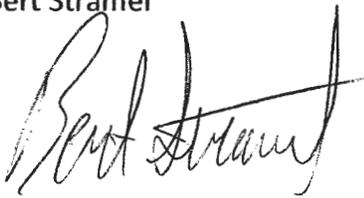
4. The public information meetings were far from informational. I don't remember any information on the proposed LEMA being handed out other than maps. Staff totally ran and controlled the meetings. I asked questions directly to the board and staff answered. The GMD has failed to educate the water right holders of what this LEMA entails. For example, the first hearing was mostly questions simply because people don't fully understand.

5. This LEMA does not give any tools back to the local area. It doesn't add monitoring wells or collect any new or added data. It basically gives the whole of GMD 4 to the chief engineer

for the term of 5 years. I would like to know just how much we are saving and what are we saving it for?

I am a conservationist. I don't believe in pumping without need. I watched irrigators this spring pump past the point of saturation even with a forecast of rain. I have driven down roads washed out by irrigation and can testify to windmills being lowered in order to reach water. Sadly many of these areas still will not see a reduction because they fall into certain colored townships. Please send this back to the GMD so they can fill their responsibility to educate and represent their constituents.

Bert Stramel

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bert Stramel". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent horizontal stroke across the middle.