

A **Water Conservation Area (WCA)** is a designated area with an approved management plan developed by a water right owner or group of water right owners with the consent of the Chief Engineer to reduce water withdrawals while maintaining economic value via water right flexibility.

WCAs were signed into law in April 2015 primarily to provide a tool to water right owners to extend the usable lifetime of the Ogallala-High Plains Aquifer.

### **WCA Flexibilities:**

Participation within a WCA may afford flexibilities that are not available to water right owners outside of a WCA. These flexibilities will be outlined in the WCA management plan and may include:

- Creating multi-year allocations
- Moving allocations between enrolled water rights
- Allowing for new uses of water

WCAs do not make any permanent changes to enrolled water rights and can be limited in duration to allow water right owners to try out the controls.

### **Eligibility:**

Any groundwater water right owner or group of water right owners may form a WCA provided the rights are vested or appropriated, from the same source of supply and they meet one or more of the following conditions:

- Groundwater levels in the area are declining or have declined excessively
- Rate of withdrawal of groundwater within the area in question equals or exceeds the rate or recharge in the area
- Preventable waste of water is occurring or may occur in the area
- Unreasonable deterioration in the quality of water is occurring in the area
- Area is closed to new appropriations

### **Plan Requirements:**

Detailed requirements are outlined in K.S.A. 82a-745. Water right owner(s) will develop a management plan to serve as the basis for the WCA agreement, which should include:

- Names of all water right owner(s) and contact information
- Clear geographic boundaries
- Written consent of all participating water right owners
- Information supporting that the area meets eligibility requirements
- Proposed duration of the WCA and any processes for adding/removing water rights
- Outline of goals and corrective controls
- Indication that due consideration to previously implemented voluntary water conservation measures has been provided to all water right owners within the WCA
- Compliance monitoring and enforcement
- Consistencies with state law

### **Getting Started:**

KDA-DWR is committed to providing the tools, information and assistance necessary to assist any water right owner interested in forming a Water Conservation Area. Some of these tools and information may include, but are not limited to:

- Maps of places of use
- Hydrographs from monitoring wells
- Water-use history
- Estimated usable lifetime maps
- Example consent agreement language

As you initiate discussions about the development of a WCA, contact your local Kansas Department of Agriculture, Division of Water Resources field office:

Garden City: (620) 276-2901

Stockton: (785) 425-6787

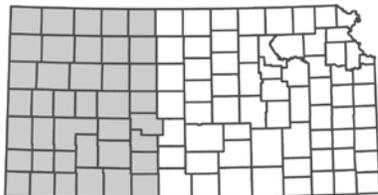
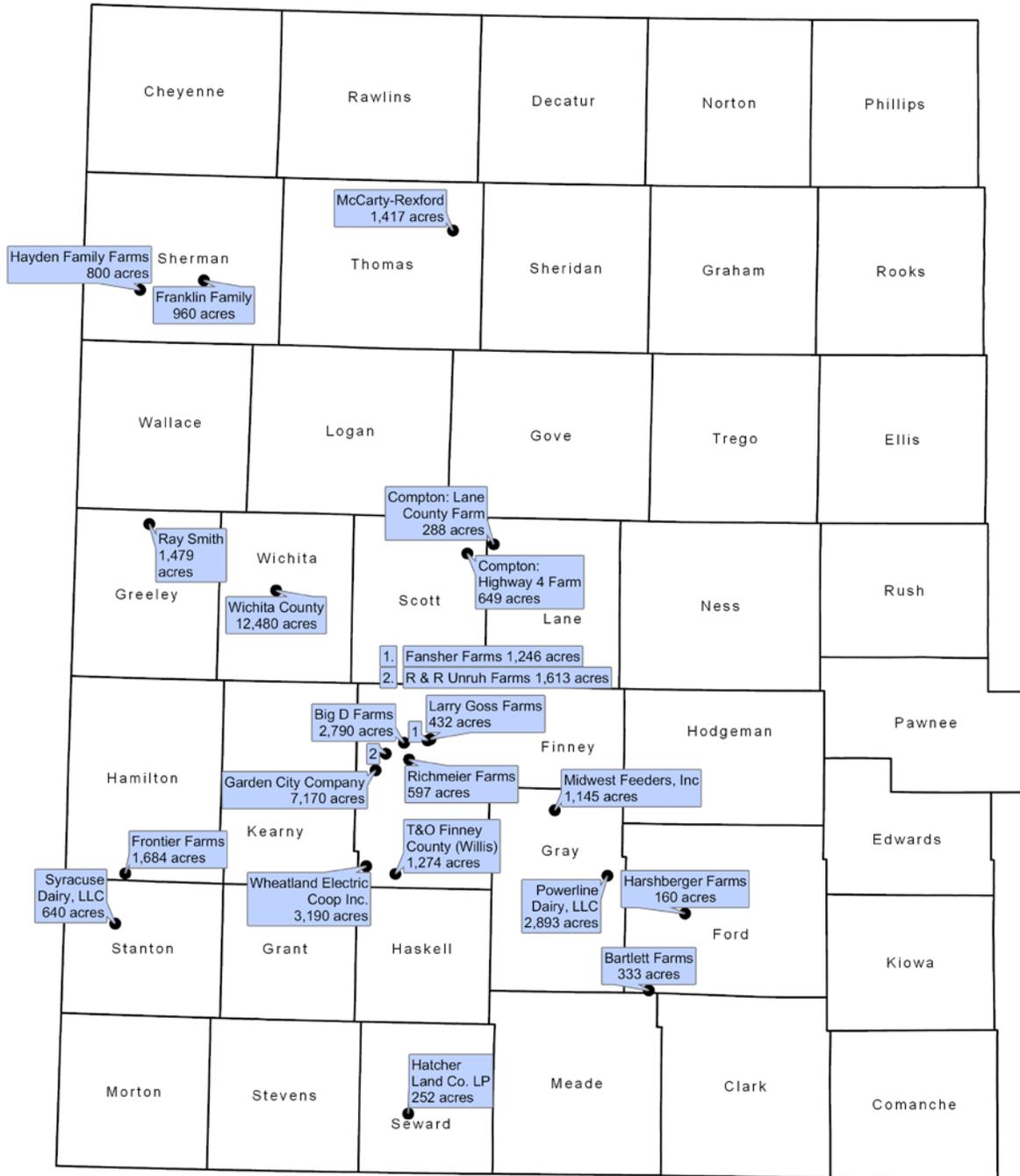
Stafford: (620) 234-5311

Topeka: (785) 296-5733

For more information on WCAs please see:

[www.agriculture.ks.gov/WCA](http://www.agriculture.ks.gov/WCA)

# Water Conservation Areas



0 25 50 Miles



Details of each WCA are available online at [www.agriculture.ks.gov/wca](http://www.agriculture.ks.gov/wca)



Kansas Department of Agriculture  
Division of Water Resources  
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