

## Wichita County LEMA Renewal Discussion Overview – March 26<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Proposed LEMA Schedule:

**April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2025** – Outreach Meeting in Leoti at the Fairgrounds at 11:00am

-Agenda is focused on presenting a proposed LEMA renewal (Summary below) to the public for feedback & discussion prior to drafting the final LEMA for submittal to the Chief Engineer of Kansas.

**April/May** – GMD1 Board works to Finalize the WC LEMA Renewal Document

**June/July** – LEMA Renewal Request to the Chief Engineer (*July at the very latest*)

-One LEMA Hearing is Required

-Supplemental information will include a review of water use data from the first 4 years of the Wichita County LEMA, proposed changes to the plan (LEMA period, combined wells units, carryover, appeals, etc.)

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### Summary of Wichita County LEMA Proposal and Board Discussion

*The following proposed LEMA criteria is to be discussed at the April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2025, Outreach Meeting and is subject to change due to community feedback, GMD1 Board Discretion or advice from legal counsel. The final plan document will be made available at the District Office and at GMD1.org*

#### 1. Discussion: LEMA Time Period

2-year, 5-year, 7-year and 10-year renewal LEMA periods have been discussed. At this time, while a “long term” LEMA would be entertained in the future, consensus has been thus far to renew the WC LEMA for another 5 years, which would be 2026-2030.

**Proposed:** The Board is proposing a renewal of the Wichita County LEMA for a second 5-year period (2026-2030)

#### 2. Discussion: Combined Well Units

At this time there has been relative consensus that the ability to request a combined well unit should re-open and remain open for all 5 years of the next Wichita County LEMA. However, an individual would still need to file a combined well unit form with the Groundwater Management District No. 1 office for systems that are plumbed together. Creating LEMA groups for the Wichita County LEMA (combined place of use, overlapping water rights, etc. similar to the Four County LEMA) has been discussed however may trigger the need for a new LEMA proposal rather than a renewal.

**Proposed:** The Board is proposing that the new 5-year LEMA will allow for a combined well unit to be applied for at any time during the LEMA.

### **3. Discussion: Carryover of Unused Allocations**

At this time the Board has discussed several options for the carry-over of un-used allocation from the first LEMA to the next LEMA. It is important to assure that individuals who have saved additional AF of allocation, are given substantial credit for those savings while also working to do away with the idea of historical “use it or lose it.” It is also important to protect the plans overall savings, as much of Wichita County is approaching or is at relative Q-Stable and we don’t want to go backwards in savings (as estimated by the Kansas Geological Survey).

**Proposed:** The Board is proposing that two years of carryover may be carried over to the next LEMA. The LEMA renewal will include an additional backstop of identifying that the Wichita County area must still maintain to be at Q-Stable at the end of the next LEMA (2030).

### **4. Discussion: Appeals**

At this time there has been discussion as to how to handle future appeals in the next five years of the Wichita County LEMA. Appeals to the WC LEMA were only allowed in year-one of the first WC LEMA. Therefore, new ownership had few options if they purchased property after year 1. There perhaps would need to be parameters or limitations on this appeals process. Currently the Wichita County LEMA Appeals process includes a pump test and proof of voluntary conservation. Since the LEMA has already been in place for 5 years, likely specific opportunities for new owners would need to be included.

**Proposed:** The Board is proposing that the window to file an appeal will remain open during the duration of the LEMA, for new ownership and special circumstances that will be identified and determined in a similar appeals process as outlined in the Four County LEMA.