

Model to show impact of less pumping

By Tom Betz
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A computer model developed by Kansas State University to show the impact of state plans to curb water use on the western Kansas economy will be a main topic when the Kansas Water Authority meets next Thursday and Friday in Colby.

Water levels in wells supplying irrigation, homes and businesses on the High Plains have been going down for three decades, and state officials have made slowing the decline a priority. The model to be presented at the meeting in Colby should show the effects cutting water use by any given amount will have on farm production and the economy here, as well as water levels.

That's important, said Wayne Bossert, director of the Northwest Kansas Groundwater Management District in Colby, because so far, state experts have studied only the impact on water supplies. No one

really knew how that will affect farms and businesses.

The authority will meet Thursday and next Friday at the Comfort Inn in Colby. A presentation on the new High Plains study will be at noon Thursday by Dr. Bill Golden of the Department of Agricultural Economics at Kansas State University.

Bossert said the district has cooperated in developing the model to respond to the state Water Plan, which calls for reducing the rate of decline in the aquifers.

"The state Water Plan has made the High Plains aquifer a point of emphasis," Bossert said. "We have hydrologic models to see what might happen depending on what you do over time, like shutting wells down. Some are reasonable, but not great.

"This will couple the hydrologic model with an agricultural economic model. The economic model takes its cue from the hydrologic and says that when you reach a

certain level, it will show that it is not possible to grow crops, and what the effect is on the agriculture economy."

Bossert said Golden just finished a report a few weeks ago where the model was used to explore three scenarios. The object was to look at what happens if the plan is to call for a 30 percent reduction in well use. He said the model looked at three ways that could be done and the economic impacts of each.

"The water plan is to slow the decline rates," Bossert said. "We look at using the Conservation Reserve Enhanced Program, a voluntary incentive water retirement program, or the third option to cut everyone across the board by 30 percent."

He said there was no magic about the 30 percent; it was just picked as a starting point. He said it could easily be run with 20 percent or 40 percent, and the model could even let them look at 32 percent or any other amount.

"We know all the options are the same hydrologically," Bossert said, "but there are differences in what happens to the economy depending on the way the water is shut down.

"I think this model gives us a couple of things, including showing what might happen to the economy depending on the option we take. We can explore what the effect is to the economy and see how much we want to do to the agricultural economy to reduce the decline in the water levels.

"We can show we have cut the water, but it may take a large bite out of our economy. It has always been addressed hydrologically, and this will give us a way to look at the economic options."

Study partners in the computer model include the Groundwater Management District, the state Department of Agriculture's Division of Water Resources, K-State, the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation and the Kansas

Water Office.

On Friday, a representative from Colorado will explain how that state is proposing to deal with its obligation to send more water to Kansas and Nebraska under the Republican River Compact.

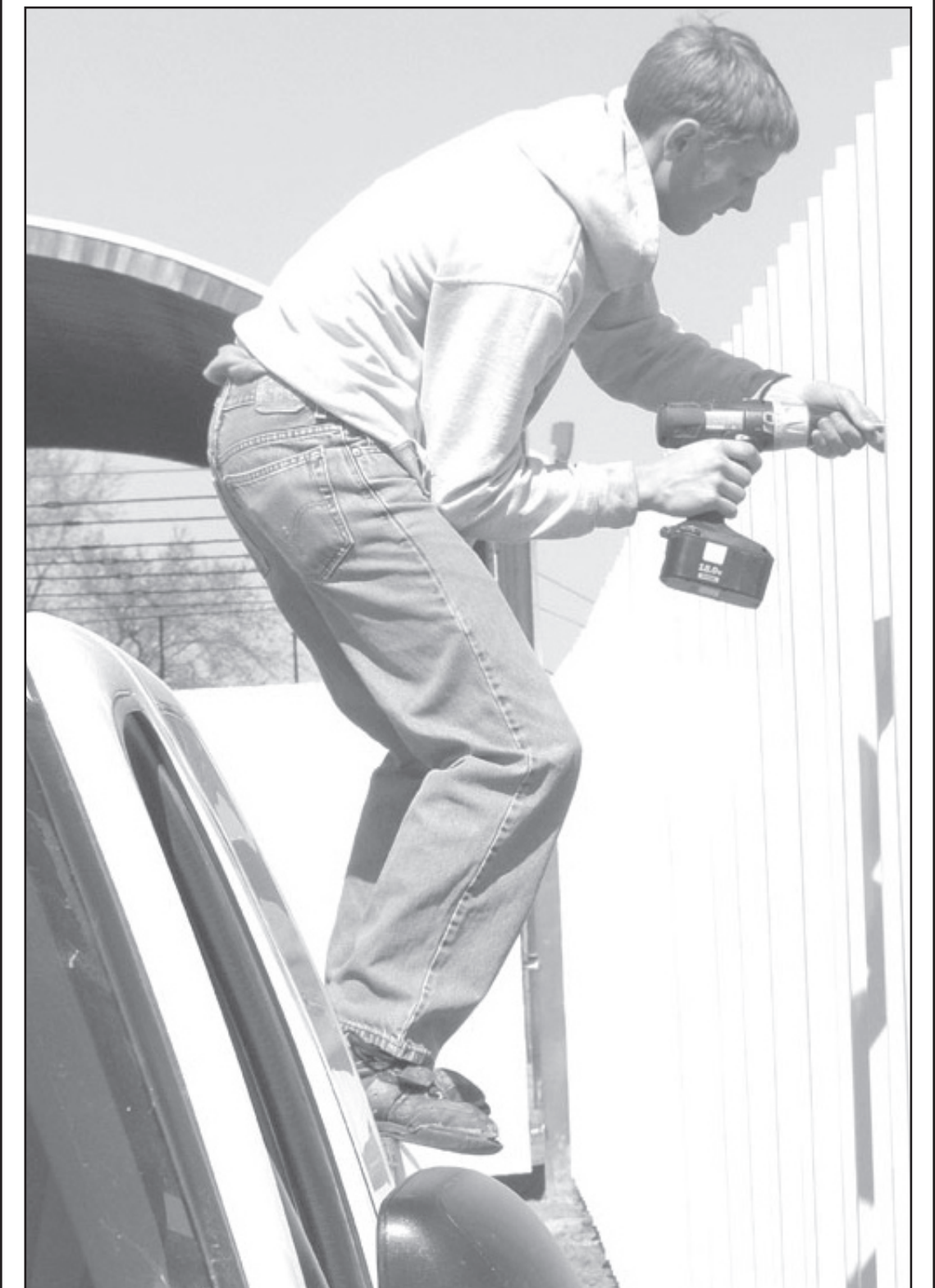
Other issues at the meeting will include a preliminary policy plan for management of surface water and water-related issues in the state legislature.

The meetings will begin at 8 a.m. on both days and are scheduled to end by 2:30 p.m. on Thursday and 11:30 a.m. on Friday.

The 24-member authority advises the Legislature and governor on water policy issues. Members of the state's 12 Basin Advisory Committees provide two-way communication between the authority, the groups they represent and water users in each basin.

A complete agenda is posted to the Kansas Water Office web site www.kwo.org.

New fence goes up at fairgrounds



Adam Duell, son of Steve Duell, chairman of the county Fair Board, used a battery-powered drill to put screws in the top part of a new steel sheet fence on the south end of the Sherman County Fairgrounds which separates the race track and arena from the carnival. Steve Duell was marking the line of screws with the help of farmers Scott Jarrett and Art Hatfield.
Photo by Tom Betz/The Goodland Star-News

Wildlife incentives extended

Landowners interested in the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program may be eligible for more money because of a one-month extension of the 2002 Farm Bill, but applications must be received by Tuesday at the Natural Resources Conservation Service office.

"This is a short timeline, but it allows landowners to apply for the program," said Astor F. Boozer, act-

ing state conservationist for Kansas. "About \$150,000 is available statewide. Interested landowners should contact their local office to apply by April 1."

The program offers financial and technical assistance for development of habitat for both wildlife and fisheries on private or tribal lands, Boozer said.

The service's priorities for the

Kansas habitat plan include grass-land birds, with emphasis on bobwhite quail, ringneck pheasant and prairie chicken; threatened and endangered species; species in need of conservation; and natural communities, including prairies, wetlands and riparian areas.

Contact the Sherman County office at 210 W. 10th or call (785) 899-3070.

Human rights relay to visit KU

An international relay protesting the choice of China for the 2008 Olympic Summer Games will stop at the University of Kansas twice next month.

The Human Rights Torch Relay, an international campaign slated to span six continents, 40 countries and an estimated 150 cities, will be at the university and South Park in Lawrence on Wednesday, April 9, and Saturday, April 12.

Organizers say they want to draw attention to the ruling Communist Party's worsening human rights violations both inside and outside China's borders. Since China was chosen as the 2008 Olympic site, they say, Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and Reporters Without Borders have all noted a marked increase in violent repression aimed at silencing groups and individuals the party has labeled as enemies, including Tibetan Buddhists, Christians, Uighur Muslims, democracy activists and Falun Gong.

A torch march will be held Wednesday, April 9, at the KU

campus. Saturday's activities will kickoff at Wescoe Beach at the university and proceed to South Park. Activities from 9 a.m. to noon (Mountain Time) will include a rally and music, including singer Randall Effner and his song "Feels like 1936."

Lyrics to the song, which compares conditions in China to Germany under the Nazi regime, can be found at justicewillprevail.com.

Other activities include a symbolic Olympics run, bagpipe salute, petitions, information tables and balloons. Awards for best class project and sign that most reflects the relay will be given. Those attending are encouraged to bring a lawn chair for the sit-in for "No Human Rights \ No Beijing Olympics."

Those who can't attend can participate by sending letters of support and proclamations to be shared at the Kansas event and to the relay's global sponsor.

Liaison for the Kansas event is Cathy Rooney, crooney@sunflower.com or 939 Fir St., Eudora, Kan. 66025.

Information on the relay can be found at <http://humanrightstorch.org>.

On Aug. 9, a year prior to the start of the Olympic Summer Games, the relay's flame was lit in Athens, Greece, to illuminate the Chinese regime's worsening human rights violations and to press for change. The relay's founding premise is: "The Olympics and crimes against humanity cannot coexist in China."

The relay has visited Europe, Asia, Africa, South America and Australia. Between appearances in Jakarta, Indonesia, and Gisborne, New Zealand, it visited Pasadena, Calif., Jan. 1, for the Rose Bowl Parade.

The relay is scheduled to return to the United States on Saturday with activities in San Jose, Calif., and then to tour U.S. cities in April and May, including Denver on Saturday, April 5. Activities are planned in several Canadian cities in May.

correction

A caption under the photo of a dinner for the Kansas State University rugby team in the Friday, March 21, edition of *The Goodland Star-News* incorrectly identified the youngster in the photo as Zane Sloan, brother of team member Hale Sloan. It was Eli Kuhlman, son of John and Missy Kuhlman. This was a reporting error.

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The Goodland Star-News will correct any mistake or misunderstanding in a news story. Please call (785) 899-2338 to report errors. We believe that news should be fair and factual. We want to keep an accurate record and appreciate you calling to our attention any failure to live up to this standard.



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5:30 PM to 7:30 PM
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\$5 per person
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MENU
Spaghetti with meat sauce or chicken alfredo sauce
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Garlic Bread
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Tossed Salad
Cottage Cheese
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Doo Wop

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Saturday, March 29th, 2008

Two Performances 2:30 PM and 7:30 PM Colby High School Auditorium

HOMESTEAD REALTY AND AUCTION

New Listing
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This little gem will leave a big impression! Nestled on a large corner lot, this home boasts a beautifully landscaped yard, perfect for entertaining! Inside offers a bright living room and adjoining kitchen with all appliances included and new linoleum. Master bedroom, plus 2 additional bedrooms and bathroom complete the package. Lots of recent updates! Priced at \$45,000. Contact listing agent, Cynthia Butts at 785-821-1811 or visit www.cynthiabutts.net.
804 Syracuse \$58,000



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