Kansas Water Office

# Instream Flow

OKLAHOMA WATER RESOURCES BOARD
GOVERNOR'S CONFERENCE

OCTOBER 19, 2011

# Instream Flow

**ISSUE:**

**STREAMS IN KANSAS ARE
TO MEET WATER QUALITY STANDARDS,
SUPPORT A HEALTHY AQUATIC AND
RIPARIAN HABITAT AND
MAINTAIN ACCESS TO DIVERSION FOR
BENEFICIAL USES.**

# Instream Flow

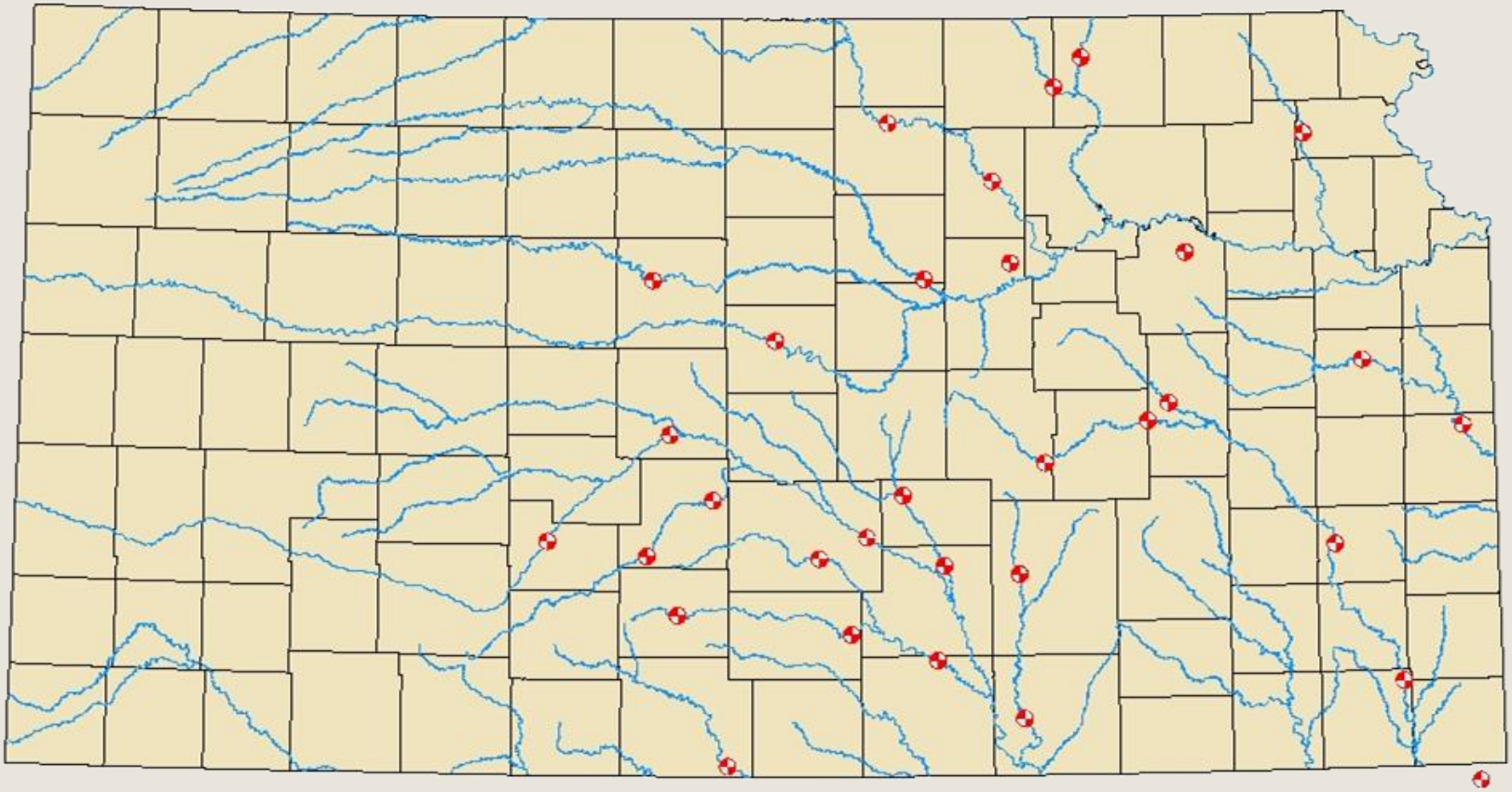
- WATER QUALITY RELEASES FROM FEDERAL RESERVOIRS
  - 10 LAKES HAVE DEDICATED STORAGE
    - OVER 300,000 AF WATER QUALITY STORAGE
    - MANAGED TO MEET FLOW TARGETS

# Minimum Desirable Streamflows

- April 12, 1984 established as priority date for all MDS established before July 1, 1990

- Meant to "preserve, maintain, or enhance baseflows for instream water uses relative to water quality, fish, wildlife, aquatic life, recreation, general aesthetics and domestic uses and for the protection of existing water rights".

# MDS Gage Locations



# Kansas Water Plan Objective

Meet Minimum Desirable Streamflow (MDS) at a frequency no less than the historical achievement for the individual sites at the time of enactment.

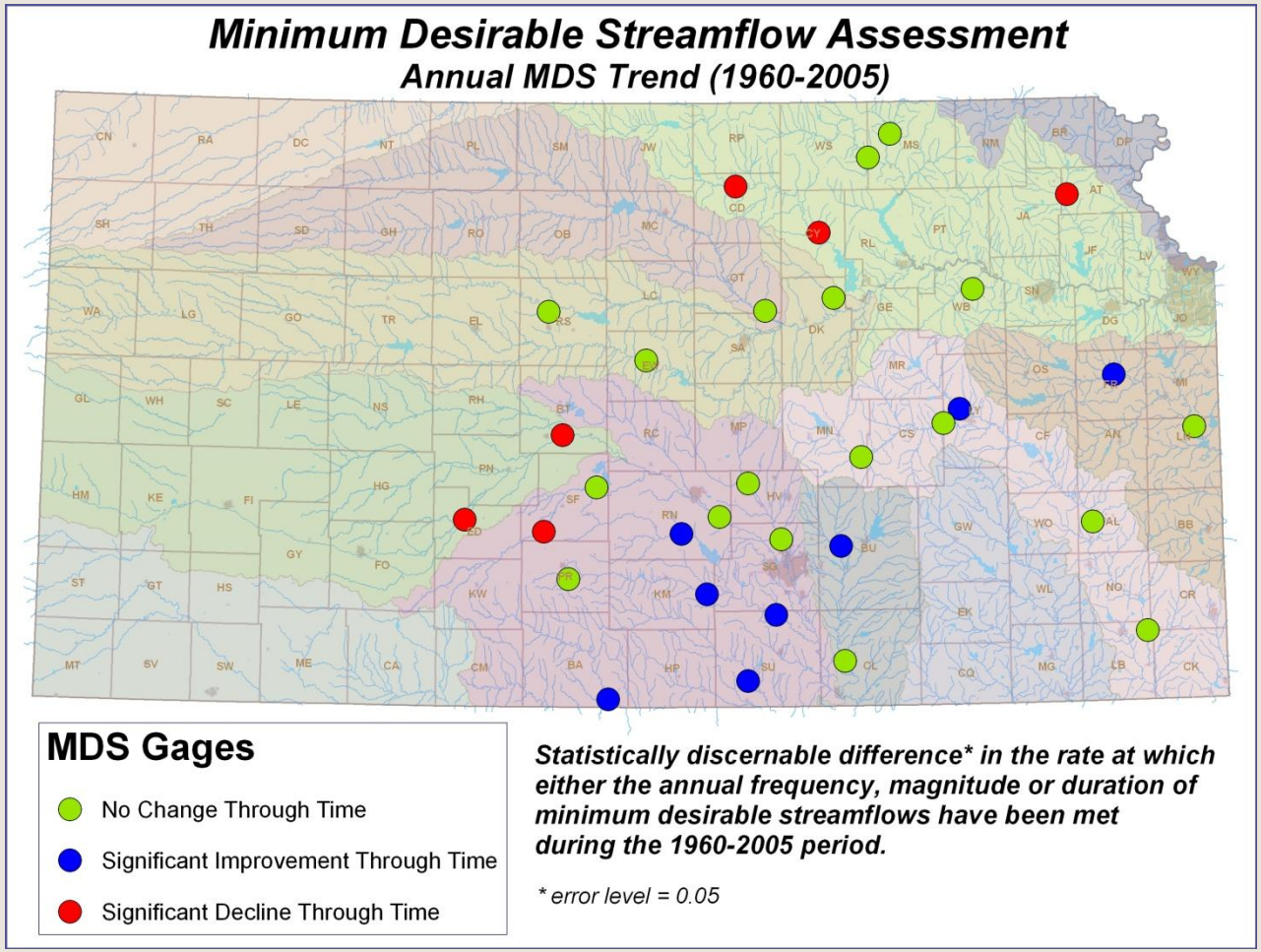
# Are We Meeting the Objective?

KWO conducted an assessment in 2006 to determine if we are making progress towards meeting the MDS objective.

*8 MDS gages showed a significant improvement

*18 showed no change

*6 showed a decline

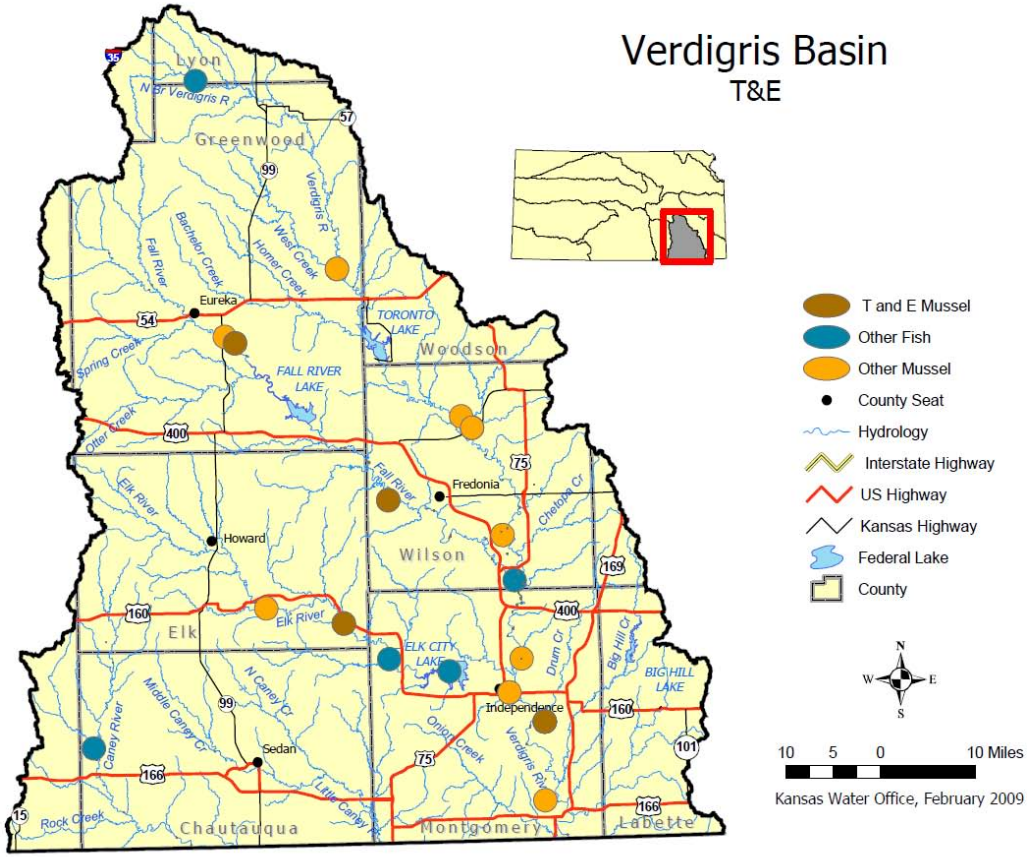


# Is More than MDS Needed in Kansas?

- MDS protects a number (# cfs), is a mechanism needed to protect a use?
- Does one Instream Flow policy fit all? Or are basin-specific policies needed?
- How can reservoir and watershed dam releases be used to augment flow?

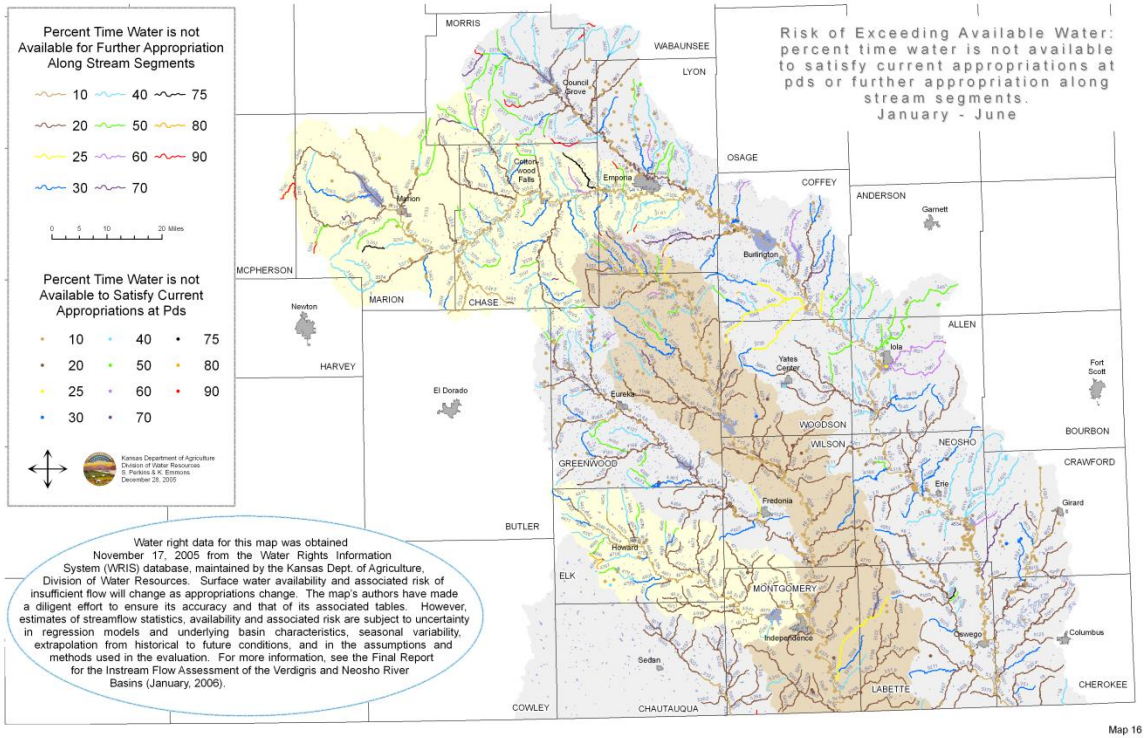
# Instream Flow Discussions in Kansas

Focus a pilot project on a smaller watershed



# Instream Flow Discussions in Kansas

Consider water availability, quantity and timing of flow



## Instream Flow Discussions in Kansas

Develop and implement instream flow tools

- Reviewing potential in Kansas for instream flow protection under existing recreational use criteria.
- If so:
  - An instream right would not be required to divert water
  - Flow for the right would not be part of the flow to meet downstream needs
  - Easements may be needed to protect the place of use (in the stream).

# Questions & Discussion

TRACY STREETER
DIRECTOR, KANSAS WATER OFFICE
WWW.KWO.ORG