



Online HydroGRAM

Former Chief Engineer David Pope Receives Fox Award

For 24 years, David Pope administered water laws in the state of Kansas. He was the fourth and longest tenured Chief Engineer for the Kansas Department of Agriculture's Division of Water Resources.

In recognition of his service, The Kansas Water Office presented him with the prestigious Fox Award at the August 16-17, 2007 meeting of the Kansas Water Authority in Independence, Kansas. He received the award for his distinguished leadership in supporting the implementation and origination of legislation advancing the goals of the State Water Plan.

The Kansas Water Office established the Fox Award in 1997. Recipients are groups or individuals who have worked effectively to meet the objectives of the Kansas Water Plan, provided exemplary service while a member of the Kansas Water Authority or in other ways benefited some aspect of Kansas water and related land resources.

The Fox Award honors Ron Fox, former state representative, who championed the cause of the Kansas Water Plan and who passionately advocated its development and implementation. Recipients of the Fox Award have been legislators, educators and Kansas Water Authority members.

Pope's career as a professional engineer began in 1971 when he worked for the Kansas State University Cooperative Extension Service. He left the Extension service in 1976 to become the first manager of the Southwest Kansas Groundwater Management District No. 3 (GMD No. 3).

He managed GMD No. 3 before joining the Kansas Department of Agriculture in 1978 as Assistant Chief Engineer. In 1983, he was appointed Chief Engineer, the fourth person to fill that position since it was created in 1927. The programs he administered governed the quantity of water appropriated for beneficial use without waste in Kansas.

Interstate compacts, or agreements on interstate water resources, became second nature to Pope, who represented Kansas on four such compacts. Two major interstate water lawsuits, *Kansas v. Colorado* and *Kansas v. Nebraska* and *Colorado* were among the key legal events in his career.

During his administration, the Division of Water Resources adopted a safe yield standard for approving new water permits throughout most of Kansas to ensure a reliable water supply.

Several Intensive Groundwater Use Control Areas (IGUCAs) were created under his leadership to either slow or halt depletion of water supplies in specific areas.

He has implemented what is considered the best water use reporting system in the United States, and assisted with the passage of legislation, allowing water banking, flexible appropriations and enforcement.

Pope now serves as executive director of the Missouri River Association of States and Tribes (MoRAST). The association's primary goal is to protect and enhance the future of the Missouri River basin. Actions to manage natural resources, including water resources and fish/wildlife, will take into consideration the impact on the economic, historical, cultural and social resources of the Missouri River basin.

Seven states in the coalition are Montana, Wyoming, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas and Iowa. Missouri is not a participant. Tribes are represented by the Mni Sose' Intertribal Water Rights Coalition.



David Pope, retired Chief Engineer of the Kansas Department of Agriculture's Division of Water Resources, receives the 2007 Fox Award from Steve Irsik, chair of the Kansas Water Authority, at the Authority's August 2007 meeting in Independence, Kansas.