

**Visioneering Unified Legislative Alliance
Equus Beds Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR) Project
LEGISLATIVE RESUBMISSION PROPOSAL – November, 2010**

Proposal: It is requested that the Visioneering Unified Legislative Alliance include in its list of priorities for the 2011 legislative session the following proposal by the City of Wichita:

Visioneering Wichita endorses the City of Wichita's request for \$1 million from the state Water Fund in support for the Equus Beds Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR) Project.

Background of issue (i.e., relevant data, history):

The City of Wichita, in partnership with area municipalities, ground water districts and other interested parties, has entered the second phase of a far-sighted and innovative project aimed at protecting a major source of quality water for much of south-central Kansas. The basic concept is to pump excess river flow back into the 70 billion gallon underground reservoir of the Equus Beds Aquifer. The water is treated to drinking-water quality before being pumped into the aquifer. The first phase, financed entirely by Wichita water customer revenue, is complete, and the City has begun the second phase. The aquifer spans about 900,000 acres, serving irrigators (55 percent of usage), municipalities such as Wichita, Halstead, Newton, Hutchinson, McPherson, Valley Center and others (39 percent), and industry (6 percent).

The project accomplishes multiple major objectives with broad impact across the region:

- Reverses the decline of the aquifer water level and avoids its eventual depletion
- Assures a stable supply of quality drinking water for 550,000 water customers
- Creates a hydraulic barrier that protects the aquifer from the otherwise inevitable encroachment of salt water pollution from man-made and natural sources
- Sustains an affordable supply of irrigation water for agricultural interests across the area
- Creates a partnership with the State of Kansas that recognizes underground reservoirs as a key component of the state water plan.

Completion of the project is expected by 2016, and state funding would be requested through the duration of the project.

Describe the regional impact or significance to South Central Kansas:

The ASR project has broad-based benefits for a variety of end users. Municipalities such as Wichita and numerous others in this region will be able to meet consumer demand for quality drinking water.

Irrigators will have a cheaper and more accessible supply of water to maintain our agricultural economic base.

Additionally, restricting the intrusion of salt-water pollution and enhancing base flow in the Little Arkansas River will protect the quality of one of Kansas' most important water supplies and improve habitat for fish and wildlife.

Finally, ASR is a new water resource development technology to Kansas. Its successful implementation will provide the entire state with another option for development of future water supplies, which are essential to the state's economic well-being.

Describe the relationship of the proposal to job growth, per capita income and/or education:

A dependable supply of affordable, sustainable water is essential to any plans for economic development in this area. Virtually every industry requires a dependable supply of water to meet its objectives. Among those industries is agriculture, one of the three pillars of the Kansas economy. Irrigation is vital to the production of commodity grains that represent the bulk of agricultural income. By helping to sustain and grow the region's economic base, this project also has a direct impact on the collection of property, income and sales taxes that provide annual support for public education.

Persons/Organizations/Groups with primary responsibility for advancing proposed legislation (please provide contact information, including telephone and e-mail):

Dale Goter, City of Wichita Government Relations Manager, 316-352-4876
(dgoter@wichita.gov)

Joe Pajor, assistant director, City of Wichita Public Works and Utilities, 316-268-4504
(jpajor@wichita.gov)

Deb Ary, Wichita Water Utilities Superintendent, 316-269-4760 dary@wichita.gov

Draft of proposed legislation: (if applicable)

N/A (request is a line item in Kansas Water Authority FY2012 budget recommendation)