

Rep. Sloan Hosts Assistant Secretary of the Army for Drinking Water Supply Tour

Rep. Tom Sloan (R, Lawrence) successfully invited the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works), Ms. Jo-Ellen Darcy, to visit Kansas to discuss with Kansas water policy agency heads and the Governor how to increase coordination between Kansas agencies and the Corps of Engineers. Rep. Sloan previously twice hosted Ms. Darcy's predecessor and led a delegation to Ms. Darcy's Pentagon office.

"The future of Kansas will be determined by our ability to provide clean, safe drinking water to our increasing population and to meet the need for flood control, drought protection, recreational opportunities, and water for our agricultural and industrial needs," Sloan said. "Extending the productive lives of the state's large reservoirs (e.g., Clinton, Perry), municipal drinking water lakes, and the dam structures across our state is key to our state's future. It will be almost impossible to construct large new reservoirs, so protecting and enhancing our existing ones is vital."

Governor Sam Brownback, Kansas Water Office Director Tracy Streeter, State Conservation Commission Director Greg Foley, and leaders of the Kansas City and Tulsa Corps of Engineers offices joined Assistant Secretary Darcy and Rep. Sloan in discussing the state's long term needs, Corps and State funding and policy priorities, and touring several drinking water supply reservoirs. The Kansas Biological Survey, led by Dr. Ed Martinko, Dr. Jerry deNoiles, and Dr. Mark Jakabuskas, provided a demonstration of reservoir bottom mapping and a sediment core sample.

"Kansas has a unique state-local government program to extend the lives of municipal drinking water lakes that can serve as a model for state-federal cooperation on the large reservoirs," said Sloan. "Neither the state nor Corps of Engineers has enough money to protect drinking water supplies from the headwaters to the lakes themselves, but together through a coordinated planning and implementation program we can do a much better job. The visit by the Assistant Secretary and involvement by the Governor are key to expanding the existing Kansas-Corps partnership."

"While attention is currently focused on flooding along the Missouri River, sediment build-up in our drinking water supply lakes is a greater threat to our people and future because of degradation in storage capacity and taste and odor problems associated with algae growth," Sloan said.

Rep. Sloan is serving his 9th term in the Kansas House of Representatives. He is Chairman of the Vision 2020 Committee and a member of the Joint Committee on Energy and Environment, House Energy & Utilities, Local Government, and Agriculture & Natural Resources Budget Committees. He also is a member of the National Conference of State Legislature's Energy Supply Task Force and Vice Chairman of the Council of State Governments' Energy & Environment Task Force.