

County Declines Water Support

(KNZA)--For a second time, the Brown County Commission has declined to send a letter of support for the Kickapoo Tribe's efforts to gain Congressional approval of a water rights agreement between the Tribe and state of Kansas.

Saying there are still a lot of unanswered questions, the Commission voted unanimously Monday against signing a letter of support.

The decision comes after state and tribal officials meet with the Commission last week to discuss the agreement and the Tribe's plans to construct a reservoir.

Commissioner Keith Olsen said while he got some questions answered last week, he still has questions that haven't been answered.

Commissioner Dwight Kruse says he understands the Tribe wanting to have water rights and feels they are going to move ahead whether the county sends a letter of support or not.

He said he would feel more comfortable if he knew the specific size of reservoir they are looking at.

The agreement, which quantifies the Tribe's water rights in the Delaware River Basin, was approved last September but still must be ratified by Congress.

The Commission initially declined to send a letter of support in February after hearing from a group of landowners concerned about the Tribe's efforts to revive the Plum Creek reservoir project.

The Tribe asked the Commission to reconsider their decision.