

**Oklahoma
Comprehensive Water Plan**

Regional Input Meeting #4

Beaver, OK
Sept. 11, 2008

Meeting Agenda

Time	Topic	Speaker/Facilitator
3:05 pm	Afternoon Session Convened	
3:15 pm	Meeting Purpose and Staff Introductions	Mike Langston, Institute Assistant Director
3:45 pm	Discussant Introductions and Water Facts Discussion	Dianna Leggett, Facilitator
4:00 pm	Small Group Discussions of Issue Ratings	
5:05 pm	Plenary Group Discussion of Issue Ratings	Dianna Leggett
7:00 pm	Afternoon Session Adjourned	
7:30 pm	Public Discussion of Issue Ratings	Mike Langston
8:15 pm	Evening Session Adjourned	

The purpose of the Regional Input Meetings is to determine which issues deserve priority attention as we move forward in the water planning process. In this region, 34 citizens were invited to participate in a discussion about the importance of 54 issue categories, which were created by grouping the 2500+ comments obtained from the 42 Local Input Meetings held in 2007. The participants ranked an issue category as highly important if they believed that the issue category should be discussed in the planning workshops that will be held in 2009. Otherwise, they ranked the issue category as having low importance.

Twenty-seven citizens participated in the afternoon session, which was witnessed by another 16 observers. The observers were encouraged to listen carefully to what was being discussed and then given the opportunity to offer their own comments and suggestions during the evening session. Altogether, 47 citizens participated in the evening session.

In the tables that follow, the ratings by the participants of each of the 54 issue categories are presented in the second column. The **bold** (in black) ratings (“H” and “L”) are the ratings given by the discussants in the afternoon session. Where agreement among the discussants was reached, only one rating is presented. If no agreement was reached, then “H/L” is recorded. If the observers differed on the ratings offered in the evening session, then these are recorded in *italics* (blue color).

The rationales for each rating are presented in the third column of each table. Rationales written in **bold** (black color) are those offered by the discussants in the afternoon meeting. Rationales written in *italics* (blue color) are those offered by observers during the evening session.

During the RIM, we also obtained several comments that express concerns, facts, or preferences for water resource management, rather than whether the issue should be discussed at the next level. We included these non-prioritization comments in a table at the end of this report.

QUANTITY (QN) ISSUE CATEGORY

(ISSUES ASSOCIATED WITH THE COLLECTION, STORAGE, AND DISTRIBUTION OF WATER TO RELIABLY MEET WATER NEEDS)

THE PLAN SHOULD CONSIDER...	STATE-WIDE PRIORITY	EXPLANATION/RATIONALE
Qn-1. the improvement and expansion of drinking water infrastructure, such as impoundments, distribution systems and aquifer recharge measures	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We need to plan for future populations and it's [infrastructure] important to improve. • It may be more regional or local because there may some areas that don't need anything and other areas that do need things. It reminds us that there are regional differences in our state.
Qn-2. maintenance of water supply systems, such as dams and pipelines	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The maintenance of projects is always very important.
Qn-3. State and federal funding of water storage infrastructure	H/L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We need financial help because we can't fund everything locally. Government help is very important but right now it is very difficult to get. • This issue is high in terms of needing funding but it may not be up to the water plan to determine how something will be funded. This is outside the scope of the plan. • You should fund your own stuff and this may not be as important as some of the other issues in the planning process • Planning can depend on financing. So it can be hard to develop a plan without knowing what money is available. There needs to be financial discussions during the planning process. • It is the plan's job to figure out what needs to be done not necessarily to figure out where the funding will come from.

<p>Qn-4. the effects of climate change on water supplies</p>	<p>L/H</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are going to need to find ways to obtain water and increase better management practices. However, we are unsure how to stop the effects of climate change. • This should be low because the climate is always changing. • If this is included it should be considered in supply and demand analysis but not on its own. • We are looking at 50 years from now and we need to anticipate what kind of things need to be addressed. • The whole plan should be flexible because you don't know what the weather will be or the population in the future. • There could be some interrelationship with allocations when talking about climate change. • We don't need to worry about climate change in allocations. • This is high because this provides a vehicle for public awareness about land management and can cause a shift in practices. • We can't out guess Mother Nature and you have to plan for the extremes. We can't really figure out what is best. We need to plan to have the set aside to use for drought times. It should be high because you need to plan for extremes.
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QUALITY (QL) ISSUE CATEGORY

(ISSUES ASSOCIATED WITH WATER AND WASTEWATER COLLECTION AND TREATMENT, AS WELL AS SOURCE PROTECTION)

THE PLAN SHOULD CONSIDER...	STATE-WIDE PRIORITY	EXPLANATION/RATIONALE
<p>QI-1. State and federal funding of water treatment and protection</p>	<p>H/L</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We had mixed feelings on this. The state should fund smaller towns and the big cities should take care of themselves. Small towns need all the help they can get. They may not get all the grants they need and then will have major problems. • This should be a high priority. • Treatment and protection are two different things and there should be funding for treatment, but protection should be separated from this. • What do you need is based on the study, and then someone else figures out the funding. • This has already been part of the past plan. • Someone has to ask the legislature for the money. • If there is a plan to fund things and then it goes to the legislature, they may do the funding. • If you eliminate state and federal funding then you get nothing. • There are other things that are more important
<p>QI-2. more and better measures to protect drinking water</p>	<p>H</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is a high priority. We need to protect against pollution. We may need to limit future development and the <i>wrong</i> kind of industry. • To keep the wording in this rational could cause problems. We aren't going to limit future development and the <i>wrong</i> kind of industry. If this wording is gone then everyone would agree it's high. • It is a high priority to discuss because everyone has to have safe water. • What this doesn't say is what we need to protect from. It may be that what we are doing today is fine. The discussion should be what will need to be done in the future.

<p>QI-3. better technology for treating wastewater</p>	<p>H/L</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over time we will have more wastewater so we will need better technology in order to treat it. • In 50 years reusing the water we have already used could be important and should be considered. • I have seen changes just in the past 25 years and a lot will change in the next 25 years and we need to talk about it. • I thought we already had pretty good methods now and there may be other things that will be more important. • This is a low priority because it is driven by the industry and the Water Board can't drive the industry. • Technology drives itself so whether we put it high or low it will change and there are more important things to talk about
<p>QI-4. requirements for providing the public with accurate and timely water quality information</p>	<p>L</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People don't need to be told all of the details and most people won't care anyway. • There are already things in place to take care of this and there are more important things to talk about.

WATER CONSERVATION AND REUSE (C) ISSUE CATEGORY

(ISSUES ASSOCIATED WITH WATER CONSERVATION SUCH AS INCREASED WATER USE EFFICIENCY, REDUCED WASTING OF WATER, USE OF MARGINAL WATERS, AND REUSE OF GRAY WATER)

THE PLAN SHOULD CONSIDER...	STATE-WIDE PRIORITY	EXPLANATION/RATIONALE
C-1. measures to encourage conservation through improving water use efficiency and wasting less water	L/H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economics will eventually force the situation. This is an important questions but not necessary for discussion. • All five of these should be a low priority. The best education is a price structure because it will do its own educating. • <i>This should be a higher priority. We already have things in place that aren't beneficial to water conservation such as the use it or lose it rule. We should look at incentives first instead of trying to put more regulations in place.</i>
C-2. measures that encourage the reuse of treated wastewater, gray water, produced water (oil and gas) and storm water run-off	H/L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over time, especially in large cities they are going to have to reuse water as levels decrease. However, some feel that there are other issues that are more important to discuss.
C-3. improved educational programs about water conservation for all Oklahomans	H/L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conservation is an important issue. Education is important but people have to want to be educated about the issues. • All of these issues should be a high priority but without awareness, use practices won't change and we need to realize that we don't have an unlimited supply. • Conservation is highly important but you have to want to learn to get educated, but we might need regulations to get people to conserve. • We have a limited amount of time and we need to spend our time discussing the bigger issues, not the smaller issues, and this should be a low priority. • Education is already happening.
C-4. incentives to promote water conservation	H/L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It may be the only way to get people to respond, but there are higher priority things to discuss
C-5. research programs that assess improved methods for water conservation	H/L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research can help solve the problems, but this may not be of highest priority.

APPROPRIATED WATER USES (AP) ISSUE CATEGORY

(ISSUES ASSOCIATED WITH USES OF WATER, INCLUDING CONJUNCTIVE MANAGEMENT (OF SURFACE AND GROUND WATER) AND MINIMUM STREAM FLOWS (TO PROTECT AQUATIC LIFE))

THE PLAN SHOULD CONSIDER...	STATE-WIDE PRIORITY	EXPLANATION/RATIONALE
<p>UA-1. changes in water law regarding groundwater and surface water use</p>	L/H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This impacts property values, but it is important to the economy to keep it the same. • We considered UA-1 and UA-2 as basically the same issue. • I can see UA-1 and UA-2 as separate things. Water law needs to be talked about and should be ranked high. It's going to be discussed whether it is put in the plan or not. • The water law is such a broad topic that to start trying to make it part of the plan it could get totally out of hand. It would be difficult to put some type of comprehensive change of the water law in the plan, and it may not be appropriate for the plan to discuss. • These should both be a high priority, UA-1 and UA-2. • Water law needs to stay the same so it should not be discussed. • Water law is different in the State and it needs a regional perspective because of the different uses and sources.
<p>UA-2. the interaction between ground and surface water in allocation decisions</p>	L/H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same reason as above. • This should be a low priority because allocations could be unfair to the northwest part of the state. • It's not broke so it doesn't need to be changed
<p>UA-3. prioritizing water uses during shortages</p>	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is high. The plan should include management and conservation and should have priorities during shortages.
<p>UA-4. the water quality and quantity needs of ecosystems in allocation decisions</p>	L/H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This may not be as important as other issues and the EPA already does a lot of regulation with this. • It should be considered high because wildlife and our world need it. • It could be low because it is more a regional issue. In some parts of the state quality is more important than quantity.

UA-5. the need of adequate amounts of water to further economic development in allocation decisions	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We considered this low for this region but high for the state.
UA-6. the effect of population change on water needs in allocation decisions	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regionally this is probably low but in OKC it could be quite high because of the population change. Could be low because if it is discussed we could get outvoted because we don't have as much voting power as downstate.
UA-7. the water needs of recreation and tourism in allocation decisions	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regionally this is pretty low but statewide it is very high because other areas have a lot of recreation.
UA-8. the water needs of agriculture and agriculture industry in allocation decisions	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In this area this is high and probably across the state because agriculture is the number two money maker for the state.
UA-9. the water needs of oil and gas production, including refining and exploration, in allocation decisions	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is very important as oil and gas is the number one money maker for the state.
UA-10. the water needs of mining in allocation decisions	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low priority here but high across the state especially when you read the comments. <i>Oklahoma mining companies produce over 85 million tons of construction materials a year. Water is used in most of these operations. If water is restricted, or not available, construction aggregates would have to be imported at considerable extra expense. Maintaining mining companies' access to water should have a high priority in the statewide water plan.</i>
UA-11. the water needs of navigation in allocation decisions	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is important because of how important it is to our state especially in shipping our goods in and out of the state.
UA-12. the water needs of hydropower in allocation decisions	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low for the area but statewide could be important because it could be a less expensive way to provide energy for the state.
UA-13. the water needs of industry in allocation decisions	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This goes back to money, without industry we don't have taxes.
UA-14. the water needs of municipalities in allocation decisions	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Everybody needs water, the cities need water and there should be no question that this needs discussion.

WATER TRANSFERS AND SALES (T) ISSUE CATEGORY

(ISSUES ASSOCIATED WITH THE INTER-BASIN TRANSFER OF WATER IN OKLAHOMA AS WELL AS SALES OF WATER OUTSIDE OKLAHOMA)

THE PLAN SHOULD CONSIDER...	STATE-WIDE PRIORITY	EXPLANATION/RATIONALE
T-1. water sales or transfers within the State	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is a very high priority. There will be an imbalance shown between the regions and we need to find a way to balance between them. There may need to be some regionalization. It is timely because there are already lawsuits going on. • As hot of a topic as this is both statewide and a national issue, it has to be talked about.
T-2. water sales or transfers outside of the State	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is very timely because there are already lawsuits happening and we have to remember our water comes in from other states and goes out to other states, and we need to work with them on both quantity and quality issues.
T-3. the economic impact of sales or transfers on the entire State, as well as the basin of origin	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is interrelated with T-1 because it is already happening and we need to talk about how the system will work and develop procedures. • We need to think broadly and look at both the transferor and the transferee.
T-4. how water and land is managed within the basin of origin if water is sold or transferred	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is related to the other 3 areas and when you make these kinds of transfers you have to have some knowledge of the impact on the area. Again this affects both quality and quantity.

LAND MANAGEMENT AND HAZARD MITIGATION (LH) ISSUE CATEGORY

(ISSUES ASSOCIATED WITH LAND MANAGEMENT PRACTICES TO PROTECT WATER RESOURCES (E.G., RIPARIAN AREA RESTORATION, SOIL CONSERVATION, AND WETLANDS ENHANCEMENT) AND WITH MEASURES TO REDUCE THE DAMAGE FROM NATURAL AND MAN-MADE HAZARDS, INCLUDING TERRORISM)

THE PLAN SHOULD CONSIDER...	STATE-WIDE PRIORITY	EXPLANATION/RATIONALE
LH-1. how to reduce the impact of natural or man-made disasters that could affect water supply or infrastructure	L/H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are not sure if the plan should consider hazard mitigation. Other agencies may better manage this. This is a low priority because others are going to deal with this. This is outside the scope of the water plan. • Shouldn't this include drought so maybe this does need to be discussed. Terrorism is not within our scope and it could be separated out. Other man-made issues such as flood control dams could be removed from the comment.
LH-2. land management practices that affect water quality and quantity	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is a high issue. How land is managed will have an effect on both quality and quantity.
LH-3. the infrastructure needs for fire fighting	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is more a local issue. There is no question fire fighters need water but this not appropriate for the water plan to discuss.

WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLANNING (P) ISSUE CATEGORY

(ISSUES ASSOCIATED WITH HOW PLANNING SHOULD BE CONDUCTED, INCLUDING SCOPE, PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCEDURES, FUNDING, EVALUATION, AND CONFLICT MANAGEMENT)

THE PLAN SHOULD CONSIDER...	STATE-WIDE PRIORITY	EXPLANATION/RATIONALE
P-1. ways to balance demand and supply over the long-term	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is very high; this is the key thing to this whole study. When doing forecasting 50 years out there can be lots of variations. How many of those variations do you need to plan for?
P-2. ways to improve the current planning process	H/L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are not sure we have any particular reason to discuss the process because we are in the middle of it. We do need a lot more information about how the process goes. Part of this needs involvement of other entities so maybe the Dept. of Ag or Dept. of Mines should be involved to know the amount of allocations needed. There may be ways to improve it but right now we are not sure how.
P-3. whether and how Oklahoma should work with other states on ground and surface water quality and quantity	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is really of high importance. We are much better off if we collaborate instead of standing with our guns ready. We don't have a good approach on how to do this so it does need discussion.
P-4. how to better involve the public in the planning process	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is a low priority because they have been involved in all steps along the way. We want to keep the public involved.
P-5. how to incorporate regional differences in water supply and use	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is very high and there are going to be imbalances and the regional differences need to be worked out. The regional needs and the state needs aren't going to end when the study ends.
P-6. what research needs to be done during and after the current planning process	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are not sure what research is being done now but actions should be taken and we need to have the research to evaluate what our options are.
P-7. treating the water plan as a living document that is reviewed on an ongoing basis	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This needs to be done and is a high priority and the discussion needs to happen about how you do that. I agree it should be a high priority to discuss but it should not be an ever changing document. People do need some stability in the plan. It needs to be a high priority to be discussed because if you put a plan in place for the next 25 years the quantity or quality of water will change.

P-8. procedures to deal with conflict during and after the planning process	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There will be conflict on how you approach or deal with a problem. This is a high priority to determine how you are going to deal with this. Whether it is mediation or consultation between agencies but find a way to keep the courts out of it.
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WATER MANAGEMENT AGENCIES (AP) ISSUE CATEGORY

(ISSUES ASSOCIATED WITH THE JURISDICTIONS, AUTHORITIES, AND PROCEDURES OF WATER MANAGEMENT AGENCIES)

THE PLAN SHOULD CONSIDER...	STATE-WIDE PRIORITY	EXPLANATION/RATIONALE
AP-1. changes to State agency jurisdictions, authorities and relationships	L/H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is a low priority because the way the agencies work now if fine. Though some felt it needs to be discussed even though changes may not need to be made. • There are so many different agencies that deal with water, maybe this should be high. • We like it the way it is because we like dealing with the Dept. of Ag and don't want to have to deal with someone like DEQ. • There may be recommendations made that are not covered by our current laws but I still think this is a low priority. • You can't control what the government does when they say they are consolidating an agency because they may all still be the same with only a name change.
AP-2. Changes to local agency authorities and relationships and changes to or development of new local organizations	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same reason as above except everyone agreed it was low.
AP-3. Changes in the services agencies offer to the public	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We need to improve the existing services and the agencies need to be more helpful and this needs to be discussed. • You don't have to consider this with AP-1 because agencies can offer either good or bad service and you can maybe do something about this.
AP-4. More consistent enforcement of current laws and regulations	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is a low priority; this is not really within the scope of the plan. After the plan is complete then it can be dealt with.
AP-5. the effects of federal regulations on state regulations and programs	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is high priority because we need to comply with the federal mandates.

<p>AP-6. new state regulations and laws as necessary</p>	<p>L/H</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is a low priority as new laws can create more problems than benefits. • This should be rated high because the things we are going to discuss are going to need to have new regulations and laws based on what we are talking about. • Changes will not favor rural Oklahoma it will favor OKC and Tulsa. • You have to set up procedures and this needs to be talked about.
<p>AP-7. Incentive programs to promote compliance with regulations</p>	<p>L</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is a low priority. The state should not have to give incentives to get people to do what they should.
<p>AP-8. Revisions to the current permitting process to make it more efficient</p>	<p>L/H</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is low because it is fairly efficient now and if you take care of the efficiencies through AP-3 then this will take care of itself. • I think this should be high because the permitting process is complicated and requires lots of paperwork.
<p>AP-9. Changes in the law regarding the ownership of surface water and groundwater</p>	<p>H</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is high priority but only for surface water and not groundwater. The laws are currently separate and should stay that way. Groundwater law is fine.
<p>AP-10. Taxes on water sales, transfers and uses</p>	<p>L</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is a low priority. No regulation is the best regulation.
<p>AP-11. Regionalization of water and wastewater systems</p>	<p>L/H</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The state doesn't need to worry about this, this should be done regionally (locally). • <i>The state plan should encourage this and so this should be rated high.</i>
<p>AP-12. Tribal claims to both ground and surface water</p>	<p>H</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is a high priority. It may not be important to our region but is very important across the state.

OTHER COMMENTS OFFERED DURING THE RIM SESSION

ISSUE #	COMMENT
UA-1	If groundwater and surface are connected some feel it would force landowners to manage groundwater to impact surface water.