

**Oklahoma
Comprehensive Water Plan**

Regional Input Meeting #2

Elk City, OK
Aug. 12, 2008

Meeting Agenda

Time	Topic	Speaker/Facilitator
3:00 pm	Afternoon Session Convened	
3:08 pm	Meeting Purpose and Staff Introductions	Mike Langston, Institute Assistant Director
3:23 pm	Discussant Introductions and Water Facts Discussion	Dianna Leggett, Facilitator
3:48 pm	Small Group Discussions of Issue Ratings	
5:00 pm	Plenary Group Discussion of Issue Ratings	Dianna Leggett
6:20 pm	Afternoon Session Adjourned	
7:00 pm	Evening Session Convened	
7:15 pm	Public Discussion of Issue Ratings	Mike Langston
8:00 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, 31 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-six 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, 38 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.

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 keep our water here and it will take impoundments to do that.
Qn-2. maintenance of water supply systems, such as dams and pipelines	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The current infrastructure needs to be updated.
Qn-3. State and federal funding of water storage infrastructure	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost of maintaining and providing additional infrastructure could be prohibitive; state and federal funding is necessary.
Qn-4. the effects of climate change on water supplies	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seasonal changes will happen now and in the future. • <i>Discussants thought any unused water was wasted water. Such an approach is unbalanced and fails to demonstrate a rudimentary knowledge of the water cycle and hydrology. Ratings were then made based on a flawed understanding of basic water concepts.</i>

QUALITY (QI) 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>	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The issue is currently being fairly and adequately taken care of through DEQ and EPA. Regional centralization tied to funding may be an issue though. • Regional areas need to be involved in the decisions and this would make it a high priority.
<p>QI-2. more and better measures to protect drinking water</p>	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State and federal agencies are already doing an adequate job in taking care of this. • This may not need discussion in the plan. • If the quantity goes away, then the quality may go away as well.
<p>QI-3. better technology for treating wastewater</p>	L/H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The technology we currently have is appropriate and adequate. • There may be advances in the future but not necessarily for this region. • This could be an issue statewide and should be discussed.
<p>QI-4. requirements for providing the public with accurate and timely water quality information</p>	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In western OK, it is already being done and no change is necessary.

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	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This (the entire issue category) is seen as one thing and therefore everything is considered important. • <i>Without water, we can't live very well.</i>
C-2. measures that encourage the reuse of treated wastewater, gray water, produced water (oil and gas) and storm water run-off	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently we see a lot of emphasis on reuse in larger areas, but the wave of the future is to use gray water in more ways.
C-3. improved educational programs about water conservation for all Oklahomans	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education of the populace goes a long way toward achieving water efficiency.
C-4. incentives to promote water conservation	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If C-4 happens then C-5 will happen. C-3 and C-4 are the most important issues in this category.
C-5. research programs that assess improved methods for water conservation	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We need research because development of water conservation methods is a continuing process.

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>	<p>H/L</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If it is not broken, don't fix it. The law works well now. • It should be incorporated in the plan as is, with no changes. This should not be discussed. • If it is not on the table to discuss, then it won't be changed and it shouldn't be changed. • There is disagreement within the group as to whether this should be discussed in the next phase. • UA-1 and UA-5 should be high priority (actually all should be high) because of the uncertainty in the current law. Some clarity and certainty would add stability. • What happened in Kansas can happen in Oklahoma: landowners will no longer own the water. • It should be a high priority in the plan so that it can be put it in the plan to keep it the way it is (if you don't want changes). • There are discrepancies that need to be resolved and beneficial changes that should be made. • The plan needs to address issues such as water sales. • <i>We need to figure out how to make it fair for everyone across regions.</i> • <i>Confusion is created because discussants are looking at different aspects of current law or procedures. There is a vast difference between a need for fundamental change pertaining to water use and some "tweaks" or imperfections in current law that do not amount to fundamental changes. Future revisions of discussion topics should clarify this.</i>
<p>UA-2. the interaction between ground and surface water in allocation decisions</p>	<p>H/L</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is similar to the water law issue, so it should not be changed. • It is a high priority because ground and surface water correspond to each other. If you over pump groundwater then surface water will suffer. The current regulations need to be looked at so streams don't go dry. It can

		<p>also affect one area differently than another.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current laws are not working as well as they should because the state is already looking at the relationship. This gives citizens an opportunity to be included in the discussion and not just the bureaucrats. • To plan for the future, we need to know what we have. If you don't have enough information, then you aren't doing due diligence in the planning process. • <i>The issue could be pushed until the water rights are taken away from the landowner.</i>
UA-3. prioritizing water uses during shortages	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Municipalities are concerned about prioritization during times of drought. • Drinking water is the most beneficial use of water. • <i>Human use should have higher priority than endangered species.</i>
UA-4. the water quality and quantity needs of ecosystems in allocation decisions	L/H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UA-4, UA-5, UA-7, and UA-8 are rated low because the current permitting system works well. • This is one of the "low" priority issues that should be discussed so they stay the same – if that is what people want. • <i>UA-4 – UA-14 should be considered high to ensure that we consider the needs of all users fairly – even though some uses may be accorded a higher priority.</i> • <i>Related to UA-4 through UA-14, the groups took an unbalanced point of view and only judged municipal uses as a high priority. All Oklahomans use our water and the needs of all should be considered in decisions and a balanced approach that recognizes the needs of all in the decision-making process.</i>
UA-5. the need of adequate amounts of water to further economic development in allocation decisions	L/H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It would be good to address this on a statewide basis.
UA-6. the effect of population change on water needs in allocation decisions	L/H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same rationale as UA-4
UA-7. the water needs of recreation and tourism in allocation decisions	L/H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same rationale as UA-4
UA-8. the water needs of agriculture and agriculture industry in allocation decisions	L/H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same rationale as UA-4

UA-9. the water needs of oil and gas production, including refining and exploration, in allocation decisions	L/H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same rationale as UA-4
UA-10. the water needs of mining in allocation decisions	L/H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Aggregate production is an important part of the State's economy. These operations require temporary access to water. Without this water, people could not get the materials needed to build homes, hospitals, schools, churches, highways, dams, sewers and much more. Companies cannot make the investments required to open aggregate quarries if they do not have predictable and certain supplies of water.</i>
UA-11. the water needs of navigation in allocation decisions	L/H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same rationale as UA-4
UA-12. the water needs of hydropower in allocation decisions	L/H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same rationale as UA-4
UA-13. the water needs of industry in allocation decisions	L/H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same rationale as UA-4
UA-14. the water needs of municipalities in allocation decisions	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is a critical use of water.

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"> • It is already being discussed, so it is appropriate to include. • The fairness and equitability of any sale or transfer needs to be discussed.
T-2. water sales or transfers outside of the State	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some issues are already happening but they still need to be discussed outside the courts.
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"> • Discussion about what is public water and what is private water should be discussed. If it is going to be public water that is sold, then the public needs to be involved.
T-4. how water and land is managed within the basin of origin if water is sold or transferred	L/H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This could be taken care of in a contractual relationship, so it may not need to be discussed. • This issue could be rated high but it needs to be better defined.

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	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is important to protect the water we already have.
LH-2. land management practices that affect water quality and quantity	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is a low priority in the short-term but a high priority over the long-term.
LH-3. the infrastructure needs for fire fighting	L/H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is more of a local or regional issue as opposed to a statewide issue. There are regulations that require pipe sizes in municipalities but not in rural areas; this should be addressed because of potential liability claims. Current regulations are not being enforced and they should be. If density-based requirements are implemented, it will save millions of dollars a year in litigation. I think this is a separate issue because rural water systems are already out there and they have a different set of rules than do municipalities. All stakeholders need to be involved in the discussions regarding this issue. <i>Because of earlier discussions, this should be ranked a high priority for further discussion.</i>

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 one of the basic tenets of this whole process.
P-2. ways to improve the current planning process	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is already a planning process in place.
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"> • We need to have some system incorporated in the plan to address this. Some is done through compacts but it still needs discussion.
P-4. how to better involve the public in the planning process	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The public is already involved.
P-5. how to incorporate regional differences in water supply and use	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are regional differences in quantity, quality and views about water, and so this should be discussed.
P-6. what research needs to be done during and after the current planning process	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This needs to be done.
P-7. treating the water plan as a living document that is reviewed on an ongoing basis	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Part of the process is almost self-evident; any good planning process would have this built in.
P-8. procedures to deal with conflict during and after the planning process	H/L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Probably worthwhile to build these (mediation and arbitration) into the plan to keep it out of the courthouse.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is appropriate, but now may not be the time. • <i>Agencies should not have authority to change the law.</i>
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"> • Appropriate, but now is not the time do it; it should come later on.
AP-3. changes in the services agencies offer to the public	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same as 1 and 2.
AP-4. more consistent enforcement of current laws and regulations	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is timely, and we need to know where the water is going; enforcement would do that. • <i>How many of you are willing to meter how much water you use in your household? Shower, toilet flushing, kitchen, gardening and etc.</i>
AP-5. the effects of federal regulations on state regulations and programs	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is important to know what the federal government is doing, and it is timely, but may not be appropriate for the plan to address but should be discussed at this point.
AP-6. new state regulations and laws as necessary	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is important for the public to be involved in the discussions about changes to regulations. • If we interpret the issue as “if it is not discussed then the law is fine and therefore no change needs to be made,” then it won’t change. However, the concept could be interpreted differently. • If laws are being challenged, then they need discussion. • Agency rule changes need discussion. • <i>Possibly use arbitration and not legislation to address changes that may need to be made.</i>
AP-7. incentive programs to promote compliance with regulations	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is appropriate but should come later, after the plan is complete.

<p>P-8. revisions to the current permitting process to make it more efficient</p>	<p>H/L</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally works okay so not necessary to get into this at this point. • The permitting process is the most important part of the water plan. There are disagreements as to what the permitting process is. Therefore this should be a high priority • If it was working great, there wouldn't be any issues. If laws were working well, then court dockets would be empty. This should be a high priority. • The permitting process is part of the appropriation process. • <i>Agree with the low priority.</i> • <i>This should be a high priority until we resolve the water sales to Texas issue. We need to do everything we can to stop the sale. The only we can do that is to change the law to give local and regional governments more input.</i> • <i>Confusion is caused because the discussants are looking at different aspects of current law or procedures. There is a vast difference between a need for fundamental changes pertaining to water use and some "tweaks" or imperfections in current law that do not amount to fundamental changes. Future revisions of the discussion topics should clarify this.</i>
<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 appropriate to the planning process and needs involvement of the public in the discussions. • Even though the laws work fine now, we need to be involved in any discussions about this issue.
<p>AP-10. taxes on water sales, transfers and uses</p>	<p>L</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is less important than some of the other issues that need to be addressed.
<p>AP-11. regionalization of water and wastewater systems</p>	<p>H</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is important and appropriate and could be a big part of the plan.
<p>AP-12. tribal claims to both ground and surface water</p>	<p>L/H</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timely and important but may not be appropriate for the plan because the decision is not ours to make. The decision will come from the courts or somewhere else; it is out of our control. • If changes are made regarding AP-9, then these may take care of AP-12. If we work together on these issues, we might make progress and avoid litigation. • <i>If it can be resolved in these discussions, then we can avoid the courts and we can move forward so it should be a high priority.</i>