

Water Research Institute Oklahoma Comprehensive Water Plan Monthly Update

August 2008



It was great to see so many of you at the Basic Water Law Workshop on July 28 & 29! We have received good feedback from the meetings and hope all that attended found the information helpful.

Regional Input Meetings

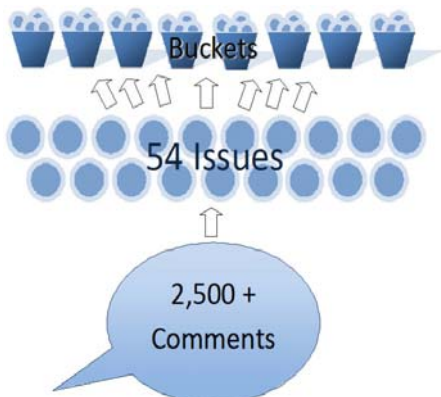
We have completed the first two Regional Input Meetings (RIMs), Aug. 7, in Big Cabin and Aug. 12 in Elk City. Thanks to everyone who attended. I also want to say a special thank you to Jo Montana at the Grand Gateway Economic Development Association for the wonderful desserts she provided at our first meeting!

We are currently working on getting the results of those meetings written up and available on our website. I will let everyone know as soon as they are posted.

I have also posted a new copy of the Regional Input Meeting Packet on the website. After the first two meetings, we received some suggestions about wording and consolidating some of the issues, so we have made a few changes.

What Happens at a RIM?

Since many of you have not attended a RIM, I wanted to explain the purpose of these meetings. If you attended one of the Local Input Meetings last year, you know we just listened to what you had to say and recorded those comments. We received over 2,500 comments and in order to make them easier to work with, we have organized them into 54 issues. We have divided those issues into eight groups that we call "Buckets."



At the RIMs, we will ask the discussants to determine whether each of those 54 issues should be included in discussions next year during the planning workshops. The discussants will rate issues "high" if they are important to include and "low" if it is not important to include them.

Please note that these ratings are not based on whether an issue is important or a prioritization of uses. *The sole purpose of these meetings is to determine if an issue needs further discussion in the water planning process.* Furthermore, we are not asking people if they are for or against an issue; that is for discussion later.

Regional Input Meeting Results

We will post a report for each of the meetings on the website and a statewide, summary report after all 11 meetings are complete. The content of the planning workshops (2009) will be based on the topics identified as "High" in the statewide report.

We have received some questions about who will participate in the planning workshops and the town hall. The discussants selected, or alternates that fill in for a discussant, will be eligible to participate in the next round of meetings. About 240 people will be selected out of the 368 we currently have to attend the planning workshops, and about 150 will be chosen for the town hall.

Other Information

Again this year the Water Research Institute and the OWRB will combine the **Water Research Symposium** and the **Governor's Water Conference**. The Conference will be held at the Reed Center in Midwest City, **Oct. 28 – 30th**. More information is available on the website at <http://environ.okstate.edu/OKwater>.

DVDs of the Basic Water Law Seminar should be available in about two weeks. If you are interested in obtaining a copy of the workshop contact Anissa Maher at 405-530-8800 or check the OWRB's website at www.owrb.ok.gov for an order form.

I would like to mention the student employees we have working for us so you will be familiar with their names. Valerie Fleming, an Environmental Sciences senior, began working for us in March. Valerie's main responsibilities are to help on this water planning project. Johnna Stevenson joined us the middle of July as a communications intern. She is a senior majoring in Ag Communications. Johnna helps with press releases about the water plan and is also responsible for the quarterly newsletter the Institute publishes – *The Aquahoman*. Kylie Ahern is a freshman studying both Music and Environmental Science. She helps us make sure everything is ready for each meeting and for mail-outs. Jeff Melson, an Animal Science senior, works for the Institute for Sustainable Environments and will be helping with the RIM meetings. All of the students will be helping us at the RIMs and you should get an opportunity to meet them all during the next several months. We certainly appreciate their help!

If your organization would like me to come discuss the water planning process, please contact me at jeri.fleming@okstate.edu or at the number listed below.

As always feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns you have.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jeri".

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Upcoming Regional Input Meetings

Thurs. Aug. 21

SE Expo Center, McAlester

Thurs. Sept. 11

Beaver County Fairgrounds, Beaver

Thurs. Sept. 18

Great Plains Tech. Center, Lawton

*Each meeting will begin at 3:00 pm and is
open to the public*