

Water Research Institute Oklahoma Comprehensive Water Plan Monthly Update



January 2008

I hope everyone had a great holiday season and wish you all a wonderful 2008. Mike, Alison and I are looking forward to the New Year and to the next phase of the planning process, the Regional Input Meetings. We are beginning preparations for them, such as choosing locations and dates for the meetings and preparing reports. I will let you know as information becomes available.

As happens at the beginning of a new year I thought there should be a few changes in how we communicate with everyone. I realized as I got ready to send out this update that not only do we have about 840 people on our email list, but we also have over 160 people we have postal addresses but not email address. In order to ensure everyone stays informed about what is happening, I decided to change the format of the updates so they can be easily mailed in both electronic and traditional formats. Hopefully, this will keep everyone involved and up-to-date.

If you receive this update through the mail and prefer to receive it electronically, or if you receive it both through email and regular mail please just let me know which you prefer and I will make whatever change needs to be made. As always if you have any questions or comments please don't hesitate to contact me.

Comments

We have received over 2,400 comments and are beginning to organize them to prepare the regional reports.

Once this has been completed we will issue final Local Input Meeting Reports to replace the draft Local Input Meeting reports currently available. In addition, one report will be compiled that includes all the comments we received in other ways (online, phone, mail, etc). We are scheduled to complete these by the end of February.

If you would like to see what com-

ments have been made you can search our comment database on our website. There are several different ways to search the comments. You can search by category, region, county, meeting location or you can enter your own search term.

Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions about the comments or would like a printed copy of a report.

Regional Input Meetings

We are beginning preparations for the next step in the planning process, the eleven Regional Input Meetings. Dates and locations of the regional meetings should be announced by the end of March or the first of April. There is a map attached that shows the regions so you can identify which region your county is in.

While these meetings will be open to the public, they will be conducted in a different format than the Local Input Meetings. Each meeting will be split into two sessions, an afternoon session and an evening session. The afternoon session will consist of about 30 people, who will work to categorize and prioritize the comments from their region. While this meeting is open to the public, we will ask that observers hold their comments until the second session.

The evening sessions are open to anyone and provide an opportunity for feedback on the decisions made at the earlier meeting. We will present the results along with the reasoning for the decisions made in the afternoon meeting then ask for feedback.

Prior to the regional meetings, we will mail out and post on the website briefing reports for each regional meeting. These reports serve as the background information that the deliberants will consider prior to each meeting. After each of the regional meetings we will send out post-meeting summary reports.

If someone is not able to attend a regional meeting and has an observation about what was determined at the meeting they are welcome to comment. We want to hear from people throughout the planning process.

Nominations

As mentioned above, the afternoon session of the regional meetings will consist of a panel of 30 people chosen through a nomination process. We have been seeking nominations throughout the year and have received approximately 380, but more are needed to ensure that all water interests are fairly represented. **We will continue to accept nominations until February 29, 2008.**

The nominations help ensure that all water interests are identified and represented, and the people that live in each region have a voice in who will represent them and their interest. We have designed this process to include as much participation and input by the public as possible. In fact it is our goal that everyone who wants to participate has that opportunity.

When you nominate yourself or someone else we would like to know about your/their knowledge of the region's water issues. We also ask that you/they be willing to listen and reflect on others' interests, and are committed to developing recommendations that meet the needs of all Oklahomans, and participating throughout the balance of the planning process.

We will be reviewing all nominations and we may contact the nominees and a reference for more information. We are working to convene a panel to make the final selections of the nominees. Once we have solidified the panel, we will list it on our website and send it to all on our mailing list. We will also post on the website a list of the nominees and the water interest they represent.

