

June 2009

Water Research Institute Oklahoma Comprehensive Water Plan Monthly Update



Thank you to everyone who participated in and helped us organize the first Planning Workshop!

Planning Workshops

The purpose of the first planning workshop was to begin developing suggestions for how water should be managed in Oklahoma. The participants did a great job developing new ideas and coming up with questions for the experts about those ideas.

We have now begun compiling answers to those questions so they can be sent to the participants about a week before the next Workshops.

The suggestions (a.k.a. strategies) from the workshops can be found on our website. We encourage everyone to review and comment on them. The link is http://environ.okstate.edu/owrri/waterplan/strategy_search.asp. The strategies are in various stages of development and so vary in the amount of detail provided. More details will be added to each as they are revised in future workshops.

Speaking of which, the second workshop is scheduled for **August 13**, at the Metro Tech Center in Oklahoma City. Each workgroup (or theme), will consist of the same people as the first workshop. The groups will hear the experts' answers to their questions and work to further develop their suggestions. They may also develop new questions as their ideas get more detailed or they may develop entirely new ideas.

At the final workshop, scheduled for **Oct. 22**, the participants will again work on their strategies and develop questions. The results (both strategies and answers) from this final workshop will be compiled into a background document that will prepare participants for the Town Hall meeting to be held in 2010.

To help prepare participants for the workshops, Camp, Dresser and McKee, Inc., prepared a *Water Demand and Supply Handbook* that details some of the work they have completed. We will post the handbook on our website and will have limited hard copies and CDs availa-

ble. If you would like one, contact me at jeri.fleming@okstate.edu.

What's Next?

Once the planning workshops are complete, we will focus our attention on preparing the background document mentioned above. This document will also include opinion papers on the strategies from various organizations, both governmental and non-governmental.

This information will then be sent to the approximately 150 participants in the Town Hall. This Town Hall will be very different from what some think of as a Town Hall. This is not a public meeting where people come to voice their concerns or interact with politicians; it is a statewide meeting to discuss a specific topic at length with the goal of developing policy suggestions for the Legislature and Governor.

The Oklahoma Academy will conduct the Town Hall. They have held similar meetings for over a decade. Typically, the Academy invites only their members to participate in the Town Hall; however, for our meeting, we will invite those who have been actively participating in the water planning process.

At the Town Hall, the participants will be divided into 5 or 6 workgroups, with each workgroup discussing all of the strategies from the planning workshops. On the final day, the full group will convene and vote on the strategies they think should be submitted to the Water Board. For more information about the Academy you can visit their website <http://www.okacademy.org/>.

The Water Plan Document

Once the Water Board has the Town Hall final report, they will determine which suggestions to include in the Water Plan. The Water Board staff will combine these ideas with recommendations from the OWRB and other agencies and craft the Draft Water Plan recommendations.

Next, we will hold 11 regional public meetings to get feedback about the draft plan. We will submit those comments to the Water Board, who

will write the final plan. That final plan will be submitted to the Water Board's nine-member board for approval, in 2011, and then, to the legislature and the Governor at the beginning of the 2012 legislative session.

Governor's Water Conference and OWRRI Research Symposium

Save the Date! The 2009 Conference and Symposium is scheduled for Nov. 3 – 5 at the Reed Center in Midwest City.

Other Information

The Irrigation Association will be holding their first Water Conference on July 22 – 23 in Park City, Utah. Topics include water scarcity, water regulation and legislation, sustainability, and water conflicts. For more information download their flyer at www.irrigation.org.

The PowerPoint presentations and the questions received at the Basic Water Science Seminar are now available online. You can visit our website <http://okwaterplan.info> and click on the links.

I will be on vacation from June 18 – June 30th and will not have email access. If you need assistance please contact Mike Langston at mike.langston@okstate.edu or Jenny Jafek-Jones at jjenny@okstate.edu (yes, there are 2 js) or at the number below.

I am always happy to visit with any group regarding the planning process, so please feel free to contact me to come speak to your group. I can be reached by email or at the number listed below. As always feel free to contact me with any questions.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jeri', is written over a horizontal line.

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