

Local Input Meeting Report



#12

Duncan, Oklahoma
Stephens County Fair and Expo
Center
North East Room
June 12, 2007

Project Description

The Water Research Institute, at Oklahoma State University, is working under contract with the Oklahoma Water Resources Board to update Oklahoma's Comprehensive Water Plan. The Institute has designed an innovative process that combines citizens' ideas with the assistance of water experts in formulating policy recommendations. This process seeks to rely on the citizens' values for guidance in making tough choices about management of our State's water resources.

The first phase of this process consisted of 42 Local Input Meetings held throughout the State beginning in April 2007, at Beaver and ending on Nov. 15, 2007, at Idabel. The purpose of the meetings was to gather citizens' ideas, questions, suggestions and concerns about Oklahoma's water resources. This report is a comprehensive list of the comments received at this meeting.

In addition to the Local Input Meetings the public participation process consists of four other components. During the second phase, beginning in 2008, the Institute will conduct 11 regional meetings where selected participants will review the comments, consolidate similar issues, and prioritize them. Planning workshop, where participants will work to development management alternatives, is scheduled to begin in 2009. The Oklahoma Academy for State Goals will hold a special Town Hall meeting, in the spring of 2010, where citizens will develop consensus recommendations. These recommendations will be forwarded to the Oklahoma Water Resources Board for consideration/inclusion in a draft updated Comprehensive Water Plan. In the final phase the Institute will again conduct 11 regional meetings. At these meetings, the Institute will receive feedback and implementation suggestions on the draft Water Plan. Comments received at these meetings will be forwarded to the Water Board who will finalize the Plan and submit it to the legislature and the governor.

For more information visit the Institute's website at <http://okwaterplan.info>, email them at waterplan@okstate.edu, or by phone at 405.744.9994. You may also contact the Oklahoma Water Resources Board at www.owrb.ok.gov or 405.530.8800.



Meeting Agenda

Time	Topic	Speaker
6:37 pm	Welcome	Max Gallaway Educator Stephens County Cooperative Extension Service
6:38 pm	Purpose of Meeting and Introduction of Staff	Mike Langston, Assistant Director Water Research Institute
6:44 pm	Water Challenges in Oklahoma	Duane Smith, Executive Director Oklahoma Water Resources Board
7:12 pm	Comments from the public	Public Participants
8:06 pm	Meeting adjourned	

Attendees

Water Research Institute Staff

Mike Langston, Assistant Director
 Jeri Fleming, Communications Manager
 Alison Stone, Administration Specialist

Oklahoma Water Resources Board Staff

Duane Smith, Executive Director

Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service Staff

Max Gallaway, Stephens County Extension Educator

Public Participants

29 citizens

Comments

Forty-two comments were received from the meeting participants. Comments were submitted both orally and by comment card. The comments are organized alphabetically by topic. Each comment is preceded by a unique identification number that will remain with the comment throughout the process. *Additional comments were submitted online to the website and are not included below; however, there is a separate report that lists all comments received through the website, by fax, mail and phone.*

Water Management

Agencies

- *Rural Water Districts*
 - **Dn29** The plan should develop a way for municipalities and rural water districts to work together better.

Conservation

- **Dn6b** Conservation needs to be encouraged through such measures as: The permitting process should be changed to remove the "use it or lose it" requirement.
- **Dn37** We must stress conservation, however and whenever possible, through legislation, fee structures, permitting process, etc.
- *Incentives*
 - **Dn6a** Conservation needs to be encouraged through such measures as: The inverted rate structure should be done away with. Tax credits should be considered for conservation measures such as capturing rainwater, xeriscaping and greywater recycling.

Economic Impacts

- *Development*
 - **Dn8** If you can not supply the water to expand the economic development, then the development should not be permitted. There should be forward thinking on any kind of development.
 - **Dn23** The plan should include projections for using our water for economic growth.
 - **Dn26** The plan needs to recognize that Oklahoma is an under-populated state with lots of resources and provide for growth especially in light of BRAC [Base Realignment and Closing] and growth around Lawton.
 - **Dn36** Bigger is not better when it comes to development and growth.

Infrastructure

- *Funding*
 - **Dn1** The plan should include financing for cities to clean out lakes to extend their lifespan and expand their capacity.
 - **Dn2** I am concerned about the cost effectiveness of dredging as opposed to building new reservoirs.
 - **Dn16** There should be some funding made available to rehabilitate and refurbish the dams we already have.
 - **Dn27** Please continue the state revolving fund (OWRB) for funding water infrastructure.
- *Maintenance*
 - **Dn10** The flood control structures in the State are getting to the end of their design life and should be rehabilitated. In that process, we should look at using those structures for public water supplies for economic development and fire protection.
- *Needs*
 - **Dn20** There should be consideration given to building reservoirs on Cache and Beaver Creeks before they run into the Red River.

- **Dn34** The plan should look at how many well users are going to convert to municipal or rural water districts. It should consider where the additional water comes from to serve these new people.
- **Dn40** We should look for ways to partner with municipalities and the State to see how we could expand some existing flood control dams to become multi-purpose structures when they are targeted for rehabilitation. These existing structures save the State over \$71 million in flood damage and the State needs to ensure that Conservation Districts and Watershed Sponsors such as the city of Duncan have the resources for the operation and maintenance of these valuable structures.

Planning

- **Dn3** In the planning process, economic considerations should be evaluated last, so good ideas do not get eliminated before receiving full consideration.
- **Dn17** The plan should protect those cities that have planned for and paid for their water resources. The investment (infrastructure & assets) has to be protected and not given up to the have-nots without cost share.
- **Dn18** We should figure out how to execute the plan in a way that avoids conflict and should include some process to manage conflict when it does come up. By having this process in place it helps get the conflict resolved more quickly.
- **Dn28** The population along the Oklahoma side of the Texas border may increase because of Texas' higher taxes. This needs to be taken into consideration in evaluating future water requirements.
- **Dn32** The plan should encourage more cooperation between municipalities and regions.

Policy/Regulations

- *Federal Regulations*
 - **Dn4** I believe the State underestimated the number of cities on the MS-4 list for stormwater evaluation. I suggest making it possible to include county governments on this list, as many small communities were not originally included. [Including county governments will mean those small communities are also included.]
- *State Regulations*
 - **Dn5** There is currently no law requiring fire departments to report water usage and there should be.
 - **Dn14** We need to reevaluate the "use it or lose it" water right regulation.
 - *Permits*
 - **Dn11** We need to make sure we are prepared for the worse case scenario. The plan needs to recognize the reservoirs were designed based on firm yield and the water permitting process should be based on that yield.
- *State Statutes*
 - **Dn38** We should look at what legislation we need to better protect Oklahoma's water in terms of quantity, quality, ownership, priorities of use, etc.

Regionalization

- **Dn33** The plan should consider consolidation of water plants in the most efficient way possible to yield the best quality, quantity and prices.

Sales and Transfers

- *Control*
 - **Dn9** Texas should not be able to determine which land uses are permitted in a watershed in another state that supplies water to them.
 - **Dn24** If we don't find ways to use our water here, then we could lose it.
 - **Dn25** We need to know how much water we need for ourselves to protect us from losing that water to other states.
- *Interstate*
 - **Dn7** Texas should send all their economic development to Oklahoma, instead of us sending them our water.
 - **Dn12** The plan should figure out how to help our own citizens who are hauling drinking water to their homes rather than sending drinking water to Texas.
 - **Dn15** Municipalities have invested money in developing their water sources, and if water is sold to Texas, it will affect cities that have paid to develop their water supply. We need to be very careful with supplying Texas water.
 - **Dn19** If we have to give our water to Texas, then Texas should get the lower quality water and we should keep the better water for ourselves.
 - **Dn22** The plan should define as many uses/needs for State waters as possible to help quantify our water requirements to ensure Oklahoma meets its water needs before water is made available to go out-of-state.
- *Intrastate*
 - **Dn31** Duncan has been able to take care of its water needs and has planned well. We understand the importance of and are willing to share with other communities.

Watershed Management

- **Dn21** Invasive species of plants (red & salt cedar, willow trees) waste lots of water and control of them needs to be addressed. The Conservation Districts need partners and assistance in their current project to do this.
- **Dn30** Water quality needs to be addressed in the State water plan. Lots of studies are being done on Best Management Practices and this needs to be considered in the plan.
- **Dn39** The model established by the Conservation Districts to address the dust bowl and water quality issues - through cooperative, voluntary locally-led action - should be used state-wide to address multiple water quality problems through cooperation between cities and farmers and ranchers. The Conservation Reserve Enhanced Program (CREP) is one example.
- **Dn41** Red cedars and salt cedars are expanding at an incredible rate (NRCS says red cedars are taking over 700 acres a day in Oklahoma). Other invasive plants are also sucking up water that could be used for human or agriculture use. We need to examine ways that we can partner together with landowners to address this issue.

Water Sources

Groundwater

- *Quality*
 - **Dn35** The plan should look at the water quality of groundwater wells.

Water Uses

Storage Use

- **Dn13** Above ground storage tanks should be looked at as an option for storage especially during dry periods. The plan should include both studies and funding for such tanks.

ADDENDUM

Category Descriptions

- **Water Management**

- Agencies – Includes, but is not limited to, federal, state, and local agencies. Also includes rural water districts, jurisdictional issues, and additional funding needs by individual agencies
 - Federal – Comments regarding federal agencies that are not necessarily related to a law or regulation
 - Funding – Additional federal, state, or local funding opportunities for various projects
 - Jurisdiction – Limiting, expanding, or consolidating agency jurisdiction
 - Local – Includes cities, conservation districts, and other locally led authorities
 - Rural Water Districts – Suggestions that would affect rural water districts
 - State – Comments regarding State agencies
- Conjunctive Use/Management – Consideration of the interaction between ground and surface water
 - Legislation – Changes in Oklahoma law to recognize/not recognize the interaction of ground and surface water
 - Research – Identification of additional research needs concerning conjunctive use
- Conservation – Decreasing use and preservation of Oklahoma’s water resources
 - Education – Conservation education and educational resources
 - Incentives – State or local incentives to encourage water conservation
 - Research – Directed at water conservation measures
 - Sustainability – The continuous long-term availability of water resources
 - Technology – Equipment or other innovations intended to help conserve water
- Economic Impacts – The effects water has on the State’s economy
 - Development – Increased housing, industry, tourism, or other types of development requiring water resources
 - Population Change – The effect population change has on local and State economies
 - Recreation & Tourism – The impact recreation and tourism have on the State’s economy as well as the effect water management has on recreation and tourism
 - Regulations – The effect both federal and State regulation has on water districts
 - Sales – Concerns regarding the effect the sale of water will have on the State’s or basin of origin’s economy
- Health – The effect water quality and water quantity have on both human health and the environment
 - Ecological – The environmental impacts of water quality and water quantity
 - Health – The health effects resulting from a lack of available good quality potable water
- Infrastructure – Includes, but is not limited to, drinking water and waste water treatment facilities, pipelines, dams and other associated structures
 - Needs – New infrastructure needs
 - Maintenance – Maintenance of existing infrastructure

- Funding – Additional, continued or increased State or federal funding opportunities
- Planning – Comments regarding the planning process for the Oklahoma Comprehensive Water Plan
 - Interstate Cooperation – Working with surrounding states to avoid conflicts regarding water flowing into and out of Oklahoma
 - Priorities – The prioritization of water usage during times of shortage to avoid later conflicts
 - Public Participation Process – Comments regarding issues with the public participation process
 - Regional Difference – Recognizing water availability, uses, and rainfall variations across the State
 - Research – Identification of possible research needs during the planning process
 - Revision – The need for updating the plan more frequently than once every 10 years or so
- Policy/Regulations – Comments regarding various State and federal statutes (laws) and regulations (rules)
 - Adjudication – Court involvement in the management of Oklahoma’s water resources
 - Enforcement – Enforcement of current laws and regulations by the appropriate agency
 - Federal Regulations – Comments about federal laws and regulations
 - Incentives – Federal and State incentive programs to promote compliance with laws and regulations
 - State Regulations – Comments about State regulations or rules
 - Permits – Comments about the permitting process
 - Water Rights – Comments about regulations concerning water rights
 - Taxes – The levying of taxes to collect money for various reasons
 - State Statutes – Comments regarding Oklahoma’s water law
- Regionalization – the consolidation of water treatment facilities or other infrastructure by municipal and/or rural water districts
 - Funding – Federal or State funds available to help facilitate regionalization
 - Incentives – To help encourage regionalization of water treatment facilities
- Sales & Transfers – The artificial movement of water either in-state (intrastate) or out-of-state (interstate)
 - Compensation – Who should be compensated, how should they be compensated, and how much should they be compensated if water is sold or transferred
 - Control – Concerns about who would control the water and land if water is sold or transferred
 - Interstate – Out-of-state water sale or transfer
 - Intrastate – In-state water sale or transfer
- Water Rights – Who has the right to control or use ground or surface water
 - Private Property Rights – Rights to groundwater on private property
 - Permitted Water Rights – Both surface and groundwater permitted water rights
 - Native American Rights – Tribal claims to both surface and groundwater

- Water Security – Natural and man-made threats affecting water supplies
 - Disasters – Natural or man-made disasters affecting either water infrastructure or supply
 - Terrorism – Terrorist attack on water infrastructure or supply
- Water Treatment – Includes both natural and man-made water treatment suggestions
 - Artificial – Technologies for treating both drinking and waste water
 - Natural – Ecological (environmental) ways of treating both drinking, and waste water i.e. wetlands
- Watershed Management – The management of land, including development that affects water quality and water quantity
- **Water Uses**
 - Agriculture Use – The way water is used in the agriculture industry
 - Biofuels Growth – Suggestions and concerns regarding the increased growth of crops for biofuels
 - Commercial Use – The use of water by commercial enterprises such as small businesses, etc.
 - Conservation Use – Suggestions and concerns regarding various ways to use water in a way that will conserve it
 - Reuse – The reuse of various water supplies such as treated wastewater, gray water, and storm water run-off
 - Ecological Use – Maintaining sufficient water levels to ensure the health of wildlife and ecosystems e.g. in-stream flows
 - Habitat – Water uses to protect wildlife habitat
 - Research – Identification of additional research needs regarding the ecological use of water
 - Hydropower Use – The use of dams to produce electricity
 - Industrial Use – The use of water by factories, power plants and other industrial uses
 - Biofuels Processing – The use of water in processing biofuels in the State
 - Mining Use – The use of water in the mining industry
 - Oil & Gas Use – The use of water by the oil and gas industry
 - Private Domestic Use – Household water that is not supplied by a municipality or rural water district and includes both ground and surface water
 - Wells – The use of private domestic wells
 - Public Domestic Use – Household water that is supplied by a municipality or rural water district
 - Municipality – Household water supplied by a town or city
 - Rural Water District – Household water supplied by a Rural Water District
 - Recreational Use – The use of water for recreation and to promote tourism
 - Aesthetics – Concerns about the aesthetic beauty of Oklahoma’s water resources
 - Boating – The use of water for water recreation such as boating
 - Fishing – The use of water for fishing in the State’s water resources
 - Golf Courses – The use of water in maintaining the State’s golf courses
 - Storage – The storage of water in reservoirs, or in aquifers either naturally or artificially; may also include other storage methods such as cisterns
 - Transportation Use – The use of water to maintain Oklahoma’s navigation channels, i.e. McClellan-Kerr Navigation System

- **Water Sources**

- *Both* Ground and Surface Water – Comments referring to *both* surface and groundwater concerns
 - Quantity – The quantity of *both* surface and groundwater
 - Quality – The quality of *both* surface and groundwater
 - Both – *Both* the quality and quantity of surface and groundwater
- Climate – The effect climate has on water sources including global warming and rain
- Groundwater – Concerns about the State's groundwater
 - Quantity – The quantity of groundwater
 - Quality – The quality of groundwater
 - Both – *Both* the quality and quantity groundwater
- Recycled Water – Non-traditional sources of water
 - Waste Water – Treated waste water as a water source
 - Gray Water – Gray water (water that comes usually from washing machines, showers, bathtubs, etc.) as a water source
- Surface Water – Concerns about the State's surface water
 - Quantity – The quantity of surface water
 - Quality – The quality of surface water
 - Both – *Both* the quality and quantity of surface water