

Local Input Meeting Report



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Goodwell, Oklahoma
Oklahoma Panhandle
Research and Extension Center
April 19, 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
6:35 pm	Welcome	Arleen James, Educator Texas County Cooperative Extension Service
6:40 pm	Purpose of Meeting and Introduction of Staff	Mike Langston, Assistant Director Water Research Institute
6:45 pm	Water Challenges in Oklahoma	Dave Dillon, Water Plan Coordinator Oklahoma Water Resources Board
7:10 pm	Explanation of Meeting Process	Mike Langston
7:15 pm	Comments from the public	Public Participants
8:30 pm	Meeting adjourned	

Attendees

Water Research Institute Staff

Mike Langston, Assistant Director
Jeri Fleming, Communications Specialist
Alison Stone, Administration Specialist
Lucy Kroblin, Facilitator

Oklahoma Water Resources Board Staff

Dave Dillon, Water Plan Coordinator

Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service Staff

Arleen James, Texas County Extension Educator
Steve Kraich, Texas County Extension Educator

Public Participants

58 citizens

Comments

Twenty-five 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

Conjunctive Management

- **Gw16** I am concerned about the connection of groundwater/surface water and reallocation of water rights and the resulting devaluation of property.
- *Legislation*
 - **Gw13** I am concerned that groundwater/surface policy will be changed to bring them together. I think the current law/policy should not be changed.
 - **Gw14** The legislature should not be allowed to force groundwater pumping to stop in order to increase the flow of the Beaver River.

Planning

- *Interstate Cooperation*
 - **Gw22** We should work with surrounding states to ensure Oklahoma groundwater owners don't lose their water or their water rights due to loss of availability of adequate water.
- *Priorities*
 - **Gw9b** I am concerned that industries compete for water and there may not be enough water for future generations.
- *Regional Differences*
 - **Gw6** I recommend regionalization of water planning so that specific areas have rules appropriate for them.
 - **Gw17** Remember Cimarron County is a part of Oklahoma not just at tax time.

Policy/Regulations

- **Gw19b** The State needs to address decommissioning unused wells and test wells that are left open.
- *Enforcement*
 - **Gw15** I would like the OWRB to reward BMPs [Best Management Practices] and to punish those that don't practice BMPs to encourage citizens to use BMPs.
- *State Regulations*
 - *Permits*
 - **Gw12** What is the difference between agricultural use and industrial use? I am concerned that industry will come in and pump too much water. Is industry going to be monitored on their well use?
 - *Water Rights*
 - **Gw10** We should change the way water is allocated rather than force cities to use eminent domain.
 - **Gw9c** I am against cities using eminent domain to take water rights.

Sales and Transfers

- *Intrastate*
 - **Gw7** There should be a plan to bring excess floodwater or other excess water from other parts of Oklahoma to areas that may need it.

- **Gw2** I'm concerned that the rest of the State will take water from the Panhandle to supplement or fix their problems. The citizens in the Panhandle know how to deal with a drought.
- **Gw3** I'm concerned the water will flow to Oklahoma City rather than stay here in the Panhandle or be used in other parts of the State or other states.
- **Gw5** I'm concerned water will be taken rather than bought. We don't want to sell the water we have nor do we want it taken. Other parts of the state need to learn how to manage their own water resources and not take it from other areas.

Water Rights

- **Gw9a** If population increases in some towns the current water rights may not be adequate. I'm not sure if additional water rights can be purchased to meet the needs of the communities.
- *Private Property Rights*
 - **Gw4** The State should not be able to allocate groundwater rights from this area (Panhandle) to other parts of the state.
 - **Gw8** The system is working in the Ogallala aquifer and doesn't need to be changed. It is a private property right and as the owners we feel water is ours to use as we see fit.
 - **Gw21** It could be difficult to regulate an aquifer without looking at the formation of the entire aquifer. This omission could result in a loss of water rights because a well dried up due to groundwater use by others in the aquifer.
 - **Gw18** Groundwater should stay with the land. I am concerned groundwater could become the State's water as opposed to the surface owner's.

Water Sources

Groundwater

- *Quality*
 - **Gw19a** Water quality must also be addressed in the plan. I am concerned about pollution leaching into the groundwater making it unusable.
- *Quantity*
 - **Gw1** The number of wells in the testing program should be balanced across the State relative to the size of the basin. It needs to be a representative sample and statistically correct.

Water Uses

Agricultural Use

- **Gw23** The State government needs to give consideration to agriculture as they are the second largest industry in the State because it has not been reflected in recent legislation. Agriculture should not be slighted.

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