

THE AQUAHOMAN

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The fall is a busy time for OWRRI, as evidenced in this issue. Our annual Water Research Symposium and the Governor's Water Conference will be held concurrently Oct. 26 & 27; turn to pages 7-11 for more information about the event such as the announcement, agenda, and call for papers. Our Student Poster Competition also takes place at the Research Symposium, allowing students to gain experience presenting their original research. Learn more about the contest on page 9. Last but certainly not least, we have issued our annual Request for Proposals for the research grants competition (pages 10-11).

As you can see, we have many opportunities for involvement. You're sure to find something of interest in these pages; enjoy!

From the Director's Desk:



I want to take this opportunity to express our appreciation for the many contributions of the Water Research Advisory Board. We are so thankful for its dedication, sage advice, and considered judgments in guiding the activities of the OWRRI. It is not an overstatement to say that our success is a direct result of its involvement.

First, a little background...The federal Water Resources Research Act, (which created the OWRRI and the other 53 Water Research Institutes throughout the U.S.) requires that each Institute consult with water managers and users in its state to define water research priorities. Most Institutes have since established some form of committee or board to provide advice on water research needs. When I took over as OWRRI director in 2002, no such advisory body existed; research priorities were defined after informal conversations with three or four agency representatives. We believed that it would be beneficial to gather input from a broader array of water professionals. In 2004, working with the Secretary of the Environment, the Oklahoma Water Resources Board, and the U.S. Geological Survey, we invited representatives from several federal and state water management agencies, tribal government, water user groups, and non-government organizations to form the WRAB. To our delight, almost all those we invited accepted and we have enjoyed high attendance at every WRAB meeting since.

The WRAB has evolved into a body that does much more than provide advice on research priorities, though that remains an important function. We meet twice each year. In our winter meeting, we invite research teams who have applied for OWRRI funding to present their proposals. The WRAB ranks each proposal and the top three are selected for funding.

In our summer meeting, the WRAB deliberates on the research priorities for the following year. We also require that the previous year's research award recipients present the results of their research. This not only keeps the WRAB members informed of the latest research findings, but also helps them decide on what research should be conducted the following year.

