



## Oklahoma Floodplain Managers Association 2007 Spring Workshops on Floodplain Management 101

For more information and to register on-line visit: [www.okflood.org](http://www.okflood.org)



## National Rural Water Association

### Rural Water Rally

April 29—May 1, 2007

Hyatt Regency Washington on Capitol Hill, Washington DC

Reservations: 1.800.233.1234

Phone: 202.737.1234, Fax: 202.393.7927

Or visit: <http://www.nrwa.org/evRally.htm>



## Oklahoma Clean Lakes & Watersheds Association

The mission of the Oklahoma Clean Lakes & Watersheds Association (OCLWA) is to provide a forum for scientists, citizens, and professionals to exchange ideas, receive education, and form partnerships to foster sound management and protection of lakes and watersheds.



## Oklahoma Rural Water Association

### 36th Annual Meeting & Technical Conference

April 23-25, 2007 Southern Hills Marriot—Tulsa, Oklahoma

For more information visit: <http://www.okruralwater.org>

Oklahoma Water Resources Research Institute  
003 Life Sciences East  
Stillwater, OK 74078-3011

# THE AQUAHOMAN

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To receive this free newsletter or inquire about available resources, contact OWRRI.



Director: Dr. Will Focht  
Asst. Director: Mike Langston  
Sr. Unit Asst: Andee Julkowski  
Writer/Editor: Jane Talkington  
003 Life Sciences East  
Stillwater, OK 74078-3011

PHONE: 405-744-9994  
FAX: 405-744-7074  
E-MAIL: [owrri@okstate.edu](mailto:owrri@okstate.edu)  
WEBSITE:  
<http://environ.okstate.edu/owrri>

## OWRRI funds DOUBLE for 2007 !

The Oklahoma Water Resources Research Institute is granting three research grants of \$50,000 each, which must be matched 1:2 with non-federal dollars. This year's additional funding will be provided by the Oklahoma Water Resource Board.

In response, OWRRI has agreed to focus the research activities on answering questions that will inform the state's Comprehensive Water Plan.

"This partnership between OWRB and OWRRI is a really exciting opportunity because it makes these awards much more valuable to the researchers," said Mike Langston of the OSU Environmental Institute. Langston elaborated, "They have committed \$375,000 over the next five years.

This money will mean more clean water for Oklahomans in the future. The OWRB is showing great leadership by investing in research to help answer some of the tough water-related questions in Oklahoma."

The funding was announced November 13, 2006 by Duane Smith at the Governor's Water Conference in Oklahoma City.



OSU's Dr. Will Focht presents stakeholder part of the Comprehensive Water Plan at the Governor's Water Conference in Oklahoma City in November 2006. The process begins April 2007 with "listening" sessions to gather stakeholder input.

## The Comprehensive Water Plan

The update to the Oklahoma Comprehensive Water Plan represents a crucial shift in the state's historical approach to water planning. For the first time, state planners will focus on the development of systems-level plans to provide the most water to Oklahomans. Updated assessments of current water supply and long-term water needs will be used to identify those water management strategies--including

development of additional water supplies, regionalization of facilities, infrastructure upgrades, and water management options--to best meet the future needs of Oklahoma citizens, even during drought conditions. The plan will be implemented in three phases beginning in April of 2007. Details can be found at <http://www.owrb.state.ok.us/supply/ocwp/ocwp.php>

## LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR: Dr. Will Focht

### OWRRI Will Lead the Stakeholder Involvement Effort in Revising Oklahoma's Water Plan

The Oklahoma Water Resources Board has asked the OWRRI to lead a statewide stakeholder involvement effort in the second decennial revision of the State's Comprehensive Water Plan. The process will begin in January 2007 with the approval of the stakeholder involvement plan by the Planning Advisory Board that will assist the OWRB throughout the five-year planning period.

The OWRRI proposes to conduct the stakeholder involvement process in six phases – beginning with a series of listening sessions to be held across the state during 2007 and early 2008 (a detailed description of the phases will be provided in the next *Aquahoman* issue). The purpose of these sessions is to ask the people of Oklahoma about the water issues they want addressed in the planning process and to solicit their suggestions for dealing with these issues. The sessions will be open to anyone who wishes to attend.

In announcing the stakeholder involvement effort at the 2006 Governor's Water Conference, Director Will Focht assured the audience that OWRRI seeks participation by all those interested in the management of water resources in Oklahoma. The OWRRI will work with the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service, the 11 Regional Councils of Government, and other organizations to encourage participation and two-way communication throughout the planning process. OWRRI will also maintain a website dedicated to the planning effort on which will be posted documents and reports as they are developed and through which stakeholders can submit comments and suggestions.

**You are Invited to the  
5th Annual Environmental Awards Reception  
Hosted by the OSU  
Environmental Science Graduate Program  
March 29, 2007  
Keynote speaker: Dr. Jim MacMahon  
Director of the Ecology Center at Utah State University**

**Wes Watkins Center at OSU in Stillwater  
\$10 ticket, 5:00 pm—7:30 pm  
Appetizers plus cash bar, RSVP (405) 744-9994**

## WRAB Member Roster

The OWRRI established the Water Research Advisory Board. The WRAB members are:

James R. Barnett, President  
Environmental Federation of Oklahoma

Cara Cowan-Watts  
Cherokee Tribal Council Member

Jerry Brabander, Field Supervisor  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Jeff Cloud, Chairman  
Oklahoma Corporation Commission

Jon Craig, Director, Water Division  
Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality

Cheryl M. Dorrance, Director of Research  
Oklahoma Municipal League

Ed Fite, Administrator  
Oklahoma Scenic Rivers Commission

Michael Fuhr, State Director  
The Nature Conservancy

Stephen L. Nolen, Chief  
Environmental Analysis and Compliance Branch  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Quang Pham, Professional Engineer  
Oklahoma Depart. of Agriculture, Food, and Forestry

Bill Porter, Assistant State Conservationist  
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Stephen Schmelling, Ph.D., Director  
Environmental Protection Agency - Kerr Lab

Seneca Scott, President  
Oklahoma Sustainability Network

Duane Smith, Executive Director  
Oklahoma Water Resources Board

Mike Thralls, Executive Director  
Oklahoma Conservation Commission

Trish Weedn, Executive Director  
Oklahoma Association of Regional Councils

Gene Whatley, Executive Director  
Oklahoma Rural Water Association

Kim Winton, Ph.D., Director  
Oklahoma Water Science Center  
U.S. Geological Survey



**Anna Parviainen-Childers** is a doctoral student in OSU's Environmental Science program. She is assisting Dr. Art Stoecker, Associate Professor, Dept. of Agricultural and Resource Economics with the OWRRI 2007 grant for *Decision Support System for Long-Term Planning of Rural and Urban Water Supply System Costs in Oklahoma*.

This project will develop a decision support system (DSS) to determine the optimal number, location, and size of drinking water treatment plants and distribution lines in the planning area (Washington, Rogers, and Wagoner counties). This will address long-term planning needs for drinking water supplies such as whether it is more efficient to serve a large area with a few, centralized treatment systems or a group of small,

decentralized systems. The researchers will determine water demand through the year 2060, the location, capacity, and condition of existing water treatment infrastructure, the cost of improvements, and the minimum-cost infrastructure that will meet future demands.

### 1. How has this experience helped prepare you for your career?

*"I have become familiar with different agencies and individuals, and their roles, influence and capabilities in water resources."*

### 2. What have you learned from conducting this research?

*"I have learned humbleness. As Nelson Mandela has said: "After climbing a great hill, one only finds that there are many more hills to climb." An arrogant and close-minded research attitude will not necessarily yield "correct" results because "correctness" is difficult to define. I have adopted the old Japanese production and manufacturing style in research asking: "What does the market need," rather than stating: "This is what we want the market to have." This style does not compromise research integrity but is open to inputs from different agencies and individuals who better understand what the problems in Oklahoma's water resources are. Flashy algorithms and computer models can only serve as aiding tools after the real problems have first been identified."*



### 3. What insights have you gained about the importance of water resources?

*"Water is a multi-dimensional resource, thus the water resources planning has to adopt a holistic approach. Through this project I have discovered that an economic feasibility of long-term water planning must be evaluated and incorporated into the policy-making. However, we have to be careful that the holistic approach does not become an empty paradigm, but actually has content."*

### 4. Tell about the international perspective you bring to this project in light of your global perspective.

*"I am from Finland and I have lived in Oklahoma for 10 years. The water problems are not really global but local. Research and problem-solving should start from our own back yards."*

### 5. Why were you drawn to this project?

*"Again quoting Nelson Mandela: "It is one thing to find fault with an existing system. It is another thing altogether, to replace it with a better approach." That was the initial draw, then I realized that this study, like any study on water resources, is a small piece of a big puzzle."*