



Oklahoma Water
Resources Center

Currents

February 2019

Discussions in Our Capital Make for Better Conversations in Oklahoma

(by Dr. Kevin Wagner)

At the end of this month, I will have the privilege of visiting our nation's capital with other water center directors at the National Institutes on Water Resources annual conference. I always look forward to this event where I learn more about other water centers' issues and operations, and hear about research needs and priorities of many of the federal water agencies.

A highlight of the trip is always visiting with Oklahoma's congressional delegation. I am always impressed by their depth of knowledge and interest in water. In our discussion I highlight water issues in the state and the excellent water research and extension being conducted by our affiliated faculty and students. In turn, our legislators communicate their concerns and how the Oklahoma Water Resources Center's programs can better serve their district, our state, and the nation.

I look forward to bringing what I learn back to Oklahoma and continuing the conversation with researchers and managers to secure Oklahoma's water future.



U.S. Capitol

Emerging Irrigation Technologies Lead to Water Conservation Strategies

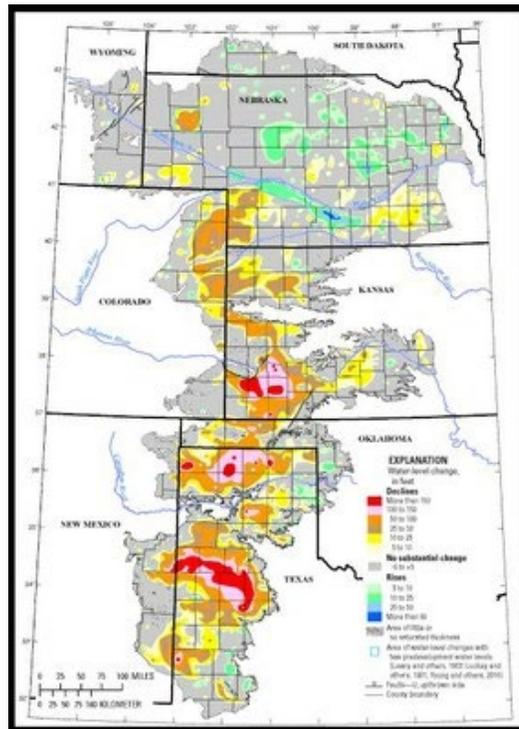
(by Brittany Davis)

Importance

Much of America's food, clothing, and many other products come from crops grown in the Great Plains – much of which is made possible through irrigation. Crop irrigation accounts for 41% of all freshwater consumption in Oklahoma, making it the number one water user. Over the past four decades, the water in this region's aquifers has severely declined. This decline is a major concern because the aquifers are where almost half of Oklahoma's freshwater comes from. Declining groundwater levels have not greatly affected the nation as a whole (yet), but farmers have been making changes to the way they irrigate to prevent the nation from feeling the effects.

Challenges

Because of its extremely low recharge rate, the Ogallala is considered at risk of almost complete groundwater depletion. The aquifer currently loses about 1-3 feet per year. If losses continue at this rate, the aquifer will essentially be depleted in about 30 years. [View the full, printer-friendly article here.](#)



Map of declining water levels in Ogallala Aquifer
(Click image to enlarge. Image credit: [USGS](#))

Opportunities

Funding

- **DOE:** Subsurface Biogeochemical Research (Pre-application due 2/14/19; full application due 4/11/19)
- **National Water Research Grants Program** (USGS 104(g) grants of \$250,000; due 2/15)

Employment

- Human Dimensions of Large Rivers **Researcher** (National Great Rivers Research and Education Center)
- **Assistant Professor** of Hydrogeochemistry/Low Temperature Geochemistry (OSU)

Events

- **Ground Water Protection Council Underground Injection Control Conference** (Fort Worth, TX; 2/24-27)
- **2019 Irrigation Conference** (Goodwell, 2/28)
- **Washed Up Exhibition** (OSU Museum of Art; 1/8 - 3/9)
- **OCLWA Annual Conference** (Stillwater, 4/3-4; abstracts due 3/15)
- **National Adaptation Forum** (Madison, WI; 4/23-25)
- **UCOWR/NIWR Annual Water Resources Conference** (Snowbird, Utah; 6/11-13)
- **Southern Region Water Conference** (College Station, TX; 7/23-25)

Oklahoma Irrigation Conference Slated for February 28



[February 28 | Oklahoma Panhandle Research & Extension Center](#)

The 2019 Irrigation Conference will be held February 28th at the Oklahoma Panhandle Research & Extension Center in Goodwell, OK. **RSVP by February 25th.**

The Oklahoma Irrigation Conference is for Oklahoma agricultural producers who irrigate their crops or pastures. Irrigation specialists will be on hand to discuss irrigation research, managing salinity, variable rate irrigation, and more.

The schedule and online registration is available [here](#). The cost is \$15 and will be payable at the door.

***Washed Up* Exhibition on Display through March 9**



Porcelain casts of aquatic specimens

Washed Up explores the environmental challenges of water insecurity and climate change to human life and biodiversity through the lens of art. The multimedia installation by Kansas artists Marguerite Perret and Bruce Scherting incorporates photographs and porcelain casts of aquatic specimens. These components represent what might have washed up on shores 250 million years ago and what is washing up on shores today.

The first of a three-part exhibition series, *Washed Up* invites visitors to think about the impact of water events — regionally and globally — on geographies, cultures, and economies. [\[Read more...\]](#)

Oklahoma Water Resources Center

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