



Oklahoma Water  
Resources Center

# Currents

June 2019

## 2019 Water Legislation in Oklahoma

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(by Ali Meek)

This legislative session was an active one with multiple bills introduced addressing water.

HB2142 created the Tri-State Commission on the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System, and HB2143 created the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System Infrastructure Revolving Fund to repair or update the infrastructure of this important waterway. The bill will become effective July 1, 2019.

The legislature established a moratorium on the issuance of permits to mining overlying a sensitive sole source groundwater basin or subbasin or in which groundwater emanating from any sensitive sole source groundwater basin or subbasin may collect within a pit.



HB2471 authorized the Department of Mines to promulgate final rules to provide for effective interagency consultation and coordination of activities among the Department, the Oklahoma Water Resources Board and the Department of Environmental Quality on all administrative matters relating to the operation of mines at locations that overlie a sensitive sole source groundwater basin or subbasin (refer also to SB1080). This bill will become effective November 1, 2019.

HB 2474 requires the Oklahoma Water Resources Board to provide a 30-day protest period for limited quantity stream water permits and limited quantity groundwater permits and requires that those permit applications are posted online.

Groundwater was a major topic of discussion with the introduction of SB705. Approved by the governor, this bill adds “funding” to the list of necessary actions regarding public groundwater that the Legislature recognizes as essential to the economic prosperity and future well-being of the state. This bill will become effective November 1, 2019.

SB568, which will become effective July 1, 2019, will create a revolving fund for the Oklahoma Water Resources Board to continue the Arbuckle-Simpson Hydrology Study. Finally, HB2263 created the Groundwater Irrigation District Act to manage groundwater irrigation districts. This bill establishes requirements for a groundwater irrigation district, provides sanctions for permit holders, and sets guidelines for district boards. The bill will become effective November 1, 2019.

Marginal water and wastewater were also major topics. SB998 sets standards for use of marginal water in Oklahoma. This bill states that marginal water use in accordance with Oklahoma Groundwater Law and the rules of the Oklahoma Water Resources Board is considered a beneficial use and not waste. Recently passed, this bill will become effective November 1, 2019.

Other bills introduced, but not passed, addressed modifying the portion of the Illinois River designated as a scenic river (HB1422), authorizing Water Sales to Texas (HB2576), Oklahoma Waters and Water Rights Modernization (HB1824-1827), protection of instream flows (HB1403), gravel removal from the Illinois and Barren Fork River systems (HB1423), and updating the Grand River Dam Authority (HB1986-1987).

Current water bills and their descriptions can be found at <https://legiscan.com/OK/legislation>.

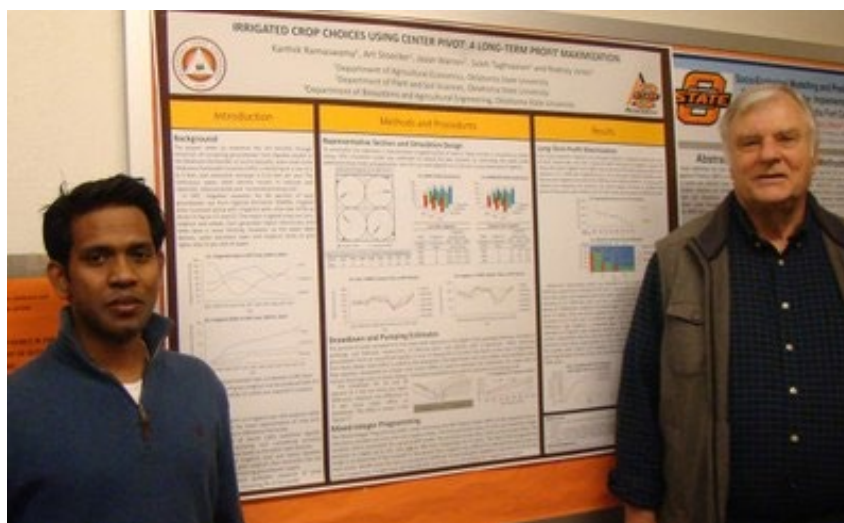
## How Crop Arrangement can extend the Life of the Ogallala Aquifer

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(by Abu Mansaray and Kevin Wagner)

Irrigation for annual profit maximization (APM) is a predominant farming practice in the U.S. In the Great Plains Region, there is concern that this strategy is not sustainable due to declining water levels in the Ogallala Aquifer, the only groundwater source in the area. Long-term profit maximization (LPM) could be a better strategy.

Oklahoma farmers are interested in LPM; however, they are concerned that the water they save could be used by someone else. This is a major barrier to greater adoption of this strategy. Karthik Ramaswamy, a PhD student at Oklahoma State University, evaluated various LPM scenarios to determine what percent of groundwater saved would be retained by farmers using LPM strategies. [\[Keep reading...\]](#)



*Karthik Ramaswamy and the late Dr. Art Stoecker*

## New Resources for Homeowners with Septic Systems

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[What to do during power outage](#)

[What to do after severe weather](#)

Find many more resources at <http://septicsoystems.okstate.edu>.

## Opportunities

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### Funding

- **USDA: RREA-National Focus Fund Projects** (RREA-NFF; due 6/21/19)

### Events

- **UCOWR/NIWR Annual Water Resources Conference** (Snowbird, Utah; 6/11-13)
- **EPA's Water Quality Modeling Workgroup webinar, "Introduction to AQUATOX"** (6/12 at noon, Central; registration required)
- **Great Plains LID Research and Innovation Symposium and Design Competition** (Fort Collins, CO; 6/24-26)
- **Southern Region Water Conference** (College Station, TX; 7/23-25)
- **The Water Center's Water Research Advisory Board** (OKC, 8/14)
- **Groundwater Protection Council Annual Forum** (OKC, 9/15-17)
- **North American Lake Management Society Symposium** (Burlington, VT; 11/10-15)

## Advisory Board Member Spotlight: The Oklahoma Water Resources Board

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(by Julie Cunningham, OWRB Executive Director)

I believe it was always my destiny to spend a career involved in managing, protecting, and planning for the future of Oklahoma's water resources. My passion for Oklahoma's lakes and streams is rooted in my childhood. My earliest memories take me back to fishing off the dock and sailing with my parents and brother at Lake Hefner, and camping with grandparents at Lake Eufaula's Belle Starr Campground. As a teen I spent summers water skiing and hanging out with friends at our family's cabin at Lake Texoma.

Read more about how Julie got started with OWRB, and OWRB's beginning, current work, and future goals in [the full article here](#).

## Taghvaeian to receive UCOWR Early Career Award

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(by Ali Meek)

Dr. Saleh Taghvaeian, Oklahoma State University assistant professor and research/extension specialist in the Biosystems and Agricultural Engineering Department, has been selected to receive the Universities Council on Water Resources (UCOWR) Early Career Award for Extension/Outreach/Engagement for 2019.

Taghvaeian is being recognized for excellence in his work to improve agricultural water management and irrigation efficiency in Oklahoma.



*Dr. Saleh Taghvaeian presents to landowners during an OSU Extension workshop*

He approaches solving Oklahoma's water issues from a conservationist standpoint, considering both economic and environmental consequences. The future of food and water security depend on research such as this.

Not only is Taghvaeian passionate about agricultural science, but he understands the importance of educating agricultural producers. He is diligent in extending his research to the public so as to keep farmers up to date with the latest advancements in the agricultural industry.

On behalf of Oklahoma Water Resources Center, we would like to thank Dr. Taghvaeian for his contribution to the betterment of our water resources and congratulate him on this well-earned honor, which he will receive at UCOWR's Annual Water Resources Conference later this month.

More about Dr. Taghvaeian's research and extension projects is at <http://water.okstate.edu/connect/faculty-members/taghvaeian>.

#### **Oklahoma Water Resources Center**

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