

Oklahoma

Water News

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE OKLAHOMA WATER RESOURCES BOARD

Come to the Water Conference December 5!

"Drowning in the High Cost of Water" theme expected to draw hundreds

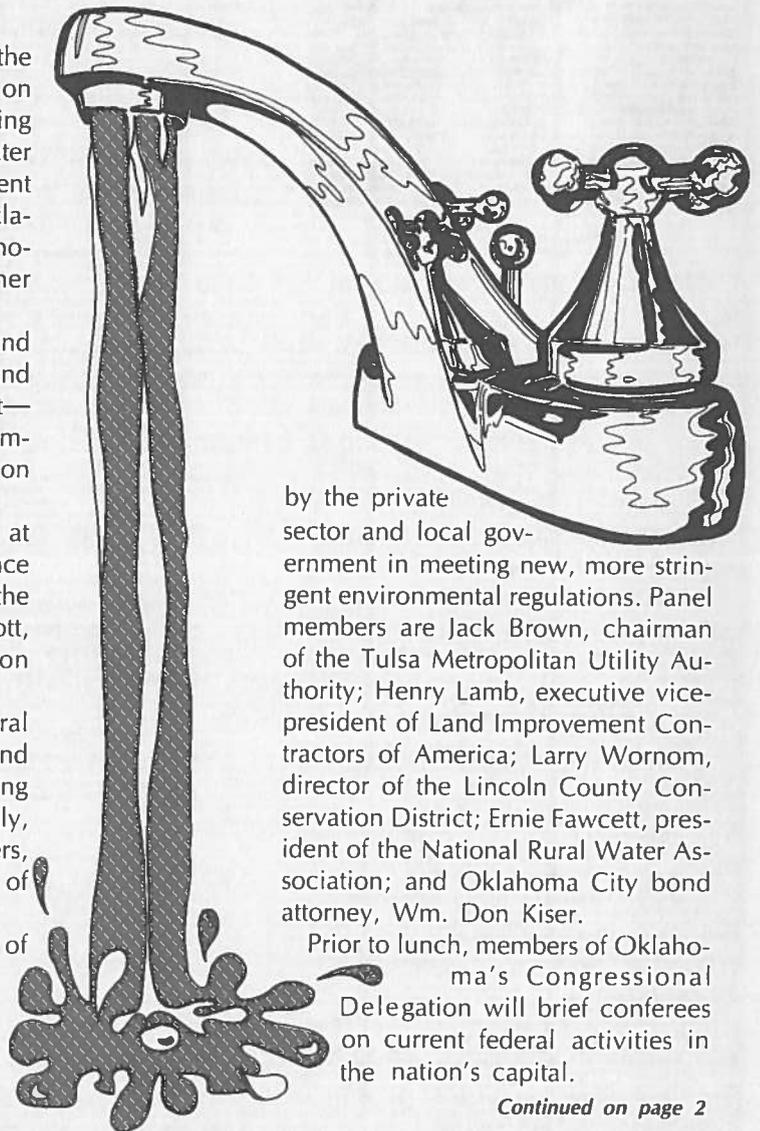
With the theme "Drowning in the High Cost of Water," the Eleventh Annual Oklahoma Water Conference will focus on the rising costs of water resources management and providing water to the public. All Oklahomans with an interest in water resources are invited and urged to attend the day-long event on Wednesday, December 5 at the Marriott Hotel in Oklahoma City. The Conference is coordinated by the Oklahoma Water Resources Board and sponsored by 29 other organizations.

The cost issue involves questions of human health and safety, environmental regulations and the effect new laws and regulations will have on water resources development—especially construction of improved facilities by smaller community systems—as well as household water rates passed on to the consumer.

Water Conference activities will begin with registration at 8 a.m. and conclude that afternoon following the Conference luncheon. Board Chairman Robert S. Kerr, Jr. will kick off the meeting by introducing the keynote speaker, E. Donald Elliott, General Counsel for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, who will address the Conference theme.

Following Elliott will be two other representatives of federal agencies intimately involved in water resources planning and management. Discussing the federal viewpoint of "Managing Our Water Resources" will be Major General Patrick J. Kelly, Director of Civil Works for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and Joe D. Hall, Deputy Commissioner of the Bureau of Reclamation.

After the coffee break will be a panel discussion of "Increased Costs—Where's the Money to Come From?" Five panelists—representing agriculture, finance, municipal and other interests—and moderator James R. Barnett, OWRB Executive Director, will examine the mounting costs of water resources management and problems faced



by the private sector and local government in meeting new, more stringent environmental regulations. Panel members are Jack Brown, chairman of the Tulsa Metropolitan Utility Authority; Henry Lamb, executive vice-president of Land Improvement Contractors of America; Larry Wornom, director of the Lincoln County Conservation District; Ernie Fawcett, president of the National Rural Water Association; and Oklahoma City bond attorney, Wm. Don Kiser.

Prior to lunch, members of Oklahoma's Congressional Delegation will brief conferees on current federal activities in the nation's capital.

Continued on page 2

Conference, continued from page 1

The luncheon program features an inside look at "Water Funding Prospects in the 43rd Legislature." Senator Darryl F. Roberts, Senate Majority Leader, and Representative Glen Johnson, Speaker-Designate of the House, will explore the potential for water resources legislation in the upcoming session. An annual highlight of the Conference, presentation of



E. Donald Elliott

Oklahoma Water Pioneer Awards, follows the two legislators. The Pioneer Award ceremony was begun in 1985 to honor Oklahomans who have made outstanding contributions to the development of Oklahoma's water resources. The awards will be presented by departing Governor Henry Bellmon and Glenn Sullivan, Secretary of Natural Resources.

Rounding out the day's activities will be an address by Oklahoma's Governor-Elect.

Clip this form for easy registration

Registration for the Oklahoma Water Conference costs \$25 and can be made by calling the OWRB at (405) 271-2521 or completing the registration form in this issue and mailing it with your check, money order or purchase order.

For additional information on the Conference, call Conference Coordinators Mary Whitlow or Brian Vance at (405) 271-2523.

Dead Rainbows—Oil on the Water

Imagine, if you will, an idyllic scene of your choosing. The only requirement is that it be peaceful and include a calm lake which, like a mirror, reflects the opposite shore. Wait . . . what is that? Could it be? A glistening sheen of dirty colors, like dead rainbows, covers the surface of the lake. Someone must have changed his car's oil again and not recycled it.

Rainfall runoff produces shock effects on receiving waters as various substances, some toxic, are abruptly mixed into our water supplies. By one estimate, there are times when 40 percent of the pollution in our nation's water is old motor oil containing lead and trace amounts of other toxic metals plus a variety of hydrocarbons, many of which are toxic to aquatic life even at low concentrations. Pouring oil into the gutter or storm sewer, or letting it leak from your car, is just like dumping it directly into a lake or stream. Recycling used oil does not mean to use it as a weed killer or on dirt driveways because it can soak through the soil, even at landfills. Used oil is not common garbage—it's toxic waste.

To put the problem into perspective, a single pint of oil can create a glistening slick the size of a football field. A single quart is enough to pollute 250,000 gallons of water. One part oil to one million parts water is

detectable to human taste and smell. Average estimates indicate that 240 million gallons of used crankcase oil finds its way into the nation's lakes, rivers and streams each year—22 times more oil than the Exxon Valdez spilled into Alaska waters. The nation was outraged at one oil tanker spill, yet we lamely accept the willful disposal of 22 times that much each year.

It is estimated that about one-half of all automobile owners change their own oil. If you're one of them, please take the discarded oil to a gas station or recycling facility. Some auto parts stores will also accept used oil. You can purchase sturdy containers to store used oil from three or four oil changes. If you have someone change your oil, make sure they recycle it or take it to someone who does. Most used oil can be reused as ship or industrial boiler fuel, or one of many lubricating oils.

The exciting thing is how easily we can help solve the problem, even if current pollution levels may sound discouraging. It is proven that each individual's contribution can produce noticeable results. If, during the next few months, you and your neighbors do nothing more than ensure that your used automobile motor oil is recycled, you will make a major difference in the quality of the nation's water. *Texas Water Commission*

Oklahoma Water Conference
% Oklahoma Water Resources Board
P.O. Box 53585
Oklahoma City, OK 73152

Please make \$25 check, money order or purchase order payable to OKLAHOMA WATER CONFERENCE. No refunds considered after November 28. Registration includes luncheon.

Name _____

Representing _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____

Zip Code _____ Phone (_____) _____

New Mexico Violated Compact, Says Report

Oklahoma and Texas won the first round in their Supreme Court lawsuit with New Mexico over waters of the Canadian River. A report issued October 15 by Special Master Jerome C. Muys says the State of New Mexico has been in violation of the Canadian River Compact with Oklahoma and Texas since the spring of 1987.

The nine-member Supreme Court appointed Muys Special Master to hold hearings and gather evidence on its behalf and to make a recommendation on how the court should rule. The Supreme Court will now determine whether it agrees with the opinion of the Special Master.

"Oklahoma, Texas and New Mexico entered into an interstate stream compact in 1950 to spell out precisely how much water from the Canadian River System each of the three states could store and use," said James R. Barnett, OWRB executive director. "New Mexico enlarged Ute Dam on the Canadian River near Tucumcari in 1984, clearly violating the compact terms regarding the amount of storage capacity the state was allowed," he said.

After trying to resolve the disagreement at annual and special compact meetings, Oklahoma and Texas sued New Mexico in 1987. Lawsuits between states are so rare that this one is numbered 109—indicating only 108 have preceded it since the nation was founded in 1789.

"We are at the stage where the Special Master has made his recommendations," said OWRB General Counsel Dean Couch. He pointed out that if the Supreme Court agrees with these findings, it could turn the matter back over to the Special Master to determine damages Texas and Oklahoma sustained. "It could be money damages, but there are also other options available to him," Couch said.

A schedule for written or oral arguments has not yet been set by the Supreme Court, but when the case is heard, R. Thomas Lay will represent Oklahoma. Lay, former OWRB general counsel, is special counsel working with the Attorney General's office in the case.

Lewis Kamas, retired state legislator from Freedom, serves as Oklahoma's only commissioner to the Canadian River Compact. According to Kamas, "if New Mexico continued to capture all the flow of the Canadian River, it would be a serious blow to western Oklahoma, which depends on water from the Canadian and groundwater to support the economy."

The Canadian River System in Oklahoma consists of two major rivers—the Canadian (often called the South Canadian) and the North Canadian. Lake Eufaula is impounded on the (South) Canadian, and Canton Reservoir, which supplies water to Oklahoma City, is impounded on the North Canadian.

Barnett points out that the future of Oklahoma City's water supply could eventually be jeopardized if New Mexico continued to retain excess water.



Corps Redefines Wetlands

The Army Corps of Engineers has removed one-third of all wetlands—or 60 million acres—from its control by redefining "wetlands." Specifically, the directive clarifies "normal circumstances" as it pertains to "prior converted croplands."

According to new policy, farmers will not have to obtain permits to alter certain farmlands, which had previously been subject to Section 404 regulations. The Corps has now ruled that lands which have been farmed for many years under normal circumstances will no longer support wetland vegetation.

Maj. Gen. Patrick Kelly emphasized that the Corps remains committed to protecting wetlands. He said the new policy should not be construed as a weakening in the Corps' stance.

The National Wildlife Federation views it as a step back from "No Net Loss." NWF expects as much as 40 million acres to be exempted, out of a total of roughly 100 million acres.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM UPDATE

Approved at October Board Meeting

Grants

Dougherty PWA—\$45,000
Waukomis PWA—\$37,500
Laverne PWA—\$15,500
Pawnee PWA—\$25,000
Cleo Springs PWA—\$75,000
Coweta PWA—\$75,000

Loans

(current rate—6.592%)
Cleo Springs PWA—\$165,000

Totals as of 10/9/90

	Loans	Grants
Approved	70	207
Amount	\$74,660,000	\$13,165,458
Funded	53	182
Amount	\$44,990,000	\$11,580,975



Georgia Patten, left, opens gifts and cards at the reception in honor of her retirement as Dena Riddle watches. Patten came to the OWRB in March 1978; retired October 31, 1990.

**STORAGE IN SELECTED OKLAHOMA LAKES & RESERVOIRS
AS OF OCTOBER 29, 1990**

PLANNING REGION LAKE/RESERVOIR	CONSERVATION STORAGE (acre-feet)	PRESENT STORAGE (acre-feet)	PERCENT OF STORAGE		PLANNING REGION LAKE/RESERVOIR	CONSERVATION STORAGE (acre-feet)	PRESENT STORAGE (acre-feet)	PERCENT OF STORAGE	
			conservation	flood				conservation	flood
SOUTHEAST					EAST CENTRAL				
Atoka	124,100	118,824	95.8	N/A	Eufaula	2,314,600	2,286,576	98.8	0.0
Broken Bow	918,070	914,100	99.6	0.0	Tenkiller	654,100	648,729	99.2	0.0
Hugo ¹	187,603	187,603	100.0	0.1	Wister ¹	58,601	50,830	86.7	0.0
McGee Creek	113,930	113,445	99.6	0.0	NORTHEAST				
Pine Creek ¹	73,346	73,127	99.7	0.0	Birch	19,200	16,888	88.0	0.0
Sardis	274,330	273,929	99.9	0.0	Copan	43,400	37,860	87.2	0.0
CENTRAL					Eucha	80,000	75,000	93.8	N/A
Arcadia	27,520	27,431	99.7	0.0	Fort Gibson	365,200	365,200	100.0	0.1
Hefner	75,400	61,952	82.2	N/A	Grand	1,672,000	1,530,550	91.5	0.0
Overholser	15,900	11,816	74.3	N/A	Heyburn	7,105	5,988	84.3	0.0
Stanley Draper	100,000	72,235	72.2	N/A	Hudson	200,300	200,300	100.0	0.9
Thunderbird	119,600	116,320	97.3	0.0	Hulah	31,160	24,562	78.8	0.0
SOUTH CENTRAL					Oologah	553,400	544,641	98.4	0.0
Arbuckle	72,400	72,215	99.7	0.0	Skiatook	322,700	283,763	87.9	0.0
Texoma	2,643,300	2,624,270	99.3	0.0	Spavinaw	30,590	29,275	95.7	N/A
Waurika	203,100	194,157	95.6	0.0	NORTH CENTRAL				
SOUTHWEST					Kaw ¹	428,600	423,224	98.8	0.0
Altus	132,830	76,272	57.4	0.0	Keystone	557,600	529,284	94.9	0.0
Ellsworth	72,490	56,152	77.5	N/A	NORTHWEST				
Fort Cobb	80,010	78,097	97.6	0.0	Canton	111,310	91,086	81.8	0.0
Foss ²	256,220	173,909	67.9	0.0	Fort Supply	13,900	13,394	96.4	0.0
Lawtonka	56,574	49,264	87.1	N/A	Great Salt Plains	31,420	31,420	100.0	0.2
Tom Steed	88,970	75,754	85.2	0.0	STATE TOTALS 13,130,879 12,559,442 95.7 .04				

¹ Seasonal pool operation

² Conservation pool lowered to enhance project operation
N/A—not applicable; no flood storage allocation.

Data courtesy of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Bureau of Reclamation, Oklahoma City Water Resources Department, Central Oklahoma Master Conservancy District, City of Tulsa Water Superintendent's Office, City of Lawton, City of Altus, Altus Irrigation District, Foss Reservoir Master Conservancy District and Fort Cobb Master Conservancy District.

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Oklahoma Water Resources Board
1000 N.E. Tenth, P.O. Box 53585
Oklahoma City, Okla. 73152

BULK RATE

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We're Moving

Effective December 17, 1990,
the new address and telephone
number of the Oklahoma Water
Resources Board will be:

600 N. Harvey

P.O. Box 1678

Oklahoma City, OK 73101

(405) 231-2500