“Celebrate Water” at the Governor’s Water Conference, October 9

On October 9, the Oklahoma Water Resources Board and 30 other water-related organizations will host the 23rd Annual Governor’s Water Conference at the Adams Mark Hotel in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

The 2002 Water Conference, entitled “Celebrating Water: Past Successes, Future Challenges,” will feature addresses by state and national water officials and viewpoints on an assortment of water issues from Oklahoma’s gubernatorial candidates, Congressional representatives, and state legislative leaders.

Allan Stokes, Chief Operations Officer of America’s Clean Water Foundation (ACWF), and Larry Walkowiak, Oklahoma-Texas Area Manager for the Bureau of Reclamation, will treat conferencees to a historical perspective on water development and protection as well as a vision of future water issues on the horizon. ACWF was created in 1989 to build public interest and understanding of clean water issues and to promote personal stewardship of water resources. This year, ACWF is participating with many state and federal water organizations, including the OWRB, to promote the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s “Year of Clean Water,” which recognizes the 30th anniversary of the federal Clean Water Act. The Bureau of Reclamation has directed much of the water development in the western U.S., including Hoover Dam and other large-scale projects, and is currently commemorating its 100-year anniversary with a year-long celebration.
other topics addressed during the one-day Conference will include interstate water quality concerns, such as elevated phosphorus levels in Oklahoma’s Scenic Rivers, and Native American water rights and water quality administration. The 2005 update of the Oklahoma Comprehensive Water Plan, with an emphasis on citizen-based planning efforts, will also be outlined as will the legal ramifications of water transfer. The Conference luncheon will feature presentation of Oklahoma Water Pioneer Awards for 2002. Since 1985, the award has honored those individuals who have made extraordinary contributions to the use, management, and protection of Oklahoma’s water resources.

preceding the Conference, on October 8, state navigation interests will host a complimentary barge ride/tour of the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System. The tour will depart from Tulsa’s Port of Catoosa at noon. The Water Conference reception will begin at 5:30 p.m. at the Adams Mark.

Conference registration, including the complimentary barge tour, is $40. Overnight accommodations are available at the Adams Mark, 100 East Second Street. Reservations can be made by calling 1-800-444-2326. A block of rooms and special room rate of $55 has been reserved for conference until September 17. After that date, the Hotel’s standard rate will apply. The government room rate is available for government employees (with appropriate identification).

For more information on the Governor’s Water Conference, call Barry Fogerty at 405-530-8800 or email Mary Nell Brueggen at mnbrueggen@owrb.state.ok.us. For advance registration, please complete the registration form below and mail it to the address indicated on the form along with your $40 check, money order, or purchase order.

**Clip and mail to:**
Governor’s Water Conference
3800 N. Classen Boulevard
Oklahoma City, OK  73118

Please enclose $40 check, money order, or purchase order payable to Oklahoma Water Resources Board. No refunds after October 2.

For more information, call (405) 530-8800 or e-mail mnbrueggen@owrb.state.ok.us.

**Governor’s Water Conference Registration**

Name ____________________________

Organization _______________________

Address ___________________________

City/State __________________________

Zip __________________ Phone (____) _______________________

I will attend the Barge Tour on October 8

Number of guests for Barge Tour (please submit guest names)
Water Conference Agenda
October 9, 2002
Adams Mark Hotel & Conference Center
Tulsa, Oklahoma

8:00 Registration

8:30 Welcome
Grady Grandstaff, Chairman
Oklahoma Water Resources Board
Bill LaFortune, Mayor
City of Tulsa

8:50 Governor’s Address
Frank Keating, Governor of Oklahoma

9:05 Celebrating 30 Years of Clean Water
Allan Stokes, Chief Operations Officer
America’s Clean Water Foundation

9:20 A Century of Water for the West: The Bureau of Reclamation’s Centennial Celebration
Larry Walkoviak, Manager
Oklahoma-Texas Area Office

9:35 Tribal Water Rights and Water Quality Administration
Taiawagi Helton, Professor
University of Oklahoma College of Law

Lindsay G. Robertson, Associate Professor
University of Oklahoma College of Law

Michael Brophy, Attorney
Ryley, Carlock & Applewhite

10:20 Coffee/Exhibits

10:40 Addressing Interstate Water Quality Issues
Marcus C. Devine, Director
Arkansas Dept. of Environmental Quality

Brian Griffin, Secretary of Environment
State of Oklahoma

11:10 The Legal Ramifications of Water Transfer
Drew L. Kershen, Earl Sneed Professor
University of Oklahoma

Gary Allison, Professor
University of Tulsa College of Law

11:40 2005 Update of the Oklahoma Comprehensive Water Plan
Duane A. Smith, Executive Director
Oklahoma Water Resources Board

Noon Luncheon Program

Oklahoma Water Pioneer Awards

The Outlook from Washington D.C.
Oklahoma’s Congressional Delegation

State Legislative Outlook
Senator Rick Littlefield
Senator James Dunlap
Representative Larry Adair
Representative M.C. Leist

Oklahoma’s Gubernatorial Candidates

2:30 Adjournment

Water Quality Improving in Lake Thunderbird

A new Water Board report indicates that water quality in Lake Thunderbird, near Norman, is improving. The report reveals that chlorophyll concentrations fell significantly last year, an indication of the reduction of algae and overall improvements in water quality, water clarity, and habitat. While it is common for aging lakes to undergo eutrophication, a process associated with relatively high levels of algae productivity, data gathered from the recently concluded study report show that Thunderbird is suffering from excess productivity of the aquatic organism.

“Chlorophyll-a concentrations above 20 micrograms per liter (mg/L) indicate that algal productivity has reached an excessive stage and must be reduced before the lake’s water quality deteriorates to a critical level,” says Paul Koenig, an OWRB water quality specialist.

Prompted by these water quality concerns, the OWRB initiated a cooperative study in July 2000 with the Central Oklahoma Master Conservancy District (COMCD), which manages Lake Thunderbird and oversees the delivery of the lake’s water to Norman, Del City, and Midwest City. Throughout the next two years, OWRB staff collected and analyzed water quality data from the lake, resulting in a series of water quality improvement recommendations to COMCD. Subsequent management decisions by the District resulted in almost immediate impacts, as well as improvements in the water’s taste and odor, Koenig said.

“In 2001, 20 percent fewer water samples had chlorophyll concentrations above 20 mg/L, and the average concentration decreased from 23 mg/L in 2000 to 15 mg/L in 2001,” he pointed out. The Thunderbird study also included a lake capacity determination to determine proper sizing for a new aeration device to replace the older, inadequate system.

Board employees Nathan Kuhnert (middle) and Phil Moershel (right) assist staff of the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation in reestablishing shoreline vegetation at Lake Thunderbird in early July. This is the second year the agencies have cooperated in the effort to enhance fish and wildlife habitat in and around the lake.
National, State Organizations
Stay on Top of Flooplain Issues

W. Kenneth Morris, CFM
State Floodplain Manager; OWRB

In late June, I was fortunate to attend the 26th annual conference of the Association of State Floodplain Managers (ASFPM) in Phoenix, Arizona. At this extremely interesting and educational event, the nation’s leading flood hazard management professionals—including planners, engineers, consultants, insurance professionals, and community floodplain managers from virtually every state—were afforded a rare opportunity to share floodplain protection strategies. The ASFPM represents some 4,500 floodplain managers from across the country.

This year’s theme “Breaking the Cycle of Repetitive Flood Loss”, inspired almost 700 government and private professionals to attend. A major topic of discussion was President Bush’s proposed increase of $300 million for floodplain mapping and modernization, including increased accessibility through the Internet, within the nation’s 20,000 flood-prone communities. Flood maps serve many purposes and accurate maps have a direct influence on the magnitude and costs of flooding events. The Federal Emergency Management Agency estimates that local regulation of flood hazard areas, predicated on FEMA’s flood maps, saves the nation about $1 billion each year in flood-related property losses.

In early August, the Oklahoma Department of Civil Emergency Management hosted a three-day training session entitled “Disaster Response & Recovery Operations.” The course covered the basic concepts and procedures involved in responding to major disasters. It addressed federal, state and local roles and responsibilities in major disaster recovery work. The workshop also included an overview of preliminary damage assessment, disaster recovery centers, and special needs of victims and disaster workers is also included. All who attended left with stronger perspectives of this vital issue, especially important in light of the events last September, and are now better prepared to serve citizens who are impacted by virtually any manner of disaster or emergency.

I want to encourage all state floodplain managers and partners of the Oklahoma Floodplain Management Association to attend OFMA’s 12th Annual Conference to be held September 21-24 at Quartz Mountain Resort. Consistent with the recent push to balance structural and non-structural flooding solutions in a manner that will not cause additional flood damage on other properties, the conference theme is “No Adverse Impact: Taking Ownership at the Local Level.” The meeting will feature local hazard mitigation success stories, provide extensive information on floodplain mapping, and review the latest floodplain management techniques. Plan on taking a couple extra days, arrive Saturday and enjoy some of the special attractions at Quartz Mountain Lodge and the adjacent area in southwest Oklahoma. OFMA will host a golf tournament on Sunday as well as a Sunday evening social. Rooms have been reserved at a special rate of $55 per night. Please register early by calling the OWRB at 405-530-8800.

A related aspect of the No Adverse Impact initiative, and a top priority of Oklahoma’s floodplain management program, is adequate training of insurance agents in writing flood insurance policies as well as familiarity with general principles of the National Flood Insurance Program. I am continually frustrated and disturbed by the relative lack of knowledge possessed by insurance agents in this area, especially since flood insurance policies are so closely tied to home insurance policies. OFMA leaders have pledged to intensify their efforts and provide more training opportunities to educate insurance agents about flood policies and the NFIP. It will require a very intense effort to get the attention of the insurance industry and improve service to property owners and businesses in Oklahoma. But working together, we can get it done.
The Federal Emergency Management Agency’s Flood Map Store is now accessible at www.msc.fema.gov. The site, maintained by FEMA’s Map Service Center, offers online Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) to its wide range of customers, including the public.

Flanagan Honored with Walking Trail

Ron Flanagan, Tulsa planning consultant and prominent member of the Oklahoma Floodplain Management Association, has been honored by the City of Tulsa through designation of Flanagan’s Way, a four-mile walking trail along the city’s Mingo Creek. Flanagan has been intimately involved in local flood awareness, mitigation, and planning for more than three decades.

Around the time of Flanagan’s brief service as zoning administrator for the Tulsa planning commission, the city was considered one of the nation’s major disaster-prone areas. The infamous 1984 Memorial Day flood caused 14 deaths and $183 million in property damage. Today, due in part to Flanagan’s push for a non-structural approach to floodplain management, Tulsa serves as a model for municipal floodplain management.

Workshop Success Due to Board Staff

The work of OWRB employees Rhonda Kouba (pictured below), Virginia Roy, and James Leewright was critical to the success of the OWRB’s recent Floodplain Management 101 workshops. Kouba, assisted by Roy, organized the workshop and lesson materials while Leewright contributed graphics and developed workshop certificates awarded to those who successfully completed the one-day course. The workshops—held this May in Norman, Tulsa, Woodward, Lawton, and McAlester to coincide with Flood Awareness Month in Oklahoma—trained some 124 local floodplain officials and related individuals from throughout the state on the latest floodplain management procedures.
Koon Receives Employee Award

Kevin Koon, of the Board’s Information Services Section, is the agency’s Employee of the Quarter. Koon was recognized for the honor at the OWRB’s monthly meeting in August.

Originally from Iowa, Koon earned his Bachelors Degree in Geography in 1995 from Northwest Missouri State University in Marysville, Missouri. He received his Masters in Geography from Oklahoma State in 1997 and that same year accepted an appointment as a Carl Albert Executive Fellow with the OWRB.

Koon is known for his exceptional customer service skills and a consistent positive attitude toward his job and co-workers along with a willingness to lend a hand with virtually any task. These traits are especially valuable in perhaps the most critically important aspect of Koon’s job—i.e., assisting users with highly technical aspects of the agency’s geographic information system (GIS).

The Employee of the Quarter is awarded four times each year to those staff members who excel in their relative positions at the Water Board. Honorees are selected by a committee of peers.

Glenn Sharp Appointed to Board

Glenn A. Sharp, a civic leader and public relations/marketing specialist with Northeast Oklahoma Electric Cooperative, has been appointed to the Oklahoma Water Resources Board by Governor Frank Keating.

Sharp is past president of the Grand Lake Association and has served on the Boards of the Grove Area Chamber of Commerce and South Grand Chamber of Commerce. He is a past member of the Oklahoma City and Oklahoma State Chambers of Commerce. From 1984 to 1992, Sharp served on the Governor’s Economic Development Team.

A resident of Grove, Sharp graduated from Tulsa Central High School and the University of Tulsa with a B.A. in History and Political Science. He worked 29 years for Southwestern Bell Telephone Company before retiring in 1992; more recently, he was Vice President of Grand Lake Bank. Sharp and his wife Polly are the parents of four daughters and the grandparents of eight children.

Sharp, who replaces long-time Board member Dick Seybolt, represents recreational water use interests and Congressional District 2. He will serve a seven-year term officially ending in 2008.

James Leewright Retires

Long-time Water Board draftsman and graphic artist James Leewright has retired following 34 years of exceptional service to the agency. Leewright was honored by OWRB staff and friends at a brief reception held July 30 at Board offices in Oklahoma City.

“James’ career is characterized by the individual mark of quality that distinguishes his work,” says OWRB Executive Director Duane Smith. “And while his mapping and drafting skills and eye for detail are virtually unparalleled, we especially appreciate James as a person and for his willingness to always lend a helping hand to those in need.”

Some of the more notable publications on which Leewright lent his expertise include the Appraisals of Water and Related Land Resources of Oklahoma, 11 reports that served as precursors to the 1980 Oklahoma Comprehensive Water Plan, and the subsequent update of the Water Plan in 1995. However, Leewright’s work may be best exemplified through the enormously popular Oklahoma Water Atlas and its two revisions. He was also instrumental in creation of Rural Water Systems in Oklahoma, a compendium of state rural water system maps and related information.
Reservoir Storage

Reservoir storage levels in Oklahoma remain generally good, although they continue to drop in some areas. As of August 21, the combined normal conservation pools of 31 selected major federal reservoirs across Oklahoma (see below) are approximately 93.6 percent full, a 1.3 percent decrease from that recorded on August 5, according to information from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Tulsa District). Twenty-six reservoirs have experienced lake level decreases since that time. Twenty-two reservoirs are currently operating at less than full capacity (compared to 20 two weeks ago). Two reservoirs (Lugert-Altus, only 22.6 percent; and Tom Steed, 58 percent) remain below 80 percent capacity.

### Storage in Selected Oklahoma Lakes & Reservoirs
As of August 21, 2002

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Climate Division</th>
<th>Conservation Storage (acre-feet)</th>
<th>Present Storage (acre-feet)</th>
<th>Percent of Storage Conservation</th>
<th>Flood</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North Central</td>
<td>428,325</td>
<td>423,079</td>
<td>98.8</td>
<td>1.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northeast</td>
<td>3,768,642</td>
<td>3,479,979</td>
<td>92.3</td>
<td>0.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Central</td>
<td>276,790</td>
<td>251,726</td>
<td>90.9</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central</td>
<td>154,225</td>
<td>148,755</td>
<td>96.5</td>
<td>0.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Central</td>
<td>2,916,043</td>
<td>2,720,968</td>
<td>93.3</td>
<td>0.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southwest</td>
<td>301,810</td>
<td>259,249</td>
<td>85.8</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Central</td>
<td>2,956,916</td>
<td>2,944,424</td>
<td>99.6</td>
<td>1.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southeast</td>
<td>1,512,859</td>
<td>1,393,846</td>
<td>92.1</td>
<td>0.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Totals</td>
<td>12,314,610</td>
<td>11,522,026</td>
<td>93.6</td>
<td>0.51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Drought Indices

According to the latest Palmer Drought Severity Index (August 17, below), drought conditions have generally improved in many areas of Oklahoma. However, four climate divisions are still in various drought categories. The Panhandle/Northwest region remains in the “extreme” drought category while the West Central climate division has been downgraded to “severe” drought. Only two of Oklahoma’s nine climate divisions have undergone PDSI moisture decreases since August 3.

The latest monthly Standardized Precipitation Index (through July, below) continues to indicate long-term dryness throughout the past year in northwest Oklahoma. Also, north central and west central Oklahoma have experienced an extended, moderately dry period. Among the selected time periods (3-, 6-, 9- and 12-month SPIs), the Northwest/Panhandle climate division reports “extremely dry” conditions throughout the last 12-month period and “very dry” conditions during the last 6 and 9 months. Among periods beyond one year, the 15-, 18-, and 24-month SPIs also report particularly dry conditions for much of northern and western Oklahoma.
### Financial Assistance Program Update

**Loans/Grants Approved as of August 13, 2002**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Total Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>FAP Loans</strong></td>
<td>264</td>
<td>$416,570,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The OWRB’s Financial Assistance Program (FAP), created by the State Legislature in 1979, provides loans for water and wastewater system improvements in Oklahoma. The tremendous popularity of the bond loan program is due, in part, to extended payoff periods of up to 30 years at extremely competitive low-interest rates, averaging approximately 4.762 percent since 1986.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>CWSRF Loans</strong></td>
<td>130</td>
<td>$447,616,443</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) loan program was created in 1988 to provide a renewable financing source for communities to draw upon for their wastewater infrastructure needs. The CWSRF program is Oklahoma’s largest self-supporting wastewater financing effort, providing low-interest loans to communities in need.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>DWSRF Loans</strong></td>
<td>23</td>
<td>$73,856,433</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) loan program is an initiative of the OWRB and Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality to assist municipalities and rural water districts in the construction and improvement of drinking water systems. These projects are often mandated for communities to obtain compliance with increasingly stringent federal standards related to the treatment of drinking water.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>REAP Grants</strong></td>
<td>340</td>
<td>$28,904,595</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Rural Economic Action Plan (REAP) Program was created by the State Legislature in 1996. REAP grants, used for water/wastewater system improvements, target primarily rural communities with populations of 7,000 or less, but priority is afforded to those with fewer than 1,500 inhabitants.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Emergency Grants</strong></td>
<td>488</td>
<td>$28,659,670</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OWRB emergency grants, limited to $100,000, are awarded to correct situations constituting a threat to life, health, and/or property and are an indispensable component of the agency’s financial assistance strategy.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

More information about the OWRB’s Financial Assistance Program can be obtained by calling the OWRB at (405) 530-8800.