

OKLAHOMA Water News

4th Quarter 2011

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2012 Update of the Oklahoma Comprehensive Water Plan

During the final year of development of the 2012 Update of the Oklahoma Comprehensive Water Plan, the most ambitious water planning effort ever undertaken by the state, the OWRB and its planning partners continued to solicit important input from stakeholders, citizens and others with a vested interest in the future of Oklahoma's water resources. Beginning in April, the OWRB initiated a final round of regional feedback and implementation meetings to gather comments and suggestions on the draft Water Plan and its various components. Open to the general public, each meeting included a unique session allowing public water supply providers to verify local infrastructure data and related water supply and demand information collected over four years of OCWP analyses. A second session provided citizens and other stakeholders with an opportunity to contribute comments on draft water policy recommendations, including implementation strategies.

Throughout 2011, OWRB staff and partners assembled a wealth of OCWP technical data and information into 13 Watershed Planning Region Reports. The reports include water supply/demand assessments, future supply challenges, and potential options to secure water for planning basins and regions through the next 50 years and beyond. Considerable attention was given to creating both sensible and functional planning documents, which will serve as indispensable technical resources for water providers, policy makers, and water users in making informed decisions concerning future local and regional water use and management. Following a public review and comment period, each report was modified, corrected, and refined prior to final collective approval of all 13 reports by OWRB members in October.

OWRB members dedicated four monthly meetings to detailed review and discussion of OCWP Water Policy Recommendations—the cornerstone policy product of the OCWP

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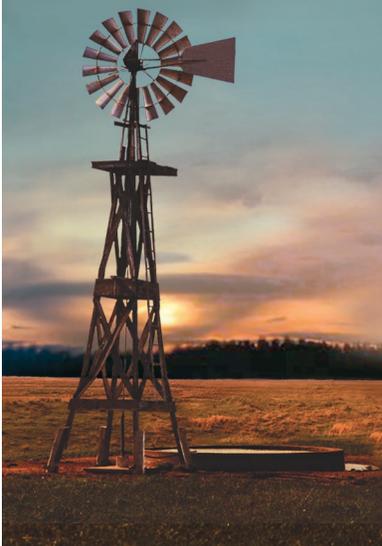
From the Director

As we reflect on a landmark year in water planning and prepare for potentially groundbreaking water management legislation in 2012, we need a clear execution strategy to maintain our current momentum and implement initiatives arising from the 2012 Update of the Oklahoma Comprehensive Water Plan, approved last October. With this in mind, the OCWP's priority and supporting recommendations include specific implementation plans, where applicable, that not only provide assurances that citizens have access to safe and reliable water supplies in the future, but also should help minimize water rights conflicts and related disagreements over water use and protection.

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J. D. Strong, Executive Director
Oklahoma Water Resources Board



From the Director (continued)

From a more general perspective, the Foreword of the *OCWP Executive Report* offers four core factors critical to securing Oklahoma’s water future: infrastructure, data, management, and regional planning.

Related to infrastructure, Oklahoma must provide long-term, affordable financing—beyond what is currently available—to construct and maintain water and sewer systems that furnish safe, clean, and reliable water supplies for its citizens and communities. Failure to act will threaten the state’s future viability and growth, especially in rural areas.

Recognizing that information is the foundation for sound decision-making, the state must not only reestablish its dwindling base of reliable water data but also expand its network of stream gages, monitoring wells, and water quality monitoring sites. Equally critical is the need to upgrade and develop the models and tools necessary to quantify, manage, and allocate surface and groundwater resources with confidence.

While current water management programs have served the state well in developing, utilizing, and protecting water supplies, changing public priorities and additional stress on supplies suggest a more innovative, and in some cases, measured approach in the future. It is clearly time to initiate proactive, systematic, and judicious evaluation of existing water laws and procedures if we hope to maintain the stable and orderly utilization of water so critical to Oklahoma’s economic welfare and quality of life.

Regional planning is the fourth core factor of OCWP strategy and implementation. Most water problems are regional in nature, so it makes sense to solve them based upon local issues and priorities identified by citizens, users, and stakeholders. While statewide water planning has served Oklahoma well and oversight is still required at the state level, the time has come to encourage and formalize regional water planning as the new standard that empowers local citizens, who are more in touch with their unique needs, challenges, and potential solutions.

On our annual Water Day at the State Capitol on February 13, we will formally deliver the long-awaited *2012 OCWP Update* to Governor Fallin and the State Legislature. Concerning this monumental achievement, I have tremendous pride and confidence in the path we have chosen to follow, in the impressive work of staff and our many partners, and in the unassailable process and strong science we have utilized to generate the OCWP. While much has been accomplished in the planning phase, we have merely scratched the surface of what must be done to ensure reliable water to meet the myriad needs of all Oklahomans through 2060 and beyond. With the *2012 OCWP Update* as our road map, and the persevering spirit of my fellow Oklahomans at the wheel, our future looks bright indeed. 💧

Annual Report (continued)

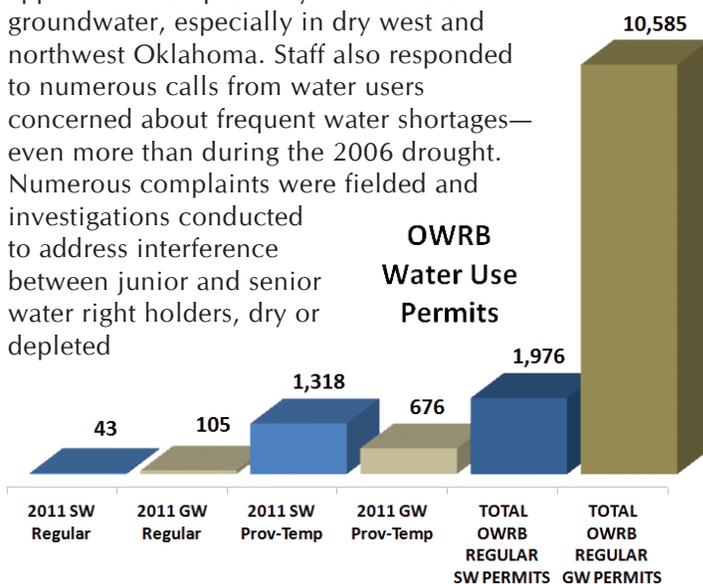
process—culminating from extensive citizen involvement since initiation of the update in 2006. In particular, from June through September, members deliberated, debated, and prioritized recommendations for immediate or prompt implementation and/or legislative consideration. Following formal public comment, the final *OCWP Executive Report*—featuring both priority and supporting recommendations, as well as an extensive summary of technical work—was formally approved by OWRB members on October 17.

The *2012 OCWP Update* was presented to the public at the Governor’s Water Conference and Research Symposium on October 18-19, and will be submitted to the Governor and State Legislature in February 2012.

In June, House Speaker Kris Steele and Senate President Pro Tem Brian Bingman announced formation of the 16-member Joint Legislative Water Committee to review the *2012 OCWP Update* and facilitate the development of long-range water policy for Oklahoma. Numerous meetings were held in the legislative interim where OWRB staff and others were invited to provide information and opinions about ongoing activities and draft OCWP documents. Joint Legislative Water Committee co-chairmen Rep. Phil Richardson and Sen. Brian Crain provided direction for the bipartisan and geographically diverse membership. Committee members and other legislators have indicated that water policy will be a top priority in the upcoming legislative session.

Water Use Permitting

In 2011, the OWRB experienced a considerable increase in water use permit applications, including many from ranchers attempting to keep pasture lands viable for cattle production and from oil and gas producers. Due to drought conditions experienced throughout the state, applicants were primarily interested in groundwater, especially in dry west and northwest Oklahoma. Staff also responded to numerous calls from water users concerned about frequent water shortages—even more than during the 2006 drought. Numerous complaints were fielded and investigations conducted to address interference between junior and senior water right holders, dry or depleted



In 2011, most permits granted were provisional-temporary that authorize relatively short-term water use. Currently, the OWRB has on file 10,585 regular permits appropriating 3,542,600 acre-feet of groundwater and 1,976 regular permits for 2,570,530 ac-ft of surface water.

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creeks, declining water wells, and falling reservoir levels that placed critical strains on crops, livestock, municipal and industrial supplies, and fish populations.

Work began on developing stream water allocation models for the Washita River, North Canadian River, and Verdigris River Systems. These models will allow staff to provide water shortage warnings—based on seniority of water right—to enhance management of available water resources.

Hydrologic Studies

The Garber-Wellington Water Management Study, focusing on the physical properties and future management of central Oklahoma's primary groundwater source, was completed last year and the final report is under review. The Rush Springs Aquifer Study was initiated in 2011 with completion projected in mid-2014. The Rush Springs, also a significant aquifer in the central region of the state, is an important source of irrigation and municipal water supply.



OWRB geologist Jessica Magers measures the groundwater level at the Spencer Mesonet site. The well was installed at the site to collect data for the Garber-Wellington Management Study. This is one of six Mesonet sites statewide with a groundwater observation well.

The OWRB has also contracted with the U.S. Geological Survey to conduct a 20-year update of the groundwater study for the North Canadian River Alluvium and Terrace Groundwater Basin from the Beaver-Harper County line to Lake Overholser at the Canadian-Oklahoma County line. The investigation will determine if there has been any significant depletion in the basin and develop a new groundwater flow model. Work is anticipated to be completed by late 2013.

The Arbuckle-Simpson Aquifer Study was completed in 2011. This year, the OWRB will consider approval and implementation of a new maximum annual yield that will provide for local use of this vital water supply while, at the same time, protecting springs and streams in the region.

Floodplain Management

The OWRB continues to assist communities in adopting new Flood Insurance Rate Maps through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Map Modernization program. Updated FIRM maps have been issued for 12 counties and 65 participating communities in Oklahoma. Staff also participated in FEMA RISKMap Discovery projects for the Lower North Canadian River Basin and Grand Lake River Basin. Meetings were held with communities and the public to collect data and information for use in identifying areas that may be eligible for mapping, mitigation, and compliance projects. The OWRB continues to train accredited floodplain administrators in Oklahoma's 386 participating National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) member communities. With assistance from the Oklahoma Floodplain Managers Association, the OWRB conducted 18 training opportunities in 2011.

The OWRB is also an active participant with FEMA in the Cooperating Technical Partnership (CTP) Program, an innovative approach to fostering working partnerships between FEMA and participating NFIP communities, regional agencies, state agencies, tribes, and universities in the FEMA flood hazard mapping program. The OWRB is currently assisting the communities of Broken Arrow and El Reno with their flood hazard mapping needs.

Well Driller and Pump Contractor Program

During 2011, the OWRB Well Drilling and Pump Installer staff maintained licenses for 375 licensed Well Drilling and Pump Installer firms and 663 licensed operators. The OWRB licensed 19 new firms and 63 new operators during this period. The OWRB also received reports for 2,693 water wells, 1,846 monitoring wells/geotechnical borings, and 1,316 heat exchange wells completed this year. Staff maintain a well log database of more than 140,000 well completion, boring, geothermal, and plugging records that are accessible to the public.

Water Quality

The OWRB approved revised Water Quality Standards and Implementation Rules in March 2011 (subsequently approved by the Legislature and Oklahoma governor), which revised protocols for assessing waters of the state for the Clean Water Act "303(d)" list of impaired waters.

As part of the OWRB's Beneficial Use Monitoring Program (BUMP), 40 lakes and 117 stream/river segments were sampled by staff during 2011. Collections included water quality, shoreline, and riverine habitat, fish, algae, and macro-invertebrates. Monitoring included both ambient trend lakes and river sites as well as probabilistic lake and stream monitoring locations. BUMP lake sampling underwent a thorough reevaluation and modification to incorporate a probabilistic sampling approach to maximize benefits and efficiencies in the program while reducing expenses. Monitoring staff are currently partnering with EPA to conduct the National Lakes Assessment with field work initiating this summer. This

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national study is designed to establish comparable lake conditions between states to facilitate standardized assessment.

Streams staff are also nearing completion on the third year of the statewide streams probabilistic program. Additionally, through an ongoing successful partnership with the Grand River Dam Authority, the OWRB continued dissolved oxygen monitoring on both Grand and Hudson Lakes to support Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) relicensing, and will begin installation and monitoring work in 2012 on W.R. Holway Reservoir to support its relicensing.

In addition to collecting water level measurements in the statewide Mass Measurement Program's statewide network of more than 500 wells, the OWRB's groundwater monitoring team assessed Swine Licensed Managed Feeding Operations compliance in an additional 550 wells through a continuing partnership with the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry. Staff also acquired a wealth of historical groundwater quality data—now available to the public—to support the Garber-Wellington aquifer study.

In response to the potential for severe impacts resulting from toxin-producing algae, OWRB staff are working with various state, local, and volunteer monitoring entities to assess the risk from harmful algae blooms.

The OWRB continues to participate in the National Flowing Waters Study. Sampling on numerous Wadeable and non-wadeable streams are providing data to assess environmental integrity of the waters.

Lakes and Special Studies staff continued to work cooperatively with the Central Oklahoma Master Conservancy District to monitor and improve water quality in Lake Thunderbird where a new system to oxygenate lake water was implemented. The OWRB



More than 4,000 wetland plants were established at Lake Eucha on 3,200 square feet of floating islands consisting of recycled plastics. These plants will provide valuable habitat for birds, fish, and aquatic insects while reducing nutrients in the water column.

and other agencies are also finalizing cooperative development of a total maximum daily load (TMDL) calculation to address Thunderbird water quality impairments, including high turbidity, algae, and low dissolved oxygen.

Lake revegetation projects included the establishment of more than 4,000 wetland plants at Eucha on 3,200 square feet of floating islands consisting of recycled plastic and 820 aquatic plants placed in enclosed pens and cages at Fort Cobb. Work continued at Stanley Draper, Grand, and Hudson Lakes to establish and spread the growth of native plants that serve as an inexpensive yet innovative method to combat erosion and suspended sediment, reduce nutrients, and provide valuable habitat for birds, fish, and aquatic insects. The OWRB also works to educate lake managers on the many benefits of establishing aquatic plants.

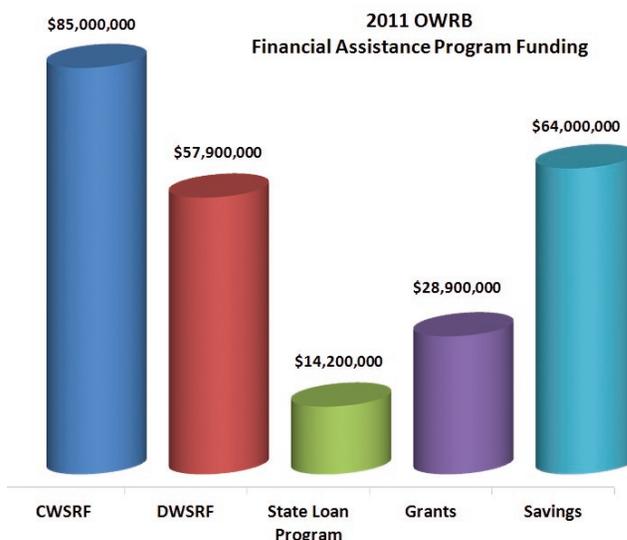
In a joint water resource and water quality study, the OWRB is cooperating with Oklahoma State University and the Oklahoma Conservation Commission on the Oxbow Lakes Project, an ongoing effort to identify and characterize oxbow wetlands in Oklahoma. The objective is to catalogue and initiate an assessment scheme for this unique water resource.

Phosphorus Standard Review

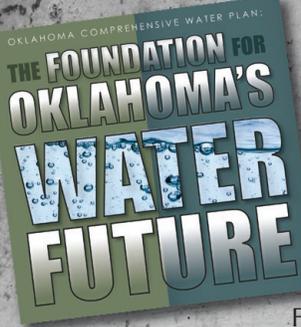
Consistent with the 2003 interstate agreement with Arkansas, OWRB staff initiated the ten-year review of Oklahoma's .037 milligram/liter phosphorus standard for Oklahoma's six Scenic Rivers. A technical advisory group consisting of state, federal, and tribal officials and point and nonpoint source dischargers from both states was formed to evaluate the current appropriateness of the numerical standard based on the latest, best scientific information available. The reevaluation will be completed later this year.

Financial Assistance

In 2011, the OWRB'S Financial Assistance Program approved 50 grants and loans totaling more than \$186 million to address water and wastewater infrastructure



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32nd Annual Oklahoma Governor's Water Conference

On October 18-19, the OWRB hosted the 32nd annual Oklahoma Governor's Water Conference in Norman. After opening remarks from Oklahoma Lieutenant Governor Todd Lamb, keynote speaker Charles Fishman, shared stories from his

new book, *The Big Thirst*, focusing on innovative solutions to local water problems. Fishman emphasized that water problems are local problems, not global problems, and that the solutions need to be local as well. Serving as emcee for the conference was Linda Lambert, OWRB Chairman.



Above: Sec. Gary Sherrer, House Speaker Kris Steele, and Col. Michael Teague.



Above: OWRB Executive Director J.D. Strong introduces "The Value of Water" panel speakers (left to right) Patricia Horn, Richard Hatcher, Mark Nichols, Bill Sims, and Bob Portiss.

Also during opening comments, OWRB Executive Director, J.D. Strong, announced the completion of the 2012 Update of the Oklahoma Comprehensive Water Plan (OCWP). Six OCWP panels were held during the two days culminating with a Joint Legislative Water Committee Open Meeting hosted by Sen. Brian Crain and Rep. Phil Richardson.



Linda Lambert

The conference boasted 53 sponsors and 30 exhibitors, including all of the state's most prominent water-related agencies and organizations.



Charles Fishman



Kris Steele



James Lankford



Todd Lamb

2011 Oklahoma Water Pioneers

R. Thomas Lay served as the first attorney and General Counsel for the OWRB specializing in water rights, water pollution, water resource development projects, dam safety, and related environmental matters. Lay was instrumental in establishing the legal groundwork that enabled the success of the OWRB's Financial Assistance Program. He has been a long-time successful advocate of a broad range of water issues and is considered a true expert on Oklahoma water law.



Rick Smith joined the OWRB in 1978 as an Economist in the Planning Division, where he became one of the principal authors of the first Oklahoma Comprehensive Water Plan. During his tenure at the OWRB, Smith structured and developed the basic loan programs now offered by the OWRB's Financial Assistance Program. Since then, he has advocated the OWRB's financing options through his firm, Municipal Finance Services, Inc., which now represents more than 100 Oklahoma cities and towns.



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needs for Oklahoma communities and rural water/sewer districts. The Program closed 3 bond issues, two in April for the State Revolving Fund in the amounts of \$85 million for Clean Water, and \$57.9 million for Drinking Water, and one in June for the State Loan Program in the amount of \$14.2 million. Financing via OWRB saved communities approximately \$64 million over traditional financing avenues.

The OCWP Infrastructure Finance Committee was created last year to address the \$82 billion in current and future water and wastewater infrastructure needs projected throughout the OCWP's 50-year planning horizon. The Committee, consisting of professionals in both the public and private sector that play integral roles in state water and wastewater infrastructure financing, are investigating options to help communities deal with the ever-increasing need for state water and wastewater project funding.

Legal Developments

On September 7, 2011, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit issued two decisions involving attempts by water users outside of Oklahoma to obtain authorization to secure water within Oklahoma.

In Tarrant Regional Water District v. Herrmann, the Tarrant Regional Water District (TRWD) had sought declaratory and injunctive remedies against Oklahoma laws that placed conditions on the use of compacted stream water outside of the state. The district court had granted summary judgment and dismissal in favor of OWRB members. On appeal, the Court of Appeals affirmed the district court on several grounds. The Court of Appeals held that the federal Red River Compact—a standing agreement between the states of

Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, and Louisiana—provides Congressional consent and gives the Oklahoma Legislature latitude to impose conditions on stream water apportioned to Oklahoma under the compact. The Court further held that TRWD lacks standing to assert claims for groundwater located in Oklahoma because, among other things, the statutes challenged by TRWD do not apply to groundwater. On January 19, 2012, TRWD filed a final appeal with the United States Supreme Court seeking review of the Court of Appeals decision.

In City of Hugo v. Nichols, the City of Hugo, Oklahoma and the City of Irving, Texas had sought declaratory and injunctive relief against the application of Oklahoma statutes governing stream water that restricted use of such water out-of-state. Hugo and Irving had entered into a contract for sale of water to Irving for Irving's use in Texas. Earlier, the district court had granted summary judgment to the OWRB, concluding that the Red River Compact authorized Oklahoma to enact the challenged laws. On appeal, the Court of Appeals vacated the district court's order and remanded the case to dismiss for lack of federal jurisdiction. The Court of Appeals ruled that neither Hugo nor Irving had standing. The Court's opinion held Hugo, under the doctrine of political subdivision standing, lacked standing to invoke a dormant Commerce Clause claim against the OWRB (i.e., Hugo's parent state). The Court further held that Irving's claimed injury would not be redressed by invalidating the challenged laws, and Irving lacked standing because Irving's standing was premised solely on its contract with Hugo. On January 4, 2012, Hugo filed a final appeal with the United States Supreme Court seeking review of the Court of Appeals decision.

On August 18, 2011, the Chickasaw Nation and Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma filed a lawsuit in the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Oklahoma. As subsequently amended, the lawsuit names as defendants Gov. Mary Fallin, the members and Executive Director of the OWRB, and the City of Oklahoma City and the Oklahoma City Water Utility Trust (OCWUT). The lawsuit alleges the Indian Nations have federally-protected rights to the water within a 22-county territory in southeastern Oklahoma. Among other things, the lawsuit seeks (1) declaratory judgments against any action by the OWRB on a pending application by Oklahoma City and OCWUT for a permit to use stream water from Sardis Reservoir in southeastern Oklahoma, or any other withdrawal or export of water from the area at issue, unless and until there is initiated a general stream adjudication that satisfies the requirements of the federal law known as the McCarran Amendment; and (2) permanent injunctions against any such action unless and until a general stream adjudication that satisfies the McCarran Amendment is completed. In December, the OWRB authorized its counsel to institute such McCarran Amendment adjudication proceedings, if necessary, to fairly and accurately determine all rights to the use of water in the Kiamichi, Clear Boggy, and Muddy Boggy stream systems. 💧

OWRB FY 2011 Expenditures & FY 2012 Budget

Activity Name	FY 11 Expended	FY 12 Budgeted
Administration	2,839,028	3,252,680
Water Quality	2,720,623	3,238,392
Financial Assistance	2,523,447	3,691,737
Planning & Management	2,794,412	4,849,188
Secretary of Environment	<u>7,373,573</u>	<u>15,137,064</u>
Totals	\$18,251,083	\$30,169,061
Fund Name		
General Appropriations	3,564,668	4,241,494
Drillers & Installers Indemnity Fund	0	50,000
OWRB Revolving Fund	0	2,273,954
Rural Economic Action Plan Fund	72,966	0
Water Resources Revolving Fund	476,059	932,836
Drillers & Installers Regulation Fund	12,500	20,500
Water Infrastructure Dev Fund	1,168,979	1,363,852
Federal Funds - OWRB	1,256,278	2,739,284
Federal Funds - OSE	7,036,006	10,976,616
Environmental Remediation Fund	0	3,961,308
USGS Cooperative Agreement	337,188	399,552
Interagency Reimbursement Fund	1,727,729	0
ARRA Fund	759,651	15,000
DW Loan Administration Fund	490,170	1,145,823
CW Loan Administration Fund	1,115,546	1,548,842
CW Loan Fund	<u>233,341</u>	<u>500,000</u>
Totals	\$18,251,083	\$30,169,061

Drought Update

Reservoir Storage

As of January 10, fifteen reservoirs (of thirty-one selected major federal reservoirs across Oklahoma, listed at right) are operating at less than full capacity, according to information from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Tulsa District); fourteen reservoirs have experienced lake level decreases since November 28.

Palmer Drought Severity Index

According to the latest Palmer Drought Severity Index (see table below), seven of nine climate divisions in Oklahoma are currently experiencing drought conditions. However, no regions are even considered in the moderate drought category.

Standardized Precipitation Index

The latest monthly Standardized Precipitation Index (see table below) indicates near long-term dryness in all but the Northeast and Southeast climate divisions. The Northwest region is in the extremely dry category over the past nine to twelve months.



Storage in Selected Oklahoma Lakes & Reservoirs (January 10, 2012)		
LAKE	Change in Elevation (feet) 11/28/11-1/10/12	Current Flood Control Storage (acre-feet)
North Central		
Fort Supply	0.79	-3,565
Great Salt Plains	1.66	1,040
Kaw	3.42	2,438
Northeast		
Birch	-0.24	-8,335
Copan	1.21	3,508
Fort Gibson	-0.31	6,948
Grand	0.00	881
Hudson	-0.84	5,414
Hulah	2.43	3,010
Keystone	0.12	9,974
Oologah	1.68	-9,612
Skiatook	-0.53	-115,069
West Central		
Canton	0.13	-69,546
Foss	-0.30	-40,089
Central		
Arcadia	0.00	675
Heyburn	0.07	33
Thunderbird	-0.21	-28,250
East Central		
Eufaula	0.85	-133,426
Tenkiller	-0.65	7,138
Southwest		
Fort Cobb	0.15	-12,750
Lugert-Altus	0.01	-109,673
Tom Steed	-0.28	-37,158
South Central		
Arbuckle	-0.27	-10,134
McGee Creek	0.32	-16,303
Texoma	0.96	-251,278
Waurika	-0.37	-52,112
Southeast		
Broken Bow	-0.97	808
Hugo	-5.69	5,234
Pine Creek	-8.35	896
Sardis	1.42	4,232
Wister	-13.97	2,174

CLIMATE DIVISION	Standardized Precipitation Index (through December 2011)				Palmer Drought Severity Index
	3-month	6-month	9-month	12-month	January 7, 2012
Northwest (1)	Near Normal	Moderately Dry	Extremely Dry	Extremely Dry	Mild Drought
North Central (2)	Moderately Wet	Near Normal	Near Normal	Moderately Dry	Incipient Moist Spell
Northeast (3)	Near Normal	Near Normal	Near Normal	Near Normal	Near Normal
West Central (4)	Moderately Wet	Near Normal	Very Dry	Very Dry	Mild Drought
Central (5)	Moderately Wet	Near Normal	Moderately Dry	Moderately Dry	Mild Drought
East Central (6)	Near Normal	Near Normal	Near Normal	Moderately Dry	Near Normal
Southwest (7)	Very Wet	Near Normal	Very Dry	Very Dry	Mild Drought
South Central (8)	Near Normal	Near Normal	Moderately Dry	Very Dry	Mild Drought
Southeast (9)	Very Wet	Near Normal	Near Normal	Near Normal	Near Normal

For more drought information, and to obtain updated information on Oklahoma's drought and moisture conditions, go to www.owrb.ok.gov/supply/drought/drought_index.php.

www.owrb.ok.gov

*Linda Lambert, Chairman • Ford Drummond, Vice Chairman • Joe Taron, Secretary
Tom Buchanan • Ed Fite • Marilyn Feaver • Rudy Herrmann • Kenneth K. Knowles • Richard Sevenoaks*

Enhancing the quality of life for Oklahomans by managing, protecting and improving the state's water resources to ensure clean, safe, and reliable water supplies, a strong economy, and a healthy environment.



4th Quarter 2011

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FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM UPDATE

Loans & Grants Approved as of January 1, 2012

FAP Loans—329 for \$744,680,000

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 very competitive interest rates, averaging approximately 4.762 percent since 1986.

CWSRF Loans—249 for \$1,047,921,629

The Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) loan program was created in 1988 to provide a renewable financing source for communities to use 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.

DWSRF Loans—135 for \$743,649,642

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.

REAP Grants—568 for \$50,447,120

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 1,750 inhabitants.

Emergency Grants—564 for \$33,666,177

Emergency grants, limited to \$100,000, are awarded to correct situations constituting a threat to life, health, or property and are an indispensable component of the agency's financial assistance strategy.

Drought Response Program Grants—2 totaling \$200,000

Through the OWRB's Drought Response Program, funding is available for communities in most dire need during state drought emergencies declared by the Governor. A maximum of \$300,000 is diverted from existing OWRB Emergency Grant funds to establish the Program.

Total Loans/Grants: 1,847 for \$2,620,564,568 Estimated Savings: \$917,060,090

Applicants eligible for water/wastewater project financial assistance vary according to the specific program's purpose and requirements, but include towns and other municipalities with proper legal authority, various districts established under Title 82 of Oklahoma Statutes (rural water, master/water conservancy, rural sewage, and irrigation districts), counties, public works authorities, and/or school districts. Applications for agency financial assistance programs are evaluated individually by agency staff. Those meeting specific program requirements are recommended by staff for approval at monthly meetings of the nine-member Water Board.

**For more information, call 405-530-8800
or go to www.owrb.ok.gov/financing.**