

# Water Quality Update

*Newsletter of Extension Water Quality Programs*

*January 2003*

## ***New CAFO Rules***

The USEPA recently released their final copy of the new regulations concerning Confined Animal Feeding Operations. OCES Extension Animal Waste Specialist Doug Hamilton indicated that some of the more controversial issues that were present in the initial version of these rules in December 2000 are not included in this final draft. However, there are some major changes that will affect Oklahoma producers.

First of all, the ability to declare no intent to discharge has been removed. All farms that meet the numerical criteria now must apply for a CAFO permit, period. The new rules also include dry litter operations, which was not the case previously. In addition, CAFOs will now report directly to the permitting authority in each state. Since both ODA and DEQ have jurisdiction in this area, exactly which agency that will be in Oklahoma is yet to be determined.

More detailed information is available from EPA at <http://www.cfpub.epa.gov/npdes>, including downloadable factsheets. Dr. Hamilton suggests that Extension educators desiring to have an informational meeting in their county should plan on scheduling them after March 1. The details of how Oklahoma will handle the permitting process should be more concrete by then. He is available at 405-744-7089 or [dhamilt@okstate.edu](mailto:dhamilt@okstate.edu) to answer any questions you may have.

## ***New Water Quality Team Member***

Perhaps "New Title for WQ Team Member" would be more appropriate. Dr. LaDonna McCowan has been working as a Research Assistant on various projects with the WQ office. She was recently hired as Assistant State Specialist for Urban and Minority Environmental Programs. Dr. McCowan earned her doctorate from the OSU Environmental Sciences program in 1999, a nice complement to her 1996 Master's degree from OSU Biosystems & Agricultural Engineering. She will be managing two 319 projects: "*Nonpoint Source Education Program for Stillwater Creek Watershed*" and "*Erosion Control on Rural Unimproved Roads in the Stillwater Creek Watershed*." Dr. McCowan hopes to initiate some innovative new programs in the near future to address the natural resources and drinking water issues of under-served and minority communities of Oklahoma. She would welcome the opportunity to discuss ideas and suggestions to help increase Extension involvement in these areas. She can be reached on campus at 405-744-7532 or [mladonn@okstate.edu](mailto:mladonn@okstate.edu).

## ***Water Quality Program Planning Meeting***

Major changes have taken place in the WQ program since the last planning meeting over a year ago. Dr. Michael Smolen, WQ Program Coordinator, is organizing a February meeting to discuss new funding, programming options, and research emphases. Please contact him at 405-744-5653 or [smolen@okstate.edu](mailto:smolen@okstate.edu) with any ideas or suggestions you have, or to be put on the list to attend, as well as date, time, and location that would be best for you.

## ***Two Project Reports Published***

The WQ office recently published final reports for two 319(h) Nonpoint Source Pollution Projects. Task 900, “*Wellhead Protection Education for Communities and Homeowners*” focused on six small communities in Pottawatomie, Seminole, Hughes, and Pontotoc Counties. The project provided technical expertise to help each of the six municipalities develop a community plan for protection of their drinking water supply. As part of the project output, a comprehensive wellhead protection document delineated wellhead protection areas in each community, identified potential sources of contaminants, and prioritized the risk associated with each source. To help implement the project findings, an action plan was formulated for each community. The report is available online at [http://biosystems.okstate.edu/waterquality/Publications/Wellhead\\_Final\\_Report.pdf](http://biosystems.okstate.edu/waterquality/Publications/Wellhead_Final_Report.pdf).

Task 1100, “*Demonstration of Best Management Practices in the Salt Fork Watershed*,” was an education project focused on the agricultural communities in Alfalfa and Woods Counties. The project promoted BMPs for agricultural production including soil testing and other nutrient management planning, no-till, and alternative pest control methods, including the use of musk thistle weevils to combat that invasive species. Project survey information indicated that many producers were already utilizing BMP methods, but also showed increases in improved nutrient management (as indicated by different management for different fields), usage of no-till methods, and willingness to consider streamside buffer areas. The report can be accessed online at [http://biosystems.okstate.edu/waterquality/Publications/Salt\\_Fork\\_Final\\_Report.pdf](http://biosystems.okstate.edu/waterquality/Publications/Salt_Fork_Final_Report.pdf).

## ***Two Posters Presented at National Meeting***

Four OCES WQ team members attended the 2003 USDA-CSREES National Water Quality Coordinator’s Conference in Tucson, AZ. 4-H Extension Program Specialist Billie Chambers, Area Water Quality Specialist Mitch Fram, Assistant State Specialist for Urban and Minority Environmental Programs LaDonna McCowan, and WQ Coordinator Michael Smolen all made the trip to the meeting in January. They developed two posters, with the technical assistance of Environmental Science MS student Cory Peranich, for the conference. One poster described the ongoing Green Country Watershed Education project and another detailed the national award winning Trailer-mounted Stream Hydrology Model project. Chambers delivered a presentation on the Stream Trailer program that was very well received by attendees. Opportunities exist for Extension Educators wishing to present water quality program information at next year’s meeting, scheduled for Tampa, FL. Contact Dr. Smolen for more information (405-744-5653, [smolen@okstate.edu](mailto:smolen@okstate.edu)). To view the posters online, visit: [http://biosystems.okstate.edu/waterquality/Presentations/Tucson/Green\\_Country\\_poster.pdf](http://biosystems.okstate.edu/waterquality/Presentations/Tucson/Green_Country_poster.pdf) [http://biosystems.okstate.edu/waterquality/Presentations/Tucson/Stream\\_trailer\\_poster.pdf](http://biosystems.okstate.edu/waterquality/Presentations/Tucson/Stream_trailer_poster.pdf)

Michael D. Smolen, Coordinator  
OCES Water Quality Programs

Timothy L. Propst, Editor  
*Water Quality Update*

*For more information, please contact Pat Bridger at 405-744-5653 or [bridger@okstate.edu](mailto:bridger@okstate.edu)*