

Water Quality UPDATE

Newsletter of Extension Water Quality Programs

December 2003

Meetings, Meetings, Meetings

This fall has been full of water quality information sessions.

On October 19-22, nine members of the OCES Water Quality team traveled to Ruidoso, New Mexico for the **Southern Region Extension Water Quality Conference.** The group presented two posters (**The Oklahoma State Water Quality Program** and **The Green Country Watershed Education Project**) and four talks:

- Blue Thumb Volunteer Monitoring Program
 Presented by Mitch Fram
- OK Litter Market
 Presented by Jason Hollenback
- Youth and Minority Drinking Water Programs
 Presented by LaDonna McCowan
- Creek on Wheels
 Presented by Alan VanDeventer

The team hauled one of the Stream Trailers to the event, reinforcing Alan VanDeventer's talk. In addition, three youths and the Director of REYAP (*Retired Educators for Youth Agricultural Programs*) accompanied LaDonna McCowan on the trip. All the team members benefited from workshops, networking, and the opportunity to share the latest news and methods for improving water quality education programs.

Oklahoma Water 2003, a symposium cosponsored by the OSU Environmental Institute and the Oklahoma Section of the American Water Resources Association, was held on October 29-30 in Stillwater. The workshop brought together water resource professionals from around the state to present their research and discuss future needs. Topics included climate studies from the USDA-ARS at El Reno, the Arbuckle-Simpson aquifer, phosphorus issues, and water quality education.

Water Quality Related In-service Training

CCA Advanced Training will be held on campus January 7-8, 2004. Eight to ten Extension Specialists will be presenting information on Soil & Water Management, Nutrient Management, Crop Management and Pest Management.

Some non-traditional concerns will be addressed at two of the workshop sessions. The first is devoted to familiarizing attendees with useful online resources. Instructors will show how to take advantage of these time-saving tools. The second is a professional development session designed to meet this year's new expanded CCA program requirements. To reserve your spot, contact Ag Conferences at 405.744.6489.

January 22, 2004 - **Storm Water Phase II Inservice Training** will be held at the Chandler Fair Grounds (replaces OKC and Tulsa). Educators from urbanizing communities, particularly Metro-OKC and Tulsa, as well as the Lawton, Stillwater, Bartlesville, and Muskogee areas are encouraged to attend. Contact Mike Smolen (405.744.5653, smolen@okstate.edu) for more information.

OCES Water Quality Coordinator, Mike Smolen, presented a talk on *Using the P Index Approach to Protect Surface Water Quality*, and NE District Water Quality Specialist Mitch Fram spoke on *OSU Extension Education Impact on Protection and Management of Water Resources*. OSU Biosystems & Ag Engineering Professor Glenn Brown, chair for the event, said "total attendance was approximately 80 people – not bad turnout for the first year of an annual event."

The symposium included a discussion of water research needs for the state, to be used by the OSU Center for Water Research. Everyone is invited to contribute to this ongoing discussion by filling in a very brief, anonymous online questionnaire.

Register your suggestions at http://environ.okstate.edu/ei/ucwr/research-survey.

All Things Water, 2003 Oklahoma Governor's Water Quality Conference was held November 4-5, in Oklahoma City. The OCES Water Quality Program sent Coordinator Mike Smolen and Jody House, Johnston County Extension Educator, Ag/4-H Youth Dev, to the event. The controversy surrounding property rights and usage of water from the Arbuckle-Simpson aquifer was a primary topic of discussion at the conference, and the main reason House wanted to attend. The aquifer feeds both the Blue River and Pennington Creek, water source for Tishomingo, the Johnston County seat. "I sit right on top of this issue here. It affects me personally, because I'm a resident of the area, and as an Extension Educator, because whatever happens with this will impact the community and the county." House said the conference provided him good information that he will be able to pass along to his clientele.

December Landscape Maintenance Schedule, adapted from OCES Factsheet F-6408

- November 15 to March 15 is the best time to prune most trees and shrubs. (F-6409)
- Drain oil and gasoline from power equipment before winter storage.
 (<u>Dispose of these materials at a</u> <u>collection center!</u>) Drain and store water hoses and wrap hydrants. Clean up all tools. Coat metal surfaces with a thin film of oil to prevent rust.
- Remove diseased plant material from the landscape to reduce disease problems next year.



- Continue mowing cool-season lawns on a regular basis. (F-6420)
- Remove leaves from cool-season grasses or mow with a mulching mower. (F-6420)
- Continue to control broadleaf weeds in well established warm or cool-season lawns with a postemergent broadleaf weed killer. (F-6421)
- Irrigate all plantings at least 24 hours before hard-freezing weather if soil is dry. (F-6404)

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