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SEARCH INSTITUTE

SEPTEMBER 1994 ♦ VOLUME 4 NUMBER 2

H₂O NEWS

LINKING OREGON'S WATER RESEARCH AND EDUCATION

OWRRI Faces Extinction

Congress Debates Funding of Water Resources Research Institutes

The Clinton Administration's 1995-96 budget proposed the elimination of nearly \$6 million in federal funding for the Water Resources Research Institute program. This funding provides the base support for 54 water institutes including Oregon Water Resources Research Institute.

This program was initially established by Congress through the Water Resources Research Act of 1964 and reauthorized in 1990. The core federal funding is used to support research, training, technical assistance, and education and must be matched at a level of 2:1 by non-federal funds. The program is presently administered the by United States Geological Survey.

The House appropriation bill followed the President's lead in proposing to eliminate funding for the WRRRI program, but added approximately \$3 million for competitive research related to water resource issues. A poll of institutes showed that about 40% of the institutes would be eliminated under this scenario. OWRRI would be eliminated because of a lack of state support to replace the federal base funding.

The Senate appropriation bill was amended to add in the full support of nearly \$6 million of federal funding. The assistance given by Senator Hatfield in this effort was absolutely crucial. The differences between the Senate and House appropriation bills are still being worked out in the appropriation conference committee. The present prediction is that a budget somewhere between the House and Senate version will be adopted which would mean a dramatic reduction of support for OWRRI.

The National Institutes for Water Resources (NIWR) and the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges (NASULGC) are continuing to interact with Congress concerning the appropriation. The works of Steven Gloss (Wyoming Water Research Center) and Henry Vaux (former director of California Water Resources Center) were essential for documenting the success of the institute program.

What have we learned out of all this? There has been a political shift in Washington to transfer programs that benefit states to the states. Many of these programs will be eliminated in states like Oregon that are facing further reductions in governmental programs. Keeping highly beneficial programs like OWRRI alive will take a continued vigilance of the Congressional funding process. Unfortunately, such vigilance detracts us from our original objective of serving the water resources needs of the State of Oregon.

We will keep you posted as to the outcome of the Congressional appropriation battle.

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Streambank and Restoration Conference

**SPECIAL RATES
FOR H₂O
READERS!**

September 22-24, 1994
Red Lion Hotel-Columbia River
Portland, Oregon

Registration:

(You must mention H₂O when Registering)

\$135 (postmarked before September 16)

\$175 (postmarked after September 16)

For More Information Contact:

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Oregon State University
210 Strand Agricultural Hall
Corvallis, OR 97331
Phone: (503) 737-4022
FAX: (503) 737-2735

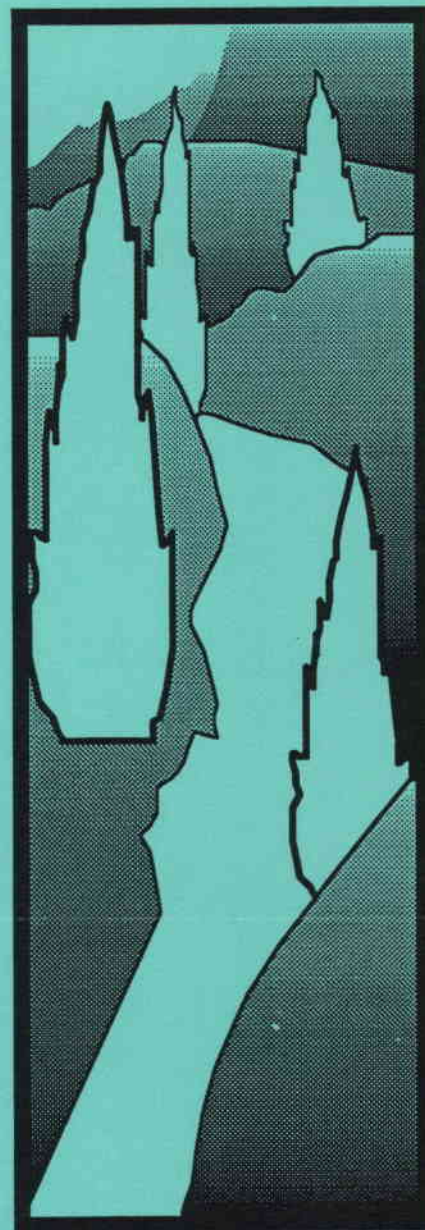
There are still spots available for OWRRI's Streambank Protection and Restoration Conference entitled *Biological Methods to Stabilize Streambanks — From Theory to Practice*. The conference is co-sponsored by the Soil Conservation Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers - Portland District, Governor's Watershed Enhancement Board, Oregon Water Resources Department, California Water Resources Center, Idaho Water Resources Research Institute, State of Washington Water Research Center, Oregon State University's Department of Bioresource Engineering, Civil Engineering, and Forestry, and Portland State University Department of Civil Engineering.

The two day conference will consist of break-out sessions and panel discussions. Panel and break-out sessions will cover such topics as:

- ◆ *Why are Streambanks Degrading?*
- ◆ *How to Determine When Bioengineering Techniques Are the Answer*
- ◆ *Starting Points and Strategies Using Model Restoration Projects*
- ◆ *Proactive Regulation and Permit Processes*
- ◆ *Specific Soil Bioengineering Techniques*

Speakers will include James Karr, Director of the University of Washington Institute for Environmental Studies, Robbin Sotir, Robbin B. Sotir and Associates, Russ Peterson, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Frank Reckendorf, SCS, West National Tech Center, Charley Dewberry, Pacific Rivers Council, and Lon Mikkelsen, Inter-Fluve, Inc.

The purpose of this conference is to look at the importance of protecting natural systems. In addition, the program will examine streams and streambanks that are in trouble or have been altered, and investigate



restoration methods of natural dynamic ecosystem processes.

A Saturday field tour to Johnson Creek and Vancouver Salmon Creek is also scheduled, but space is limited. The field tour will cover soil bioengineering. It is a method which uses specific live native plant materials as its main structural component. Live plant materials (cut imported branches) are tamped or placed on the ground or in trenches in such a manner that they serve as erosion and sedimentation controlling devices. They are intended to grow and assist in land stabilization and vegetative naturalization.

The Seventh Annual James A. Vomocil Conference is being held October 25-26, 1994 at the LaSells Stewart Center, Oregon State University, Corvallis, Oregon. Sponsored by the Oregon State University Extension Services and the Oregon Water Resources Research Institute, the theme for this year's conference is "Willamette River Basin: Today's Water Policy Issues, Tomorrow's Reality."

The 1994 James A. Vomocil Water Quality Conference was designed to bring together those concerned with the science and policy of the Willamette River. As concerned citizens we have the opportunity to understand that the science is inexact and that the policy issues have alternate solutions. Speakers were selected to bring together the best science available with the most articulate representatives of the various policy perspectives. In addition, we hope that you, our audience, will bring inquisitive minds and a sense of adventure as we take some first steps into the future on the Willamette Basin.

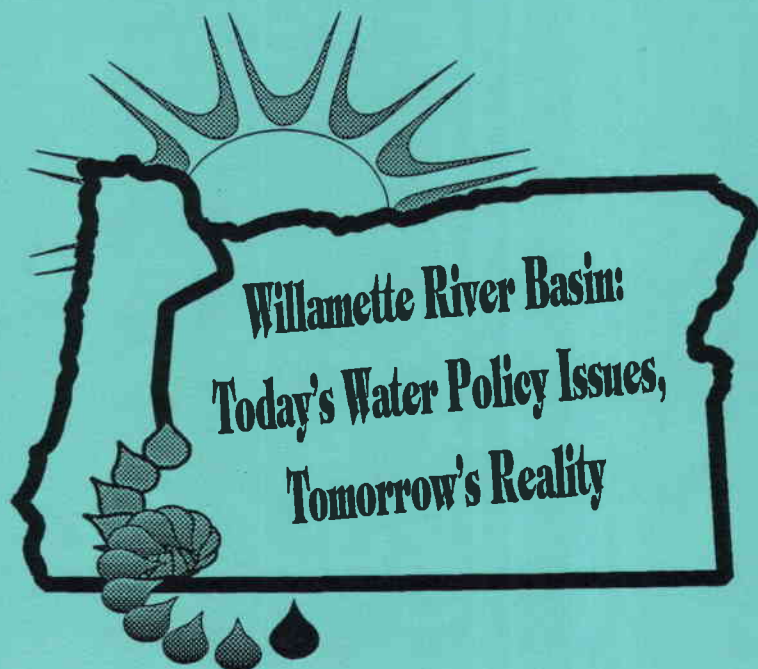
Speakers will include Patricia Benner, OSU Department of Fisheries and Wildlife, Dennis

Lynch, U.S. Geological Survey, Steven G. Ellis, Tetra Tech, Bill Gaffi, Unified Sewerage Agency, and Charles Collins, Water Use Coordinator, U.S. Geological Survey.

Topics under discussion will include:

- ♦ *The Willamette Landscape: Yesterday and Today*
- ♦ *The Challenge of the Willamette: Water Allocation Needs for Instream Uses and for Withdrawal*
- ♦ *The Challenge of the Willamette: Water Quality Management for Multiple Uses.*
- ♦ *The Future as Perceived – Where Do We Go and How Do We Get There?*

Jim Vomocil, for whom the conference is named, is a recently retired Extension Specialist with a driving commitment to make water information accessible to the entire public impacted by water management decisions. The Annual Water Quality Conference was created in the pursuance of that objective.



Seventh Annual James A. Vomocil Conference

October 25-26, 1994
Oregon State University
LaSells Stewart Center
Corvallis, Oregon

Registration:

\$40 (before October 5, 1994)
\$55 (after October 5, 1994)

For More Information Contact:

OWRRI
Oregon State University
210 Strand Agricultural Hall
Corvallis, OR 97331
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Community Involvement Highlights

The Oregon Groundwater Community Involvement Program is a joint project between OWRRI and the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). In the last issue of *H₂O News* I described our program and introduced "Groundwater Connections."

In May, the Community Involvement Program and OWRRI organized two events in honor of National Drinking Water Week. With help from the Corvallis League of Women Voters we co-sponsored "Groundwater Protection - A National Teleconference," a live satellite broadcast from Washington, D.C. A panel of local water experts answered audience questions, and OSU Extension's Home-A-Syst Program and Corvallis Public Works Department staffed exhibits.

The second event, a free Well-Water Nitrate Testing for Benton and Linn Counties, was a big success, with twelve volunteers testing nearly 250 water samples. Benton County Master Gardeners and Philomath High School students volunteered, and DEQ and Lane County Extension assisted.

In August, we conducted a nitrate testing event at the Crook County Fair (Prineville) in collaboration with Crook County Extension. Public response was excellent and 90 samples were tested. Volunteer assistance was provided by the City of Prineville. A groundwater forum is being planned for Prineville in September.

The purpose of this newsletter is to highlight what communities are doing for groundwater protection. Please write, call or e-mail me if you have projects, resources, or educational tools to share. Suggestions are welcome!

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Lane County Develops Periodic Nitrate Monitoring Program

An on-going citizen-volunteer monitoring project is being developed in Lane County by the Lane County Extension Service. Extension agent, Ross Penhallegon, a leader in developing a strong volunteer-based nitrate monitoring project in Lane County, will coordinate the project with assistance from the Oregon DEQ and the Community Involvement Program. Volunteers will conduct quarterly nitrate tests on wells in an area from Harrisburg to Coburg. These areas have shown high nitrate levels in the past, and periodic monitoring will help give more information about the source and distribution of nitrate contamination. Volunteers have met to develop the project, and plans are to start monitoring in November. Volunteers will be involved in sample collecting, testing, and data base management. If you want more information about the monitoring program, or want to volunteer contact: Ross Penhallegon, Lane County Extension (503) 687-4243.

Groundwater Resources

Groundwater Model Available for Loan, includes how-to manual and demonstration ideas. Contact: Loretta Brenner, (503) 737-5736.

Groundwater Model Demonstration Videotape (15 min.) Shows how to operate and maintain a groundwater model (model is different from the loaner model we have, but gives the basics for using the model). Available on loan from Community Involvement Program, or \$15 from Water Watchers, LWV Enid, 1722 E. Maple, Enid, OK 73701, (405) 242-5012.

Precious GEMS: Groundwater Education Strategies that Work. A new guidebook that highlights effective ways to educate people about groundwater protection. Based on the experiences of the Groundwater Education in Michigan program. FREE from: W.K. Kellogg Foundation, PO Box 5196, Battle Creek, MI 49016-5196.

Protect Your Groundwater - Educating for Action. Practical information about citizen involvement in groundwater protection. Examples from U.S. communities. Contact: League of Women Voters, 1730 M Street NW, Washington, DC 20036, (202) 429-1965. \$6.95 + shipping

Senior Citizens Help Protect Springfield's Drinking Water

*By Charles S. Davis, Engineering Technician,
Springfield Utility Board (503) 726-2396*

This September, the Springfield Utility Board (SUB), Rainbow Water District (RWD), and Lane County Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), are joining forces and launching a new program to promote wellhead protection. Senior citizens will be the eyes and ears of the community as they survey the area for contamination risks to their aquifer. This information will be used to help evaluate strategies to protect Springfield's drinking water.

The SUB and RWD are in the process of identifying wellhead protection areas for five more wellfields serving Springfield. The senior volunteers are a valuable resource in the program because their knowledge of the local area will help identify potential groundwater contamination sources, such as abandoned gasoline stations, old water supply wells and septic tanks, and dry cleaning businesses.

The use of RSVP volunteers by the City of El Paso, Texas in their wellhead protection program inspired the Springfield Project. Chuck Davis, SUB, followed up on the idea and presented it to representatives from the OR DEQ, EPA, and State RSVP directors. Elaine Barrett, Director of Lane County RSVP, was eager to pursue the project, and her agency was given an EPA grant to help fund the project.

Springfield is in the southern end of the Willamette Valley with a population of 42,000. Due to the cost of treating surface water for drinking purposes the lack of surface water rights, the city relies entirely on groundwater for their drinking water supply. In 1990, one of their four wellfields was shut down because of 1,1,1-trichloroethane (a chemical solvent) contamination. The SUB spent over \$200,000 responding to this problem.

Wellhead protection programs reduce the potential for contamination problems and encourage citizen awareness and involvement in aquifer protection. Both Barrett and Davis are excited about the RSVP project and comment, "Our volunteers know that protecting Springfield's drinking water is a valuable gift to our families and our community."

In addition to the survey, volunteers are needed to do driving, clerical, and field work and will be trained in mid-September. Those interested should contact: Elaine Barrett at (503) 342-1881.

Public Education Guides Boardman's Wellhead Protection Program

*By Barry Beyler, Public Works Director,
Boardman, Oregon (503) 481-9252*

When the City of Boardman in Eastern Oregon began developing a Wellhead Protection Program it became apparent to the City Council and staff that citizen acceptance of this program would be crucial to its success, and began looking at options to increase public awareness.

Prior to the delineating the Wellhead Protection Area (defining the geographic area of protection), several key local officials from government, civic, and industry concerns discussed the proposed program. This offered city staff an opportunity to learn about public concerns and to "sell" the program's merits. Through interagency discussion and public review a sound and mutually acceptable delineation plan was adopted.

City staff have developed public education techniques for disseminating information. The most successful method, the 'Water Smart Kids' program, is used in local elementary and high schools. General water and wastewater classes begin in grade 2 and are built upon in subsequent grades. A grade 5 program was developed to complement a geology curriculum relating geology to water supply and protection. These classes educate both the children and their parents. Parental involvement provides staff the opportunity to explain the program's necessity and promotes consumer participation.

City staff have developed flyers and handouts to answer commonly asked questions. The staff also conducts public presentations on water-related issues. Valuable information has been gathered and positive working relations between the City, other government agencies, and businesses have resulted. For example, a local government agency that handles pesticides has begun working with the City to reduce potential groundwater contamination by changing pesticide handling practices.

A Wellhead Protection Ordinance is being developed to provide the city, potential development, and existing facilities framework for effectively reducing contamination potential while allowing for the area's protected growth. Public input has been used to assist in development of the draft Ordinance.

Protecting the water supply requires efforts by all potential beneficiaries of that system. Through public education, the City is confident that an environment can be established to minimize potential conflicts, and encourage rational discussion. Discussion can then focus on the goal of protecting drinking water and groundwater for Boardman's citizens, now and in the future.

OWRRI UPDATE

Fall Seminar Series

The OWRRI Seminar Series for Fall, 1994 will be "Salmon Recovery Plan Under Fire." The Series will be held every Tuesday from 2:00-3:30 p.m. in the Electrical Computer Engineering building (ECE), Room 102. Speakers and topics to be announced.

The OWRRI Seminar Series will continue in the Spring of 1995 with "Protecting Pristine Aquatic

Ecosystems — Are we Loving Them to Death." Spring Seminar information will be out in October, 1994.

A reminder that the Spring 1994 Seminar Series "Protecting International Watersheds" videos are now available for checkout at OWRRI. Call or write OWRRI for a current listing of other videotapes available for loan.

Reading Seminar

OWRRI and the Department of Civil Engineering are offering a new graduate reading seminar entitled "Environmental Policy in a Democratic Society." The seminar, taught by Professor David A. Bella, Department of Civil Engineering, is a unique interdisciplinary reading seminar to explore how democratic societies might develop, implement

and sustain environmental practices to protect and utilize its natural resources. An all-day Saturday retreat will be included. The class will be offered Fall, 1994 on Thursdays, 5:10 p.m. - 6:20 p.m. in Strand Agriculture Hall, RM 214. For further information contact David Bella at 737-3500.

Office News

A few changes have recently taken place in the OWRRI office. To begin, three students have been added to the office staff.

Chris Bartron, who has been an OWRRI volunteer for the past eight months, is now working on visual presentations for OWRRI conferences. Chris is attending Linn-Benton Community College and plans to transfer to OSU as a Fisheries and Wildlife major.

Beth Putnam is helping with general office organization and is the new Student Editor of the newsletters. Beth is a senior in Political Science and French. She was formerly a reporter for the OSU Daily Barometer.

Gene Brandon is hard at work organizing the OWRRI library. Gene has a Masters in Library

Science from the University of Denver and is currently pursuing his Ph.D. in biology from OSU.

Thanks to Gene, the library is shaping up quickly and OWRRI hopes to expand it further. We are currently looking for outside additions to the library. Items such as gray literature (unpublished assessments and reports that have not been widely distributed) on topics relating to water issues, videos and updated publications are of particular interest. Anyone with materials that they would like to include in the library should contact Gene at (503) 737-4022.

OWRRI is also hoping to compile a list of current and former OSU Water Minors. Please contact Beth at (503) 737-4022 if you are currently enrolled or are a graduate of the program.

Upcoming Conferences and Seminars

SEPTEMBER

◆ September 15:

Abstracts due for NW Regional Riparian Symposia. December 8-9. (208) 885-6429.

◆ September 22-24: Streambank Protection and Restoration Conference: Biological Methods to Stabilize Streambanks - From Theory to Practice

Sponsored by OWRRI. Co-sponsors: Pacific Northwest WRRI's, SCE, USFW, GWEB, OSU, PSU, and ACOE. Red Lion-Columbia River Inn, Portland, OR.

◆ September 28-30: Watersheds Expo 94: "Creating the links... People, Politics, Science and Stewardship"

Regional watershed event. Call Mary Crandal, WSU, for information on registration. Meydenbauer Center, Bellevue, WA.

◆ September 29: Satellite Videoconference: Farm*A*Syst Environmental Farm Plan-Strategies for Implementation

A satellite presentation of University of Wisconsin-Extension, Cooperative Extension, Program Support. Contact: J. Ronald Miner, Bioresource Engineer Dept., OSU, 116 Gilmore Hall, Corvallis, OR, 97331. (503) 737-2041.

OCTOBER

◆ October 25-26: Water Quality Conference - "Willamette River Basin: Today's Water Policy Issues, Tomorrow's Reality"

Sponsored by OWRRI and OSU Extension Service. LaSells Stewart Center, OSU.

NOVEMBER

◆ November 6-11: 30th Annual AWRA Conference: National Water Quality Assessment (NAWQA)

Contact: Phillip Greeson, U.S. Geological Survey. (404) 409-7700. Chicago, IL.

◆ November 15:

Papers due for American Water Resources Association 31st Annual Conference. Conference date: November 5-9, 1995. Contact: John S. Grounds III, (713) 235-4921.

◆ November 15-16: "Upper Columbia River Basin: An International Dialogue"

Sponsored by State of Washington Water Research Center, Washington State University. Contact: Diane Weber, (509) 335-5532. Spokane, WA.

◆ November 16-18: Watershed Management Council Symposium

Will address issues of integration and communication in watershed management. Sponsored by University of Berkeley, Extension Forestry. Contact: kerner@nature.berkeley.edu. Ashland, OR.

◆ November 17-18: "Promoting Community Groundwater Protection"

Sponsored by the Groundwater Foundation, Lincoln, Nebraska. For more information call: (800) 858-4844. Washington, D.C.

◆ November 21-26: IWRA World Congress "Satisfying Future National & Global Water Demands"

Contact: Glenn E. Stout, International Water Resources Association, University of Illinois. (217) 333-6275. Cairo, Egypt.

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Upcoming Conferences and Seminars, *continued from page 7*

DECEMBER

- ◆ December 8-9: Northwest Regional Riparian Symposia: Diverse Values - Seeking Common Ground

Jack Ward Thomas will be among the speakers. Sponsored by Idaho Riparian Cooperative and the Idaho WRRI. (208) 885-6429.

COMING IN 1995

- ◆ January 26, 1995: Linn Soil and Water Conservation District Watershed Management Workshop

For more information call: (503) 967-5927. LaSells Stewart Center, OSU. 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

- ◆ February 27-28, 1995: First Annual Pacific Northwest Water Issues Conference

OWRRI is sponsoring with Pacific Northwest WRRI's. Red Lion Jantzen Beach, Portland, Oregon. Information to be mailed out in October, 1994.

- ◆ April 23-26, 1995: Water Conservation in the 21st Century: "Conservation, Demand & Supply"

Contact: J. Paul Riley, Professor Emeritus, Utah State University. (801) 750-2783. Salt Lake City, UT.

- ◆ August, 1995: International Gravel Bed Rivers IV Conference

OWRRI will co-sponsor. Epis Retreat Center, Gold Bar, WA.

H₂O NEWS

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For additional copies or for further information regarding the Oregon Water Resources Research Institute program, please call or write:

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