

STATE OF OKLAHOMA

1st Session of the 60th Legislature (2025)

SENATE BILL 91

By: Woods

AS INTRODUCED

An Act relating to the Oklahoma Conservation Commission; creating the Spring Creek Watershed Study Act; providing short title; directing certain water quality study; stating purpose; creating certain advisory groups; establishing group memberships and purposes; establishing reporting requirement; creating the Spring Creek Watershed Study Revolving Fund; establishing fund purpose; providing source of funds; providing for codification; and providing an effective date.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

SECTION 1. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 3-7-111 of Title 27A, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

A. This act shall be known and may be cited as the "Spring Creek Watershed Study Act".

B. The Oklahoma Conservation Commission, in partnership with other local, state, and federal agencies and non-governmental organizations shall undertake a comprehensive water quality study of the Spring Creek Watershed located in Cherokee, Delaware, and Mayes counties near Kansas, Oklahoma. The study shall examine methods to

1 protect and improve the health of the aquatic habitat in the  
2 watershed. The findings of the study shall be used to implement  
3 voluntary, incentive-based conservation practices by the Commission  
4 in partnership with other local, state, and federal agencies.  
5 Implementation of study findings shall be subject to availability of  
6 resources.

7 C. There is hereby created the Spring Creek Watershed Water  
8 Quality Advisory Group, organized by the Commission and the local  
9 conservation districts in the watershed. The advisory group shall  
10 consist of the following members:

11 1. Three members representing the local conservation districts  
12 in the watershed, appointed by the Commission;

13 2. Three local landowners, appointed by the local conservation  
14 districts in the watershed, who predominantly reside in the  
15 watershed full time and who represent major types of land management  
16 in the watershed including, but not limited to, poultry production,  
17 livestock grazing, and forestry land management;

18 3. One landowner, appointed by the local conservation districts  
19 in the watershed, who predominantly resides outside the watershed;

20 4. One member representing the municipal government of Kansas,  
21 Oklahoma, appointed by the Commission;

22 5. One member representing the municipal government of Oaks,  
23 Oklahoma, appointed by the Commission; and  
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1       6. Any other members deemed necessary for inclusion by the  
2 Advisory Group, to be appointed by the Commission.

3       D. In addition to the advisory group described in subsection C  
4 of this section, a technical advisory group shall be established to  
5 support the efforts of the study. Membership of the technical  
6 advisory group shall consist of:

7           1. The Secretary of Agriculture or his or her designee;

8           2. The Executive Director of the Department of Environmental  
9 Quality or his or her designee;

10          3. One member representing the Natural Resources Conservation  
11 Service of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA NRCS);

12          4. One member representing the Farm Service Agency of the  
13 United States Department of Agriculture (USDA FSA);

14          5. One member representing the Grand River Dam Authority;

15          6. One member representing the Department of Wildlife  
16 Conservation;

17          7. One member representing the National Watershed Coalition;  
18 and

19          8. One member representing the Cherokee Nation.

20       E. Members of the advisory groups described in subsections C  
21 and D of this section shall serve without compensation. The  
22 Commission shall provide the physical space for meetings of the  
23 advisory groups and administrative support as needed. Upon  
24 appointment of all members to the advisory groups, the Commission

1 shall schedule their first meetings. At the first meeting, the  
2 advisory groups shall elect a chair and a vice chair. Any vacancies  
3 on the advisory groups shall be filled in the same manner as  
4 provided for in this section.

5 F. The advisory group, with support from the technical advisory  
6 group, shall:

7 1. Assist the Commission in developing the report required by  
8 subsection G of this section;

9 2. Recommend policies or programs to incentivize participation  
10 in voluntary efforts to protect the water quality and aquatic  
11 habitat of the region. Such recommendations shall take into account  
12 optimization of existing state and federal resources and  
13 initiatives, including the state water quality program, the USDA FSA  
14 Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP), the USDA NRCS  
15 Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), the USDA Small  
16 Watershed Program, the USDA NRCS Conservation Stewardship Program  
17 (CSP), the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program, the USDA NRCS  
18 Agriculture Conservation Easement Program (ACEP), and any other  
19 appropriate state or federal voluntary program identified by the  
20 advisory group; and

21 3. Identify and recommend strategies for implementation of the  
22 reported recommendations and findings.

23 G. On or before June 1, 2026, the Commission shall publish an  
24 electronic report of the Spring Creek Watershed Study findings on a

1 publicly available website. The Commission may, from time to time,  
2 update such findings as conditions change and pertinent information  
3 becomes available.

4 H. The Commission may contract and cooperate with the Natural  
5 Resources Conservation Service of the United States Department of  
6 Agriculture and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to conduct  
7 activities provided for in this section.

8 I. The Commission may apply for and accept grants, gifts, or  
9 other sources of public and private funds to carry out the purposes  
10 of the Spring Creek Watershed Study Act.

11 SECTION 2. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified  
12 in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 3-7-112 of Title 27A, unless  
13 there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

14 There is hereby created in the State Treasury a revolving fund  
15 for the Oklahoma Conservation Commission to be designated the  
16 "Spring Creek Watershed Study Revolving Fund". The fund shall be a  
17 continuing fund, not subject to fiscal year limitations, and shall  
18 consist of all monies received by the Commission from appropriations  
19 by the Legislature to the fund, and any money received as gifts,  
20 grants, or other contributions from public or private sources  
21 provided for the purpose of implementing the Spring Creek Watershed  
22 Study Act. All monies accruing to the credit of the fund are hereby  
23 appropriated and may be budgeted and expended by the Commission for  
24 the purpose provided for in the Spring Creek Watershed Study Act.

1 Expenditures from the fund shall be made upon warrants issued by the  
2 State Treasurer against claims filed as prescribed by law with the  
3 Director of the Office of Management and Enterprise Services for  
4 approval and payment.

5 SECTION 3. This act shall become effective November 1, 2025.  
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