



We need to talk

About USDA Watershed Program Challenges and Opportunities:

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National Watershed Coalition National Meeting

Salt Lake City, Utah

Sunday October 1, 2023



5:30 PM 6:30 PM NWC / NASCA Meet and Greet

Monday October 2, 2023



Moderator: Tina Hendon, NWC Vice Chair

- 8:30 AM 9:00 AM **Welcome! We Need to Talk!**
Lisa Knauf Owen, NWC Chair - Dan Sebert, NWC Executive Director - Tyler Brown, NASCA Vice President
- 9:00 AM 9:30 AM **PL566 on the Utah Landscape**
Norm Evenstad, USDA-NRCS, Ret.
Bronson Smart, National Watershed Rehabilitation Program Manager, USDA-NRCS
- 9:30 AM 10:00 AM **The USDA Small Watershed Program and the Impacts of Changing Climate- From Research to Action**
Sherry Hunt, PhD, Research Leader, USDA ARS Agroclimate and Hydraulics Research Unit, Stillwater OK
- 10:00 AM 10:30 AM **BREAK**
- 10:30 AM 12:00 PM **Big Dam Deal or Dam Big Deal - Oroville 6 years After...**
The Oroville story in 2017 gained national attention and it holds some interesting information and learning opportunities for USDA Watershed Project Sponsors and their partners. A behind the scenes look at the incident and the activity that has followed in the six years that have passed will be discussed. The lessons learned relevant to our smaller structures will be emphasized.
Paul Schweiger, Vice President, Gannett Fleming, Inc.
- 12:00 PM 1:00 PM **LUNCH**
- 1:00 PM 5:00 PM **NASCA / NWC Field Tour**



Tuesday October 3, 2023



Moderator: John Foster, Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB)

- 8:30 AM 9:00 AM **Conservation and Watershed Leadership for the Future**
Keith Owen, Director of Education, NACD
- 9:00 AM 9:30 AM **Managing Easement Information in a Digital Age**
Wendie Sharp, GIS Specialist, OK Conservation Commission
- 9:30 AM 10:00 AM **The NWC for the Future-Where do we go from here?**
Dan Sebert, NWC Executive Director
- 10:00 AM 10:30 AM **BREAK**
Moderator: Gene Saurborn, West Virginia Conservation Agency
- 10:30 AM 11:30 AM **Emergency Watershed Protection Program | Secrets to Success**
Our panel will share their insights, tips, and tricks in navigating the NRCS Emergency Watershed Protection Program. Highlights will include sponsor strategies, planning readiness, common challenges, and how to manage an aggressive schedule. We will share partnering best practices, aligning project expectations, project phasing, and maximizing compliance and checklists.
Jason Dodds, NRCS Project Engineer, NRCS
The Jones & DeMille Engineering Team | Darin Robinson, PE, Owner / Chief Technical Officer - Eric Major, PE, Northeast Director
Parker Vercimak, PE, Team Lead - Jenna Jorgensen, Lead Environmental Coordinator
- 11:30 AM 12:00 PM **Louis Aspey, Associate Chief, USDA-NRCS, Washington DC**
- 12:00 PM 1:00 PM **LUNCH**
Moderator: Brad Shedd, MS State Soil and Water Conservation Commission
- 1:00 PM 1:30 PM **NRCS Watershed Report**
Ralph Smith, National Watershed Operations Program Manager, USDA-NRCS, Washington DC

1:30 PM	2:00 PM	Direct from DC - A Watershed Legislative Update, the Farm Bill, Appropriations, and Beyond Pelham Straughn, 9b Group, Washington DC
2:00 PM	2:30 PM	PL566 and Ag Water Projects J-U-B Engineers Zan Murray, Executive Vice President - Bryce Wilcox, Area Manager
2:30 PM	3:00 PM	Utilizing Ag Water Elements of PL566 in Oregon Julie O'Shea, Executive Director, Farmers Conservation Alliance FCA works in partnership with rural communities in pursuit of water management solutions that benefit both agriculture and the environment.
3:00 PM	3:30 PM	BREAK Moderator: Barb Oltjen, NWC Secretary-Treasurer, Wolf River Watershed District-Kansas
3:30 PM	4:30 PM	Navigating the PIFR Process We will explore solutions to overcome common challenges and obstacles, discuss tips and tricks to streamline the process, and share lessons learned to effectively and efficiently prepare PIFRs. We will also share best practices in setting the stage for planning readiness, engaging multiple sponsors so everyone has a voice, and understanding the critical path standards and program elements. Blongshia Cha, NRCS Watershed Program Specialist, NRCS The Jones & DeMille Engineering Team - Darin Robinson, PE, Owner / Chief Technical Officer - Ricky Anderson, PE/CFM, Certified Floodplain Manager - Jenna Jorgensen, Lead Environmental Coordinator
7:00 PM	9:00 PM	NWC Leadership Team Meeting (closed session)
7:00 PM	9:00 PM	NRCS Water Resources / Watershed Employees Meeting (closed session)

Wednesday October 4, 2023



8:00 AM	8:15 AM	Opening Comments Shana Joy and Lisa Knauf Owen
8:15 AM	8:45 AM	Welcome to Utah Kelly Pehrson Deputy Commissioner - Utah Department of Agriculture & Food
8:45 AM	9:30 AM	State Partner Panel Emily Fife, Kristy Davis, Jim Bowcutt
9:30 AM	9:50 AM	State Staff Sharing Session Presentation
9:50 AM	10:20 AM	Since We Last Talked - An NWC Report Dan Sebert, National Watershed Coalition
10:20 AM	10:50 AM	BREAK
10:50 AM	11:30 AM	Wildlife NGO's and Conservation Partnerships Joel Pederson, Mule Deer Foundation
11:30 AM	11:50 AM	State Staff Sharing Session Presentation
11:50 AM	1:00 PM	LUNCH & Partner Updates Chief Terry Cosby, NRCS
1:00 PM	1:30 PM	IRA & Farm Bill Update Pelham Straughn, 9b Group
1:30 PM	1:50 PM	State Staff Sharing Session Presentation
1:50 PM	2:20 PM	Diversity Programs and NASCA Engagement Ashley Henderson, NASCA Southeast Representative
2:20 PM	2:50 PM	BREAK
2:50 PM	3:20 PM	FSA Presentation - CREP & CRP Zach Ducheneaux, FSA Administrator
3:20 PM	3:40 PM	State Staff Sharing Session Presentation
3:40 PM	4:10 PM	Utah Watershed Restoration Initiative Daniel Eddington, Utah Department of Natural Resources
4:10 PM	4:40 PM	Easements and Working Lands Presentation American Farmland Trust
4:40 PM	5:00 PM	Closing Comments Shana Joy and Lisa Knauf Owen
6:00 PM	8:00 PM	President's Reception



Darin Robinson, PE, Owner - Chief Technical Officer - Jones & DeMille Engineering

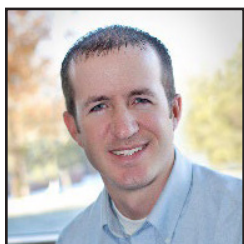
As owner and Chief Technical Officer of Jones & DeMille Engineering, Darin brings 24 years' experience in planning, design, project leadership, and construction management of many irrigation, watershed, river system, reservoir, dam, and culinary water system planning and improvement projects.

Darin has served as JDE's Program Manager for multiple watershed planning and rehabilitation projects under an NRCS IDIQ contract covering the entire Western United States for the past six years. In this capacity, Darin and his team have completed numerous NRCS-funded emergency watershed protection (EWP), dam rehabilitation, and dam assessment projects across Utah and other western region states resulting in an in-depth understanding of various agency standards, processes, required reports, design practice

standards, and related documentation. Specifically, Darin has completed over \$40 million of EWP-funded projects.

Darin's recent project experience within Utah has included Sevier County Richfield-West Sevier Watershed, Weber Basin WCD-Upper Weber River Watershed, Duchesne County Water Conservancy District Efficiency Project, and Olsen Reservoir Price Watershed as well as Nugget Creek Dam Assessment, and Utah Dam Assessments.

Darin has been instrumental in procuring funding and contributed to the one billion dollars procured by Jones & DeMille on behalf of our clients over the past 20 years. His ongoing and past NRCS and USFS work, and relationships provide a learning environment to broadly mentor and build strong, focused professionals across the industry. Darin has a strong



Eric Major, PE, Northeast Director - Jones & DeMille Engineering

Eric current serves as the Northeast Director of Jones & DeMille Engineering and offers 13 years of valuable knowledge and experience working on a variety of different infrastructure projects, water resources, irrigation improvements, master plan updates, flood control, water and sewer projects, and studies.

Eric's expertise also includes a variety of hydraulic modeling, conceptual project estimating, and water resource project design and construction projects. He has been involved in several dam rehabilitation projects, river diversion structures, PIFRS, and NRCS watershed plan-environmental assessments. He has helped secure funding through NRCS, Utah Department of Agriculture, and the Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART program for numerous projects in the past several years.

Eric was the Project Manager for the Dollar Ridge Emergency Watershed Protection project which spanned two counties and required extensive coordination with landowners and multiple stakeholders. Eric is proficient in working with property owners, contractors, farmers, and ranchers and has spent time in all those occupations. Eric has managed several canal facility management plans within northeast Utah, including Rock Point, Steinaker Service and Feeder Canals, and Ashley Central Canal. These projects included mapping and field assessments dealing with storm water entry, potential risk areas, and canal embankment and slope stability.



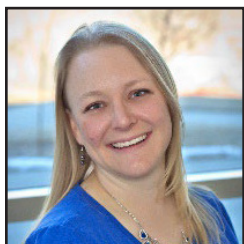
Parker Vercimak, PE, Team Lead - Jones & DeMille Engineering

Parker is an experienced Team Lead at Jones & DeMille Engineering with expertise in project management and design engineering, specializing in hydraulics, hydrology, water systems, culinary water and wastewater master plans, water source development, irrigation structures, pipelines, erosion protection, flood mitigation, and other water resources infrastructure planning, design, and construction engineering.

Parker has been on JDE's design team as Lead Project Engineer for several wastewater, irrigation, watershed, river system, reservoir, culinary water system planning, and Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP)/NRCS projects throughout Utah including Hanksville EWP, Price River EWP, Wellington/PRWID EWP, Carbon South Meadows EWP, Utah County EWP, Spanish Fork Plan-Environmental

Assessment (Plan-EA), American Fork (Lehi) Supplemental Plan-EA, and many others. He also served as the Lead Design Engineer and Assistant Project Manager on the Utah County EWP Project for the Woodland Hills, Elk Ridge, and Payson Damage Survey Reports (DSRs).

Parker also manages FEMA flood mitigation projects, primarily through the BRIC program. These projects require in-depth hydrology and hydraulic analysis, documentation and reports, and communication with the team and sponsors/stakeholders. Most recently, he was the Project Manager and Lead Technical Advisor for the Fremont-Caineville PIFR which further evaluated the feasibility of a new reservoir on the Fremont River system and required coordination with sponsors, co-sponsors, stakeholders, internal design/planning team coordination, and coordination with the NRCS.

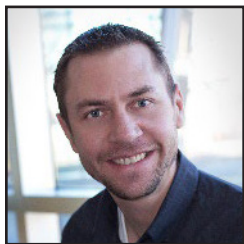


Jenna Jorgensen, Lead Environmental Coordinator - Jones & DeMille Engineering

Jenna serves as Lead Environmental Coordinator for Jones & DeMille Engineering and brings over 20 years of experience with federal agencies involving NEPA, project management, environmental policy compliance, and environmental document preparation. Jenna previously worked as a wildlife biologist for the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS).

Jenna has worked extensively with the NRCS on PL-566 and Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) projects. Since 2015, she has overseen environmental compliance for 19 EWP projects, specifically compliance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, Sections 401, 402, and 404 of the Clean Water Act, and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). She has conducted listed

species surveys, prepared biological documents for Section 7 consultation with (USFWS), and prepared applications for and successfully acquired all necessary Clean Water Action Section 404 permits.



Ricky Anderson, PE/CFM, Certified Floodplain Manager - Jones & DeMille Engineering

Ricky is a Certified Floodplain Manager at Jones & DeMille Engineering and is an expert in hydrologic and hydraulic modeling, and also has extensive experience in the analysis and design of dams, dam breach analysis, dam hydrologic studies, dam emergency action plans, flood inundation studies, channel stabilization, diversions, storm drain systems, etc. His dam design and rehabilitation projects included several NRCS dams.

Ricky has been involved in over 10 NRCS PL566 Watershed Plan-EAs in Utah, Colorado, and California in the last two years. He also has great relationships and established contacts with the NRCS, FEMA, and other related agencies. Ricky recently received the Denis

D. Stuhff Award of Excellence at the Utah Floodplain and Stormwater Association (UFSMA) conference for his FEMA related work and was nominated to the UFSMA board.

Ricky is known for his technical knowledge and proficiency with design software, computer programming, and automating design and modeling processes via ArcGIS analysis, AutoCAD, and computer programming. He also brings a practical understanding of hydraulic structures due to four years of experience at the world-renowned Utah State University hydraulic research laboratory where he built and tested models of dam spillways, pump stations, pipelines, flow meters, etc.



Jason Dodds, Project Engineer - NRCS

During his 15-year career, Jason has worked for the state and three federal agencies. He has planned, managed, designed, and implemented a wide variety of construction projects including on-farm irrigation, stream restoration, and large-scale flood control projects throughout Utah.

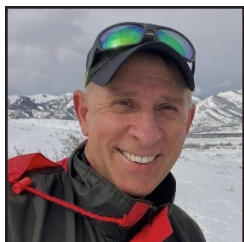
Jason currently serves as an Emergency Watershed Protection and Watershed Operations Engineer for Utah NRCS. Jason strives to reduce the inherent problems that are associated with federal contracts. He prides himself on being able to have open, productive communication with sponsors, design engineers and construction contractors to produce high quality, efficient products which meet

sponsors' goals while staying within programs limitations.



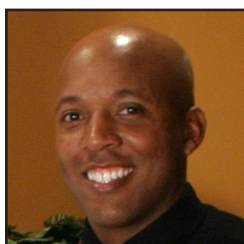
Blongshia Cha, Watershed Program Specialist - NRCS

Blongshia is a Watershed Program Specialist for the Natural Resources Conservation Service in the state of Colorado. She received her degree in agricultural science and has been with the agency for nine years and currently administers the Watershed and Flood Prevention Operations (WFPO) Program, the Watershed Rehabilitation Program (REHAB), and assist in the Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) Program.



Norm Evenstad - NRCS-Ret / ACES

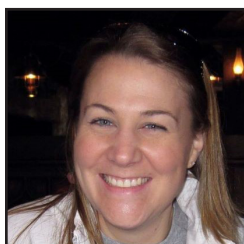
Norm recently concluded 36 years with the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). His journey took him through diverse roles and regions, beginning as a soil scientist in North Dakota, followed by stints as a geologist in both California and Utah. Over the years, Norm assumed roles such as planner, District Conservationist, Water Resources Coordinator, and eventually, Assistant State Conservationist for Water Resources in Utah. September marks his new part-time role as an ACES enrollee assisting NRCS-Utah with their Water Resources Program implementation.



Ralph Smith, Watershed Programs Acting Branch Chief - NRCS

Ralph Smith is the NRCS Watershed Programs Acting Branch Chief. Ralph has been with the Watershed Programs Branch since 2019, serving first as the Watershed Operations Program Manager.

Prior to working in the NRCS National Office, Ralph Worked in Tennessee as the State Hydraulic Engineer and as an Area and Field Engineer. He also served as the Acting State Conservation Engineer for Georgia and on Emergency Watershed Program details in California and Louisiana. Ralph received his Bachelor of Science degree in Agricultural and Biosystems Engineering from the University of Tennessee – Knoxville.



Wendie Sharp, Geographic Information Systems Specialist - Oklahoma Conservation Commission

Wendie Sharp is a Geographic Information Systems Specialist for the Oklahoma Conservation Commission. She is currently spearheading the watershed easement initiative for Oklahoma's 2,107 watershed projects. Her career spans almost two decades where she has stepped into almost every role of GIS from analyst, lead, coordinator, and project creator. Her diverse experience and unique history in GIS has allowed her the opportunity to serve as GIS advisor and liaison for various multi-disciplinary projects and initiatives. Other work includes the creation of a proprietary collaborative tracking and mapping system for single point data access. Wendie is interested in the impact of GIS on conservation efforts and is committed to sharing how GIS technology and data management can aid in its future.



Sherry Hunt, Research Leader - Agroclimate and Hydraulic Engineering Research Unit (AHERU) USDA ARS

Sherry Hunt is Research Leader for the Agroclimate and Hydraulic Engineering Research Unit (AHERU) of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Agricultural Research Service (ARS) Oklahoma and Central Plains Agricultural Research Center. The AHERU has worksites in Stillwater and El Reno, Oklahoma. She serves as her agency's Dam Safety Officer and a tech lead for Partnerships for Data Innovations. With more than 20 years of professional experience, she is responsible for planning and conducting research to develop basic and applied knowledge for the design and analysis of safe, economical structures and channels for the conveyance, storage, disposal, and measurement of runoff waters and the advancement of cloud-based technologies including low-cost sensors and instrumentation, decision support tools, and computational models to evaluate and manage environmental, social, and economic

sustainability. Dr. Hunt is an internationally recognized authority in the physical modeling of hydraulic structures and embankment breach. Her expertise in air entrained phenomena and development of stepped spillway technology has extended the planned service life of dams throughout the U.S. and Europe and has preserved millions of dollars in annual benefits these dams provide. Sherry serves as the co-chair of the Federal Emergency Management Agency National Dam Safety Review Board research work group. She has recognized with several awards including the ASDSO Terry L. Hampton Medal and the ASABE G. B. Gunlogson Countryside Engineering and the Gale Holloway Professional Development Awards. She is an ASABE Fellow, and she was a 2021 Samuel J. Heyman Service to America Medals science and environment category finalist. Sherry graduated with her B.S. and M.S. in Biosystems and Agricultural Engineering from Oklahoma State University and her PhD. in Civil Engineering from Colorado State University.

Zan Murray PE, Water Resources and Structural Engineer - J-U-B ENGINEERS, Inc.

Zan Murray is a water resources and structural engineer with over a decade of experience in agricultural water management and irrigation efficiency projects. He has worked closely with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) on various projects, using funding from the Emergency Watershed Protection and Watershed and Flood Prevention Operations programs. His experience includes projects in vegetation restoration, stream stabilization, canal lining and piping, and pressurized irrigation systems for agricultural, municipal, and forested land groups across northern Utah. He has worked with various sponsors, including irrigation companies, municipalities, and counties, and has experience with oversight, approvals, and permits from state and federal agencies. Zan enjoys spending time with his family and friends in his free time. He is an avid mountain biker, hiker, and dirt biker. In the winter, he performs recreational snow surveys with his family as a volunteer ski patroller at Beaver Mountain.

Bryce Wilcox, Area Manager - J-U-B ENGINEERS, Inc.

Bryce Wilcox has 25 years of experience in designing and implementing water infrastructure projects. In recent years, Bryce has focused on projects funded by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Watershed and Flood Prevention Operations program in Utah, Wyoming, and Idaho. These projects include agricultural water storage reservoirs, canal systems, pump stations, aquifer recharge, pressure irrigation systems, flood control detention and debris basins, and public recreation projects. Throughout his 25 years, Bryce has worked with many irrigation companies to improve agricultural water delivery and has enclosed miles of canals from 42" pipes to 9 ft x 8 ft box culverts. When not in the office, Bryce spends the rest of his time on the family farm growing pumpkins, watermelons, and the best cantaloupes in Utah. You can find Bryce fishing or boating with his family when not farming.



Pelham Straughn - 9-B Group

Pelham Straughn worked on Capitol Hill for nearly two decades, over half that time with the House Committee on Agriculture. During his thirteen-year tenure on the Committee, Pelham worked on three different farm bills, served two different subcommittee Chairmen and three different full committee Chairmen. He served in many different capacities including Subcommittee Staff Director, Senior Professional Staff and finally Policy Director where he led the policy team during the formation, debate, and passage of the Agricultural Act of 2014. His portfolio at different times included conservation, farm and commodity programs, trade, livestock, crop insurance, disaster programs, sugar, peanut, and tobacco programs.

In 2015, Pelham Straughn and Dave White, former Chief of NRCS, founded the 9b Group. 9b Group was formed as a Benefit Corporation providing clients with expertise in agricultural conservation policy and sustainability. As a Benefit Corporation, 9b Group has the purpose of creating a positive impact on the environment and society, and assisting clients in realizing, expanding, and surpassing their conservation and sustainability goals. A native of Birmingham, Alabama, Pelham graduated from Hampden-Sydney College and now resides in Arlington, VA.

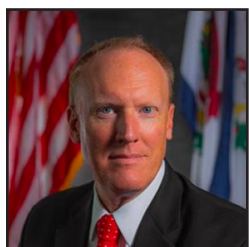


Bronson Smart, PE - National Watershed Rehabilitation Program Manager - NRCS

Bronson Smart began working for USDA for the Natural Resources Conservation Service in 1997 as a student trainee while attending Utah State University where he graduated with a BS in Civil and Environmental Engineering in 2000 and a master's degree in Civil Engineering with an emphasis in Water Resources. He has served as a field engineer, State Environmental Engineer, State Conservation Engineer and in 2022 was selected as the National Watershed Rehabilitation Program Manager. His work has been recognized nationally as 2014 NRCS Engineer of the year and was recognized that year by the National Society of Professional Engineers as one of the top ten engineers in federal service. He also was recognized in 2020 with the Connecting Conservation Award by the Utah Association of Conservation Districts for his work with watershed projects and sponsors.

Born and raised on a family farm in Pleasant Grove, Utah where he and his family still operate a cow-calf beef operation and raise corn silage and alfalfa hay for the cattle and some sweet corn for neighbors and family. His passion for conserving natural resources and working with local communities to provide clean water, healthy soil and good food has made an impact across the state of Utah.

Bronson enjoys spending time with his wife Stephanie, daughters Kayli, McKenna, and Ashlyn and sons Isaac, Mason and Stayten working on the farm and being in the mountains near their home in Kamas, Utah. He enjoys serving his local community as well as skiing, riding UTVs, camping, and rappelling.



Louis Aspey, Associate Chief - NRCS

Louis has served in multiple leadership positions with NRCS and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers during his 30-year career. Most recently, he served as Deputy Chief for Management and Strategy. In that position, he led the establishment of the Office of Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production and oversaw workload analysis, budget formulation and execution, outreach and partnerships, strategic support services, and international programs.

Prior to arriving at NRCS's National Headquarters, Louis served as the State Conservationist in West Virginia. During his tenure, he, along with his staff and partners, addressed broad-scale flooding, water supply, and food resiliency challenges. These issues are some of the greatest barriers to economic prosperity in Appalachia and often disproportionately impact underserved and disadvantaged communities.

Louis, a native of southwestern Pennsylvania, is proud to be the first in his family to attend college. He earned an undergraduate degree in civil engineering from Geneva College in Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania, and a graduate degree in public administration from American University in Washington, D.C. In his free time, Louis enjoys fishing, camping, traveling, and exploring the outdoors with his wife, Karen, and beloved rescue dog Oatie.



Julie Davies O'Shea, Founder and Executive Director - Farmers Conservation Alliance

Julie Davies O'Shea is the founder and Executive Director of Farmers Conservation Alliance (FCA). With an extensive background in conservation, renewable energy, and irrigation projects, Julie is the catalyst behind the growth and development of FCA. This includes the marketing of the Farmers Screen technology and the creation of the Irrigation Modernization Program. Over the past eight years, FCA's Irrigation Modernization Program has helped irrigation communities to complete project pre-development and secure \$244 million towards modernization projects. The program is now working with more than 55 irrigation communities in eight states to develop shovel-ready projects and secure more than \$1 billion in funding for those projects in the next seven years.



Paul G. Schweiger, PE, CFM, Vice President and Manager Dams and Hydraulics Section - Gannett Fleming, Inc.

Paul is a Vice President of Gannett Fleming, Inc. and manager of the firm's dams and hydraulics section. He received bachelor's and master's degrees in civil engineering from the University of New Brunswick, Canada. Paul has been with Gannett Fleming for 35 years. During that time, he has provided engineering consulting services for more than 500 dams throughout the United States including designing and rehabilitating NRCS dams. Paul served on the National Dam Safety Review Board and led the updating of the national (FEMA) Guidelines for Selecting and Accommodating Inflow Design Floods for Dams and Lessons Learned from Dam Incidents and Failures research project and website. He regularly serves as an expert hydrology and hydraulics engineer on Independent External

Peer Review panels for United States Army Corps of Engineers dam and flood control projects. Paul is a frequent instructor of Association of State Dam Safety Officials (ASDSO) engineering webinars and seminars.



Keith Owen, Director of Education - National Association of Conservation Districts

Keith Owen has over thirty years of experience in natural resources management and a deep interest in how humans conserve and improve the soil, water, air, plants and animals we depend on for a good life. He is an Oklahoma State University alumnus and has worked in local, state and federal positions with boards and agencies from conservation districts to the US Fish and Wildlife Service. Keith is now the Director of Education for the National Association of Conservation Districts and guides the development of tools and resources that increase the capacity and outreach potential of conservation districts across the US.



Lisa Knauf Owen, Assistant Executive Director - Oklahoma Conservation Commission | Chair, National Watershed Coalition

Lisa Knauf Owen is the Assistant Executive Director of the Oklahoma Conservation Commission and currently serves as Chair of the National Watershed Coalition. In her 32 years of service to the Commission and Conservation Districts, she has served in multiple capacities including Education Coordinator, Assistant Director of District Operations, Director of District Services, Operations Chief and now Assistant Executive Director.

Lisa's main job functions include providing day-to-day contact and assistance to the Conservation Commission agency staff and Oklahoma's 84 conservation districts, their staff and directors. She manages a multitude of grants and agreements as well as provides oversight of the Commission's financial management and human resources, Conservation Programs and District Services Divisions.

Lisa comes from a farming family in north central Texas where peanuts were the main crop along with a small cow-calf operation. Although her schooling and background are in Forest Management, Lisa has spent the majority of her career working with a different natural resource; the men and women who work for Oklahoma's conservation districts.

Lisa and her husband, Keith, reside in Norman, where in their spare time, they enjoy various outdoor pursuits including shooting sporting clays, kayaking, fishing and hunting.

