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Second Public Meeting for Illinois River Watershed Management Plan Re-Scheduled for May 18

LITTLE ROCK, AR—The Arkansas Department of Agriculture’s Natural Resources Division (NRD), in partnership with the Oklahoma Conservation Commission (OCC), has re-scheduled the second in a series of public meetings to update the watershed-based management plan for the Illinois River Watershed. The original meeting in January was postponed due to inclement weather. The meeting will be held May 18, 2023, in West Siloam Springs, Oklahoma.

The Illinois River and its tributaries have a variety of uses set forth by the Arkansas Pollution Control and Ecology Commission (APCEC), including fisheries, recreation, drinking water supply, and agricultural and industrial water supply. The goal of this watershed-based plan is to protect and improve water quality in streams and other waterbodies by addressing non-regulatory issues through voluntary activities or practices.

“The NRD and the OCC held the first stakeholder meeting back in October 2022 and had over 60 attendees,” said Tate Wentz, NRD Water Quality Section Manager. “The second and third meetings will be focused on conservation practice implementation. We will also be requesting input from landowners about those practices so it is critical for anyone interested to attend as it will help guide resource allocations to improve water quality into the future.”

The meeting is open to the public and will provide an overview of the watershed management planning process. Stakeholders will discuss water quality issues, conservation practices, the current state of the watershed, and the next steps in the development of the management plan.

The meeting is set for May 18, 2023, from 2:30 p.m. to 4 p.m. and will be held at the Cherokee Casino and Hotel located at 2416 US-412, West Siloam Springs, Oklahoma 74338.

For more information about the meeting, contact Tate Wentz at tate.wentz@agriculture.arkansas.gov.

For more information about the Illinois River Watershed, visit irwp.org/.

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