

1 **SENATE FLOOR VERSION**

2 April 23, 2025

3 **AS AMENDED**

4 ENGROSSED HOUSE

5 BILL NO. 1588

6 By: Hardin, Deck, and Alonso-
7 Sandoval of the House

8 and

9 Woods of the Senate

10 **[Oklahoma Conservation Commission - legislative
11 intent - water quality plan - report - funds -
12 Revolving Fund - purpose - source - codification -
13 effective date]**

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

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

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

20 B. The Legislature finds that:

21 1. Increasing pressure from agriculture and residential
22 development as well as stream bank erosion and other activities have
23 led to declining water quality levels in the Northeast Oklahoma
24 watershed known as Spring Creek located in Cherokee, Delaware, and
25 Mayes counties near Kansas, Oklahoma, resulting in increased concern

1 by the residents of the Spring Creek area and citizens of Oklahoma
2 as a whole as to the continued health of the watershed. The once
3 pristine stream is a prime example of how many similar high quality
4 Ozark waterbodies that draw millions of visitors to the area each
5 year, support water supplies for growing urban centers in Oklahoma,
6 and provide habitat for important wildlife and fisheries resources
7 are threatened without cooperative, voluntary protective action by
8 local communities and other stakeholders;

9 2. Improved voluntary land management practices including soil
10 conservation practices, riparian restoration and protection,
11 reforestation, streambank livestock exclusion, and other methods of
12 stewardship have great potential to improve and protect the quality
13 of water in the Spring Creek watershed while improving the
14 ecological health of the area; and

15 3. It is in the interest of the citizens of this state as a
16 whole and the residents of the Spring Creek watershed that the
17 Oklahoma Conservation Commission, in partnership with other local,
18 state, and federal agencies and nongovernmental organizations,
19 undertake a comprehensive water quality study of Spring Creek to
20 determine the best course of action to protect and improve the
21 health of the aquatic habitat in the watershed.

22 C. It is the intent of the Legislature that the findings of
23 this study will be used to direct implementation of voluntary,
24 incentive-based conservation practices by the Commission in

1 partnership with other local, state, and federal agencies and
2 subject to availability of resources, in the Spring Creek watershed
3 to protect and improve the aquatic habitat and water quality in the
4 area.

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

8 A. 1. The Oklahoma Conservation Commission shall undertake a
9 comprehensive watershed-based water quality plan designed to improve
10 and protect the water quality and aquatic habitat in the Spring
11 Creek watershed through the utilization of voluntary, incentive-
12 based programs.

13 2. On or before June 1, 2026, the Commission shall publish an
14 electronic report of the findings. The Commission may, from time to
15 time, update such findings as conditions change and pertinent
16 information becomes available.

17 B. The Commission may contract and cooperate with the Natural
18 Resources Conservation Service of the United States Department of
19 Agriculture and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to conduct
20 activities provided for in this section.

21 C. The Commission may apply for and accept grants, gifts, or
22 other sources of public and private funds to carry out the purposes
23 of the Spring Creek Watershed Study Act.

24

1 SECTION 3. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified
2 in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 3-7-113 of Title 27A, unless
3 there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

4 There is hereby created in the State Treasury a revolving fund
5 for the Oklahoma Conservation Commission to be designated the
6 "Spring Creek Watershed Study Cash Fund Revolving Fund". The fund
7 shall be a continuing fund, not subject to fiscal year limitations,
8 and shall consist of all monies received by the Commission from
9 appropriations by the Legislature to the fund, and any money
10 received as gifts, grants, or other contributions from public or
11 private sources provided for the purpose of implementing the Spring
12 Creek Watershed Study Act. All monies accruing to the credit of the
13 fund are hereby appropriated and may be budgeted and expended by the
14 Commission for the purpose provided for in this act. Expenditures
15 from the fund shall be made upon warrants issued by the State
16 Treasurer against claims filed as prescribed by law with the
17 Director of the Office of Management and Enterprise Services for
18 approval and payment.

19 SECTION 4. This act shall become effective November 1, 2025.

20 COMMITTEE REPORT BY: COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
21 April 23, 2025 - DO PASS AS AMENDED
22
23
24