

# THE STATE GEOGRAPHER'S POSITION

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STATE GEOGRAPHER EMERITUS



# HOW DID WE GET A STATE GEOGRAPHER?

- CONSORTIUM OF OKLAHOMA GEOGRAPHERS FORMED IN MID-1980S. SEVERAL COLLEGES WERE INVOLVED.
- A RESPONSE TO POLLS SHOWING STUDENTS KNEW LITTLE OF GEOGRAPHY

# HOW DID WE GET A STATE GEOGRAPHER?

- THE CONSORTIUM THOUGHT IT WOULD BE GOOD TO HAVE A STATE POINT PERSON FOR GEOGRAPHY
- ED PUGH, GEOGRAPHER, WAS AN AIDE TO GOVERNOR NIGH
- GOVERNOR WALTERS SIGNED EXECUTIVE ORDER 91-19

**FILED**

SEP 20 1991

OKLAHOMA SECRETARY  
OF STATE

S T A T E O F O K L A H O M A

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

E X E C U T I V E O R D E R 91-19

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WHEREAS, current information and understanding of the physical environment is of critical importance in developing, planning and implementing a variety of state programs; and

WHEREAS, state agencies, policy makers, and citizens have a continuing need for access to knowledge and expertise relating to the geography and topography of the State of Oklahoma; and

WHEREAS, all citizens and residents of Oklahoma stand to benefit from increased access and familiarity with the physical environment of the State;

NOW THEREFORE, by the authority conferred upon the Office of the Governor by the Constitution and Laws of the State of Oklahoma, I hereby order and direct:

1. That there be created the Office of the State Geographer to serve as a consulting, advisory, and informational resource to State elected officials, officers, policy makers and citizens on matters relating to the geography, topography and the physical environment of the State.

2. The Office of the State Geographer shall consist of a State Geographer and up to six Associate State Geographers. The State Geographer and all Associate State Geographers shall be appointed by the Governor and shall serve at his pleasure.

3. The State Geographer and all Associate State Geographers shall possess an advanced degree in Geography and have professional level knowledge of Oklahoma's geography and physical environment.

4. The State Geographer shall expend no state funds unless specifically authorized to do so by the Oklahoma Legislature.

# WHAT THE GEOGRAPHER DOES

- SERVES AS A RESOURCE

“That there should be created the Office of the State Geographer to serve as a consulting, advisory, and informational resource to State elected officials, officers, policy makers and citizens on matters relating to the geography, topography, and physical environment of the state.”

# HOW DOES ONE BECOME STATE GEOGRAPHER?

- NO FIXED TERM
- DECIDED UPON INFORMALLY BY THE COMMUNITY AND NAME PUT UP TO GOVERNOR

# HOW DOES ONE BECOME STATE GEOGRAPHER?

- VETTED BY OSBI
- APPOINTED BY GOVERNOR
- SERVICE AT PLEASURE OF GOVERNOR



# WHO HAS BEEN STATE GEOGRAPHER?

- BOB SPRINGER, 1988-2003
- STEVE STADLER , 2003-2015



# OFFICE OF THE STATE GEOGRAPHER

- INDEPENDENT UNTIL 2007
- EXECUTIVE ORDER 2007-07 (HENRY) CREATED CABINET SYSTEM AND THE STATE GEOGRAPHER WAS PUT UNDER THE COMMERCE SECRETARY



# OFFICE OF THE STATE GEOGRAPHER

- NON-REMUNERATED
- OCCUPANTS HAVE BEEN STATE EMPLOYEES
- 10% OF MY TIME WAS COST TO THE STATE



# ACTIVITIES OF THE STATE GEOGRAPHER

- BY STATE CODE: SERVICE ON STATE GI COUNCIL
- BY ORGANIZATION BYLAW: SERVICE ON BOARD OF THE OKLAHOMA ALLIANCE FOR GEOGRAPHIC EDUCATION (OKAGE) K-12 OUTREACH



# ACTIVITIES OF THE STATE GEOGRAPHER

- YEARLY GEOGRAPHIC STATE BEE: MODERATOR AND JUDGE
- OCCASIONAL PUBLIC QUESTIONS
- FILED CONFLICT OF INTEREST FORMS



# ACTIVITIES OF THE STATE GEOGRAPHER

- OPINION FOR OKLAHOMA'S PLACE NAMES BOARD
- TALKS AT SCHOOLS AND UNIVERSITIES
- OCCASIONAL TELEVISION AND RADIO
- LETTERS OF SUPPORT FROM THE OFFICE



# STATE CODE §82-1501-205.1. Definitions - State Geographic Information Council.

- B. There is hereby created a State Geographic Information Council composed of nineteen (19) members as follows:
- 1. Director of the Oklahoma Conservation Commission or designee;
- 2. Director of the Department of Environmental Quality or designee;
- 3. Chair of the Corporation Commission or designee;
- 4. Director of the Oklahoma Department of Commerce or designee;
- 5. Commissioner of the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food, and Forestry or designee;
- 6. Director of the Oklahoma Water Resources Board or designee;
- 7. Director of the Department of Transportation or designee;
- 8. State Geographer or designee;
- 9. Director of the Oklahoma Geological Survey or designee;
- 10. Director of the Center for Spatial Analysis of the University of Oklahoma or designee;
- 11. Dean of the Division of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources of Oklahoma State University or designee;
- 12. Director of the Ad Valorem Division of the Oklahoma Tax Commission or designee;
- 13. A member appointed by the Director of the Conservation Commission from a list of names submitted to the Director from the Oklahoma regional universities;
- 14. Director of Information Services of the Office of Management and Enterprise Services or designee;
- 15. Director of Wildlife Conservation or designee;
- 16. Director of Homeland Security or designee; and
- 17. Three members to be appointed by the Governor pursuant to subsection C of this section.

# 2015

- MARCH LETTER RECEIVED FROM FALLIN'S OFFICE:
  - A. EXECUTIVE ORDER NOT RENEWED
  - B. REASON WAS TO "STREAMLINE" STATE GOVERNMENT (70 ORDERS WERE NOT RENEWED)
  - C. STADLER MADE "STATE GEOGRAPHER EMERITUS"



# 2015

- JULY MEETING AT GOVERNOR'S OFFICES
- GEOGRAPHERS FROM OKAGE MEET WITH STEVE MULLINS, GENERAL COUNSEL
- MULLINS WAS PRESENTED WITH A PACKET OF REASONING FOR REINSTATEMENT
- MIKE SHARP WROTE A LETTER OF SUPPORT ALONG WITH THE PRESIDENT OF *NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC*

# 2015

- A VERY GOOD MEETING
- WE WERE ASKED TO PRESENT A CASE HOW THE POSITION COULD SERVE THE STATE ON VARIOUS ENTITIES
- BUT MULLINS RESIGNED IN FEBRUARY 2016

2016

- APRIL LETTER ASKING FOR A MEETING WITH GOVERNOR'S OFFICE: UNANSWERED

# SITUATION VIS-À-VIS STATE GI COUNCIL

- THE STATE GEOGRAPHER IS IN CODE AS PART OF THE COUNCIL
- THE DISCONTINUANCE OF THE OFFICE GOES AGAINST SPECIFIC LEGISLATIVE INTENT

# WHAT IS TO BE DONE?

- SHOULD ANYTHING BE DONE?
- IF YES, WHO SHOULD DO IT?
- ATTORNEY GENERAL OR LEGISLATIVE CHAMPION?

