

# ENVIRONMENTAL JOURNALISM 2015

Society of Environmental Journalists  
**25<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL CONFERENCE**



**Norman, Oklahoma**

**Oct. 7-11, 2015**

# WEATHER, WATER, ENERGY:

**News in Every Neighborhood**

Hosted by the **University of Oklahoma**



# WELCOME TO OKLAHOMA

## PREPARE TO BE SURPRISED!

Images courtesy of Brent Fuchs, Sarah Terry-Cobo and StateImpact Oklahoma

We're glad you're joining us in the Sooner State, a land of ancient mountains, endless skies and waving prairie.

And, we're pleased to be hosting you at one of its most beautiful times – October. The state's 12 distinct eco-regions include hardwood forests of eastern Oklahoma, which should be a mash of reds, oranges and yellows, and the Tallgrass Prairie, which will be adorned in its autumnal hues.

Those of us who live on the Great Plains know you call our home “flyover country.” You won't think that after you leave. We and our host, the University of Oklahoma, will fill your notebook with story ideas. This is a state wedded to its land, and its accomplishments are impressive. Did you know, e.g., that Oklahoma has cleaned up more EPA-listed impaired waterways than any other state in the nation?

We've put together a “two-fer” because we realize the story-telling landscape has changed. You'll get a heavy dose of video and graphics training along with SEJ's noteworthy sessions on content.

OU's Gaylord College of Journalism and Mass Communication is opening its media labs so we can offer hands-on training. Google is sending a trainer to demonstrate its free maps, charts and graphics tools. SEJ will teach entry-level classes on the use of smartphones for video, and Gaylord will lead an advanced video class. Friday night, we'll screen documentaries, munch on popcorn and talk about visual storytelling.

This is a land where battles over water and energy are writ large, where climate and severe weather dominate life. We won't shy away from any of this. Global warming still in dispute? EPA scientists not accessible? We've invited Sen. James Inhofe and EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy to share the podium, and we'll give you the microphone for questions.

Oklahoma was built on Big Oil and agriculture, but the state lives or dies by the availability of water. The result is well-funded energy, water and ag research at public and private centers in Oklahoma. Many have invited us into their labs. Got questions about fracking and earthquakes? Plant genetics? Water law? Learn the science and why some questions don't yet have answers.

Some of the planet's most violent and extreme weather is found here, and so is one of the world's leading centers for severe weather research. The National Weather Center brings together OU, NOAA, state agencies and private industry. The synergy of this research will be open to SEJ, and we'll focus on the changing nature of extreme weather in a warming world.

In Oklahoma, we'll bear witness to the ability of people to recover from tragedy, and we'll have a chance to examine our role in documenting it. In the Territory where tribes were forced to migrate, Native Nations now work to preserve the environment, diversify tribal-owned businesses and help their own members. On the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the Oklahoma City bombing, we hope to offer attendees a joint session with journalism historians

at the national memorial and museum.

This is tough country, and its people are tougher. Come to the heart of Conservative America and learn why those of us who live here, love it. Our friends work hard, play hard and care deeply, including those who disagree with us.

Our conference hotel is proving ideal for keeping costs down. Each room is a suite, so you can double-bunk while maintaining your privacy, or you can pile in more people for even greater savings. The rooms come with a free breakfast and happy hour!

Sure, we've got cattle and hogs, wheat and sorghum, but this is also the land of peaches, peanuts and pecans. Come enjoy some of our specialties, take home a care package of Great Plains goodness.

**Come to Oklahoma. We've set the table.**

*Conference Co-Chairs:*

**Nancy Gaarder**, *Omaha World-Herald*

**Sarah Terry-Cobo**, *The Journal Record* (Oklahoma City)

**Bring your notebook,  
your camera, your  
boots and binoculars.**

**Bring your  
uncertainty about  
Oklahoma too.**

# TOURS IN THE FIELD

## THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8, 2015

Advance registration is required for all Thursday tours. Attendance on each tour is strictly limited, so registering early is important. Departure times vary (see below), but all Thursday tours will return to the Embassy Suites about 5:00 p.m. Planning was still under way at the time of printing, so please visit [www.sej.org](http://www.sej.org) for more details. For those looking for some exercise, tours 1, 3 and 8 are your best options. Other tours involve moderate exercise. Tours 4 and 9 are best suited for wheelchair accessibility.

### 1. Diving into Tallgrass – and Wind (5:00 a.m. departure, \$40 fee, lunch included)

Come watch the sunrise over the Tallgrass Prairie Preserve, one of the last swaths of unspoiled prairie on the planet. After spending the morning hiking – maybe spotting a bison or two – we'll meet with citizens of the Osage Nation to check out several local wind farm operations and find out why they have been the source of federal litigation. We'll wrap up the afternoon at the Standing Bear Museum and Education Center in Ponca City, named for the 19th century Ponca chief who forced the U.S. government to formally acknowledge that Native Americans were people with rights under the law.

**Total drive time – 6 hours.**

### 2. Tar Creek: A Superfund Study in Environmental Justice (5:30 a.m. departure, \$40 fee, lunch included, \$30 optional fee for airplane flyover of site, limited seating, available on a first-come basis)

Tar Creek was once one of the world's largest mining sites for lead, cadmium, and zinc; mine tailings still loom nearly a mile high above a town that no longer exists. Children in Picher, OK, used to play on the tailings, while toxic lead-laden dust blew into their homes. In 1983, after the mines were shuttered, the EPA added Tar Creek to its Superfund list and Picher's residents are now mostly gone. But the Quapaw Tribe is still coping with the aftermath. We'll tour the area by bus or by an optional flyover, share lunch with tribal elders and hear from scientists and government officials about how cleanup is progressing. We'll also watch a 2006 PBS documentary, "The Creek Runs Red," on the bus.

**Total drive time – 6.5 hours.**

### 3. Drought and Climate Change Impacts at Lake Altus-Lugert, Quartz Mountain and the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge (6:00 a.m. departure, \$40 fee, lunch included)

Sustained drought has left southwestern Oklahoma with massive agricultural losses and long-term water supply needs. The situation could worsen: In 2015, NASA Goddard Institute for Space Studies scientists predicted the Great Plains might soon face the worst droughts in 1,000 years. Climatologists and scientists will accompany attendees on a road trip to one of the state's most drought-affected lakes, and see the drought's impact by hiking along the pink-red granite outcroppings of Quartz Mountain. At the Wichita Mountains

Wildlife Refuge, attendees will see bison, hear about conservation efforts, and learn how haze from coal-fired power plants in Texas affects the environment in Oklahoma. The environmental challenges in this region raise questions about food security and sustainable communities. **Total drive time – 5 hours.**

### 4. A Taste of Oklahoma Food Research (6:30 a.m. departure, \$40 fee, lunch included)

See and taste some of the latest research in food production and agricultural sustainability in Oklahoma. At Langston University, Oklahoma's only historically black university, we'll learn about goat meat and small ruminant production methods at its world-renowned Institute for Goat Research. Next up, Stillwater and Oklahoma State University, where we'll learn about food safety research, meat processing and product development with small startup companies in Oklahoma. We'll also talk with one of the top wheat breeders in the nation about the wheat genome mapping and how it helps breeders better select for traits that help farmers and consumers alike. Our day will round off with a trip to Ft. Reno's U.S. Department of Agriculture Research Center. **Total drive time – 4 hours.**

### 5. Water Rights – Water Fights (7:00 a.m. departure, \$40 fee, lunch included)

No area of Oklahoma better illustrates the delicate water balance among industry, communities, and landowners than south-central Oklahoma. That's where the Arbuckle-Simpson Aquifer provides water to 40,000 people and enjoyment to millions more each year at the Chickasaw National Recreation Area. But a recent increase in limestone and sand mining is putting more pressure on perhaps the most sensitive water resource in the state. We'll tour the back roads to see some shocking water waste, before heading to the recreation area to learn how the depletion of the aquifer is impacting tourism and to hear about the ongoing fight between the state and Native American tribes over who controls the water. Our final stop will be the Kerr EPA National Lab, where experts will tell us what they're learning about groundwater sustainability. **Total drive time – 3.5 hours.**

### 6. A Noble Look at Sustainability (7:30 a.m. departure, \$40 fee, lunch included)

What is soil health? Why would an environmental journalist care about it? Soil is the first line of defense in feeding a world impacted by increasing weather volatility stemming from climate change. Healthy soil helps reduce nitrogen and phosphorus loss from farms. Ardmore, OK, is home to the Noble Foundation, a unique private facility that focuses on agricultural and grasslands research. The campus has more than 90 scientists who conduct grassland research and work with farmers and ranchers. You'll learn about their research while exploring the facility. You'll also visit a ranch and learn about sustainable grazing and challenges of encroaching sprawl. **Total drive time – 3 hours.**

CONTINUED

## CONTINUED TOURS

### **7. Drilling, Fracking, Disposal and Earthquakes? Oh My!** *(8:00 a.m. departure, \$40 fee, lunch included)*

Oklahoma is in the heart of several prolific oil formations and is no stranger to the boom and bust cycle. Indeed, several Oklahoma companies have led the drilling boom in the Barnett, Marcellus and Bakken shales. But, those drillers also pioneered water reuse and recycling techniques, designed more efficient and safer rigs, and created high-tech automated systems to monitor disposal operations in real time. Our goal is to get you up close and personal with drilling and disposal operations. We'll start on the OU campus with an introduction to oil drilling and hydraulic fracturing. Then, into the field to witness companies drawing water from local streams, to check out the cool tools used to drill deep wells, and to examine water recycling facilities and a wastewater disposal operation. **Total drive time – 3.5 hours.**

### **8. Explore the Heart of Indian Country** *(8:30 a.m. departure, \$40 fee, lunch included)*

Based on the Choctaw words "Okla" meaning people and "humma" meaning red, Oklahoma is home to 38 federally recognized tribes. On this tour of the Chickasaw Cultural Center and traditional springs, we'll explore the unique relationship among the Chickasaw Nation, Choctaw Nation and the state over land and water issues. Visit a re-creation of a traditional Chickasaw village, featuring a council house, spiral garden, replica mound, corn crib, stickball fields and more. Learn about multiple aspects of Chickasaw life, including language, recreational activities, cooking demonstrations and cultural displays. Enjoy lunch options from the Aaimpa Café, featuring American Indian food selections. Finish the day with a hike to Chickasaw Springs. **Total drive time – 2.5 hours.**

### **9. National Weather Center: From Balloons to Supercomputers, Forecasting Severe Weather** *(9:00 a.m. departure, \$40 fee, lunch included)*

Oklahoma is justifiably famous for its severe weather. The National Weather Center, a partnership of OU, NOAA and state agencies, is a world leader in severe weather research. Here, we'll learn about connections between climate change and severe weather, limitations in forecasting weather and advances around the corner. Tour includes the National Severe Storms Laboratory, where researchers work to improve the accuracy of storm warnings, the Storm Prediction Center, which forecasts the risk of tornadoes and severe weather nationally, the Radar Innovations Lab, used by the military and the weather service to advance their ability to peer into the atmosphere, and the local NOAA forecasting office. **Total drive time – 1 hour.**

## AGENDA

Environmental Journalism 2015: The 25th Annual Conference of the Society of Environmental Journalists officially begins Wednesday afternoon, October 7, at 5:00 p.m., with our opening reception, followed by dinner, special welcomes and SEJ's awards program.

### **Wednesday, October 7**

Before the official beginning, we offer these two all-day workshops below, as well as an afternoon meet-and-greet session, where we'll discuss how ethnic diversity enriches us all and explore ways to increase this diversity within our ranks. See [www.sej.org](http://www.sej.org) for more details.

#### **ALL-DAY WORKSHOPS**

##### **1. Telling the Big Story Through Graphics**

The ability to tell stories through graphics has become crucial to standout storytelling. With severe weather dominating headlines, authoritative reporting requires an understanding of the data kept by the National Climatic Data Center (the nation's weather library). Develop skills in both areas. NOAA and Google will lead this class. Google will demonstrate My Maps and Fusion Tables. NOAA will demystify its data. You'll leave class able to host, visualize and publish data. **SEJ Members only. You'll need a Google account and understanding of Google Drive. Check the SEJ website for details. Pre-registration and \$45 fee required. Lunch included.**

##### **2. Beginning and Advanced Video Training**

Join us for hands-on video workshops and learn how to shoot, edit and produce your own one-to-two-minute film. We're minimizing the gear talk and maximizing hands-on experience, so that when you're done you'll be able to shoot and edit with confidence. Bring any camera or smart-phone that takes video and you'll be good to go. The workshop will have two tracks, one for beginners taught by SEJ members, and the other for those who already know how to shoot video with their phone or DSLR camera, which will be taught by the Gaylord College of Journalism, using Final Cut Pro X or Adobe Premiere Pro. You pick the track. **SEJ Members only. Check the SEJ website for details. Pre-registration and \$45 fee required. Lunch included.**

#### **OPENING RECEPTION, DINNER AND SEJ AWARDS**

Oklahoma has 38 federally recognized tribes and the highest percentage of Native Americans of any state. To kick off this year's festivities, we'll celebrate this cultural diversity with opening prayers, traditional song, dance and drumming. Then, we'll explore how Native peoples in Oklahoma and beyond influence conservation and environmental policies across the state, the nation and the globe. Following dinner, where we hope to include traditional foods, settle in and watch SEJ's Environmental Journalism Awards, the best of the best environmental reporting and photojournalism on the planet – great work that's changing the world, one story, one photo, one book at a time.

## Thursday, October 8

**Tours:** See previous pages for details on Environmental Journalism 2015 field expeditions across Oklahoma.

### Independent Hospitality Receptions and Exhibits

Now a popular SEJ tradition, this is the conference's best networking opportunity. After spending the day out and about on tours, meet with the hosts of multiple receptions. They'll have experts on hand, as well as displays, materials and, of course, great food and drink. This year we'll have exhibitors and alternative vehicles on display in the mix. *Check the SEJ website beginning in July for details.*

## Friday, October 9

This year full breakfast is included with registration. We'll program Friday and Saturday breakfast get-togethers with agency PIOs, alternative vehicle and other tech demos and breakout sessions. *Check the SEJ website beginning in July for details.*

### OPENING PLENARY

#### Climate Change and Extreme Weather: Planning for an Uncertain Future

From tornadoes on the plains to hurricanes on the coasts, and from drought and wildfire to flooding and snowstorms, and despite differing politics and climate change "beliefs," the nation is bracing for a super-charged extreme weather future. We'll explore this future with top weather, ocean and infrastructure experts, learn about adaptation and mitigation strategies already under way and address our limitations in understanding the threats.

#### Network Lunch

Choose a discussion table on a wide range of timely topics and reporting tips, or join a breakout session with lively newsmakers or journalism trainers.

#### Keynote Debate

We've invited Senator James Inhofe, R-OK, Chairman, Committee on Environment and Public Works, and EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy to sit down together for what promises to be a lively exchange on all things climate change and the future of our planet. Snowballs and other weapons will be checked at the door.

#### Dinner and Movie Night

Following free happy hour at the hotel, we'll settle back for an evening of pizza and popcorn, beer and wine, and a mini-multiplex of films on the environment. From major Hollywood movies to award-winning documentaries to a selection of shorts, we'll have a handful of options playing concurrently in different rooms. After the movies, filmmakers will take questions and talk about their craft. ***Pre-registration and \$25 fee required.***

## Saturday, October 10

### LUNCH AND PLENARY SESSION

#### Our Energy Future

Oklahoma is a microcosm of energy rights and energy fights across the nation. Utilities are eager to add more renewable energy, but struggle with transmission power. They're also grappling with the EPA's proposed Clean Power Plan, which might make coal-fired plants uneconomical. The state is home to several independent oil and gas drillers, known for pioneering horizontal drilling and hydraulic fracturing methods that have fueled the recent boom. As towns push back on the industry's right to drill in or near city limits, states are considering preempting the municipal bans. We'll explore Oklahoma as both a microcosm and a driver of energy use nationally with experts from all sectors.

#### Mini-Tour Bonanza

Sign up on-site beginning Wednesday afternoon for SEJ's popular mini-tours. Options this year may include: Residential wind power; drones and journalism; Oklahoma City National Memorial; recycling industry; OU Biocorrosion Center; urban flood control; bike tour; and the National Weather Center.



#### SEJ's 25th Anniversary and Dinner Party

Join us for an evening of music and dancing, cocktails and a full sit-down dinner, and celebrations with SEJ's founding members at the Sam Noble Oklahoma Museum of Natural History. Curators will be on hand to

lead small groups through exclusive behind-the-scenes tours, and we'll have the full run of the exhibits, including the Hall of Ancient Life, the Hall of Natural Wonders and the Hall of the People of Oklahoma.

***Pre-registration and \$40 fee required.***

## Sunday, October 11

#### Tours and Brunch at the National Weather Center

The National Weather Center, with 550 people housed in its five-story, high-tech facility, is a world leader on extreme weather research and education. We'll tour the Storm Prediction Center, which predicts severe weather across the continental U.S., and the National Severe Storms Laboratory, and other features. Then we'll have brunch with authors and discuss the environmental history of water, drought and the Great Plains. ***Pre-registration and \$25 fee required.***

***Conference adjourns at noon. Buses will return attendees to either the hotel or airport, with airport arrival by 1:00 p.m.***

# SESSIONS

## THE CRAFT

- ▶ Wrangling the Numbers
- ▶ EPA Databases Workshop
- ▶ Hands-On Google Workshop: Building Maps and Graphics
- ▶ Figures Lie and Liars Figure: Understanding Temperature and Climate Records
- ▶ Freelance Pitch Slam
- ▶ Money in Politics
- ▶ Helping the Science Community Engage the Public
- ▶ Covering Environmental Crimes
- ▶ Pipelines at Your Doorstep: Safety and Routing Databases
- ▶ FOIA Clinic: From Ag Gags to Proprietary Chemicals

## ENERGY

- ▶ Fracking Regs State By State: Where Does Your Home Rank?
- ▶ Water Energy Nexus: Where's All That Water Going?
- ▶ Get on the Oil Train (or Pipeline): Policies and Future
- ▶ Quake Debate: Earthquakes in Oklahoma
- ▶ Integrating the Grid: Renewable Energy Throws a Monkey Wrench

## WATER

- ▶ The True Cost of Water: Risks and Benefits
- ▶ Mega-Drought? Little Doubt
- ▶ Toledo Water Crisis: Algae at the Spigot
- ▶ Western Water Law: From Prior Appropriation to Rule of Capture
- ▶ World's Water Woes: Drinking Up and Drying Out

## NATIVE AMERICANS AND DIVERSITY

- ▶ Indian Environmental Law: Flexing Legal Muscle Beyond Reservation Lands
- ▶ Tribes and the Environment: Conservation Efforts and Resource Extractions
- ▶ Environmental Justice Today: From the Plains to the Streets
- ▶ Indians 101: Sorting Through Tribal Governments, BIA Oversight and Legal Jurisdiction

## CLIMATE CHANGE AND WEATHER

- ▶ Whose Denial? IPCC and the Social Science of Climate Change
- ▶ Climate Change Attribution: Pinning the Tornado on the Donkey
- ▶ Tipping Points and the Science of Greenhouse Gases
- ▶ Security Threats from Climate Change
- ▶ From D.C. to Paris: Climate Change Policy for Dummies
- ▶ A Most Violent Sky: On the Frontier of Severe Weather Research

## THE LAND

- ▶ That 14-Letter Dirty Word: Infrastructure
- ▶ Are We Exhausting the Planet?
- ▶ Winged Warnings: What Can Today's Mineshaft Canaries Teach Us?
- ▶ Sage Grouse and Prairie Chickens: Endangered Species Update
- ▶ Green Chemistry: From Household Cleaners to Industrial Secrets

## FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

- ▶ Soil Health Workshop
- ▶ Feeding the World by Going Small
- ▶ Can Big Data Save U.S. Farmers?
- ▶ Adapting Farms to Climate Change: Epigenetics, GMOs, No Till



# REGISTRATION INSTRUCTIONS

**SAVE PAPER!** Please register online and pay by credit card at the Secure Payment Site.



**Problems with the online form?** Contact SEJ at [sej@sej.org](mailto:sej@sej.org) or (215) 884-8174 to have a form emailed, faxed or mailed to you, or click the "Download PDF Form" found here: <http://bit.ly/SEJ2015Registration>, and follow the instructions on the form.

Questions about registration? Contact Robin Smith, [rsmith@sej.org](mailto:rsmith@sej.org) or (517) 290-4891. Please call after 6pm and before 10pm ET on weekdays, and 9am - 6pm ET on Saturday or Sunday. If you need immediate help during regular working hours, contact Chris Bruggers at (502) 641-1844.

Registration can be confirmed only when payment is received.

**Cancellation Policy:** If you cancel your registration in writing by **Sept. 7, 2015**, you will receive a full refund less a \$50 processing fee. Non-attendance does not constitute cancellation. Substitutions may be made. Email or mail your request for cancellation to Robin Smith.

**Current members only:** You may include your dues with your registration fee. You must already be a member of SEJ to renew with conference registration.

### SEJ Dues Schedule (current members only)

US/Canada	<b>\$70</b>
Students	<b>\$40</b>
Mexican Members	<b>\$35</b>
International Postal Members	<b>\$55</b>
International Electronic Members	<b>\$20</b>

## Conference Registration Fees

Member rates apply to SEJ members only. SEJ membership is restricted to journalists, professors and students. Read SEJ's eligibility criteria here: [www.sej.org/eligibility](http://www.sej.org/eligibility). Apply online at [www.sej.org/how-to-join-sej](http://www.sej.org/how-to-join-sej). Membership applications submitted after Sept. 1, 2015, might not be processed in time for the conference.

Membership applicants: do not include your new member fees with conference registration. You must apply as directed above.

### MEMBER RATES

#### MEMBERS

On or by **8/1/15** **\$195**  
**8/2/15** or later **\$240**

#### SINGLE DAY

(Please specify which day)

On or by **8/1/15** **\$110**  
**8/2/15** or later **\$120**

### Non-members

**Save money!** Subscriptions to SEJ's quarterly newsletter, *SEJournal*, include conference fee discounts for up to three people per professional subscription.

## SEJOURNAL SUBSCRIBERS

### SEJOURNAL SUBSCRIPTION RATES

#### INDIVIDUAL: \$45

(saves 50% off non-member registration fees for the individual subscriber)

To take advantage of subscriber discounts, subscribe today by including your subscription fee with your conference payment. Please contact SEJ at [sej@sej.org](mailto:sej@sej.org) or (215) 884-8174 if you are unsure about your category.

#### UNIVERSITY: \$55

(saves 50% off non-member registration fees for up to three people)

#### SMALL NONPROFIT: \$50

(saves 50% off non-member registration fees for up to three people)

#### NONPROFIT: \$75

(saves 30% off non-member registration fees for up to three people)

#### GOVERNMENT: \$80

(saves 30% off non-member registration fees for up to three people)

#### CORPORATE: \$200

(saves 10% off non-member registration fees for up to three people)

### STUDENT RATES

#### STUDENTS \$80

(Membership is not needed for student rate. However, students may be eligible for membership. See above for information on joining SEJ.)

### REGISTRATION RATES

#### INDIVIDUAL, UNIVERSITY, SMALL NONPROFIT SUBSCRIBERS

(annual budget of \$1,000,000 or less)

On or by **8/1/15** **\$525**  
**8/2/15** or later **\$575**

#### SINGLE DAY

(Please specify which day)

On or by **8/1/15** **\$225**  
**8/2/15** or later **\$275**

#### NONPROFIT/GOVERNMENT SUBSCRIBERS

On or by **8/1/15** **\$735**  
**8/2/15** or later **\$805**

#### SINGLE DAY

(Please specify which day)

On or by **8/1/15** **\$315**  
**8/2/15** or later **\$385**

#### CORPORATE SUBSCRIBERS

On or by **8/1/15** **\$945**  
**8/2/15** or later **\$1,035**

#### SINGLE DAY

(Please specify which day)

On or by **8/1/15** **\$405**  
**8/2/15** or later **\$495**

## GENERAL ADMISSION

### NON-MEMBERS WITHOUT SUBSCRIPTION

On or by **8/1/15** **\$1,050**  
**8/2/15** or later **\$1,150**

### SINGLE DAY (Please specify which day)

On or by **8/1/15** **\$450**  
**8/2/15** or later **\$550**

## Important Deadlines:

**Aug. 1:** Deadline to register at the early discount rate

**Sept. 7:** Deadline to cancel conference registration with refund less \$50 processing fee. Substitutions can be made after this time. To cancel registration, call (517) 290-4891 or email [rsmith@sej.org](mailto:rsmith@sej.org)

**Sept. 20:** Deadline to book rooms at the conference rate at the Embassy Suites & Conference Center

## LODGING

### Embassy Suites & Conference Center

2501 Conference Drive  
 Norman, OK 73069

Rates: **\$132** for one or two people;  
**\$142** for three or four people

Amenities include:

- ▶ Complimentary cooked-to-order breakfast
- ▶ Free wifi in guest rooms



## TRAVEL

Will Rogers World Airport

[www.flyokc.com/Default.aspx](http://www.flyokc.com/Default.aspx)

Oklahoma City Department of Airports

7100 Terminal Drive, Unit 937

Oklahoma City, OK 73159-0937

Phone: (405) 316-3200

### Airport Express

Fare to Embassy Suites & Conference Center: **\$38**

Book your ride from the airport:

[bit.ly/Ride2Norman](http://bit.ly/Ride2Norman)

Or call (405) 681-3311

Taxi Cabs serving Will Rogers Airport:

A1: (405) 321-3111

Checker Cab: (405) 239-7710

Yellow Cab: (405) 329-3333

### Amtrak

Take the train to the Norman, OK, Amtrak Station. Have an Amtrak station in your town?

If it's too close to fly and too far to drive, it's a good way to get to SEJ's 25th Annual Conference. Here's a sampling:

From Chicago: **\$132** (coach) (**\$112** ages 62+)

From Los Angeles: **\$156** (**\$132.60** ages 62+)

From Austin, Texas: **\$53** (**\$45** ages 62+)

[www.amtrak.com/home](http://www.amtrak.com/home)

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"It isn't what we don't know that gives us trouble, it's what we `know' that ain't so."

**Will Rogers**

## ABOUT OKLAHOMA

The Sooner State has more to offer than just extreme weather and waving prairie grasses. It has 12 distinct ecological regions, including swampy bayou in the southeast, rolling valleys thick with hardy oak trees in the northeast, dusty plains in the southwest, and high plateaus in the Panhandle. Its capital city does have a working stockyard, but it's not a sleepy cow town anymore. Oklahoma City, and our nearby host city Norman, have up-and-coming nightlives, with restaurants and bars that serve locally-sourced produce, meats, honeys and sauces. Norman has extensive bike trails connecting a network of city parks. And perhaps a shocker for environmental journalists: Oklahoma is the nation's leader in cleaning up its rivers and creeks under the Clean Water Act. It has removed more polluted water bodies from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's impaired waters list than any other state. Through voluntary conservation programs, farmers, ranchers and landowners are working together with the EPA, U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service and local county conservation agents to improve water quality. For more information about Oklahoma and the region see [www.sej.org/node/19296/](http://www.sej.org/node/19296/).

### ABOUT THE SOCIETY OF ENVIRONMENTAL JOURNALISTS

The Society of Environmental Journalists is the world's oldest and largest educational membership association of journalists, educators and students dedicated to more and better news coverage of environment-related issues. The organization is independent and nonpartisan. This year SEJ members celebrate 25 years of community, conferences, tours, publications, mentoring, diversity and special projects. Our continuing mission is to strengthen the quality, reach and viability of environmental journalism in all media, to advance public understanding. Visit [www.sej.org](http://www.sej.org) to learn more and get involved.



### ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA

The University of Oklahoma is a pacesetter in American public higher education. OU is classified by the Carnegie Foundation as a Very High Research institution, placing it in the highest tier of research universities in the nation, and OU's Research Campus is ranked among the nation's top research parks by the Association of University Research Parks. Anchoring OU's Research Campus, the National Weather Center houses academic, state and federal entities, all collaborating with a common purpose. OU's Research Campus is also home to the Department of Interior's South Central Climate Science Center, a consortium of four regional universities, two tribal nations and a national laboratory. With the opening this fall of the state-of-the-art Radar Innovations Lab, the eighth research facility to be built on the site in less than a decade, the OU Research Campus topped 1 million square feet of occupied space in less than a decade.



Image above courtesy of StateImpact Oklahoma

Cover images courtesy of Brent Fuchs, Lenzy Krehbiel-Burton, Sarah Terry-Cobo, StateImpact Oklahoma and NOAA.