



Arkansas Red River Commission

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Arkansas Natural Resources Commission
Attn: Randy Young, Executive Director
101 East Capitol, Suite 350
Little Rock, AR 72201

RE: Comments for Arkansas Water Plan, Southwest WRPR

Dear Mr. Young:

The Arkansas Red River Commission (ARRC) applauds your efforts to update the Arkansas Water Plan. Water is a precious resource that we must manage. The ARRC was created to develop the Red River for the benefit of the citizens in our region and the State of Arkansas. In our efforts in pursuing our mission it is important that we work within the parameters of the Water Plan.

Issue: For the past ten years we have been the local sponsor for a Corps of Engineer feasibility study to investigate navigation on the Red River. Funding constraints at the Federal and State level have halted the progress of this study. We believe the study efforts must continue, not just for navigation, but for all water uses.

Critical Initiatives: The ARRC is most interested in four of the five critical initiatives identified in the draft Water Plan. The Red River lacks 'infrastructure' to provide a reliable water supply. There has been no 'planning' to address the needs of the region. 'Reliable data' may exist, but it is in numerous federal and state agencies. The fourth initiative, 'proactive management', of the Red River and its tributaries, can be accomplished through the ARRC, a Commission authorized to study and plan for infrastructure on the Red River.

Potential Benefits: It is clear that the stable and orderly use of Red River water will provide a multitude of benefits that include: irrigation, recreation (proven on the Red River in Louisiana), municipal & industrial consumption, navigation, environmental flows, hydropower and reduced dependence on ground water. These benefits cannot be realized unless infrastructure is provided to capture our water resource to insure a dependable, reliable supply year round.

Recommendation: The ARRC recommends that the Southwest Arkansas WRPR section of the Arkansas Water Plan include the proposal for a state funded feasibility study. The study would determine the excess water available, the economic development potential for the stated benefits and identify if there are additional beneficial uses. Options should be investigated for use of the excess water for regional use, transfer potential to other state regions and interstate transfers.

Local Sponsor/Manager: The ARRC is currently the only Commission authorized, by State legislation, to actively oversee 'improvements' along the Red River in the counties of: Little River, Hempstead, Miller and Lafayette. ARRC authority allows this commission to cooperate with state and federal agencies. The ARRC can be the conduit to initiate, coordinate and execute a feasibility study.

The ARRC is excited that the water resources of our region and the State of Arkansas are receiving this attention and we know there is great potential to develop this resource in our region. These water resource studies and

justified projects would provide the water resource development to a region that desperately needs economic opportunities for its citizens.

Thank you for your consideration that this recommendation be included in the Southwest Region of the Water Plan and I am available to provide additional information and briefings to you, your staff and Commissioners.

Sincerely,

Dan York
Chairman