



4100 Corporate Center Drive
Suite 205
Springdale, Arkansas 72762
479.582.2100
www.nwacouncil.org

October 23, 2014

Edward Swaim
Arkansas Natural Resources Commission
101 East Capitol Avenue, Suite 350
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201

RE: Arkansas State Water Plan public comments

Dear Mr. Swaim:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written comments to the Arkansas Natural Resources Commission regarding the update of the state water plan. As you know, this is a critical document for the future of our state, especially Northwest Arkansas.

Northwest Arkansas has been a key economic engine for our state, adding 24 people a day to the Fayetteville-Springdale-Rogers Metropolitan Statistical Area and creating jobs at a rate faster than other Arkansas MSAs.

Northwest Arkansas has been so successful in large part because we've had Beaver Lake as a resource since the 1960s, and we're extremely concerned that the new state water plan suggests utilizing this fast-growing region's sole source of drinking water — Beaver Lake — to replenish other regions' water deficiencies caused by overuse of groundwater.

Exporting water to other regions will risk one of our state's top economies and best job producers, and Arkansas shouldn't take that risk.

In our view, before any other recommendations or actions are taken, a detailed study of the fast-growing White River basin is necessary and prudent to determine future water demands in northern Arkansas, to determine potential water conservation and water reuse opportunities in the basin, and to protect Northwest Arkansas water needs during drought conditions.

We have one additional recommendation.

We're recommending that specific language be added to the state water plan, requiring timely reviews of the 303(d) list. We need assurance that streams that meet their designated uses are removed from the list as soon as possible.

Thank you for your work on the state water plan and for the opportunity to provide these public comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mike Malone", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Mike Malone
President and CEO
Northwest Arkansas Council