



Newsletter November 2013

Water Supply Availability Work Group Meeting Attracts Big Crowd

More than 90 individuals attended the Arkansas Water Plan Update Water Supply Availability Work Group Meeting that was held in North Little Rock Oct. 22. Approximately 60 of the attendees were not on the “official” Work Group. They were Arkansans who wanted to take an active role in the Water Plan Update process and learn more about the state’s available water resources. The public is always invited and encouraged to attend all work group sessions, and representatives of the Arkansas Natural Resources Commission (ANRC), the agency leading the work on the Water Plan, were elated that so many members of the public attended.

The North Little Rock attendees included farmers, industry leaders, conservationists, representatives from water supply districts and municipalities, grassroots organizations, and local, state and federal agency employees that are involved in groundwater and surface water issues.

Engineers, geologists, scientists and other professionals made presentations regarding surface water availability and groundwater supplies. Surface and groundwater quality were also covered because the water has to be of good enough quality to be utilized.

Attendees heard about calculations of “excess surface water.” By law, this is 25% of flow in a watershed on an average annual basis above the amount required to satisfy existing and projected needs. These needs include the rights of riparian landowners, water for fish and wildlife habitat, aquifer recharge, water

quality, navigation, federal projects, and projected future water uses.

Groundwater depletion was also a major topic of the meeting. Arkansas groundwater users are currently withdrawing over twice the “sustainable yield” of our aquifers. This is the amount of use that can be maintained for an indefinite time without causing unacceptable environmental, economic, or social consequences. If water is removed from an aquifer at a greater rate than the sustainable yield, it is possible that long-term damage can be done, making it extremely difficult for natural, geologic conditions to replenish the water.

Presentations that were given at the Availability meeting can be viewed at <http://www.arwaterplan.arkansas.gov/>.

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Water Demand Forecasting Report Completed

The Arkansas Water Plan Update’s “Water Demand Forecast Report” has been completed and can be found online at <http://www.arwaterplan.arkansas.gov/>. These estimates of future water demand are intended for statewide and regional planning purposes, and are not intended to replace local water resources planning efforts.



Comments are welcome!

Email comments or questions to: arkansaswater@cdmsmith.com

Website: www.arwaterplan.arkansas.gov

Telephone: Edward Swaim, Arkansas Natural Resources Commission, 501-682-3979

Mail: Arkansas Natural Resources Commission, Attention: Water Plan

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ANRC encourages you to reproduce and distribute this newsletter.



How to Stay Involved in the Arkansas Water Plan Update

- Stay aware of the progress by using our e-mail newsletters <https://app.e2ma.net/app2/audience/signup/1722771/1716395/?v=a>, and frequently checking the website <http://arwaterplan.arkansas.gov/>.
- Review the data sources and calculations used to determine demands and supplies. They are included in the workgroup meeting materials on the website. Comment on any that can be improved.
- Look for areas of interest to you that are not specifically or adequately addressed in meetings and reports. Meeting minutes and agendas will be very helpful here, (minutes of meetings and agendas are located on the website) even without attending each meeting. If there are items that should get more attention, send comments to arkansaswater@cdmsmith.com.
- Go or send representatives to applicable workgroup, subgroup, and public information meetings (Schedule of meetings is located on the website).

Keep your constituency, local government officials, and legislators informed about the Plan and your interest in it.

- Especially get involved and be heard during the fall 2013 to fall 2014 period when we compare demand and supply to identify gaps, and then work on solutions that may range from specific projects, better monitoring and science, more money for infrastructure, to suggested changes in laws and rules.