



Arkansas WATERplan

Essential For Life

Newsletter November 2014

Public Comments Convince ANRC to Make Three Major changes in the Draft Executive Summary

The Arkansas Natural Resources Commission (ANRC) has consistently stressed the importance of receiving input from stakeholders and members of the general public during almost three years of work to update Arkansas's Water Plan. There have been literally dozens of public meetings and planning sessions throughout the state. During the process, ANRC has received a variety of suggestions.

After all of the public meetings, ANRC finished the Arkansas Water Plan Update Draft Executive Summary in late June, put it on the website, www.arwaterplan.arkansas.gov, and urged stakeholders and the general public to make comments on this document. ANRC set a deadline of October 24th for the comments to be sent to the agency.

There were 51 responses. Some of these comments dealt with minor issues, such as formatting, grammar, and related items, while others addressed the major issues that had been developed throughout the process.

The staff of ANRC and the planning team reviewed the suggestions that had been made through October 24th and decided that three of the recommendations in the Draft should be considered by the Commissioners for possible changes. On November 5th, ANRC had a special meeting so Commissioners could consider the changes the agency's staff recommended.

The original wording of the recommendation that was deleted is in **red**, followed by the new wording in **blue** that was approved by the Commissioners.

Recommendation: Groundwater Decline: ANRC will seek **authority opportunities** to purchase, install, and read meters on selected alluvial wells. ~~including the authority to lease or condemn sites for meter installation.~~

Recommendation: Excess Water: ~~Remove the 25-percent limitation for estimating excess water available for nonriparian transfer and conduct scientific studies~~

~~to determine what proportion of the total available water is seasonally appropriate to satisfy the required uses specified in statute by major basins and subbasins in each planning region, beginning with the East Arkansas Region, and followed by, in order, South-central, West-central, North, and Southwest Arkansas Regions. The study should be conducted in consultation with AGFC and ADEQ.~~ A deficit of legally available water has been identified within certain basins of the East Arkansas Water Resources Planning Region. The General Assembly should consider raising the 25 percent limitation for permitting excess surface water within these basins for nonriparian transfer upon completion of scientific studies in East Arkansas validating the need for an increase and confirming water is seasonably available to protect and sustain instream, riparian, and other uses specified in state law. Similar scientific analyses should be conducted in the remaining planning regions in this order: South-central, West-central, North, and Southwest. These studies will be conducted in collaboration with AGFC, ADEQ, ADH, and other state, regional, and local agencies with constitutional and statutory water management duties.

Recommendation: Water Quality: ~~Study whether nutrient management plans should be required outside current nutrient surplus areas.~~ Encourage the General Assembly to require nutrient management plans for the application of poultry litter and animal manure throughout the state.

The Arkansas Water Plan 2014 Update, with these changes and minor formatting and grammatical edits, will be prepared and submitted to the ANRC Commissioners at the end of November. The Commissioners will then consider rule-making for implementing the Update. There will be additional opportunities for public comments when specific rules and legislative action are proposed.

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Comments are welcome!

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