

Arkansas Water Plan 2014 Update

Appendix L

Arkansas Water Plan 2014 Update Stakeholder Involvement



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From the initiation of the AWP 2014 Update, the Arkansas Natural Resources Commission (ANRC) has maintained a goal of continuous and effective stakeholder involvement and public information. A multi-layered strategy for involving stakeholders and the public was developed at the onset of the project and was implemented throughout the life of the project. The focus of the stakeholder involvement strategy was facilitated information exchange. Information exchange for the five

layers shown in Figure 1 is described below.

General Public Outreach was intended to provide an opportunity for sharing information to and obtaining feedback from the general public. Thirty-six public meetings were held at the locations around the state as shown in Table 1. The public meetings were held at important milestones in the AWP process.

The purpose of the first set of meetings in November 2012 was to provide an overview of the AWP Update process; identify important studies, water management issues and concerns; obtain input on draft vision and goals for the AWP Update; and finalize and implement public information and stakeholder involvement and communication process. These meetings had high turnout, between 40 and 100 participants signed in.

The second set of public meetings, held in June 2013, attracted about 20 participants at each of the 14 meetings. These meetings were focused on explaining the results of the demand forecast for the AWP. Additionally, this set of public meetings sought to get public input to refine the AWP vision and goals, discuss initial approach to quantify water quantity and quality, and to begin identification of infrastructure, funding, and policy needs.



Figure 1 Information Exchange Summary for Arkansas Water Plan Update

Table 1: Locations and Dates of AWP 2014 Update Public Meetings

Public Meeting Location	First Set of Public Meetings	Second Set of Public Meetings	Third Set of Public Meetings	Fourth Set of Public Meetings	Fifth Set of Public Meetings
North Arkansas Water Resource Planning Region					
Fayetteville	11/13/2012	6/11/2013			9/19/2014
Harrison		6/6/2013	10/9/2013		
Batesville			10/7/2013		
Clinton		6/12/2013			
Heber Springs		6/9/2013	10/1/2013		
Searcy		6/13/2013			
Mountain View				2/19/2014	
East Arkansas Water Resource Planning Region					
Jonesboro	11/15/2012	6/7/2013		2/18/2014	9/4/2014
Forrest City		6/18/2013			
Stuttgart		6/6/2013			9/3/2013
Pine Bluff		6/4/2013			
Monticello			10/13/2013		
West-central Arkansas Water Resource Planning Region					
Russellville		6/6/2013		2/20/2014	9/5/2014
Little Rock	11/27/2012	6/5/2013			9/17/2014
Fort Smith		6/4/2013			
Lonoke				1/14/2014	
South-central Arkansas Water Resource Planning Region					
Mount Ida			10/18/2013		
Arkadelphia		6/3/2013			
Hot Springs				2/24/2012	
Smackover		6/20/2013			9/15/2014
El Dorado	11/29/2012				
South-central Arkansas Water Resource Planning Region					
Texarkana			10/10/2013	2/25/2014	9/16/2014

A third set of public meetings were held in October 2013. The purpose of the meetings was to provide an update of the AWP progress, with emphasis on the methodology used to complete the water availability analysis. Six meetings were held and there were about 10 participants at each.

Public meetings were held in February 2014 associated with the effort to develop issues and recommendations for the AWP 2014 Update. Water Resource Planning Region groups met in each of the five planning regions to discuss water resource issues and a public meeting was held in associated with those planning group meetings. There were up to 10 public participants in some regions and no public participants attended meetings in other regions.

The fifth and final set of public meeting was held in September 2014. The public comment draft of the AWP 2014 Update was released on June 3, 2014. The public comment period extended to October 24. The focus of these meetings was to provide an overview of the AWP 2014 Update and encourage the public to submit comments during the public comment period. Seven meetings were held and the number of participants was about 20 participants.

Information exchange with the public was not limited to public meetings. Presentations about the AWP Update were made for any organization or group that requested one. One hundred and twenty seven presentations were made between July 2007 and May 2014. The ANRC maintains a website (<http://www.arwaterplan.arkansas.gov/>) with up to date information on the AWP Update progress, meeting summaries, and technical documents developed for the AWP. A monthly newsletter is

distributed via email (950 addresses) and hard copy (550 addresses). The mailing list for newsletters and other AWP announcements has been built up through sign in sheets at public meetings and contacts through the website.

Water Resource Planning Region Groups were formed to represent local interests (water providers, water users, conservation districts, local governments, representatives of federal and state agencies, environmentalists, recreationalists, etc.). Table 2 shows the Water Resource Planning Groups

and the number of volunteers representing the demand sectors (e.g. agriculture, fish and wildlife, industry, navigation, water providers). The regional planning groups met to exchange ideas, review water supply and demand data, develop issues and recommendations relevant to their region. The volunteers in these groups were asked to meet 4 times: 2 times in their region and 2 times at statewide meetings to provide a prioritized list of issues and recommendations. The process of developing issues and recommendations is described in detail in Appendix H of the AWP 2014 Update.

Table 2 Water Resource Planning Region Groups for AWP Issues and Recommendations

Sector	East Region	North Region	West-Central Region	South-Central Region	Southwest Region
Agriculture – Crop Irrigation	43	2	5	4	1
Agriculture - Livestock	1	4	1	1	3
Conservation Districts	7	1	4	2	1
County Governments	2	3	3	1	1
Fish and Wildlife	9	9	8	7	3
Industrial Water Users	1	2	1	1	1
Municipal Governments	2	2	4	1	1
Navigation	2	1	2	1	1
Public Water/Wastewater Providers	2	6	11	5	1
Recreation	6	7	8	5	2
Thermoelectric	1	1	1	1	2

Technical Work Groups provided input on the methodologies used for the technical work of the AWP 2014 Update and to review the results prior using the results in the AWP. It was of utmost importance to the ANRC that the analytical methodologies used to estimate the two fundamental building blocks of the AWP 2014 Update (Demand and Supply) be understood and accepted by a broad

range of technical experts from around the state. Two Technical Work Groups were formed: one for the demand forecast and one for the water supply availability. The members of the Technical Work Groups were identified based on their experience and expertise and were invited to be a member of the groups. Table 3 shows the organization of the Technical Work Groups and the sub groups to guide specific topics.

Table 3 AWP Update Technical Work Groups and Sub-Groups

Technical Work Group	Sub-Group	Meetings	# of Members
Demand Forecast	All	December 17, 2012 May 6, 2013	54
	Agriculture	January 7, 2013 March 15, 2013	18
	Aquaculture		7
	Municipal	January 15, 2013	9
	Industrial	January 16, 2013	10
	Thermoelectric	January 23, 2013 April 1, 2013	4
	Navigation		6
	Water Availability	All	April 25, 2013 October 22, 2013
Surface Water Availability		May 21, 2013	11
Groundwater Availability		June 19, 2013	12
Water Quality		June 17, 2013	7
Fish and Wildlife		January 22, 2013 February 6, 2013 March 26, 2013 March 27, 2013 May 8, 2013 July 9, 2013	9

Each Technical Work Group started with an initial meeting to propose the overall analytical methodology and the formation of subgroups. The subgroups worked independently to reach conclusions on the methodology for the specific topic, some with in-person meetings and others using conference calls or both. To complete the Technical Work Group process, the conclusions of the subgroups were compiled and presented to the entire Technical Work Group with the goal of reaching consensus on the results of the analysis. The Demand Forecast Technical Work Group had the initial meeting in January 2013 and completed work in May 2013. The results of the Demand Forecast Technical Work Group are reflected in the AWP Demand Forecast Report (Appendix E). The initial meeting of the Water Availability Technical Work Group was in April 2013 and that effort was completed in October 2013 culminating in the AWP Water Supply Availability Report (Appendix C).

Technical Advisory Committee consisted of the nine ANRC Commissioners, senior management and/or staff of key state and federal agency representatives. The focus of this group was on developing the initial guiding policy for the AWP Update, including the vision and goals of the AWP Update.

Agency Planning Team is an interagency team led by ANRC and supported by contractors provided guidance, review, and progress input to the ANRC Program Manager. The Agency Planning Team developed and implemented the stakeholder involvement and public information activities for the AWP Update.



Issues identified by the Eastern Water Resource Planning Region Group were recorded by participants at the meeting in Jonesboro. Photo courtesy of Terry Horton