

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

ROBERT BENTLEY
GOVERNOR



STATE OF ALABAMA

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

GREG CANFIELD
SECRETARY OF COMMERCE

October 26, 2012

Mr. Brian Atkins
Division Director, Office of Water Resources
ADECA
Post Office Box 5690
Montgomery, AL 36103-5690



Dear Brian,

In response to your request for comments on the Water Agencies Working Group report "Water Management Issues in Alabama", the Alabama Department of Commerce would like to offer the following observations:

First, we appreciate the Governor's leadership in addressing many of the more important water resource issues facing this State and the Working Groups' recognition of the imperative of water to economic and commercial development.

We support efforts to make sure that any statewide water resources plan is consistent with the Accelerate Alabama economic development strategic plan, as well as all the other policy options listed in the Economic Development portion in the report as listed below:

- Any state water resources management plan should include policies and guidance for water resources development and reservoir planning programs. These policies should:
 - Encourage regional planning in water source development;
 - Encourage the exploration of public/private partnerships;
 - Identify potential reservoir sites, in conjunction with local authorities and planning agencies; and
 - Encourage the development of off-stream storage for water supply needs to minimize impacts to major rivers and streams.
- The Governor's Economic and Development strategic planning process should include consideration of water resources implications in any efforts to focus Alabama's business and industry recruiting efforts. This would be separate and distinct from the current site-specific coordination process currently in place for individual clients and projects.

- The Governor should task the Inland Waterways and Intermodal Infrastructure Advisory Board to provide recommendations for water resource-related infrastructure projects that would provide direct benefits to economic recruiting efforts.
- Once water resource assessments are complete, OWR should ensure that water capacity and availability information is communicated to the State's industrial recruiters highlighting any areas where water resource problems may impact or deter the recruitment of industries.
- ADECA and ADEM should review federal and state water supply development funding programs (including state funded seed monies, i.e. the Water Supply Assistance Authority (*Code of Alabama*, 1975, §22-23A) and the Inland Waterways and Intermodal Infrastructure Fund (*Code of Alabama*, 1975, §41-23-123)) and develop recommendations to enhance and encourage long term infrastructure planning and regional cooperation in the development of new water sources.
- ADECA should create an information clearinghouse on their web site to summarize sources of potential funding for new water source development, infrastructure improvements, or system expansions.

Finally, we concur with the Working Groups' observation that the State should be aware of federal encroachment into the water quantity area of water resources. This is particularly important since water quantity issues have historically been within a state's purview, not an area of federal jurisdiction. We support efforts to keep agencies such as EPA, the Corps of Engineers and FERC from further encroachment in water quantity issues.

In my previous tenure as Chairman of the Permanent Joint Legislative Committee on Water Policy and Management, I came to understand the importance of these issues to the future growth and development of Alabama. I have appreciated OWR's support to our staff in the area of industrial recruitment and its technical advice on several issues. We look forward to continuing this beneficial relationship in the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Greg Canfield", written in a cursive style.

Greg Canfield