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GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
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EXECUTIVE DIVISION

Bennett Bearden
Geological Survey of Alabama
P.O. Box 869999
Tuscaloosa, AL 35486-6999

Dear Bennett,

Thank you for the great work in developing and preparing the report, *Water Management Issues in Alabama*. After discussing the report with colleagues around the state, it appears that others are already providing feedback regarding a number of important specific items. Therefore, I've highlighted a few considerations below that are more general in scope.

1. As we all understand, the status of Alabama's water resources depends largely upon the status of surrounding land resources, i.e. surrounding watersheds. Thus effective water management must often involve effective land management, and effective water policy should necessitate effective land-use policy. Of course, trying to establish such strengthened policy for Alabama is likely to be a difficult political challenge. Nevertheless, I hope it is appropriate to reiterate herein the sentiments of the many of us who feel that effective land and watershed management should be an official priority in developing sound water policy for Alabama.

2. Also widely understood, effective land and watershed management implies issues of "land-use", including consideration of "land-use planning". This too, of course, is quite a politically sensitive topic, but I hope it is appropriate herein to emphasize the importance of land-use planning to the long-term management and protection of Alabama's water resources. More to the point, Alabama would benefit greatly from a process of comprehensive long term planning that better integrates planning for multiple areas, economic and environmental, as well as various cultural and educational areas.

3. As we all recognize, public support is essential in achieving the kinds of policy and planning measures that are needed for effective long-term water management in Alabama. This support is best attained through means that ensure proper public understanding of relevant issues and contingencies, and that foster a sense of public "buy-in" for implementing sound policies and programs. I hope it is appropriate herein to offer that Alabama would benefit from a careful, guided process of public involvement rather than simply the usual procedure of holding requisite public hearings.

4. Also helpful, of course, are effective programs of general environmental education. A number of initiatives are presently underway to strengthen this area of public awareness in Alabama. These represent a timely opportunity for providing collaboration and educational support as the state addresses water management needs and issues.

5. Enclosed are several documents for which I enjoyed the privilege of helping to develop. These include An Environmental Protection Plan for the State of Alabama (ADEM, 1989); Toward a Comprehensive Program of Environmental Education in Alabama (Governor's Commission on Environmental Initiatives, 2001); Project Proposal, Comprehensive Planning for a Sustainable Society: A Community Collaborative Approach (Tuscaloosa Challenge 21, 2002); and An Assessment of Water and Sewer Needs and Issues Today and for the Future (Tuscaloosa County Commission, 2009). Key parts of each of these documents give further discussion to the concerns itemized above and also contain proposed programs/projects/recommendations that are yet to be implemented but are very timely for trial/model development. I will be happy to provide any additional input or assistance regarding these as might be wished by you or AWAAG.

6. Finally, I'm sure you know, *Discovering Alabama* stands eager to be of help in any way we can. Now with almost 100 completed shows, Teacher Guides, books, and other materials, *Discovering Alabama* is a ready educational resource that includes several dozen award-winning programs specifically about water resources in the state.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Doug Phillips". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Doug Phillips