

LeFleur, Lance R

From: ADEM Director Lance LeFleur
Sent: Wednesday, August 22, 2012 1:55 PM
To: LeFleur, Lance R
Subject: FW: Alabama Water Policy

Gisele Echols
ADEM

From: Matthew Miller [mailto:matthewmiller328@gmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, August 22, 2012 12:42 PM
To: ADEM Director Lance LeFleur
Subject: Alabama Water Policy

Dear Director LeFleur,

I am writing to you regarding the need for an effective and comprehensive water policy for Alabama. I attended the August 2, 2012 Water Policy Symposium held at the Birmingham Botanical Gardens and was encouraged by both the participation and comments provided by speakers and attendees.

Water is one of Alabama's most abundant natural resources. It is also a resource that is often over-looked and under-valued. Clean water is essential to human health. Source water protection for surface water, ground water (aquifers), and recharge areas is critical to maintaining the quality and quantity of our drinking water. Water quality and quantity are key factors in economic growth and sustainability. Underlining the importance of continued access to quality water resources, economic drivers in Alabama include water dependent industries of agriculture, manufacturing, timber production, mining, and tourism. The diversity of natural habitats found across our state are also dependent upon water. These ecosystems range from underground limestone cave systems in north Alabama to the tidal influenced marsh systems of the Tensaw Delta on the Gulf Coast. Between these two extremes are the streams, rivers, lakes, forests, hills, prairies, and wetlands that encompass the amazingly diverse ecology of Alabama. The continued existence and health of these varied systems provide valuable ecosystem services in terms of natural flood control, water filtration, soil retention, and temperature modification.

An effective and meaningful long-term water policy should include consideration of the following:

- ~ water quality
- ~ water quantity
- ~ water conservation from both supply and demand sides of use
- ~ access, priority use, and water law
- ~ drinking water (surface and underground)
- ~ source water protection including aquifer recharge areas
- ~ waste water treatment
- ~ water as a valued economic resource, both now and in the future
- ~ water management, regulation, monitoring, conservation, and restoration
- ~ natural in-stream flows and hydrologic regimes
- ~ inter-basin transfer (in-state and inter-state)
- ~ control of invasive species
- ~ protection of and when possible re-introduction of native aquatic species
- ~ protection of cave aquatic systems

- ~ utilization of a watershed or river basin approach to planning and management
- ~ dams, bridges, highways, railroads, pipelines, electric transmission lines, piers, lake/sea walls, and other infrastructure that directly or indirectly impacts water resources

This is by no means an exhaustive list, but rather, one that offers key points of consideration. From my former work as a Governor's appointee to the Mississippi Water Advisory Committee I appreciate the complexity of issues involved. I applaud your efforts and those of ADEM to see a comprehensive and effective water policy in place for Alabama.

Sincere regards,
Matthew Miller

citizen of Bibb County