

**AWAWG**  
**Certificates of Use (COUs),**  
**Permitting, and Interbasin**  
**Transfers Focus Panel**  
**Update**

**Tom Littlepage**  
**COU Focus Panel Chair**  
**April 5, 2016**

# AWAWG COU Panel Tasking

- Charge from Governor Bentley based on recommendations contained in “*Mapping the Future of Alabama Water Resources Management: Policy Options and Recommendations*” released in April 2014
- Issue Areas Assessed:
  - Water Resources Management
  - Enhanced Certificates of Use/Permitting
  - Interbasin Transfers

**MAPPING THE FUTURE OF  
ALABAMA WATER RESOURCES  
MANAGEMENT:  
Policy Options and Recommendations**



A Report to  
The Honorable Robert Bentley  
Governor of Alabama  
by the  
Alabama Water Agencies Working Group  
December 1, 2013

# AWAWG Report Questions for COU Panel

- What information is required to determine whether a more formal regulatory system is needed to manage water use?
- What is the appropriate level of water management registration/permitting needed for the present? Is something different needed in the future?
- Should this level be adaptive and vary with water capacity conditions?
- How could a regulatory process work in combining the consideration of water use, interbasin transfers, and instream flow?
- If IBTs are regulated, what is the appropriate basin scale?

# Additional Consideration for IBT Issues

- The following policy options were developed from the AWA WG Report dealing with the Interbasin Transfer Issue for consideration:
  - Determination of an appropriate basin scale for evaluating and accounting for interbasin transfers of water resources.
  - Identification and summarization of current interbasin transfers (locations and amounts) once the applicable basin unit is defined.
  - Consideration of the need to require periodic reporting for existing IBTs.
  - Consideration for establishing an interbasin transfers regulatory mechanism that provides for existing transfers and establishes criteria for new or expanded transfers (including an analysis of alternatives) to ensure they are reasonable and beneficial to the state.

# Status Update

- Panel consists of wide range of representatives from business and industry, environmental organizations, utilities, navigation, economic development, public water systems, and the Alabama Water Resources Commission
- Held four meetings since September 2015
- Emphasis on:
  - Consensus on meeting procedures, agreement principles, and the report development process
  - Providing extensive background information on current water management process in Alabama; including the Alabama Water Resources Act, the Alabama Water Use Reporting program, a review of the rules and regulations relating to the Alabama Water Resources Commission and the Alabama Office of Water Resources, and various hydrologic, legal, and technical aspects that should be considered regarding any potential recommendations dealing with interbasin transfers
- Researching concepts for further analysis of large scale basin planning areas

# Next Steps

- Focused discussion on issues and recommendations for next steps
- Development of draft report
- Development of any other documents or proposals

# COU Panel Report Conceptual Outline

The following structure is envisioned for the COU Panel Report:

- Executive Summary
- Overview
- List of Issues – Certificates of Use (COUs) and Permitting
  - Summary of Discussions
  - Next Steps
- List of Issues – IBTs
  - Summary of Discussions
  - Next Steps
- Conclusions and Recommendations
  - Next Steps
  - Input to Alabama Comprehensive Water Management Plan
- Appendix
  - Membership

# Contact Info

Tom Littlepage

Alabama Office of Water Resources

Email: [tom.littlepage@adeca.alabama.gov](mailto:tom.littlepage@adeca.alabama.gov)

Phone: (334) 242-5697