



STATE OF ALABAMA  
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November 1, 2012

J. Brian Atkins, P.E.  
Division Director  
Alabama Office of Water Resources, a division of the  
Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs  
401 Adams Avenue, Suite 434  
Montgomery, AL 36103-5690

Dear Director Atkins:

Attorney General Strange asked me to respond to your request for comment upon the "Water Management Issues in Alabama" report dated August 1, 2012, that was prepared by the Alabama Water Agencies Working Group for Governor Bentley. The Attorney General appreciates the opportunity to comment on this report. As an interested stakeholder, we look forward to working with the Working Group, other stakeholders, and the public to develop a statewide water management plan that will promote economic development, protect the State's natural resources, and ensure that all Alabamians are able to use and enjoy the State's water resources now and in the future.

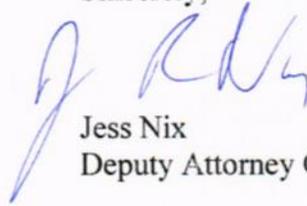
The Attorney General agrees with the report that one of the most important concerns in formulating water policy is to counter the ever increasing encroachment of federal entities, such as the Environmental Protection Agency and the United States Army Corps of Engineers, into the management of Alabama's water resources. Traditionally, issues related to water quantity have been managed by the State and we strongly believe that this traditional role should be protected and maintained in any future policy. While federal entities may have a role to play in other areas, such as water quality, statewide water policy should focus on giving the State as much authority as possible in managing waters within its borders.

In the area of interstate coordination, the Attorney General supports and encourages efforts by the State and State agencies to coordinate and cooperate with neighboring states to ensure that Alabama receives its equitable share of both surface and ground water. We are willing to participate in and assist such efforts where appropriate. Should these efforts fail, the

Attorney General stands ready to take appropriate legal action to protect the State's legal interest in its water resources.

We hope these comments are helpful to the Working Group as it continues its work on water policy issues in Alabama. Please contact me if we can be of any further assistance to the Working Group's efforts.

Sincerely,



Jess Nix  
Deputy Attorney General

JRN/al