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Arkansas Water Plan Update: Summary of Activities Completed/Preliminary Timeline Extending Through 2026 Announced

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The Arkansas Department of Agriculture (“ADA”) issued an October 27th news release addressing the ongoing Arkansas Water Plan (“AWP”) update.

The news release addresses the summary of activities completed to date and a preliminary timeline of additional work extending through 2026.

The AWP has been described as the state’s policy for long-term management of water. It was updated in 1990 and 2014.

The ADA Natural Resources Division has described the purpose of the AWP as bringing:

...data, science, and public input together to define water demands, water supplies, and potential solutions to our future needs.

Governor Sanders previously issued an Executive Order requesting that the ADA Natural Resources Division undertake:

- A comprehensive analysis/report of the state’s water needs.
- Update the AWP.

See Executive Order 23-27.

A number of public meetings with stakeholders and the public have been held to discuss the AWP update.

The completed Phase I has been characterized as a comprehensive review of the existing AWP to determine areas of significant change and to be reevaluated or updated.

The ADA news release provides a summary of the AWP activities to date, which include:

- Stakeholder Meetings.
- Development of goals, timelines, and costs to update the AWP.
- Informational presentations.
- Technical Focus Group meetings on supply, demand, flooding, water quality, and infrastructure.
- Input from the Arkansas Department of Health, Division of Energy and Environment, and Department of Commerce.
- Initiation of a Water Supply, Demand, Gap Analysis, and Mitigation Strategy Review with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Little Rock District.

- Engaged Michael Baker International to complete water and wastewater infrastructure and water quality analyses.
- Support from the Commissioner of State Lands and Corps of Engineers to complete a statewide levee inventory.
- Engaged Olsson to support development of the Flood Plan.
- Engaged Hawkins-Wier to conduct a water reclamation study for Northwest Arkansas.

The AWP Preliminary Timeline provides the following:

- June 2025 – January 2026: Water Supply and Demand Analysis.
- June 2025 – May 2026: Water and Wastewater Infrastructure/Water Quality Analysis.
- June 2025 – May 2026: Gap Analysis and Mitigation Strategy Review.
- February – July 2026: Stakeholder Meetings.
- Summer 2026: Final Plan.

A copy of the news release can be found [here](#).