

MINUTES

HOUSE & SENATE INTERIM COMMITTEES ON AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND JOINT ENERGY

October 15, 2013

The House and Senate Interim Committees on Agriculture, Forestry and Economic Development met with the Joint Energy Committee on Tuesday, October 15, 2013, at the El Dorado Convention Center, 311 South West Avenue, in El Dorado, Arkansas.

Committee members present: Representatives Matthew Shepherd, Chair; Nate Steel, Vice Chair; and Senator Bruce Maloch, Vice Chair, Agriculture, Forestry & Economic Development; Representative David Branscum, Co-Chair; and Senator Linda Chesterfield, Co-Chair, Joint Energy; Representatives John Baine, Dan Douglas, Homer Lenderman, Kelly Linck, Stephen Magie, Stephen Meeks, and Sue Scott.

Representative Shepherd called the meeting to order.

Welcoming Remarks by Chairs

Representative Matthew Shepherd, Representative David Branscum, and Senator Linda Chesterfield, welcomed committee members and guests to El Dorado.

Update from Arkansas Conservation Partnership

Randy Young, Executive Director, Arkansas Natural Resources Commission, provided an update on the Grand Prairie and Bayou Meto projects and reported the progress on both projects – the Grand Prairie pumping plant is approximately 50% complete and the Bayou Meto pumping plant is approximately 95% complete. He also spoke on the Arkansas-Oklahoma Arkansas River Compact Commission saying one of the projects reviewed annually is the phosphorus reduction goal. Mr. Young said ten years ago the typical average phosphorus concentration was .22 milligrams per liter (high), however, it is currently .07, with the goal being .037.

Dr. Tony Windham, Associate Vice President for Agriculture-Extension and Director of the Cooperative Extension Service, University of Arkansas System, spoke on the various water management practices and programs. He said Discovery Farms provides monitoring, demonstration and research on best management practices for plant nutrient and sediment loss reduction on real, working farms. Currently, there are eight Discovery Farms in Arkansas. Other initiatives/programs include:

- Arkansas Edge-of-field Monitoring Network and Nutrient Management Planning/Training
- Education and Outreach for Financial Incentive Programs for Soil and Water Conservation
- State Nonpoint Source Plan
- Irrigation Management
- Pesticide registrations
- Forthcoming ADEQ Grant on Dust, Stubble Burning and Air Quality
- Drought Management Systems
- Land-Grant Initiative for Water Resource Management in the Lower Mississippi River Basin

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:00 p.m. and committee members toured the following water conservation sites:

El Dorado Water Utilities: Reclaimed Greywater Golf Course Irrigation Pond – two city golf courses are irrigated with treated wastewater.

Entegra/Union Power Station: 42-mile interstate pipeline flows natural gas from Louisiana to Entegra's Union Power Station in Arkansas; selling energy to over 40 different wholesale customers all over the United States.

Union County Water Resources Conservation Board: Ouachita River Alternative Water Supply/Sparta Recovery Project: Clarification facility delivers water from the Ouachita River, that has been clarified, to industrial customers such as Lyon Oil.

Mystic Creek Golf Course (alternative water source): Three miles of pipe for irrigation and drainage run under fairways; multiple lakes have been built for flood control and irrigation.

Lion Oil Refinery: El Dorado facility refinery produces a wide range of refined products, including multiple grades of gasoline and ultra-low sulfur diesel fuels in compliance with current clean fuels standards.