



Beautiful Buffalo River Action Committee

December 5, 2017

ADEQ, Commission Room

2:00-3:30 p.m.

Members Present: Becky Keogh (Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality, Director), Bruce Holland (Arkansas Natural Resources Commission, Director), Stephanie Williams (Arkansas Department of Health, Deputy Director for Public Health Programs) for Nathaniel Smith, Kane Webb (Arkansas Parks and Tourism, Director), Cynthia Edwards (Arkansas Agriculture Department, Deputy Agriculture Secretary) for Wes Ward, Shelby Johnson (Arkansas Geographic Information Office, GIS Officer), Jennifer Sheehan (Arkansas Game and Fish Commission, Chief Environmental Coordinator) for Jeff Crow

Members Absent: Jeff Crow (Arkansas Game and Fish Commission, Director), Nathaniel Smith (Arkansas Department of Health, Director), Wes Ward (Arkansas Agriculture Department, Director)

Invited Guests: Dr. Reed Green (U.S. Geological Survey, Hydrologist/Adjunct Professor)

WELCOME

- **Becky Keogh** provided welcome remarks.

EXECUTIVE DISCUSSION

Approval of July 27, 2017 Meeting Minutes – Becky Keogh

- **Bruce Holland** motioned to approve the minutes. **Kane Webb** seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously approved with no discussion or questions.

Approval of 2018 First Quarter Meeting Date – Becky Keogh

- Noted that the first annual report to the Governor is due on January 30, 2018.
- **Tuesday, January 23** was chosen by the panel as the first quarter meeting date for 2018.

BBRAC Website Presentation – Becky Keogh

- Provided a demonstration of the BBRAC website, highlighting the venue to directly contact the BBRAC.

Agency Specific Metrics – Becky Keogh

- Suggested that members of the BBRAC submit one or two high-level metrics that their agency is already tracking in the watershed.
- In an effort to better inform a comprehensive view of the Buffalo River Watershed for the Governor's Report, each agency was asked to submit their metrics to Donnally Davis (davis@adeq.state.ar.us) or Heather Saco (sacoh@adeq.state.ar.us) by January 15, 2017.

BBRAC Governor's Report – Becky Keogh

- Thanked the Executive Subcommittee for their time and participation in putting together a draft report to the Governor.
- Suggested additional content for the report to include an executive summary, history of the Buffalo National River, information about agriculture, communities, and tourism.
- Requested additional content by January 15, 2018 through the Executive Subcommittee.

EXECUTIVE SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

- **Becky Keogh** reported recommendations submitted by the Executive Subcommittee.
- Recommendations included support of the Unpaved Roads Grant Program, Buffalo River Field Day, Buffalo River Watershed research, and other engagement opportunities.
- **Caleb Osborne** requested input and recommendations for the Governor's Report.

AGENCY REPORT OUTS

Kane Webb - Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism (ADPT) Report Out

- **Matt McNair**, Environmental Program Coordinator and BBRAC Executive Subcommittee member gave a presentation on the various aspects of tourism in the Buffalo River Watershed.

- The ADPT presentation and accompanying notes are available at bbrac.arkansas.gov.

Stephanie Williams - Arkansas Department of Health (ADH) Report Out

- Complimented ADPT's report and stated that ADH did not have a report this quarter.

Cynthia Edwards - Arkansas Agriculture Department (AAD) Report Out

- Reported that the Feral Hog Task Force will hold its final meeting of 2017 on December 6.
- Subcommittee recommendations will be made and a report is due to the legislature by the end of the year. The task force will continue through June 2018.

Jennifer Sheehan - Arkansas Game and Fish Commission (AGFC) Report Out

- Reported that AGFC and The Buffalo National River have produced the Buffalo River Floating Use and Angler Creel Survey (September 2013 to August 2014).
- The survey can be made available through contacting AGFC or possibly on the BBRAC website.
- Reported that AGFC shared BBRAC information through AGFC Communications Divisions and have a link to BBRAC's website through theirs.

Shelby Johnson - Arkansas Geographic Information Systems Office (AGIO) Report Out

- Announced the state-wide aerial imagery project has been successfully completed.
- Announced a GIS coordination working group will be hosted by AGIO for GIS staff from state agencies on December 13th at 10:00 a.m. at the Real Estate Commission's Boardroom.
- The data will also be available at gis.arkansas.gov.

Becky Keogh, - Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) Report Out

- Announced Dr. Robert Blanz (Chief Technical Officer, ADEQ) was nominated and accepted to serve on the EPA Scientific Advisory Board. He was also nominated and accepted to serve on the Board of Scientific Counselors to the Research and Development arm of EPA.
- Reported the results of Mill Creek *E. coli* monitoring in the Buffalo River Watershed, which reflected no impairments.
- Gave a status update on the Assessment Methodology review and the development of the 303(d) impaired waters list.
- Reported that ADEQ received a complaint which led to the discovery of an unpermitted hog farm in Newton County.
- ADEQ filed a complaint, and a judge granted a temporary restraining order with instructions to clean up by January 11, 2018.

- Reported that ADEQ received complaints about a nuisance algal bloom in the Buffalo River.
- ADEQ and the National Park Service responded to the complaints.

ARKANSAS HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOM WORKGROUP

Reed Green

- Reed Green gave a presentation on the Arkansas Harmful Algal Bloom Workgroup, including the history, development, membership, and goals of the group.
- The presentation is available at bbrac.arkansas.gov.

BUFFALO RIVER WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PLAN UPDATE

Tony Ramick

- Reported that the final Watershed Management Plan (WMP) meeting was held on October 12, 2017.
- Stated that the focus of the meeting was to discuss management practices and activities to be included in the WMP.
- Announced that the information is currently being synthesized, and a draft report is anticipated mid-December.
- Once complete, the draft WMP report will be available on the website for a 30-day review.
- Following the 30-day review period, comments will be assessed, and a final draft will be submitted to the EPA for review.
- **Bruce Holland** made some recommendations regarding general actions that can be taken in the Buffalo River Watershed.
- ANRC could work with the Conservation Districts on potential EQUIP projects in the watershed.
- ADH could begin work on sanitary surveys in the watershed.
- ADEQ could begin analyzing Total Suspended Solids (TSS) to help evaluate stream bank erosion in the watershed.
- AGFC could establish a Buffalo River Stream Team.
- Non-Governmental Organizations and Watershed Groups: Director Holland requested input from these groups identifying potential projects in the watershed.

- Outreach and education activities - **Bruce Holland** advocated for coordination among all agencies anytime we are doing something in the watershed. He also promoted outfitter education in the watershed and suggested bringing in the Keep Arkansas Beautiful program.

CONCLUSION

- **Becky Keogh** commented that we look forward to hearing from the public through the BBRAC website (<https://bbrac.arkansas.gov/>)
- Stated that the BBRAC will continue to meet monthly at the call of the Governor.