

# Beautiful Buffalo River Action Committee: Arkansas Governor Announces Formation



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## Arkansas Environmental, Energy, and Water Law Blog

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Arkansas Governor Asa Hutchinson announced the formation of a “Beautiful Buffalo River Action Committee.”

The formation of the Committee was announced in a September 30th memorandum to the Directors of the:

- Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality
- Arkansas Department of Health
- Arkansas Agriculture Department
- Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism
- Arkansas Natural Resources Commission

In announcing the formation of the Committee, Governor Hutchinson states:

... It is my position that Arkansans best understand the value of the state’s natural resources and, as a result, must lead in protecting them now and for future generations. The Buffalo National River is a source of great scenic beauty, a unique habitat, an agricultural resource, and a preeminent tourism destination. This landmark is vitally important to the state and nation. The Buffalo river water quality is monitored and continues to meet the extraordinary resource water quality standards. In recent years, concerns have been raised about possible water quality issues in tributaries to the river within the watershed. In response to these concerns, my administration will be proactive, as I am committed to protecting and supporting the vitality of the Buffalo National River.

The Arkansas Game and Fish Commission has also committed to join as a partner in the Committee’s work.

Governor Hutchinson directs the Committee to:

- Establish measurable objectives
- Set achievable action items
- Establish durable partnerships
- Share agency resources
- Inform policymakers and the general public of relevant progress

The Committee is tasked to hold, at a minimum, quarterly meetings and a report is due to the Governor on the committee’s progress by January 31, 2018.

Key priorities for the first year are stated to include:

- A forum for interested stakeholders
- Initiation of the development of a Buffalo River Watershed Management Plan
- Identification of early action and effective projects able to be implemented immediately that are expected to “jump-start” improvements for maintaining the sustained vitality of the Buffalo River Watershed
- Consider the state of current scientific investigation in the watershed and prioritize future research needs

[A copy of the Governor’s memorandum can be downloaded here.](#)