

Arkansas Nutrient Reduction Strategy Update: Arkansas Department of Agriculture/Natural Resources Division Seeking Public Comments



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The Natural Resources Division (“NRD”) of the Arkansas Department of Agriculture issued a press release referencing what it describes as its Updated Arkansas Nutrient Reduction Strategy (“ANRS”).

The ANRS is described as a:

. . . non-regulatory, voluntary guidance document that prioritizes watersheds with the highest need for reduction of nutrients that can affect health of streams, rivers, and aquatic life.

The phrase “nutrient” refers to nitrogen and phosphorus. Excess nitrogen and phosphorus can stimulate excess growth of algae. This can impair the recreational use of waterbodies and also increase organic matter which (when decomposed) can depress dissolved oxygen concentrations harming aquatic life. Further, excess nutrients can stimulate nuisance algae which can produce cyanotoxins.

Clean Water Act point source discharges containing nutrients have and continue to be a focus of both the federal Environmental Protection Agency and states implementing that statutory program. However, nonpoint sources which fall outside the scope of the Clean Water Act also in many instances contribute significant amounts of nutrients.

In Arkansas the Arkansas Department of Agriculture’s NRD principally addresses nonpoint sources.

The NRD news release discusses:

- ANRS short and long-term goals and strategies
- Use of ANRS to address nutrient inputs that originate during storm events from urban and rural settings
- Use of watershed prioritization to guide implementation of non-regulatory and voluntary nutrient reduction conservation practices
- Establishment of the first nutrient reduction strategy in 2014 as part of the 2014 Arkansas Water Plan
- Membership of Arkansas in the 12 states consisting of the Mississippi River/Gulf of Mexico Hypoxia Task Force
- Role of voluntary nutrient reduction best management practices in Arkansas to provide producer cost savings/improve water quality
- Eligibility of the states through the bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act to receive grants to implement nutrient reduction related projects

The NRD will be accepting comments on the updated ANRS through June 30th.

A copy of the news release containing links to the updated ANRS and contact information can be found [here](#).