Haslam Appoints Steering Committee To Develop Statewide Plan For Future Water Availability - Press Release

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Tennessee Gov. Bill Haslam today announced he has appointed a steering committee of leaders from federal, state and local governments, industry, academia, environmental advocacy groups and public utilities to develop a statewide plan for future water availability in Tennessee.

The plan, TN H2O, will include an assessment of current water resources and recommendations to help ensure Tennessee has an abundance of water resources to support future population and economic growth. The steering committee will submit a draft of TN H2O to the governor and will make it available for public input by October 2018.

"Abundant, clean water has been a strategic advantage for Tennessee and is critical to our quality of life," Haslam said. "We need to ensure this critical natural resource is managed appropriately as our state continues to grow and prosper."

Tennessee's population is estimated to double in the next 50 years. This growth, along with recent concerns over the utilization of the Memphis Sands Aquifer, droughts that have impacted numerous Tennessee communities, failures of aging drinking water and wastewater infrastructure, and interstate battles over water rights, all stress the need to develop a statewide plan for addressing water availability.

Tennessee Deputy to the Gov. Jim Henry serves as chairman of the steering committee.

"Tennessee's manufacturing, agriculture, energy and tourism efforts benefit greatly from our water resources," Henry said. "I am honored to help lead this important initiative and look forward to presenting the TN H2O plan to the governor in October."

TN H2O will pay particular attention to surface and groundwater, water and wastewater infrastructure, water reuse and land conservation, as well as institutional and legal framework. Working groups composed of subject matter experts will conduct the research and gather information. The Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) will oversee the development of TN H2O.

"A statewide plan will position the public and private sectors to better understand how to best preserve our water resources," TDEC Commissioner Bob Martineau said. "The time is now to make mindful, fact-driven recommendations for the future of our water."

Below is the full list of steering committee members:

·   Jim Henry, Deputy to the Governor, State of Tennessee

·   Randy McNally, Lieutenant Governor, State of Tennessee

·   Beth Harwell, Speaker of the House of Representatives, State of Tennessee

·   Dr. John Dreyzehner, Commissioner, Department of Health

·   Bob Martineau, Commissioner, Department of Environment and Conservation

·   Bob Rolfe, Commissioner, Department of Economic and Community Development

·   Jai Templeton, Commissioner, Department of Agriculture

·   Kevin Triplett, Commissioner, Department of Tourism

·   Ed Carter, Executive Director, Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency

·   Dr. Shari Meghreblian, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Environment and Conservation

·   Dr. Ken Moore, Mayor, City of Franklin

- Jim Strickland, Mayor, City of Memphis

- Dr. Philip Oldham, President, Tennessee Technological University

- Jerri S. Bryant, Chancellor, 10th Judicial District

- Jeff Aiken, President, Tennessee Farm Bureau

- Valoria Armstrong, President, Tennessee American Water Co.

- Bill Johnson, President and Chief Executive Officer, Tennessee Valley Authority

- Col. Michael A. Ellicott, Jr., Commander, USACE Memphis District

- Michael Butler, Chief Executive Officer, Tennessee Wildlife Federation

- Hanneke Counts, Vice President, Eastman Chemical

- Lt. Col. Cullen A. Jones, Commander, USACE Nashville District

- Bob Freudenthal, Executive Director, Tennessee Association of Utility Districts

- W. Scott Gain, Director, US Geological Survey

- Mekayle Houghton, Executive Director, Cumberland River Compact

- Kevin Igli, Senior Vice President, Tyson Foods

- Bo Perkinson, Board President, Tennessee Municipal League