



For immediate release:
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EPA Declines to Withdraw ADEM Water Permitting Authority

MONTGOMERY – In its petition filed in January 2010, a group of environmental organizations calling themselves the ADEM Reform Coalition requested that EPA withdraw the Department’s authority to issue and administer NPDES water permits in Alabama. If granted, this would result in the loss of state authority to protect and improve Alabama’s water quality. Such a loss of State control would dramatically increase the financial and regulatory burden on individual citizens, local governments, existing industry, and any industry considering locating in Alabama.

After an exhaustive investigation by EPA and the expenditure of substantial financial and human resources by both EPA and this Department, EPA has reported on its findings to date. Using actual, objective, and verifiable data to measure results achieved by the ADEM water program, I am pleased to report that, on April 10, 2014, we were notified that EPA found that none, absolutely none, of the allegations are worthy of withdrawing Alabama’s ability to issue and administer water permits. Only two areas have been identified for further monitoring by EPA. This is a great victory for Alabama. It is also a great victory for the working citizens of the State and their families who depend on the State being able to attract and retain industry that provide jobs for their livelihoods while maintaining a safe and healthful environment.

EPA’s action affirms that the Department’s Water Program remains on solid footing. Are there areas for improvement? Yes, and ADEM remains committed to continuing those improvements in the ADEM water program to ensure for all our State’s citizens a safe, healthful, and productive environment.

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