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South Carolina House of Representatives

Legislative Update & Research Reports

Ramon Schwartz, Jr., Speaker of the House

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Legislative Update

Water Resources News From Some Other States

Last issue's Research Report concentrated on water resources and water use in South Carolina and the Southeast. To help put this question in a broader perspective, here is a sampling of water-related events in other states:

Arizona is putting into force water-use restrictions mandated by the state Groundwater Management Act of 1980. Water consumption in Arizona must be cut by 50 percent by 2025. Arizona farmers use a great deal of water in growing citrus fruits, alfalfa and cotton--90% of the state's well water, according to The New York Times.

Without this agricultural drain, officials estimate Arizona has enough water to supply 20 million people; currently it has a water deficit and a population of less than 3 million. The proposed management plan would turn over more land to crops that do not require such large amounts of water.

The Ogallala Aquifer and Arkansas River supply Kansas with much of its water--but these sources are being drained by irrigators. Fish and Game Officials report portions of the Arkansas River in western Kansas are already dying because of heavy agricultural demands during the past 20 years.

The state Water Office has been working on a 50-year management plan, but "Kansas has a tradition of maintaining riparian rights and property ownership when it comes to regulating water," according to the February 20, 1984, issue of From the State Capitals.

A tough New Jersey law requires periodic testing of ground water by major water companies. Any company serving more than 25 customers must follow a schedule of tests to be established by the state Department of Environmental Protection. If certain toxic substances are found the water system can be ordered shut down. A recent study documented over 500 cases of ground water contamination in the state.

In Montana the State Lands Department has asked the state Supreme Court to give it full rights to ground water and runoff water that originate from school trust lands, many of which are leased to farmers and ranchers. The state is requesting full water rights to land it leases to farmers and ranchers to regulate water use so land values will not decrease.

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In New Mexico a moratorium on drilling groundwater wells in the southern part of the state--and across the border in neighboring Texas. The city of El Paso has plans to drill 326 water wells tapping New Mexico water resources. This plan has been in litigation for over three years.

One bright spot is that the moratorium would let officials in the state Natural Resources Department assess water usage in the area for the first time and prepare usage plans for the future.

Correction to "Water Use In South Carolina,"
Research Report In UPDATE # 9

In last week's Legislative Update & Research Reports, we published a report on "Water Use in South Carolina." The headings on the chart on page 6 of that report were incorrectly printed. The corrected version is offered below. The chart illustrates South Carolina's six largest water users in 1980 by category--agriculture, industry, etc.

South Carolina Water Use, 1980

	<u>Gross Use</u>				<u>Consumption</u>		
	<u>Ground Water</u> <u>mgd</u>	<u>Surface Water</u> <u>mgd</u>	<u>Total Use</u> <u>mgd</u>	<u>% of State Use</u>	<u>Con- sumption</u> <u>mgd</u>	<u>% Con sumed</u>	<u>% of State Consum</u>
Public Supply	82.2	298	380	6.6	102.6	27	23.5
Domestic Wells	57.3	---	57.3	1.0	48.7	85	11.1
Agric. Irrigation	14.8	41.3	56.1	1.0	56.1	100	12.8
Agric. Livestock	5.5	4.5	10.0	0.2	10.1	100	2.3
Industry	46.4	858	905	15.6	167.4	18.5	38.1
Thermoelec. Power	---	4,370	4,370	75.6	53.5	1.2	12.2
Total	206.2	5,571.8	5,780	100.0	438.4	---	100.0

Definitions

Water Use--any utilization of water, whether in its natural state, as in a stream or lake, or which is withdrawn and used.

Surface Water--all water bodies located on the land surface, including streams, ponds, lakes, and man-made reservoirs.

Ground Water--water located below the earth's surface.

Gross Water Use--amount of water withdrawn from a water source; some or all of the water is returned to the source.

Water Consumption--water not returned to its source. Water may be consumed by evaporation, incorporation into a manufactured product, absorption by soil, etc.

mgd--million gallons per day, the standard measurement of water use or consumption.

Inmates At Work In Three States

The Arizona Department of Corrections has opened a Correctional Work Center near Phoenix which employs inmates full-time in community work projects, such as cleaning streets and maintaining city parks.

Fifteen inmates are now fixing up the buildings that will hold the full complement of 100 inmates. The structures formerly housed seasonal farm workers.

Alabama inmates will provide labor for county and city governments under a Department of Corrections program. The inmates will clean roadsides and parks, repair jails, build county roads and perform other jobs normally funded through local taxes. The only cost for the counties or municipalities would be transportation.

In Arkansas a Prison Agri-Industry Task Force has recommended the Correction Department expand its agricultural and industrial activities. The Task Force specifically urged doubling vegetable production, increasing the inmate printing operations, and establishing additional industries such as bookbinding, paint production, janitorial supplies and signs.

*
* Maxims of Media Relations *
*
* Sooner or later elected officials find their relations *
* with the media, shall we say, somewhat strained. *
* As a service to members of the House, Update & Reports *
* offers these rules for dealing with the news media. *
* The rules are taken from American Government: *
* Institutions and Polices, by James Q. Wilson of *
* Harvard University (2nd edition, 1983). *
* # *
* All secrets become public knowledge. The more *
* important the secret, the sooner it becomes known. *
* # *
* All stories written about me are inaccurate; all *
* stories written about you are entirely accurate. *
* # *
* The rosier the news, the higher-ranking the official *
* who announces it. *
* # *
* Always release bad news on Saturday night. Fewer *
* people notice it. *
* # *
* Never argue with a person who buys ink by the barrel. *
*

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Nancy Clark

Nancy Clark, executive secretary for the Ways and Means Committee of the House of Representatives, died Saturday in Augusta of injuries she suffered in a fire at her home on January 12. Services were held on Monday at St. John's Episcopal Church Congaree.

Memorials may be made to St. John's Episcopal Church, Congaree; the Columbia Fire Department, Capital Fire Department, the Burn Foundation at Humana Hospital in Augusta, or to the Nancy Saxon Clark Memorial Fund at Lander College.
