



**Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District
CHATTAHOOCHEE BASIN ADVISORY COUNCIL
Meeting Summary
April 15, 2010**

The Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District's Chattahoochee Basin Advisory Council met on Thursday, April 15, 2010 at 10:00 a.m. at the Southern Company building in Atlanta, Georgia.

Members Present

Femi Adesanya
Keith Bentley, Keep Smyrna Beautiful
Patty Berkovitz, Watershed Alliance
Harry Boone
Bob Bunker, RM Bunker Associates LLC
Ellis Cadenhead, Coweta W&S Authority
Howard Carson Jr., Carson Developments, Inc.
Daryl Cook, Watts & Browning Enter's Inc.
Steven Culp, Veolia Water NA Harry Boone
Steve Foster
Douglas Fulle, Oglethorpe Power Corporation
Jill Glascock
Laura Hartt, Upper Chattahoochee Riverkeeper
Travis Eugene Henry, Douglas Farm Bureau
Kenneth Kagy, Gwinnett County
John Lawrence, BAC Chair

Jo Ann Macrina, Dekalb County
George Martin, Georgia Power
Tavia McCuean, Forestar Group
Charles McMullen III
Doug Miell
William Millkey
Michael Morton
John Oliver, URS Corporation
Eric Olson
James Patterson, Columbus Water Works
K. Scott Robertson, Sweetwater Environmental
Yomi Sholarin, Comm. Board of Realtors
George Taylor Jr., Oglethorpe Power Corp.
Bryan Tolar, GA Agribusiness Council
Butch Watson III, Croy Engineering
Kenneth Wood, Planners and Engineers Coll.

Members Not Present

Ginger Blackstone, GA Dept. of Labor
Rick Blackwell, Let's Go Fishing USA
Alan Bowling, Cobb S&WC District
William Braswell, West GA Board of Realtors
Jared Daley
Lee Duncan
Katherine Feeman, Big Trees Forest Preserve
Matthew Floyd
Martin George
Patrick Heerdt
Warren Howe
Mike Kauffmann, City of Villa Rica

James Martell
Kevin Norton, Paulson Mitchell, Inc.
Jason O'Rourke, Council for Quality Growth
Glenn Page, Cobb/Marietta Water Auth.
Catherine Pruitt, Stevenson & Palmer Eng.
Dan Reeves, Hunter Industries
Wes Rogers
Martin Smith
Bob Sutton, Lake Allatoona Preservation Auth.
Billy Turner
Wayne Waldrip, Keep Smyrna Beautiful
Stacey Williams, Ken Harris and Asso. Realty

Gene Kelly
Edward Klaas, II, Southern Sprinkler Systems
F. Keith Lagaite

Albert M. Wilson III
Larry Wood, City of Villa Rica

Non Chattahoochee BAC Members Present

Russell Toning, GA Soil & Water Conservation Commission
Mark Wolff

Metro Water District Staff Present

Heather Moody, Senior Program Specialist
Charlene Njoroge, Education and Public Awareness Coordinator
Pat Stevens, Division Chief

Welcome and Introductions

Chattahoochee BAC Chair John Lawrence introduced Mr. Jim Scarbrough, Gwinnett County Board Designee, who began the meeting by welcoming the group on behalf of the Metro Water District Board.

Local Government Panel Discussion of Metro Water District Plan Implementation

Local water supply, wastewater and stormwater professionals representing jurisdictions within the Chattahoochee Basin participated in a panel discussion with BAC members. The Chattahoochee panel consisted of Barbara Seal from Gwinnett County Water Resources, Jerri Russell from the City of Atlanta Department of Watershed Management and Ellis Cadenhead from Coweta County Water and Sewerage Authority. Panel participants shared their successes and challenges in implementing the Metro Water District's three Water Management plans.

Panel participants highlighted the following successes related to Metro Water District Plan implementation:

- Floodplain mapping in Gwinnett County
- New 8 MGD water plant and 2 MGD ultraviolet equipped sewage treatment plant in Coweta County
- Pretreatment Program Award and Operator of the Year Award for Coweta County
- Leak detection program in Coweta County – unaccounted for water loss has been reduced from 38% to less than 15%
- City of Atlanta sewer system evaluation and replacement program – 1400 miles of needed camera work is 80% complete

Panel participants cited the following challenges related to Metro Water District Plan implementation:

- Staff time required to ensure compliance
- Complexity of documentation and reporting
- Implementation is very expensive, never enough funds
- Loss in revenue due to the effects of the drought, the economy and slowed growth
- More difficult to be an outlying county with a smaller population

Panel participants shared the following advice and lessons learned:

- Plan ahead – don't wait for an audit to meet the Plan requirements
- Start simple and prioritize the things you can accomplish
- Get involved – participate in meetings

BAC members and panel participants had the following questions and comments during the discussion:

- What types of changes could make the compliance process less bureaucratic?
- Electronic reporting to the State would increase the efficiency of the process.
- Too much reporting is required – regulators don't even have time to read them all.
- Regulatory processes move too slowly. Rule changes could allow for more flexibility and shorten the process to get things accomplished faster.
- Reporting is too frequent. Some things do not need to be reported on monthly or quarterly.
- What improvements can the Metro Water District make to make the process easier for local governments?
- The District is good at bringing all the stakeholders together to share ideas and solutions.
- If the District did not exist, less would be accomplished by the local jurisdictions.
- The District could help local governments educate elected officials and recruit more funding for implementation projects.
- The emphasis on water conservation in this region is not going away. We need to do as much as possible to make our existing water supplies last.
- Are efforts being made to help the District determine consumptive use levels for power plants? The Metro Water District Plans focus on municipal water use. The Statewide Water Plan will address water use in private industry.
- What about efforts to regulate wells that withdraw less than 100,000 gallons? There needs to be legislation to regulate small wells because they do draw upon the overall water supply.
- Do people understand the high costs associated with toilet rebate programs?
- Water conservation programs are expensive but it is still very important for the region to make those efforts to help extend the water supply.

2009 Education and Public Awareness Poll Results

Charlene Njoroge with the Metro Water District presented a summary of the 2009 Education and Public Awareness telephone poll results. The purpose of this poll is to call 400 residents within the Metro Water District and gauge their level of awareness about water quality and water conservation issues. Ms. Njoroge explained that the poll results show basic water quality and conservation messages should be the focus of future public awareness and education efforts.

BAC members shared the following comments:

- Has anyone determined how many people look at their water bills online versus how many receive paper bills? Do people really read bill inserts?
- People do respond to notices in water bills. Gwinnett received over 300 workshop inquiries resulting from a bill announcement.

- It is inexpensive to place a message in a water bill. The same message could be put online for customers who access their bills electronically.

Clean Water Campaign Media Campaign

Ms. Njoroge gave a brief overview of the proposed 2010 Clean Water Campaign Media Plan. She discussed the messages, target audiences and suggested media for the 2010 Campaign. She then asked the BAC members for additional ideas and feedback.

BAC members had the following suggestions:

- The “go green” message has been very successful with children. We should approach water education in schools in the same way.
- Local governments do conduct water conservation and protection education in the schools. For example, Coweta County has placed it in the curriculum for all fourth grade students. Schools compete and the school that saves the most water wins a fieldtrip to the water treatment plant.
- Project Wet is a good approach to water education.

BAC Membership Drive

Heather Moody reminded the BAC members that the 2010 Basin Advisory Council recruitment drive is underway and asked that current members help to identify new members. Ms. Moody explained that the Metro Water District is particularly interested in finding additional members for the Lake Lanier and Oconee BACs. She said that interested individuals should be directed to the BAC webpage or provided with her contact information. Ms. Moody also reminded everyone that the deadline to submit membership applications is May 14, 2010.

The next meeting will be held on July 15, 2010. There being no further business the meeting was adjourned.