

GEORGIA CODE  
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\*\*\* Current Through the 2011 Regular Session \*\*\*  
\*\*\* Annotations Current Through April 22, 2011 \*\*\*

TITLE 12. CONSERVATION AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
CHAPTER 5. WATER RESOURCES  
ARTICLE 10. METROPOLITAN NORTH GEORGIA WATER PLANNING DISTRICT

§ 12-5-570. Short title

This article shall be known and may be cited as the "Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District Act."

HISTORY: Code 1981, § 12-5-570, enacted by Ga. L. 2001, p. 115, § 1.

§ 12-5-571. Legislative intent

(a) The General Assembly recognizes the value of the metropolitan North Georgia area watersheds for water supply, recreation, habitat for fish and wildlife, economic prosperity, and quality of life. The General Assembly finds that adequate supplies of clean water for drinking and other purposes constitute the lifeblood of the metropolitan North Georgia area and are, therefore, essential to the health, welfare, and economic progress of the area. The purpose of this article is to create a planning entity dedicated to developing comprehensive regional and watershed-specific plans to be implemented by local governments in the district. These plans will protect water quality and public water supplies in and downstream of the region, protect recreational values of the waters in and downstream of the region, and minimize potential adverse impacts of development on waters in and downstream of the region.

(b) The General Assembly finds that the waters and watersheds of the district are natural resources, environments, and vital areas within the meaning of Article III, Section VI, Paragraph II of the Constitution of the State of Georgia.

HISTORY: Code 1981, § 12-5-571, enacted by Ga. L. 2001, p. 115, § 1.

§ 12-5-572. Creation; purpose

- (a) There is created the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District.
- (b) The general purposes of the district shall be to establish policy, create plans, and promote intergovernmental coordination for all water issues in the district; to facilitate multijurisdictional water related projects; and to enhance access to funding for water related projects among local governments in the district area.
- (c) It is the primary purpose of the district to develop regional and watershed-specific plans for storm-water management, waste-water treatment, water supply, water conservation, and the general protection of water quality, which plans will be implemented by local governments in the district.

HISTORY: Code 1981, § 12-5-572, enacted by Ga. L. 2001, p. 115, § 1.

§ 12-5-573. Definitions

As used in this article, the term:

- (1) "Board" means the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District Governing Board created under Code Section 12-5-575.
- (2) "Director" means the director of the Environmental Protection Division of the Department of Natural Resources.
- (3) "District" means the entity established by this article that shall have planning responsibility for watershed and storm-water management, waste-water management, and water supply and conservation management within the district area.
- (4) "District area" means any county which has a population of 500,000 or more according to the 2000 United States decennial census or any future such census and all counties geographically contiguous to any such county; provided, however, that any such contiguous county having population of 100,000 or less according to the 2000 United States decennial census or any future such census may, by majority vote of the governing authority thereof and with the written approval of the director, remove itself from the district area. The district area may be expanded from time to time as provided in this article.
- (5) "Local government" means any county or municipality of this state lying in whole or in part within the district area.

HISTORY: Code 1981, § 12-5-573, enacted by Ga. L. 2001, p. 115, § 1.

§ 12-5-574. Powers; approval of plan non-binding on finances; extension of time for preparing plan

(a) The district shall promote regional coordination and cooperation through the exercise of the following powers:

(1) Development of regional and watershed-specific plans for storm-water management taking into account recommendations developed by the basin advisory councils;

(2) Development of regional and watershed-specific plans for waste-water management taking into account recommendations developed by the basin advisory councils;

(3) Development of regional and watershed-specific plans for water supply and water conservation taking into account recommendations developed by the basin advisory councils;

(4) Development of regionally consistent policies, model ordinances, and minimum standards of performance for local governments relating to the creation and implementation of the plans developed by the district;

(5) Development and coordination of an effective regional and watershed-specific water quality monitoring program and development and maintenance of a corresponding data base reflecting available monitoring data;

(6) Establishment of education programs on water quality issues and promotion of water conservation;

(7) Identification of funding sources, including without limitation federal funding sources for the creation and implementation of plans provided for under this article;

(8) Entry into contracts with both public and private parties in connection with the exercise of the powers and duties of the district;

(9) Development of measurable short-term and long-term goals for water quality and conservation improvement;

(10) Development of a program to identify and implement structural controls and nonstructural controls needed to achieve the goals for water quality and conservation improvement; and

(11) Reviewing and reporting on the progress of implementation of the water plans and achievement of the water goals developed pursuant to this article.

(b) Approval by the district of any storm-water management plan, waste-water management plan, water supply and conservation plan, or other plan pursuant to this article shall not obligate any governing authority comprising a part of the district to provide

funding for facilities planned or constructed pursuant to such plans which do not provide services to all or a portion of the population of such governing authority proportionate to any cost allocation.

(c) No extension of time by the board for preparation of a plan provided for under this article shall exceed six months, nor shall more than one extension be granted for any such plan.

HISTORY: Code 1981, § 12-5-574, enacted by Ga. L. 2001, p. 115, § 1.

§ 12-5-575. Board created; appointments; vacancies; terms

(a) There is established for the management of the business and affairs of the district a Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District Governing Board to consist of:

(1) The chairperson of the county commission or the chief executive officer of each county in the district area having a population of 200,000 or more according to the 2000 United States decennial census or any future such census;

(2) The mayor of each municipality in the district area having a population of 200,000 or more according to the 2000 United States decennial census or any future such census;

(3) A member appointed from each county in the district area not represented pursuant to paragraph (1) of this subsection by a caucus of the county commissioners together with the mayors of municipalities, the majority of the population of which reside within such county and which have water withdrawal permits or waste-water discharge permits, which caucus shall select either one of such mayors or the chairperson of the county commission or chief executive officer of the county; provided, however, that if one or more mayors participate in such selection and said initial appointee is a mayor, the successor must be the chairperson of the county commission or chief executive officer of the county, and if said initial appointment is the chairperson of the county commission or chief executive officer of the county, the successor must be one of such mayors, and the succession shall accordingly alternate in the future;

(4) Six members to be appointed by the Governor;

(5) Two members to be appointed by the Lieutenant Governor; and

(6) Two members to be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

(b) Of the initial appointments of the Governor, two shall be for a term of one year, two for a term of two years, and two for a term of three years, and their successors shall serve for terms of three years. Of the initial appointments of the Lieutenant Governor and the Speaker, one shall be for a term of one year and one for a term of three years, and their successors shall serve for terms of three years. The terms of members serving pursuant to

paragraphs (1) and (2) of subsection (a) of this Code section shall be concurrent with their terms of office in their respective counties and municipalities. Of the members initially appointed pursuant to paragraph (3) of subsection (a) of this Code section, one-half, or one more than one-half in the event of an odd number of appointments, shall be selected by lot to serve a two-year term, and the remainder shall serve a three-year term. Their successors shall serve terms of three years. All members of the board shall serve until their successors are appointed and qualified. At no time shall more than one member of the governing authority or executive branch of any county or municipality serve on the board.

(c) Any vacancy on the board shall be filled for the remainder of the unexpired term in the same manner as the original appointment to the vacated position. No vacancy on the board shall impair the right of the quorum of the remaining members then in office to exercise all rights and perform all duties of the board.

(d) The executive committee of the district shall consist of a chairperson, a vice chairperson, a secretary-treasurer, the members serving pursuant to paragraphs (1) and (2) of subsection (a) of this Code section, and such other members as the board may determine are appropriate from time to time.

(e) (1) The initial chairperson and vice chairperson of the board shall be appointed by the Governor from among the membership of the board for a term of three years, and thereafter the chairperson and vice chairperson shall be appointed by majority vote of the board for a term of three years.

(2) As a qualification for office of chairperson, except for the initial chairperson, he or she shall have served at least one year as a member of the board. No chairperson shall serve in that capacity in excess of two consecutive terms.

(3) The chairperson shall preside at all meetings of the district. He or she shall be the chief executive officer of the district.

(4) The vice chairperson shall serve in the absence of the chairperson and, in addition, shall assist the chairperson and shall perform such other duties as may be assigned by the board.

(5) The secretary-treasurer shall be the custodian of the books and records of the district, shall keep the minutes of all meetings, shall be the chief fiscal officer of the district, and shall perform such other duties as may be assigned by the board.

HISTORY: Code 1981, § 12-5-575, enacted by Ga. L. 2001, p. 115, § 1.

§ 12-5-576. Open meetings; quorum; voting; executive sessions

(a) The board shall meet at least three times per year at a time and place set forth in the minutes of the district and at such other times as the chairperson may direct. All such meetings shall be open to the public.

(b) A majority of the members to which the board is entitled shall constitute a quorum.

(c) Once a quorum has been established, a majority of the members to which the board is entitled shall be required to adopt any matter before the district.

(d) Each member of the board shall have one vote to be cast in person, and there shall be no voting by proxy; provided, however, that each member serving on the board pursuant to the provisions of paragraphs (1), (2), and (3) of subsection (a) of Code Section 12-5-575 shall be entitled to designate in writing to the chairperson of the board an alternate who may exercise any of the powers and discharge any of the duties of such member provided for in this article, including voting, in the absence of such member, other than serving as chairperson, vice chairperson, or secretary-treasurer of the board.

(e) The district, by a majority vote of those members of the board present, may go into executive session for the purposes of discussing personnel matters, meeting with attorneys representing the district in adversarial or potentially adversarial situations, and for any other purpose authorized by and consistent with Chapter 14 of Title 50.

HISTORY: Code 1981, § 12-5-576, enacted by Ga. L. 2001, p. 115, § 1; Ga. L. 2004, p. 470, § 1.

§ 12-5-577. Operating budget; sources of funding; power to enter into contracts and to expend funds; depositing

(a) Prior to July 1 each year, the officers of the board shall submit to the district for adoption a preliminary budget required for the operation of the district during the ensuing calendar year, which shall also be the fiscal year.

(b) Funding for the district operations shall be derived from the following sources:

(1) Dues paid by cities and counties within the district such that the aggregate total of all such dues from all such cities and counties shall be no less than \$500,000.00 annually. Such fees shall be raised on a per capita assessment or water-usage fee basis or based on a formula adopted and approved by the local government members of the district; and

(2) Appropriated or contracted state funds.

(c) The district is specifically empowered to contract or otherwise participate in and to accept grants, funds, gifts, or services from any federal, state, or local government or its

agencies or instrumentalities and from private and civic sources and to expend funds received therefrom under provisions as may be required and agreed upon by the district in connection with any program or purpose for which the district exists.

(d) All funds of the district not otherwise employed shall be deposited from time to time to the credit of the district in such banks, trust companies, or other depositories as the district may select.

HISTORY: Code 1981, § 12-5-577, enacted by Ga. L. 2001, p. 115, § 1; Ga. L. 2004, p. 470, § 2; Ga. L. 2006, p. 72, § 12/SB 465.

§ 12-5-578. Adjoining counties or municipalities application to be added to the district area

Any county or municipality adjoining a member county or municipality shall be added to the district area upon the application of such entity to be included in the district by resolution of its governing authority and upon approval of the director.

HISTORY: Code 1981, § 12-5-578, enacted by Ga. L. 2001, p. 115, § 1.

§ 12-5-579. Staffing; cooperation among agencies

(a) The district staff shall consist initially of the existing staff of the Environmental Planning Division of the Atlanta Regional Commission. Additional staff may be added or the staffing modified as necessary to fulfill the responsibilities of the district. The district may contract for such additional staff and consulting services as the board in its discretion may determine to be necessary from time to time.

(b) Any commission, as defined by Code Section 50-8-31, falling within the geographic boundaries of the district shall cooperate with the district and shall assist it in its efforts.

HISTORY: Code 1981, § 12-5-579, enacted by Ga. L. 2001, p. 115, § 1; Ga. L. 2008, p. 181, § 10/HB 1216.

§ 12-5-580. Coordinating committees; finance committees

(a) The board shall create one or more technical coordinating committees comprised primarily of water and waste-water officials from counties, cities, and authorities in the district. Such committees shall provide additional support to the board and staff for specific areas and issues such as water treatment, waste-water treatment, and storm-water management.

(b) The board shall create a finance committee which shall meet with the boards and staffs

of the Georgia Environmental Finance Authority, the Department of Community Affairs, and the Department of Natural Resources for the purpose of developing recommendations for a funding structure for the district and for projects included in the district plans developed pursuant to this article, and that authority and those departments, their boards, and staffs are directed to cooperate with the district in developing such recommendations. The board shall consider the recommendations of the finance committee and forward them as adopted or amended to the Governor, the Lieutenant Governor, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the chairpersons of the Senate Natural Resources and the Environment Committee and the House Committee on Natural Resources and Environment not later than December 1, 2001. Such recommendations may be updated and revised from time to time thereafter.

HISTORY: Code 1981, § 12-5-580, enacted by Ga. L. 2001, p. 115, § 1; Ga. L. 2009, p. 303, § 13/HB 117; Ga. L. 2010, p. 949, § 1/HB 244.

#### § 12-5-581. Advisory councils

(a) The board shall create separate advisory councils for the Chattahoochee, Etowah, Flint, Oconee, and Ocmulgee river basins and the Lake Lanier Basin. The Etowah River Basin Advisory Council shall include the Lake Allatoona Preservation Authority as a member. The Lake Lanier Basin Advisory Council shall include at least one member appointed by the Lake Lanier Association, Inc. Each basin advisory council shall be comprised of a minimum of 20 individuals. These individuals shall be from within the district area as well as from outside the district area, upstream and downstream of the district; provided, however, that such persons shall reside within the river basin. Each river basin shall be defined as those lands lying between the ridgelines dividing each river drainage from another. These representatives shall be selected and shall serve based upon procedures and rules established by the board.

(b) The director shall create two additional basin advisory councils each comprised of a minimum of 20 individuals. One council shall consist of individuals representing the watersheds upstream of the district and one council shall consist of individuals representing the watersheds downstream of the district. The director shall solicit the recommendation of the House Committee on Natural Resources and the Environment and the Senate Natural Resources and the Environment Committee as to the membership of such councils.

(c) Each basin advisory council shall have a chairperson and such other officers as necessary and convenient. Each chairperson shall be entitled to attend and comment at any meeting of the board.

(d) The basin advisory councils shall advise the district in the development and implementation of policy, provide input to the director concerning the development of minimum elements and standards for plans provided for under this article, and provide input on the content of plans provided for under this article as such plans are developed.

(e) The board chairperson shall appoint one or more board members to convene meetings of the basin advisory councils on a regular schedule established by the board; provided, however, that there shall be a minimum of four scheduled meetings per year. The district shall provide advance drafts of such plans or recommendations as it may make pursuant to this article to basin advisory councils for review and input, and the basin advisory councils shall prepare reports and recommendations for consideration by the district in formulating any plan or taking any other action provided for under this article. Each basin advisory council shall further provide input to the district concerning the development of minimum elements and standards for plans provided for under this article relating to its specific river basin.

HISTORY: Code 1981, § 12-5-581, enacted by Ga. L. 2001, p. 115, § 1; Ga. L. 2009, p. 303, § 13/HB 117.

§ 12-5-582. Model ordinances for effective storm-water management and for a district-wide watershed management plan; annual review; public meetings; certification by director; local compliance

(a) Within one year after May 1, 2001, unless such time period is extended by majority vote of the board, the district shall prepare for public comment one or more model ordinances for local governments designed to provide for effective storm-water management. Such model ordinances shall also include minimum design and development standards for local development as it may affect storm-water run-off quality and storm-water conveyance and infrastructure standards applicable to local governments. Upon receipt of public comment, the district shall finalize the model ordinances and publish the same.

(b) Within two years after May 1, 2001, unless such time period is extended by majority vote of the board, the district shall prepare for public comment a district-wide watershed management plan containing elements common to all watersheds within the district and containing within it watershed-specific components for watershed management. The plan shall build upon and be coordinated with existing watershed planning efforts undertaken by local governments and other entities in the district area and plans otherwise developed under this title. After receipt of public comment, the district shall approve the plan which shall meet all standards established by the director and shall include the following elements:

(1) Appropriate standards and methodologies for monitoring water quality and maintaining and organizing an inventory of collected water quality data;

(2) Descriptions of current pollutant loads by source categories, subsource categories, and specific sources where identifiable;

(3) Forecasts of potential future pollutant load increases by virtue of new development, growth, or other changes in watershed activities;

(4) Identification of streams or bodies of water within the applicable watershed having or requiring total maximum daily loads under applicable federal regulations; provisions for incorporating into the watershed-specific plan any implementation plan for total maximum daily loads as established by the director; and provisions to ensure that the watershed-specific plan conforms to requirements for implementation plans for streams requiring total maximum daily loads, such that said watershed-specific plan could be readily utilized by the director to meet applicable federal requirements for implementation plans for total maximum daily loads;

(5) Establishment of priorities for protecting watershed resources and for obtaining pollutant load reductions or preventing future pollutant load increases, or both, and an explanation of the rationale for such priorities;

(6) Identification of specific effective control programs and strategies including specific regulatory or voluntary actions to attain and maintain applicable water quality standards, including any pollutant load reductions mandated by implementation plans for total maximum daily loads; identification of specific public or private organizational responsibility for carrying out such control programs or voluntary actions, including without limitation instances where control programs require coordination among multiple jurisdictions, such that there are reasonable assurances that applicable water quality standards will be attained or maintained, or both;

(7) The model ordinances established under subsection (a) of this Code section and any recommended additions or modifications to such model ordinances, if appropriate, to provide additional measures to improve storm-water run-off quality, including without limitation, requirements to retrofit or modify existing developments in order to improve storm-water run-off quality;

(8) Recommended changes to state or local laws, regulations, or ordinances necessary to implement the plans;

(9) A timetable for implementation of necessary elements of the plans for each jurisdiction including description of annual, measurable milestones for determining whether identified measures are being implemented;

(10) Estimates of costs and identification of potential sources of funding necessary for implementation of the plans;

(11) Education and public awareness measures regarding watershed protection; and

(12) Establishment of short-term and long-term goals to be accomplished by the plan and measures for the assessment of progress in accomplishing such goals and plan.

(c) The district shall review the watershed management plan and its implementation annually to determine whether there is a need to update such plan and shall report to the director the progress of implementation of its goals, and in any case the district shall

prepare an updated watershed management plan no less frequently than every five years after finalization of the initial plan.

(d) The district shall hold public meetings concerning any plan or updated plan developed by the district under subsection (a), (b), or (c) of this Code section and shall publish in print or electronically for public notice and comment any proposed approval, disapproval, or conditional approval of any such plan.

(e) (1) Local governments within the district shall implement the provisions of the district plans that apply to them. Should any jurisdiction fail to do so, the director shall exercise his or her powers pursuant to this chapter.

(2) Upon the district's approval of the plan, the director may modify all existing permits under Code Sections 12-5-29, 12-5-30, 12-5-31, 12-5-96, 12-5-97, and 12-5-179 and any NPDES Phase I or Phase II General Stormwater permits to make them consistent with the plan. The director may include as a condition in any issued, modified, or renewed permit to any local government under Code Section 12-5-29, 12-5-30, 12-5-31, 12-5-96, 12-5-97, or 12-5-179 or any NPDES Phase I or Phase II General Stormwater permit the applicable contents of the district plan.

(3) The director shall not approve any application by a local government in the district to issue, modify, or renew a permit under Code Section 12-5-29, 12-5-30, 12-5-31, 12-5-96, 12-5-97, or 12-5-179, if such permit would allow an increase in the permitted water withdrawal, public water system capacity, or waste-water treatment system capacity of such local government, or any NPDES Phase I or Phase II General Stormwater permit, unless such local government is in compliance with the applicable provisions of the plan or the director certifies to the board that such local government is making good faith efforts to come into such compliance.

(4) Any local government that fails to adopt substantially the applicable model storm-water ordinance developed by the district under subsection (a) of this Code section, or something at least as effective as said model ordinance, and any local government that fails to adopt and implement the applicable plans developed by the district under this Code section shall be ineligible for state grants or loans for storm-water related projects determined by the director to be inconsistent with the terms of such model ordinance or such plans. The determination of the director may be appealed by the local government to the board, whose decision by majority vote shall be final.

(f) The watershed management plan shall be approved by the district only after certification by the director that the proposed plan is consistent with standards established by the director for such plan.

(g) Upon publication of the model ordinance of subsection (a) of this Code section, the district will coordinate a program to be administered by the Environmental Protection Division of the Department of Natural Resources to train local elected officials and other local personnel in uniform standards for the reduction or elimination of nonpoint source

pollution. To the extent authorized by law, the Environmental Protection Division of the Department of Natural Resources shall ensure local government compliance with the model ordinance or equally effective ordinances.

HISTORY: Code 1981, § 12-5-582, enacted by Ga. L. 2001, p. 115, § 1; Ga. L. 2010, p. 838, § 10/SB 388.

§ 12-5-583. Short-term and long-term plans for waste-water management plan; annual review; public meetings; certification by director

(a) Within one year after May 1, 2001, unless such time period is extended by majority vote of the board, the district shall develop a short-term plan to ease immediate waste-water capacity constraints and to reduce the need for sewer tap moratoria.

(b) Within two years after May 1, 2001, unless such time period is extended by majority vote of the board, the district shall develop a long-term waste-water management plan for the district covering a period of time of no less than 20 years. The plan shall be coordinated with and address any existing waste-water planning efforts undertaken by local governments in the district area and plans otherwise developed under this title. After receipt of public comments, the district shall approve the plan which shall meet all standards established by the director, and the plan shall consist of the following minimum elements:

(1) Identification of anticipated waste-water treatment capacity requirements over the life of the plan;

(2) Recommended future upgrades and expansions of existing waste-water treatment facilities;

(3) Measures to maximize efficiency through multijurisdictional approaches to avoid duplication of efforts and unnecessary costs;

(4) A timetable for phasing out existing plants if appropriate; upgrading or expanding existing plants; and construction of new plants;

(5) An inspection and maintenance program for sewer collection systems with timetables for any necessary upgrades or replacement of substandard segments of such systems;

(6) An inspection and maintenance program for septic tanks in critical areas and recommendations for effective management of decentralized waste-water systems;

(7) Identification of appropriate opportunities for gray-water reuse or the implementation of other technologies to increase waste-water treatment capacity or efficiency;

(8) Education and public awareness measures regarding waste-water management; and

(9) Establishment of short-term and long-term goals to be accomplished by the plan and measures for the assessment of progress in accomplishing such goals and plan.

(c) The district shall review the waste-water management plan developed under subsection (b) of this Code section and its implementation annually to determine whether there is a need to update such plan and shall report to the director the progress of implementation of its goals, and in any case the district shall prepare an updated waste-water management plan no less frequently than every five years after the director's approval of the initial plan.

(d) The district shall hold public meetings concerning any plan or updated plan developed by the district under this Code section and shall publish in print or electronically for public notice and comment any proposed approval, disapproval, or conditional approval of any such plan.

(e) (1) Local governments within the district shall implement the provisions of the district plans that apply to them. Should any jurisdiction fail to do so, the director may exercise his or her powers pursuant to this chapter.

(2) Upon the district's approval of the plan, the director may modify all existing permits under Code Sections 12-5-29, 12-5-30, 12-5-31, 12-5-96, 12-5-97, and 12-5-179 to make them consistent with the plan. The director may include as a condition in any issued, modified, or renewed permit to any local government under Code Section 12-5-29, 12-5-30, 12-5-31, 12-5-96, 12-5-97, or 12-5-179 the applicable contents of the district plan.

(3) The director shall not approve any application by a local government in the district to issue, modify, or renew a permit under Code Section 12-5-29, 12-5-30, 12-5-31, 12-5-96, 12-5-97, or 12-5-179, if such permit would allow an increase in the water withdrawal, public water system capacity, or waste-water treatment system capacity of such local government, unless such local government is in compliance with the applicable provisions of the plan or the director certifies that such local government is making good faith efforts to come into compliance.

(4) Any local government that fails to adopt and implement the applicable plans developed by the district under this Code section shall be ineligible for state grants or loans for waste-water related projects determined by the director to be inconsistent with the terms of such plan. The determination of the director may be appealed by the local government to the board, whose decision by majority vote shall be final.

(f) The waste-water management plan shall be approved by the district only after certification by the director that the proposed plan is consistent with the standards established by the director for such plan.

HISTORY: Code 1981, § 12-5-583, enacted by Ga. L. 2001, p. 115, § 1; Ga. L. 2002, p. 415, § 12; Ga. L. 2010, p. 838, § 10/SB 388.

§ 12-5-584. Water supply and water conservation management plan; interbasin transfers

(a) Within two years after May 1, 2001, unless such time period is extended by majority vote of the board, the district shall prepare a water supply and water conservation management plan. The plan shall build upon and be coordinated with existing watershed planning efforts undertaken by local governments in the district area and plans otherwise developed by the state. After receipt of public comments, the district shall approve the plan which shall meet all standards established by the director, and the plan shall include the following minimum elements:

(1) A description of current water supply resources within the district and potential limitations on such supply resources;

(2) Projected water supply requirements over a 20 year period for the district, including projections given differing population, consumption, and conservation scenarios;

(3) Identification of opportunities to expand water supply resources which are found within the district as it was defined on May 1, 2001;

(4) An accounting of existing transfers of surface waters in excess of 100,000 gallons per day on an annualized basis across natural basins within the district;

(5) A water conservation program including voluntary measures, best management practices, and measures enforceable through local ordinances;

(6) Education and public awareness measures regarding water conservation; and

(7) Establishment of short-term and long-term goals to be accomplished by the plan and measures for the assessment of progress in accomplishing such goals and plan.

(b) The district shall review the water supply and water conservation management plan developed under this Code section and its implementation annually to determine whether there is a need to update such plan and shall report to the director the progress of implementation of its goals, and in any case the district shall prepare an updated water supply and water conservation management plan no less frequently than every five years after approval of the initial plan.

(c) The district shall hold public meetings concerning any plan developed by the district under subsection (a) of this Code section and shall publish in print or electronically for public notice and comment any proposed approval, disapproval, or conditional approval of any such plan.

(d) (1) Local governments within the district shall implement the provisions of the district plans that apply to them. Should any jurisdiction fail to do so, the director may exercise his or her powers pursuant to this chapter.

(2) Upon the district's approval of the plan, the director may modify all existing permits under Code Sections 12-5-29, 12-5-30, 12-5-31, 12-5-96, 12-5-97, and 12-5-179 to make them consistent with the plan. The director may include as a condition in any issued, modified, or renewed permit to any local government under Code Section 12-5-29, 12-5-30, 12-5-31, 12-5-96, 12-5-97, or 12-5-179 the applicable contents of the district plan.

(3) The director shall not approve any application by a local government in the district to issue, modify, or renew a permit under Code Section 12-5-29, 12-5-30, 12-5-31, 12-5-96, 12-5-97, or 12-5-179, if such permit would allow an increase in the water withdrawal, public water system capacity, or waste-water treatment system capacity of such local government, unless such local government is in compliance with the applicable provisions of the plan or the director certifies that such local government is making good faith efforts to come into compliance.

(4) Any local government that fails to adopt and implement the applicable plans developed by the district under this Code section shall be ineligible for state grants or loans for water supply and conservation projects determined by the director to be inconsistent with such plans. The determination of the director may be appealed by the local government to the board, whose decision by majority vote shall be final.

(e) The water supply and water conservation management plan shall be approved by the district only after certification by the director that the proposed plan is consistent with the standards established by the director for such plan.

(f) The district shall neither study nor include in any plan any interbasin transfer of water from outside the district area.

HISTORY: Code 1981, § 12-5-584, enacted by Ga. L. 2001, p. 115, § 1; Ga. L. 2002, p. 415, § 12; Ga. L. 2010, p. 838, § 10/SB 388.

#### § 12-5-585. Education and public awareness

Any district plan required to include an element of education and public awareness shall describe those measures to be taken by the district and recommendations for measures to be taken by other state agencies or local governments, by public education institutions, or by any other public or semi-public entity. The district shall make these recommendations known to the affected entities and strive to coordinate educational and public awareness efforts. The district's efforts shall be designed to reach 75 to 90 percent of the population in the district within five years.

HISTORY: Code 1981, § 12-5-585, enacted by Ga. L. 2001, p. 115, § 1.

§ 12-5-586. Annual report detailing activities and progress

The district shall submit a written report not later than December 31 of each year to the Governor, the Lieutenant Governor, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the chairperson of the House Committee on Natural Resources and Environment, and the chairperson of the Senate Natural Resources and the Environment Committee, which report shall contain a detailed account of the activities and progress of the district throughout the previous year and an accurate accounting of all funds received and expended by the district and of the implementation of plans and attainment of goals.

HISTORY: Code 1981, § 12-5-586, enacted by Ga. L. 2001, p. 115, § 1; Ga. L. 2009, p. 303, § 13/HB 117.