



**Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District
COOSA / ETOWAH BASIN ADVISORY COUNCIL
Meeting Summary
April 20, 2010**

The Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District's Coosa/Etawah Basin Advisory Council met on Tuesday, April 20, 2010 at 10:00 a.m. at Red Top Mountain State Park Lodge in Cartersville, GA.

Members Present

Doris Cook, Etowah W&S

James Durham

William Francis, GAWP

William Grizzle, Cherokee Co Farm Bureau

Nolton Johnson

Dart Kendall, GOWA

Celia Klardie, City of Canton

David Kubala, Cherokee W&SA

H. Luke Mayes, Cobb Co Farm Bureau

Ed Mullinax, LAPA/Cartersville Water Dept

Douglas Sowar, Paulding Co Farm Bureau

Roy Taylor

Christina Williams, City of Cartersville

Martha Williams, Georgia Lakes Society

Members Not Present

Patricia Braithwaite

David Cervone, Obrien & Gere

John Hicks, LAPA

Barry Mansell, BAC Chair

Robert Morrison, LAPA

Carol Moson, GA Association of Realtors

Donald Salkman

Bettie Sleeth, Home Builders Assn of GA

Metro Water District Staff Present

Heather Moody, Senior Program Specialist

Charlene Njoroge, Education and Public Awareness Coordinator

Welcome and Introductions

Heather Moody with the Metro Water District introduced Ed Mullinax, Bartow 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 Coosa/Etawah Basin participated in a panel discussion with BAC members. The Coosa/Etawah panel consisted of David Kubala from Cherokee County Water and Sewerage Authority, Christina Williams from City of Cartersville and Kathy Nguyen from Cobb County Water System. 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:

- Cobb County Water Efficiency Program
- Cherokee County unaccounted for water loss reduced from 20% to less than 7%.
- City of Cartersville new car wash facility for city vehicles

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

- Expense of implementation programs
- Significant stormwater problems caused by recent flooding
- Explaining regulations to water customers and political leaders
- Getting residents to understand that stormwater protection is important to them

Panel participants shared the following advice and lessons learned:

- Be active partners in the planning process
- The Plans work best when you fit them to your jurisdiction's needs
- Education initiatives must be comprehensive and reach elected officials as well as the general public
- Water customers deserve complete explanations and honest answers to their questions
- As a local government, it is important to get your own house in order before you ask residents to make an effort to conserve and protect water resources

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

- What is the most effective way to educate elected officials about the Metro Water District?
- We need to keep elected officials active and involved.
- Elected officials are being pulled in many directions. The District should focus on pragmatic reasons for them to pay attention. We should keep the messages succinct.
- How much of the reductions in water usage can be attributed solely to rate increases? It is difficult to determine but pricing changing definitely drove participation in customer education programs.
- What is the plan to address damage from the flooding in Cobb County? Cobb is working with GEMA and FEMA on property buyouts and is planning a stabilization project for Sweetwater Creek.
- Georgia is a property rights state. Any legislation that runs counter to that will face heavy resistance from lobbyists.
- Water loss due to power generation should be addressed in the Plans. There should be a message that using less electricity will also help save water.
- The Metro Water District Plans focus on municipal water use. The Statewide Water Plan will address water use in private industry. Water use for power generation may be addressed in future plan revisions as the District Plans are brought into alignment with the Statewide Water Plan.
- Many of our behaviors and many of the products we buy are tied to water consumption.

- The real issue is how often water is retuned, where and in what quantities. There is a lot of confusion over the definition of consumptive use.

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.

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 no additional feedback at the meeting.

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 20, 2010. There being no further business the meeting was adjourned.