



**Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District
LAKE LANIER & OCONEE BASIN ADVISORY COUNCILS
Meeting Summary
October 13, 2010**

The Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District's Lake Lanier and Oconee Basin Advisory Councils met on Wednesday, October 13, 2010 at 10:00 a.m. at the City of Gainesville's Lakeside Water Treatment Plant in Flowery Branch, GA.

Lake Lanier BAC Members Present

Drew Addison
Richard Check
Bob Evans, GA Green Industry Association
Steven Garton
James Hazelwood, StoneHenge Consultants
Dale Jaeger, The Jaeger Company
Mary Jones
Val Perry, BAC Chair
Kevin Smith
Ike Swofford

Oconee BAC Members Present

Steve Payne, Braselton Utilities
Jill Stachura, BAC Chair
Kyle Webb, Breedlove Planning Inc.

Lake Lanier BAC Members Not Present

James Hatcher
Larry Long
Tim Merritt
Wilton Rooks, Scenic Georgia, Inc.

Oconee BAC Members Not Present

Bill Finnick
J. Steven Landers, Land Planning Consultants
Becki van der Walt, GA Green Industry Association
Sheryl Wells, UGA
Chris Yancey

Non Lanier-Oconee BAC Members Present

Penelope Round, Atlanta Apartment Association

Metro Water District Staff Present

Heather Moody, Senior Program Specialist
Abby Owens, Principal Environmental Planner

Welcome and Introductions

Lanier BAC Chair Val Perry welcomed the group and asked the Council members to introduce themselves. He then introduced Hall County Board Designee Kelly Randall, who officially began the meeting by welcoming the group on behalf of the Metro Water District Board.

Update on Tri-State Litigation

Heather Moody with the Metro Water District provided members with an update on recent developments in the Tri-State Water Wars Litigation. Members discussed the status of the Phase 1 Appeal, Judge Magnuson's Phase 2 Ruling and the Army Corps of Engineers' decision to reinstate consultation with the Fish and Wildlife Service.

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

- Reinitiating the Biological Opinion consultation could be good for Georgia if it shows that the endangered mussels will re-colonize.
- The studies and appeal may not be completed by 2012. The governors of the three states were committed to solving the problem, but now we will have to start over with new leaders.
- The Army Corps of Engineers will not consider raising the level of Lake Lanier unless Congress provides authorization and funds to study it.
- It is difficult to determine a course of action when we don't know the outcome of the reauthorization decision. The Glades Farm reservoir is a good option but it may or may not be necessary to build it. Water rates may need to be raised in order to fund the project and that is an important concern.

Public Comment Period on Additional Water Conservation Measures

Abby Owens with the Metro Water District presented an overview the Additional Water Conservation Measures recommended for consideration as plan amendments to the Metro Water District's Water Supply and Water Conservation Plan. Ms. Owens discussed the formation of the Chattahoochee-Lanier Working Group and outlined the deliberation process used to develop the recommendations. She explained that most of the recommendations would only apply to water providers whose supply would be limited by the Judge Magnuson ruling.

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

- How much water will be saved if all of these measures are implemented? *For the Chattahoochee and Lanier system, a conservative estimate is an additional 50 million gallons by 2035.*
- The key is educating individual homeowners and getting into the schools. A traveling educational display demonstrating how much water can be conserved around the home would be a good idea.
- There are 4-H programs in every county in Georgia. They could be excellent partners to increase water conservation in the schools. 4-H is not just about farming anymore. They focus on civic leadership and there is a big push for more environmental conservation education now. They have a presence in urban schools too, not just rural areas.
- We need to try everything. The City of Gainesville has water education staff in Hall County schools almost every day of the school year.
- Schools systems typically require the programs to incorporate GPS standards. The key is working water education into the curriculum in a way that meets some of these standards. Cobb County's green school certification program is a good example.
- This is the first year the Metro Water District Essay Contest has had submissions from all 15 counties.

- It can also be difficult to fit into the school's schedule.
- A challenge is developing programs that have a big bang for the buck.
- It has to be a sustained effort and you have to keep kids interested.
- Is Action Item CL-3 retrofit on reconnect or on sale? It is retrofit on reconnection to water service following the sale of a property. It would not apply to a change in tenants unless the building had been sold.
- Is closing dependent on the retrofit being completed? *No. In other programs home buyers are given 30 to 60 days after the sale to provide a certification document.*
- Retrofit can be difficult to implement because of delays on tax records and notification of property sale.
- It is a good idea to expand the rebate program to multi-family residences and commercial properties.
- The retrofit requirement could be added as a checkbox on the seller disclosure statement. It is also likely to be requested in the contract.
- What about people and businesses that run sprinklers when it rains? What if they are on a private well? Wells still impact the water table, and it is a public perception issue. *Action Item D-2 – Water Waste Policy addresses this problem. It has been introduced as a District-wide conservation measure. However, the measure would only apply to customers of a water utility.*

BAC Chairman Elections

There were no members who expressed interest in running for Chairman of the Lanier or Oconee BACs. Therefore, the current chairs, Mr. Val Perry and Ms. Jill Stachura, agreed to extend their service for another year. A motion was made that both Mr. Perry and Ms. Stachura should continue in their roles as BAC Chairs for 2011. The motion was voted on and passed without opposition.

The next meeting will be held on January 12, 2011. There being no further business the meeting was adjourned to begin the tour.

Tour of the Lakeside Water Treatment Plant

City of Gainesville Water Resources staff led BAC members on an informative tour of the Lakeside Water Treatment Plant. Our guide answered many questions from the BAC members and explained the various functions of the water treatment equipment.