



**Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District
LAKE LANIER & OCONEE BASIN ADVISORY COUNCILS
Meeting Summary
February 2, 2011**

The Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District's Lake Lanier and Oconee Basin Advisory Councils met on Wednesday February 2, 2011 at 10:00 a.m. at the Spout Springs Public Library in Flowery Branch, GA.

Lake Lanier BAC Members Present

Drew Addison
Richard Check
James Hazelwood, StoneHenge Consultants
Mary Jones
Val Perry, BAC Chair
Wilton Rooks, Scenic Georgia, Inc.

Oconee BAC Members Present

Jill Stachura, BAC Chair

Lake Lanier BAC Members Not Present

Bob Evans, GA Green Industry Association
Steven Garton, UGA Cooperative Extension
James Hatcher, Georgia Mountain Air
Dale Jaeger, The Jaeger Company
Larry Long
Tim Merritt
Kevin Smith, Forsyth County
Ike Swofford

Oconee BAC Members Not Present

Bill Finnick, GAFM
J. Steven Landers, Land Planning Consultants
Steve Payne, Braselton Utilities
Kyle Webb, Breedlove Planning Inc.
Sheryl Wells, UGA
Chris Yancey

Board Members Present

Jon Heard, Forsyth County Designee

Metro Water District Staff Present

Sarah Simmons, Senior Program Specialist
Corey Babb, Senior Environmental Planner
Charlene Njoroge, Education and Public Awareness Coordinator

Welcome and Introductions

Lanier BAC Chair Val Perry welcomed the group and introduced Forsyth County Board Designee Jon Heard, who welcomed the group on behalf of the Metro Water District Board and officially began the meeting with a brief overview of the activities at the City of Cumming Utilities. Corey Babb initiated group introductions. Sarah Simmons introduced herself as Heather Moody's replacement and informed the group that she will be the point of contact for BAC members moving forward.

2010 Annual Report and Implementation Report

Corey Babb gave an overview of the Metro Water District's 2010 Annual Report and Implementation Report. BAC members had the following questions and comments:

- What is capacity certification? It was clarified that capacity certification deals with the capacity of the pipe and the wastewater treatment plant.
- Is the goal for all the counties to answer "Yes" regarding capacity certification measures in the survey?
- Can utilities enforce residents to change patterns with grease? It was clarified that education on the issue is the only way to get people to change their habits.
- Can you comment on DeKalb County's plan about the suggested tunnel to get treated water back to the system?

Additional Water Supply Options for Board Consideration

Sarah Simmons informed the BAC that the Metro Water District Board is interested in an ongoing conversation about water supply options. She asked the group what they think the Board should be discussing moving forward. BAC Chair, Val Perry, asked member Wilton Rooks to speak on the issue of raising the level of Lake Lanier to 1073ft. BAC members had the following comments:

- The District should officially support raising the level of Buford Dam to 1073.
- Water storage: keep more water when we have it to use in times of drought.
- The District should take a proactive stand on the issue of raising the water level of Lanier. Pressure the politicians locally, and in Washington.
- What are the costs associated with raising the water level versus building a new reservoir?
- How does the Corps determine when to release water when the lake is at its current level of 1071ft., and will their methodologies change if the level is raised?
- We need both more reservoirs and increased lake levels.
- Hall County should move forward in building a reservoir; they can't count on having Lanier.
- Increased water storage is critical for solving the water problem.
- Have we looked at more water storage on the Flint?
- What can we do as a BAC to be more proactive?
- Building a new reservoir will take 10 years minimum.
- What percentage of the total water storage of the Lanier Basin is in Lake Lanier?
- Direct reuse would be a good option if we are not able to use Lake Lanier by 2012, but we would still have the costs of installing the system to do so.

"I'm In" Water Conservation Campaign Update

Charlene Njoroge presented an overview of the Metro Water District's new water conservation education campaign called "I'm In". She explained the history of the campaign development and gave an overview of the "I'm In" website. BAC members had the following questions and comments:

- Are "Individual" and "Organization" the only category options for those taking the pledge? If a third category for "Family" were added, you may get more people to cooperate in conservation methods and your count may reflect a more accurate number.
- Use the "I'm In" icon. Make it do something. Put the "I'm In" hand where the "Pledge Now" button is. We should be able to follow the icon all the way through the site.

- Instead of leaving conservation options/stories open-ended for organizations, give them ideas as a starting point/something to think about. Use the same idea check-boxes as were provided for individuals.
- If companies, organizations, and even schools, were listed by name it may encourage their competitors and others to join to save the embarrassment of not being a part of the campaign.
- As this campaign grows, and you allow more and more people to upload stories, information and pictures, managing the database is going to be a huge task. You will have to have someone read every story and look at every picture to make sure it is appropriate.
- On the “Organizations” page, add a field to allow them to identify the type of organization. By allowing a dropdown arrow to go to their specific type of organization, you may be able to direct them to more appropriate information. They will be able to see how many organizations of their type have pledged and read stories that have more relevant and specific conservation methods.
- Allow people to use the calculator before they take the pledge, or use them at the same time, so they can see the areas in which they need to change. This may give people more ideas for their conservation stories.
- Education is key. As this campaign is further developed, you may want to collect data and provide information by school district so that teachers can use this as a tool.
- For any pamphlets or other hard material provided with “I’m In” campaign, put a QR code on it so people can go straight to the website when they scan it with their phone.

Private Wastewater Lateral Repair Programs

Corey Babb discussed the impact that broken and leaky private sewer laterals have on water quality within the region and the options available for repair. BAC members had the following questions and comments:

- Regarding the utility that used a camera to check the lateral line and were required to repair the line: is it the same for smoke testing?
- It’s a private property issue and therefore, we have to pick the appropriate method to get broken laterals fixed.
- Do we build bigger wastewater plants to compensate?
- Are there any grants for local governments to help resolve the issues? It was suggested that CBDG grants can be used if the leaking lateral is near a listed stream.
- There are so many initiatives (e.g. streetscape improvement) that affect laterals. We need to coordinate these efforts with utilities so that we can be the solution, not the problem.

The next meeting will be held on April 15, 2011. There being no further business the meeting was adjourned.