



Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District
2014 Legislative Agenda
January 30, 2014

Tracking for 2014 Legislative Session

APPEAR ACTIVE

- Support [SB 213](#) “Flint River Drought Protection Act”; clarify legislative intent; revise definitions; expand programs – Sen. Ross Tolleson (R – Perry)
This bill is intended to improve the existing act by addressing tributaries, agricultural irrigation efficiency, flow augmentation, needed studies, and flexibility of the EPD director regarding annual prediction of severe drought conditions.
Introduced – 2/25/2013
Status – Passed Senate in 2013. Passed out of House Agriculture & Consumer Affairs Committee in year one, but not passed by House. Recommitted at end of year one.
- Track [HB 741](#) Water Resources; Issuance of Sludge Land Application Permits – Rep. Kevin Tanner (R – Dawsonville)
This bill would establish new requirements for EPD’s permitting of sludge (from wastewater treatment facilities) land application systems. The new requirements are two-fold. First, these systems shall be in compliance with local zoning. Second, if EPD holds public hearings on the proposed permits for sludge land application systems, such hearings shall be in the county where the proposed system is to be located.
Introduced – 1/14/2014
Status – Passed out of Management Resource Subcommittee of House NR&E Committee 1/27/14.
- Track [HB 864](#) Water Conservation Act of 2014 – Rep. Johnnie Caldwell (R – Thomaston)
This bill would require every governmental withdrawal permit holder to report monthly surface water withdrawal and discharge volumes (returns to the same source as the withdrawal). The bill also establishes various sanctions to be imposed upon the permit holder by the director of EPD if the permit holder’s reported return volume is less than 25% or 50% or 75%.
Introduced – 1/27/2014
Status – Assigned to House Natural Resources & Environment Committee
- Track [SB 299](#) Natural Resources; Provide Flexibility for Establishing Watershed Protection Standards – Sen. Steve Gooch (R – Dahlonega)
This bill would permit DNR / EPD some flexibility in carrying out its responsibility to set minimum standards for watershed protection. (Note: this is NOT related to the 25-foot buffer provisions in the Erosion & Sediment Control Act.) The bill does not appear to change the current authority for EPD to consider optional approaches to drinking watershed protection; however, it makes a stronger statement for considering alternatives to buffers that may be proposed by local governments.
Introduced – 1/17/2014
Status – Assigned to Senate Natural Resources and the Environment Committee.
- Track [HR 1087](#) General Assembly; Revenue Dedication – Rep. Andrew Welch (R – McDonough)
This resolution proposes an amendment to the Constitution that would authorize the General Assembly to dedicate the revenues derived from fees or assessments to the purpose for which they were imposed. The resolution includes a provision that redirection of the revenues from these fees (e.g. redirection of

Environmental Trust Fund revenues to the general fund) could occur by the approval of two-thirds of the elected members of each branch of the General Assembly.

Introduced – 1/21/2014

Status – Assigned to House Ways & Means Committee

Track [SB 306](#) Water Well Standards; permanently extend the moratorium on well or borehole construction – Sen. William Ligon (R – Brunswick)

This bill would clarify / broaden the restrictions on drilling wells or boreholes for the purpose of injecting water into the Floridan aquifer in any county governed by the coastal zone management program. The bill would add “and no existing well or borehole shall be converted” for the purpose of such injections and expands the prohibition to cover the injection of groundwater (existing code only restricts the injection of surface water).

Introduced – 1/22/2014

Status – Assigned to Senate Natural Resources and Environment Committee.

APPEAR DORMANT

Track [HB 515](#) Exemption for Certain IBTs into Metro District – Rep. Harry Geisinger (R – Roswell)

This bill would provide an exemption from the current prohibition that the Metro District shall neither study nor include in any plan any interbasin transfer of water from outside the District. The exemption would be for any interbasin transfer from a river with an annual average flow of at least 15 billion gallons per day at the withdrawal point.

Introduced – 3/4/2013

Status – Did not get out of committee or cross-over in year one.

Track [HB 41](#) Water Rates – Rep. Wendell Willard (R – Sandy Springs)

This bill would prohibit a service provider in a political subdivision created after January 1, 2000 from charging higher water or sewer fees for similar services to customers outside of the provider’s geographic boundaries unless otherwise provided by a contract.

Introduced – 1/14/2013

Status – Did not cross-over. Recommitted (returned to committee) at end of year one.

Track [HB 159](#) Ad Valorem Taxation of Property – Rep. Bret Harrell (R – Snellville)

This bill provides that property tax bills shall not include any non- related fees or assessments including storm water services fees and solid waste service fees.

Introduced – 1/30/2013

Status – Did not cross-over. Recommitted at end of year one.

Track [HB 199](#) Expand Reservoir Fund – Rep. Edward Lindsey (R – Atlanta)

This bill would expand the uses of GEFA’s Reservoir Fund to include conservation and leak detection.

Introduced – 2/4/2013

Status – Passed House in first year. Recommitted in Senate

Track [HB 225](#) EPD Rules – Rep. Tom Kirby (R – Loganville)

This bill holds that no new rule or regulation to be administered by the Environmental Protection Division shall be effective unless first approved by joint resolution of the General Assembly.

Introduced – 2/6/2013

Status – Did not get out of committee or cross-over in year one.

Track [HB 403](#) “Municipal Option Sales Tax for Water & Sewer Improvements Act” – Rep. Amy Carter (R – Valdosta)

This bill would allow any municipality that provides water and sewer service and is under a legal order to improve its water and sewer infrastructure or is located within a federal disaster area to impose a one percent sales tax to fund water and sewer system improvements.

Introduced – 2/19/2013

Status – Did not cross-over. Recommitted at end of year one.

Track [HB 408](#) Water Rates on Master Meter – Rep. Mike Jacobs (R – Brookhaven)

In this bill, if a building containing residential dwellings is served by a master meter, the rates charged to a customer by a public water provider shall be prorated among the number of dwellings served by such master meter and shall be no greater than rates charged to single family residential users for the same usage

Introduced – 2/20/2013

Status – Did not get out of committee or cross-over in year one.

Track [HB 549](#) Water Pollution; establish water emergency response procedures – Rep. Burns (R – Newington)

This bill establishes water emergency response procedures for discharges or spills of a pollutant that may be “reasonably expected to be harmful” to public health or wildlife.

Introduced – 3/5/2013

Status – Did not get out of committee or cross-over in year one.

Track [SB 117](#) Blasting or excavating near utility facilities; revise/add definitions – Sen. Rick Jeffares (R – McDonough)

This bill would amend the definition of “excavating” as well as other terms, and addresses several aspects of utility locate requests related to utility owners and operators, and excavators.

Introduced – 2/6/2013

Status – Passed Senate in first year. Assigned to House Energy, Utilities & and Telecommunications Committee. No action since second reading on 2/21/13.

Track [SB 255](#) Partnership for Public Facilities and Infrastructure Act – Sen. Hunter Hill (R – Atlanta)

This bill would set up a guidance committee and process to outline how P3 (Public-Private Partnership) projects are done in the state. It is our understanding that the bill is primarily to address procurements for transportation projects; however there is not clear evidence that water projects are excluded. The Metro Atlanta Chamber will be recommending changes to the draft legislation to prevent conflicts with the provisions of SB 122 (passed in 2011, now Georgia Code 36-91-100) concerning P3 procurements for water projects.

Introduced – 3/18/2013

Status – Assigned to Senate Transportation Committee.