



Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District

40 Courtland Street NE | Atlanta, Georgia 30303

**Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District**  
**CHATTAHOOCHEE and COOSA/ETOWAH BASIN ADVISORY COUNCIL**  
**Meeting Summary**  
**April 23, 2015**

The Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District's Chattahoochee and Coosa-Etowah Basin Advisory Councils met on Thursday, April 23, 2015 at 1:30 p.m. at the Georgia Association of Water Professionals in Marietta, GA.

**Chattahoochee Members Present**

Patty Berkovitz, Watershed Alliance of Sandy Springs	Charles McKinney
William Braswell, West Georgia Board of Realtors	Doug Miell
Dargan Cole	Angus Reed
Teresa Crisp, Dewberry Engineers Inc/ Cobb Co Resident	Kenneth Robertson
Roland de Liniere	James Steele, Paulding County Water System
Mark Esoda, GA Golf Course Superintendents Assoc.	George Taylor, Oglethorpe Power Corporation
Donald Fry	Daniel Thalimer
Douglas Fulle, Oglethorpe Power Corporation	Bryan Tolar, GA Agribusiness Council
Jack Gleason, Friends of Caney Creek.org and SmartGrowth Forsyth County, Inc	Michelle Vincent, Jacobs
Laura Hartt, Chattahoochee Riverkeeper	Wayne Waldrip, Keep Smyrna Beautiful
Carl Jacobsen	James Warner
Kenneth Kagy, Gwinnett County	Butch Watson
Richard Lisska	Nancy Wylie, League of Women Voters of Georgia

**Chattahoochee Members Not Present**

Danelle Alloway, City of Roswell Water Resources Engineer	Jo Ann Macrina
Taylor Anderson	Frank Mann, Atlanta Commercial Board of Realtors
Isaac Asher	George Martin, Georgia Power Company
Corey Babb	William Millkey

Emily Buffington, Cox Enterprises/Citizen	Mitzi Moore, Sundial Plumbing
Robert Bunker, US Army Corps	Michael Morton, City of Chattahoochee Hills
Marrissa Chanin, Riverwood Properties, LLC	Kevin Norton, Walton Development and Mgmt
David Chastant	John Oliver, URS Corporation
Steven Culp	Amreeta Regmi
Carol Duffey, Keep Newnan Beautiful/City of Newnan	Trish Reifenberger
Ben Emanuel, American Rivers	Michele Robbins, City of Sandy Springs
Debra Ewing, D. Clark Harris, Inc.	Penny Round, Atlanta Apartment Association
Richard Farmer, Watershed Alliance of Sandy Springs	Ryan Rowberry
David Forbes	Yomi Sholarin, Atlanta Board of Commercial Real Estate
Steven Foster	Sanford Stokes, Western Summit Constructors, Inc.
Jimmy Garrison, Development Planning & Engineering, Inc.	Charles Surasky
James Hawkins	John Tarpley
Patrick Heerd	Frankie Thompson
Colin Holden	Hoyt Tuggle
Warren Howe	Billy Turner, Columbus Water Works
Lynda Jenkins	Mary Kay Woodworth, Georgia Urban Ag Council
Victoria Lister	Van Yon, Member of Atlanta Commercial Board of Realtors

**Coosa Members Present**

Bruce Coyle, Paulding County	Donald McClure
Robert Endress, Atkins	Merrick McClure, City of Canton
Kyndal Foshee	Beverly McMurray
William Grizzle, Cherokee County Farm Bureau	Lori Pruitt, City of Cartersville
Marjorie Hicks, Cherokee Co Stormwater	Thomas Shannon, Ewing Irrigation Products
Nolton Johnson, Cherokee County Resident	Bettie Sleeth, Home Builders Assoc. of GA
Dart Kendall, GOWA	Mark Smiler, Atlanta Board of Realtors
David Kubala, CCWSA	Marty Williams, Georgia Lakes Society

**Coosa Members Not Present**

Jackie Archer, Realtor	Hal McClain, Rindt-McDuff Associates, Inc.
Jake Bendik	Keith McLaughlin
David Braswell, Cobb County Resident	Robert Morrison, LAPA

Daniel Coffey	Carol Moson, Georgia Association of Realtors
Doris Cook	Ed Mullinax, City of Cartersville
Gladney Cooper	Sean Nicholl, Lake Allatoona Association
Andrew Ewoh	Lewis Stegall, Paulding County Farm Bureau
Craig Ferguson, Brown and Caldwell	Bobby Terrell
Richard Gray, Murray's Loch Preservation Group	Tom Wilder
Chadwick Hypes, Dobbins AFB	Chris Williams
Aylin Lewallen	

**District Staff and Consultant Team Present**

**Others Present**

Katherine Zitsch, ARC's NRD Manager	Susan Adams
Danny Johnson, District Manager	Laurie Ashmore, Paulding Water
Andy Cornwell, District	Dieter Franz
Chris Faulkner, District	Matt Harper
Sarah Skinner, District	Becky Mixon
Kostoula Vallianos, District	Kathy Nguyen
Rick Brownlow, CH2M Project Manager	
Doug Baughman, CH2M	
Veronica Jarrin, CH2M	
Kristen Rowles, Policy Works	
Steve Simpson, Black & Veatch	
Brian Skeens, CH2M	
Chrissy Thom, CH2M	

**Welcome and Introductions**

On Thursday April 23, the Chattahoochee and Coosa/Etowah BACs met at the offices of the Georgia Association of Water Professionals in Marietta. Board Designee David Kubala (Coosa/Etowah BAC) and BAC Chair Teresa Crisp (Chattahoochee BAC) welcomed the group. Attendees included BAC members, District staff, and the CH2M HILL consultant team working on the 2016 District plan update.

**2016 Water Resource Management Plan Schedule and Stakeholder Involvement Approach**

Danny Johnson (the District) reviewed slides that explained the Water Resource Management Plan schedule and process. Danny said that this update will utilize the existing recommendations and identify any potential revisions or new actions that need to be included in the plan.

**Water Resource Management Plans Policy Review**

Rick Brownlow is the project manager for the CH2M HILL consultant team on the District's water plan update. He presented slides that provided a policy review for the 2009 plans. The slides highlighted policy changes and trends since the 2009 plans. They also identified implementation successes and opportunities for refinement and integration from the 2009 plan in

each of the following areas: Water Supply, Wastewater, Watershed and Public Awareness and Education. This material will support the plan update in the review of the goals, objectives and evaluation criteria and the identification of implementation actions.

Next, Kristin Rowles (Policy Works) with the consultant team facilitated a discussion with the BAC members on the plan review. She noted that the BAC's input through the goals and objectives discussion last year was an important source of information in preparing the policy review. She asked the members to comment on whether the implementation successes and opportunities for refinement and integration were accurate and whether the members would add anything to these lists. The following is a summary of the BAC members' feedback:

**Water Supply:**

- The water consumption rate in a small town cannot be lumped together with that of a county in a one-size-fits-all approach.
- Can we use the plan to encourage the identification of new or increased water sources?
- Need to help utilities in water pricing that does not lead to lost revenue as a result of conservation during droughts.
- More emphasis on grey water use, rainwater harvest, and conservation enhancements in plumbing code.
- Permitting more groundwater withdrawals during drought contravenes efforts to reduce water use.
- The benefits of conservation can be contravened if we continue to allow development that makes up for the reduced water use. Need to balance conservation, development and water supply needs.
- During droughts, we should consider higher conservation pricing tiers.
- Need updated data on water resources for planning.
- Use existing reservoirs for water supply storage instead of building new ones.
- Water supply overlay for watersheds such as Big Creek limits impervious surface more strictly than other areas. Could municipal water providers help to pay for losses to property owners because of the benefits to water supply protection? However, water utilities are not the only beneficiary of better water quality.
- Recommend the use of leak detecting water meters.

**Wastewater:**

- More reuse should be considered for irrigation. Grey water use should also be considered more.
- Direct potable reuse is not really acceptable to most.
- Rainwater harvesting should be encouraged.
- Remote discharge of wastewater in San Antonio (TX) supports stream flows.
- Need a better estimate of consumptive use for septic systems, land application and irrigation. Some water is returned; not 100 percent consumptive.
- Land application makes use of nutrients in wastewater. Cannot get it permitted.

- Need to educate new property owners about their septic systems and how to manage them.
  - Consider requirements for education about septic systems in real estate transactions.
  - Cumming has an education program for property owners on septic systems that is always full.
  - Board of Realtors might be able to help with providing education in property transactions.
- Do we really have much success in tracking septic systems and maintenance requirements? Needs more work.

#### **Education and Public Awareness:**

- Need to education elected officials and local government officials, especially including zoning and planning commissions.
- Consider more large-scale public education facilities on water resources in District to support more education programs for schools.
- Need more education for local government staff, especially community development officials.

The discussion of the watershed plan review was deferred until later in the meeting, after the presentation of additional related slides.

#### **Water Demand Forecasting Process**

Brian Skeens (CH2M HILL) presented slides on the approach to forecasting water demands for the plan update. The forecasts will be presented to the District Board in June or August. The following is a summary of the BAC members' discussion about the water demand forecasts:

- How do you consider those using self-supply of water?
  - Based on estimates.
- Should incorporate non-revenue water into forecasts based on current water audits.
- What is the margin of error for the forecasts?
  - Depends on the quality of data we receive.
  - Update the forecasts every five years to improve them.
  - The District is somewhat unique in that we must plan without knowing how much water we will have in future and where it will come from. We must proceed with planning despite uncertainty. Plans will be updated every five years.
- Can water supply planning drive more in terms of limits on growth and development?
  - Growth is generally driven by many other factors, not just water supply.
  - We can plan to use what we have as well as we can.
- Wells should be included in the demand forecasts.
  - We will be contacting Health Departments to gather this data.
- Are water savings toilets required in new construction?
  - Yes, and this is reflected in the forecasts.

- Do the forecasts reflect recent trends in building permits?
  - We capture future development to the extent that this is captured in the population projections. It is inherently built into the population projections.
- New cities are coming into existence. Consider forecasting by city (instead of just county) in the future.
- Suggest developing methodology to create bands of achievable water supply with associated levels of confidence; presuming 100 percent of forecasted demand can be supplied is not realistic.
- Support creating water for reuse with approaches for reusable water distribution to consumers developed in parallel. Further cost effectiveness would need to be considered for demand/supply reuse approaches.
- Talk about the benefits of point of use leak detection. The point of use leak detection conservation measure was added to the 2009 plan and applies to Lanier and Chattahoochee water users.

### **Watershed Management: River Basin Profiles and Review of Management Measures**

At this time, the group broke into two sub-groups in two different rooms: Chattahoochee BAC and Coosa/Etowah BAC. In the Chattahoochee BAC, Doug Baughman (CH2M HILL) presented slides on the river basin profile for the Chattahoochee watershed and the watershed management plan review. In the Coosa/Etowah BAC, Chrissy Thom (CH2M HILL) presented slides on the river basin profiles for the Coosa and Etowah watersheds and the watershed management plan review. Doug and Chrissy both explained that in the 2016 plan update, the river basin profiles will be organized to support watershed management planning and to maximize relevance for local communities. Their slides reviewed the changes in conditions in the respective watersheds since 2009 including land cover, land use and impaired waters. They also reviewed management issues in each river basin.

Next, Chrissy and Doug each presented a review of the 2009 plan's implementation actions related to watershed management. They also reviewed implementation successes and opportunities for refinement and integration related to watershed management. Then, Kristin Rowles facilitated a discussion with the Chattahoochee BAC members of the watershed management plan review and implementation actions. Rick Brownlow facilitated a discussion with the Coosa/Etowah BAC members on the same topics.

*The following is a summary of the Chattahoochee BAC members' discussion of the watershed plan review:*

- Enforcement is a significant issue for stormwater management. Consider an environmental crime unit to assist.
- Require additional BMPs in water supply overlay regions.
- Need more education of public officials about stormwater management.
- Consider water quality credit trading between/among point and nonpoint sources.
- Stream bank and wetland mitigation credits have been used in this region before. Were they properly implemented/enforced?

- Many lakes in the District are smaller and not adequately assessed. Need more data and assessment on these lakes, coordination with those that may have existing data from private sources.
- Make use of volunteer water quality monitoring data to collect more assessment information on smaller lakes.
- Expand volunteer water quality monitoring programs in the District.
- Areas of environmental sensitivity need greater stormwater protections.
- Need education about stormwater management for government workers at all levels.

*The following is a summary of the Coosa/Etowah BAC members' discussion, which addressed both the river basin profile and the watershed plan review:*

- Outside I-285 seems to carry the bulk of the load on stormwater/green infrastructure requirements while the built out areas do not seem to comply with as many SW related regulations.
- The river basin profiles do not include information from upstream /downstream of District. Important to consider how those areas are represented and how problems are addressed in larger watershed.
- Look into the changes in impervious surfaces (6-10 percent) and developed areas (26-35 percent). It seems like those numbers should be proportional. **CH2M HILL will verify how these two data sets relate.**
- Can we predict droughts up to 2050?
  - The scope does not include drought prediction or expected patterns. There was another recent District project that looked at climate change, but it does not predict drought timing. It does address the expected pattern and severity of wet and drought periods.
- Add the number of miles that are unassessed to the 303(d) listed streams statistics.
- Add a bold note that the transition from fecal coliform standard to E. coli standard may generate change in data.
- Add “decentralized” to land development category.

*Comments on the Watershed Plan Review:*

- In Cobb County, there are developments that chose a fee in lieu of stormwater management controls.
  - Concerned about the impact of these on streams.
  - Smaller developments still have to meet water quality requirements, but do not have to do on-site retention, if meet certain requirements.
- With regard to the bacteria standard, many more streams can be expected to be listed because EPD staff says “meet under all flow conditions.” It seems all streams will be listed under this approach. This goal seems extreme.
- For macroinvertebrates, EPD will not accept local utility data. As a result, utilities cannot demonstrate if they have made a positive impact.

- The erosion and sedimentation controls required for stream restoration projects and stabilization need to be reviewed by EPD so we can get consistency in regulatory compliance and gives tools to the utilities for compliance in these projects.
- Questions about federal requirements for shoreline stabilization and addressing erosion.
- Wetland mitigation has gone from really good projects to just ponds. The quality of the mitigation project is very important. Implementation and monitoring are key. (Action 6.B.4)
- For residential/commercial lawn practices, over-application of fertilizer should be addressed.

### **Next Steps**

The next BAC meeting will be a joint meeting in late June. At the next meeting, BAC members will discuss water and wastewater implementation actions as well as other items related to the plan update. A joint BAC meeting in July is also possible if needed due to the schedule of the plan update process. Details will be sent to members soon.