



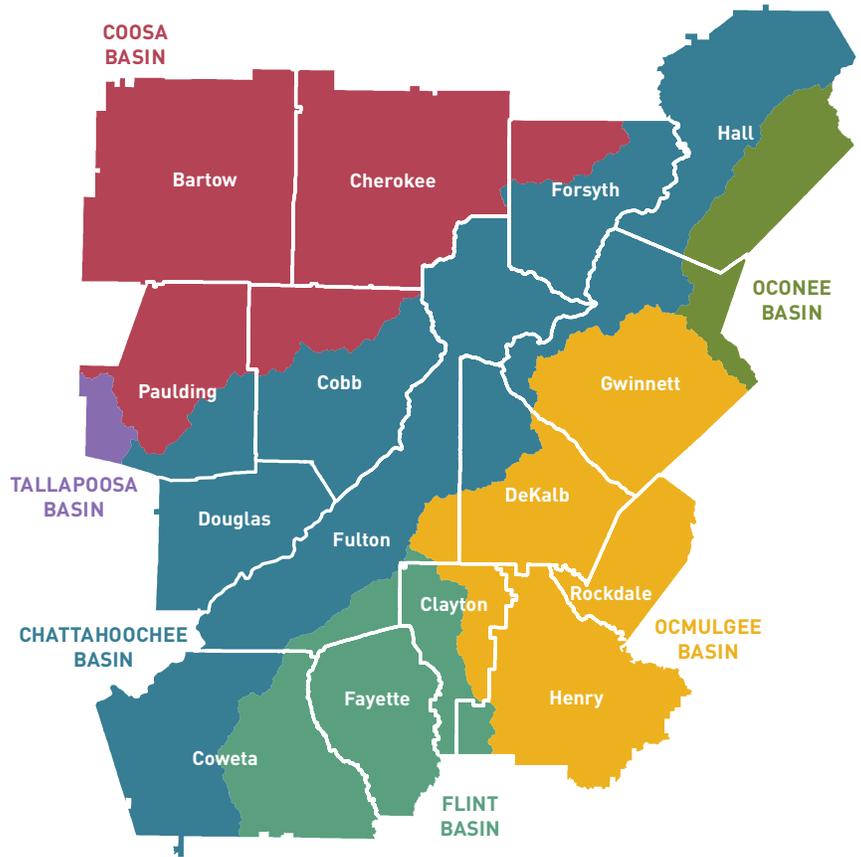
2018 Activities & Progress Report

Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District



About the District

The Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District (the Metro Water District, or simply, the District) was created by the Georgia General Assembly in 2001 as a regional water resources planning agency. The Metro Water District is staffed by the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) and develops comprehensive action items and strategies for the management of water supply and water conservation, wastewater, and stormwater for the 15 county, 95 city metro Atlanta area. The first suite of plans was adopted in 2003 and updated in 2009. The District completed the second update in June of 2017. For the first time, the three separate plans were combined into a single, integrated Water Resource Management Plan.



2018 Governing Board Members

— Elected Officials —

The Hon. Charlotte Nash (District Chair)
Chairman, Gwinnett County Commission

The Hon. Keisha Lance Bottoms
Mayor, City of Atlanta

The Hon. Al Smith
Chairman, Coweta County Commission

The Hon. Rob Pitts
Chairman, Fulton County Commission

The Hon. Steve Taylor
Commissioner, Bartow County

The Hon. Michael Thurmond
CEO, DeKalb County

The Hon. Richard Higgins
Chairman, Hall County Commission

The Hon. L.B. "Buzz" Ahrens, Jr.
Chairman, Cherokee County Commission

The Hon. Dr. Romona Jackson Jones
Chairman, Douglas County Commission

The Hon. June Wood
Chairman, Henry County Commission

The Hon. Jeff Turner
Chairman, Clayton County Commission

The Hon. Eric K. Maxwell
Chairman, Fayette County Commission

The Hon. Boyd Austin, Jr.
Mayor, City of Dallas, Paulding County

The Hon. Mike Boyce
Chairman, Cobb County Commission

The Hon. Todd Levent
Chairman, Forsyth County Commission

The Hon. Oz Nesbitt, Sr.
Chairman, Rockdale County Commission

— Citizen Members —

Katie Kirkpatrick (*Vice Chair*), Atlanta
Birdel Jackson (*Secretary/Treasurer*), Atlanta
Mark Berry, Atlanta

Pam Burnett, Marietta
Bradley Currey, Jr., Atlanta
Kit Dunlap, Gainesville
Tim Lee, Cornelia

Glenn Page, Marietta
Gerald Pouncey, Jr., Atlanta
Tim Thoms, Fayetteville

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A Message from Chairman Charlotte Nash

2018 has been a fast-paced and exciting year for the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District (the District). Among the year's highlights was working to implement the new Water Resource Management Plan, which was approved in June 2017. We hit the ground running to begin fulfilling the new plan's requirements and assist our utility, authority, and local government partners with carrying out the new and improved action items.

The plan successfully integrates water supply and conservation, wastewater and septic management, and watershed management in a holistic planning approach, the first of its kind for the region and state. It is a highly coordinated and technically sound document, with a number of innovative measures that push our region forward in water conservation and watershed protection. Local governments and water providers are working diligently to fulfill these new requirements as well as the classic elements of our plan, including conservation pricing, leak detection, and stormwater model ordinance adoption.

The plan is strong, and our local government and water provider partners are to be commended for their contributions in developing the plan and the efforts they are currently putting forth to implement it. Nowhere else in the country will one find 110 jurisdictions working in coordination to implement such an impactful and significant suite of integrated water resource stewardship measures. This plan solidifies our reputation as a national leader in water resource management.

Also, in 2018, we expanded the My Drop Counts water conservation campaign with an innovative business pledge that asks local organizations to commit to taking significant water-saving steps to reduce their water footprint and help ensure metro Atlanta's water resources for the future. Several high-profile businesses with headquarters in our region have joined the effort, and three have even provided specific timetables for becoming water-neutral. And these business partners are working diligently to promote the My Drop Counts individual conservation pledge to employees. Together, we have encouraged more than 3,700 businesses and individuals across the state to pledge to save water.

One element that strengthens our Water Resource Management Plan is the District's Technical Assistance Program (TAP), which provides resources to help local partners address specific problems. In 2018, we expanded TAP to include trainings and workshops on septic system identification and best practices for stormwater management. We worked closely with the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD), which reviews local governments and

water providers on plan compliance, to ensure consistency in plan measure interpretation. And we helped local governments fulfill new requirements on intergovernmental and intragovernmental coordination by providing guidance for planning coordination meetings and templated materials to guide discussion. TAP has proven to be invaluable in addressing local issues and providing solutions that benefit our entire region.

For our planning efforts to be most effective, we and our partners must encourage people to make habit changes to increase conservation in their homes and businesses, and to reduce our collective impact on our region's watersheds. This year, our education program focused on increasing the likelihood of habit change. We provided partners with ideas for more effective giveaways, and we revamped printed outreach material to connect people with solutions and community partners that work on water quality and quantity issues. Participation in our annual contest and events continues to grow, and we look forward to adding more participation opportunities next year.

The District is proud to have been honored by U.S. EPA as a 2018 Sustained Excellence Award winner. The award honored three efforts: our significant educational programming surrounding Fix a Leak Week; our promotion of the WaterSense label; and our advocacy for water conservation throughout the year. The Sustained Excellence Award is EPA's highest WaterSense Award, and we add it to the other prestigious state and national honors and awards we've received to date.

We are always striving for higher standards in water conservation and efficiency as we push for improved coordination across and within jurisdictions. At the same time, we support investment in data collection and analysis, which will help strengthen our knowledge of local problems and drive regional solutions.

As we look toward starting the next plan update in the coming year, we are thankful for the diligence of our staff, the guidance of the Board, and the volunteer hours invested by our stakeholder groups. It's helped make 2018 a great year. We're looking forward to an even better 2019!



Hon. Charlotte Nash
Metro Water District Chair



Education and Public Participation

Raising the Bar for Community Engagement

Educating metro Atlanta residents of all ages about watershed protection and wise water use is a critical component of the District's planning. For 17 years, the District has provided partners, local governments, and water providers with high-quality educational resources and programming assistance.

In 2018, the District launched the new and improved My Drop Counts Business Pledge, which encourages local businesses, schools and universities, and other non-profit and governmental organizations to join regional efforts to reduce water use and ensure a sustainable future. Through the new pledge, businesses commit to take significant water-saving steps – such as completing audits of water fixtures and developing action plans to replace inefficient fixtures – to reduce their water footprint. Cox Enterprises, The Coca-Cola Company, Georgia Power, SunTrust Bank, the Metro Atlanta Chamber, and Agnes Scott College are among the organizations that have taken the pledge.

The new campaign works in concert with the My Drop Counts Individual Pledge, which encourages residents to save water in and around their homes. To date, 3,700 businesses and individuals across the state have pledged to save water through My Drop Counts. Visit mydropcounts.org/pledge to find out more.

“Our Water Story,” the District's interactive puppet show, continues to be a big hit for elementary school kids, their parents, and teachers. The show explains the water cycle and the importance of watershed protection. It has entertained and informed more than 1,500 metro area residents.

The My Drop Counts water conservation campaign and the Clean Water Campaign for stormwater pollution prevention continue to be successful at influencing residents to take steps toward becoming better stewards of our water resources. Three signature contests — the Middle School Essay Contest, the High School Video Contest, and the Water Reflections Calendar Photo Contest — continue to generate high levels of participation, with more than 3,400 individuals participating in all District contests and events. The 6th Annual Water Drop Dash 5K Race and Water Festival, held in March to celebrate U.S. EPA's WaterSense Fix a Leak Week, boasted more than 700 participants. The District is proud to offer events and programming to citizens of all ages, and we look forward to expanding our offerings next year.

In October, the District was honored to receive the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's 2018 WaterSense® Sustained Excellence Award for our creative programming and public engagement during Fix a Leak Week, as well as our promotion of the WaterSense® label and water efficiency throughout the year. The Sustained Excellence Award is EPA WaterSense's top award.



3,400

Number of residents participated in District contests and signature events



3,700

Number of individuals and businesses across the state which have pledged to conserve water at home and at work

1,500

Number of children, parents, and teachers entertained and educated by the “Our Water Story” puppet show





Water Resource Management Plan

The First-of-Its-Kind Integrated Water Resource Planning for our Region

In June 2017, the District's Governing Board reached a major milestone: approving a Water Resource Management Plan that, for the first time in our region, successfully integrates water supply and conservation, wastewater and septic management, and watershed management in one holistic planning approach. The District has long been a national leader in water resource management, and this plan further bolsters that reputation.

In 2018, District staff worked to fulfill plan requirements. This meant coordinating with local governments and water providers to implement new plan measures — including crafting model language to enact and adopt policies and ordinances for metering private fire lines, as well as irrigation system requirements for large landscapes.

Finding and fixing leaks is also a critical water conservation initiative for the District. In 2017, District water providers who responded to an annual survey reported that they had detected and repaired over 4,200 leaks.

The integrated nature of the new plan requires local jurisdictions and utilities to coordinate across departments and jurisdictions. In the first year under these new plan requirements, over 60

percent of wastewater providers who responded to the District's annual implementation survey reported that they held a coordination meeting with at least one other department.

District communities also continue to enforce the District's stream buffer model ordinance as an effective strategy for water quality and stream channel protection. All local governments have adopted a stream buffer ordinance, nearly 10% of which contain more stringent requirements than those set by the District.

And to assess the conditions of local streams, District jurisdictions and utilities are required to conduct long-term water quality trend monitoring on a range of data, helping direct local investments in watershed improvement projects. Monitoring requirements vary in size and scope in the region, and in 2017, 31 District jurisdictions invested a total of \$5.16 million to collect water quality data.

4,267

Leaks detected and repaired by District utilities in 2017



60%

District jurisdictions that hosted a coordination meeting in the first year of this new plan requirement

\$5.16M

Amount invested by 31 District jurisdictions to collect water quality data



Implementing the Plan Through the Technical Assistance Program

Since 2016, the Technical Assistance Program (TAP) has served a critical role in the successful implementation of action items contained in the District's Water Resource Management Plan. TAP provides high-quality, well-integrated technical assistance to help local governments, utilities, and authorities identify resources and develop strategies to address specific issues.

In 2018, TAP focused on providing one-on-one assistance to local governments and water providers, assisting with intergovernmental and intragovernmental coordination efforts, and training local governments and utilities on plan requirements. TAP also helped smaller local governments with implementation guidance and audit assistance.

Additionally, the District continued close coordination with the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) to ensure clear and consistent interpretation of the plan action items during EPD's audit process. EPD is responsible for ensuring that local governments and water and wastewater providers are in compliance with the District's plan before new and expanded permits are approved. These efforts have led to more engagement, improved coordination across jurisdictions, and improved compliance.

The District made changes to water conservation measures, including launching and securing funding for the multi-family toilet replacement initiative under the Toilet Rebate Program.

To strengthen the foundation of our commercial water efficiency program, the District cultivated relationships with state and national restaurant associations to get feedback that's helped identify the most cost-effective and water-efficient models for our pre-rinse spray valve bulk purchasing program.

Additionally, the District obtained funding from Georgia Environmental Finance Authority (GEFA) and EPD to update the Source Water Assessment Plans (SWAPs) to help water providers comply with both the District's plan and the requirements of their annual consumer confidence reports.

The District is also working to expand our offerings through TAP in 2019, with additional trainings on topics such as planning for better stormwater management.



2018 STREAM Awards for Best Post-Construction Stormwater Management

The STREAM awards recognize impactful and innovative water resource management projects and programs. They honor the District's local member governments, utilities, and authorities that have gone above and beyond in implementing the Water Resource Management Plan. Each year's award focuses on a different planning area. This year celebrates the best in post-construction stormwater management practices.

The City of Alpharetta was recognized for developing a stormwater management plan that accommodates new development in a way that also protects water quality. For example, the city requires developments which add 1,000 square feet or more of impervious surfaces to use low-impact measures to prevent run-off from the first inch of rainfall. The city also requires residential developments to set aside funds to build and maintain stormwater management systems.

The City of Atlanta was recognized for being a regional leader in green infrastructure innovation. The city has developed a plan to incorporate "green infrastructure" into all city agencies and public-private projects, such as rain gardens, green roofs, and cisterns that slow or capture stormwater runoff. The city also requires projects which add or replace 500 square feet of impervious surface to reduce stormwater runoff.





Photo credit: Autumn at Euharlee Covered Bridge by Audrey Lanier Andersen of Cartersville, GA

Financials for 2018

The Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District operated on a calendar-year budget, with the majority of revenues coming from local government dues (\$966,549) and State of Georgia allocations (\$353,699). State funding included \$103,699 for the update of Source Water Assessment Plans across the District. The 2018 dues of \$0.20 per capita held steady from 2017. The budget included funding to continue the Septic Water Quality Study to assess the impact of septic systems on water quality in the region, provide technical assistance to local governments on drought management related to the EPD Drought Rule, and begin an update to the Source Water Assessment Plans.

Below is a review of the revenues and expenses for 2018. This accounting is subject to adjustment after fiscal year-end close and an independent audit.

Financials for 2019

In June of 2018, the Metro Water District Governing Board adopted a final budget of \$1,658,779 for 2019, with the majority of revenues coming from local governments (\$1,208,186) and the state (\$389,974). State funding includes \$139,974 for the update of Source Water Assessment Plans across the District. Local government dues for 2019 will be \$0.25 per capita (based on the 2010 Census).

The District strives to maintain a minimum fund balance of \$300,000 for operating contingencies. The fund balance is higher at the end of 2018 as we prepare for the Plan update that begins in 2019.

	2018 Budget (Approved June 7, 2017)	2018 Budget Revision (Approved May 23, 2018)
Beginning Fund Balance (Estimated)	\$554,297	\$734,466
Revenues		
Direct State Funding	\$250,000	\$353,699
Local Dues (2010 Census at \$0.20 per capita)	\$966,549	\$966,549
Interest Income	\$2,000	\$1,000
Misc. Fees	\$45,000	\$45,000
Total Revenues	\$1,263,549	\$1,366,248
Expenses by Type		
Chairman's Allowance	\$3,000	\$3,000
District Planning Function		
Salaries	\$463,278	\$521,816
Fringe Benefits	\$273,334	\$284,160
Contracts	\$229,000	\$175,000
Overhead	\$364,623	\$398,958
Miscellaneous Operating	\$83,000	\$83,000
Public Awareness / Education	\$100,000	\$100,000
Total Expenses	\$1,516,235	\$1,565,934
Projected Ending Fund Balance	\$301,611	\$534,780



Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District

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The Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District is staffed by the Atlanta Regional Commission and manages a comprehensive, integrated plan for water supply and water conservation, wastewater, and watershed management in the 15-county metro Atlanta region.

www.northgeorgiawater.org



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Metropolitan North Georgia
Water Planning District



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