

Upper Flint

# Upper Flint Council Meeting

June 9, 2023



**GEORGIA  
WATER PLANNING**

[waterplanning.georgia.gov](https://waterplanning.georgia.gov)

# Agenda

## **Objectives:**

1. Approve the Regional Water Plan for submission to GAEPD
2. Learn about and discuss proposed frost protection water withdrawal permits
3. Elect Council leadership

- 9:45 am Registration
- 10:00 am Welcome, Agenda Review – *Meagan Szydzik, GWPPC*
- 10:10 am Chair's Report – *Chairman Chase*
- 10:20 am Council Leadership Election
- 10:35 am GAEPD Report – *Johanna Smith, GAEPD*
- 10:45am Frost Protection Permitting – *Ania Truszczynski, GAEPD*
- 11:10 am Public Comment
- 11:20 am Regional Water Plan Review – *Meagan Szydzik, GWPPC*
- 12:15 pm Picnic Lunch & Corn Roast





# Introductions

## DONALD CHASE

**Council Chair for:**  
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[dgmckchase@gmail.com](mailto:dgmckchase@gmail.com)  
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## JOHANNA SMITH

Georgia EPD

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## ROB BOCARRO

Black & Veatch

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## JASON HOWARD

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## KRISTIN ROWLES

GWPPC

## **Council Lead for:**

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## MARK MASTERS

GWPPC

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## MEAGAN SZYDZIK

GWPPC

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## COURTNEY COOPER

GWPPC

**Council Advisor for:**  
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[ccooper@h2opolicycenter.org](mailto:ccooper@h2opolicycenter.org)



# Upper Flint Council Members

Name	City	County
Brian Belcher	Ellaville	Schley
Barry Blount	Americus	Sumter
Michael Bowens	Vienna	Dooly
Gene Brunson	Reynolds	Taylor
Thomas Burnsed	Meansville	Pike
Donald Chase, Chair	Oglethorpe	Macon
Brad Ellis	Vienna	Dooly
Beth English	Vienna	Dooly
Steve Fry	Williamson	Pike
Adam L. Graft	Americus	Sumter
Rodney H. Hilley	Molena	Pike
Jack Holbrook (Alternate)	Preston	Webster
Terrell Hudson	Unadilla	Dooly
Raines Jordan, Vice Chair	Talbotton	Talbot
Bob Melvin	Oglethorpe	Macon
Kenneth L. Murphy	Gay	Meriwether
Sen. Ed Harbison (Ex-Officio)		

Name	City	County
Lamar Perlis	Cordele	Crisp
Gary Powell	Buena Vista	Marion
Jim Reid	Americus	Sumter
Gordon Rogers	Talbotton	Talbot
Charles Rucks	Brooks	Spalding
Bill Sawyer	Ellaville	Schley County
Walter E. (Butch) Turner	Reynolds	Taylor
Brian Upson	Griffin	Spalding
George (Teel) Warbington (Alternate)	Vienna	Dooly
Rodney Wilson	Zebulon	Pike
Benjamin (Joel) Wood	Cordele	Crisp
Ben Haugabook		Macon





# Chair's Report

Presented by Chairman Chase





# Council Leadership Election





# GA EPD Report

*Johanna Smith, GA EPD*







**GEORGIA**  
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION DIVISION

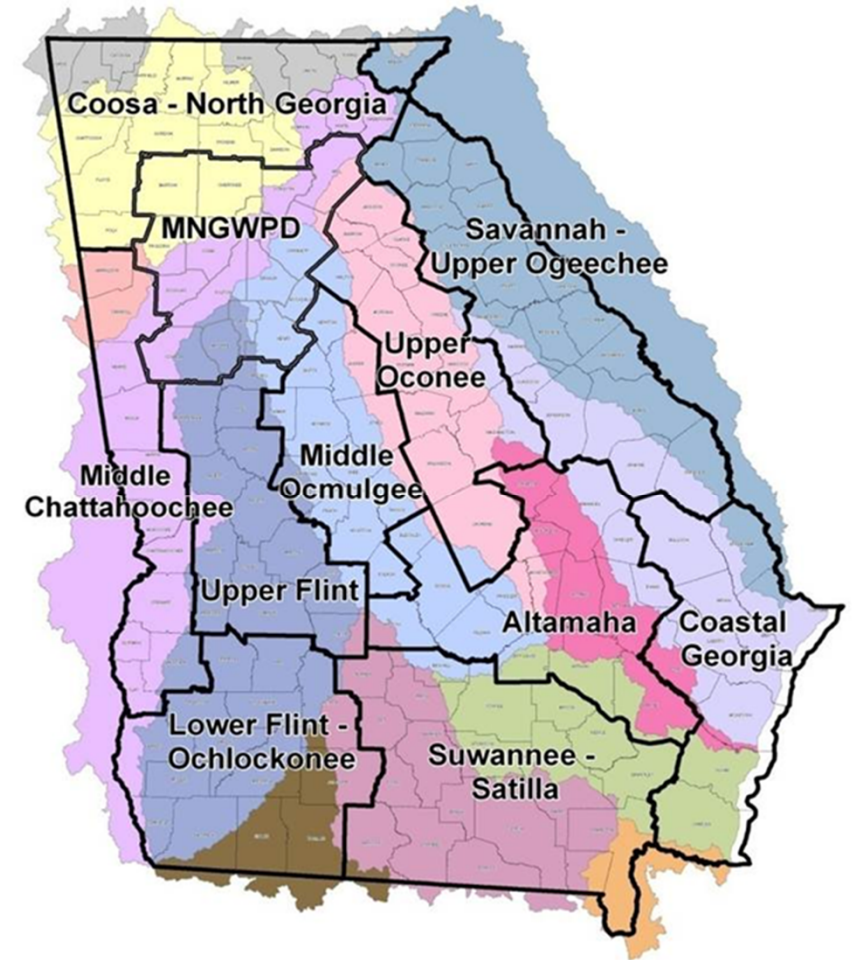
# SFY2024 Regional Water Planning SEED GRANT

Watershed Protection Branch  
Grants Unit



# Regional Water Plan Seed Grant

- Up to \$75,000 per project to implement Regional Water Plans
- Cost-Share: 60% state funds/40% local match (10% of project total as cash)
- Letter of Support from Water Council
- Scheduling required pre-application meetings will be due in Mid October
- Accepting applications for SFY2024 until **October 31, 2023**
- **NEW for SFY2023:** Must apply using online Grant Application Portal



# Online Application Instructions

- New for SFY2024
- All applications must be submitted through the RWP Seed Grant Application Portal
- 1. Create an Account
- 2. Create an Organization Profile
- 3. Complete Application Section 1: Project Description
- 4. Complete Application Section 2: Project Budget
- **5. SUBMIT all sections and supporting attachments in the portal by [OCTOBER 31, 2023](#).**

Regional Water Planning Seed Grant > City of Happy | Trash Free Waters Education

Welcome, joyhinkle+5@gmail.com

Order by: Newest to Oldest

City of Happy | Trash Free Waters Education

**RWP Seed Grant Application** [Submit](#)

When both Project Description and Budget steps are complete, click 'Mark Complete' on each. The page will refresh and the 'Submit' button to the right will become green and clickable. Click 'Submit'.

Application Section 1: Project Description [Complete](#) [Edit](#)

The blue button will update to reflect how you can interact with this step.

Application Section 2: Budget [Complete](#) [Edit](#)

The blue button will update to reflect how you can interact with this step.

POWERED BY wizehive

To inquire about potential projects or to schedule a pre-application meeting, contact Joyce McClain at [joyce.mcclain@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:joyce.mcclain@dnr.ga.gov) or 470-251-2761.





# Frost Protection Permitting

Ania Truszczynski, GA EPD







**GEORGIA**  
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION DIVISION

# Frost Protection Permitting

**June 9, 2023**  
**Upper Flint RWP Council Meeting**  
**Anna (Ania) Truszczynski**



# FLINT RIVER BASIN

- From Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport in Atlanta to the most southwestern corner of Georgia
- Subarea 4 of the ACF basin – south of Dooly County, area of significant hydraulic connection between the Flint River and its tributaries with the Floridan aquifer
- Small portions of Chattahoochee, Ochlockonee, and Suwannee River Basins are included in Subarea 4

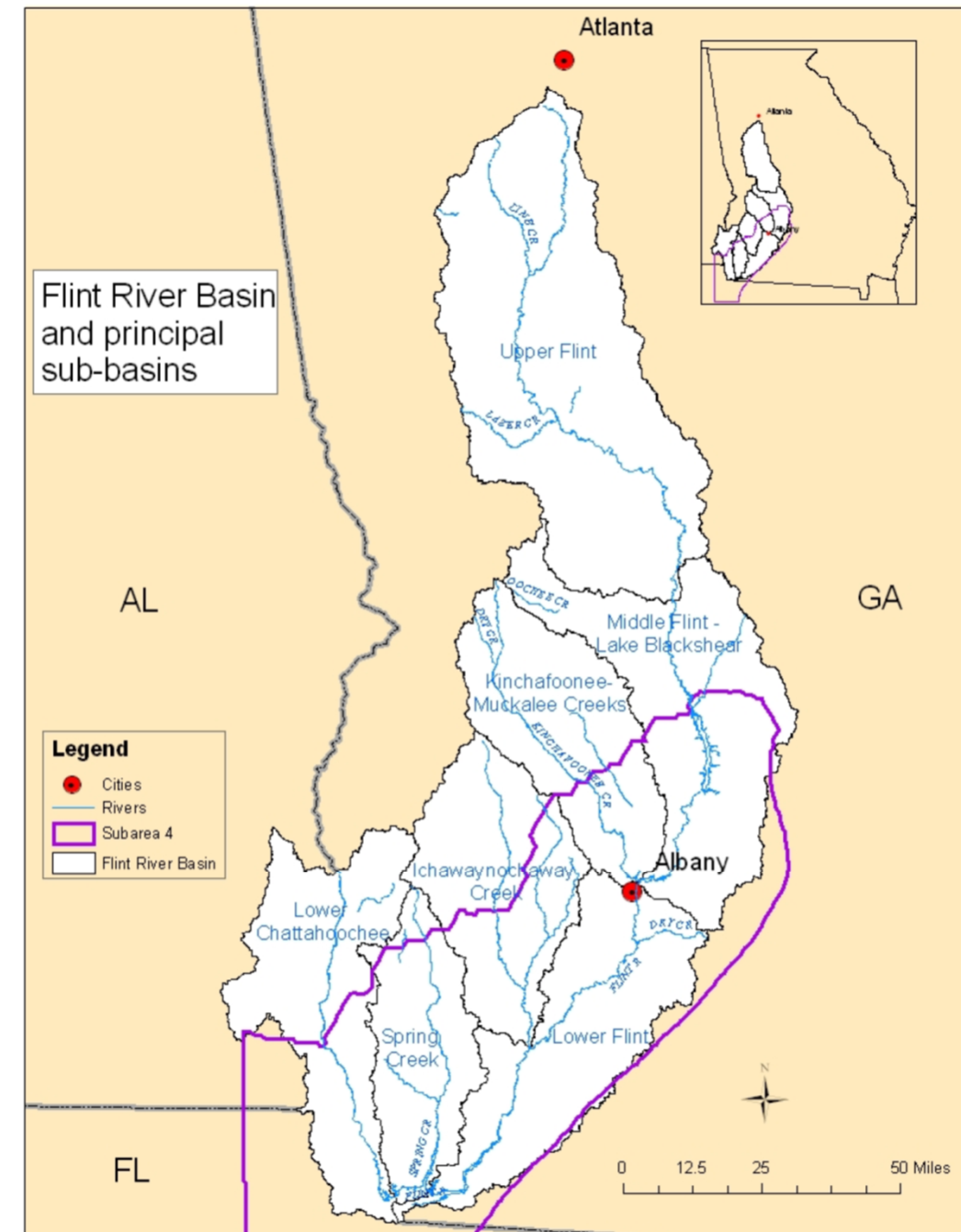


Figure 0.1: The Flint River Basin and sub-basins





# TIMELINE

- Agricultural water withdrawal permitting – 1988
- Water withdrawal permitting moratorium – 1999
- Flint river drought protection act – 2000
- Flint River Basin Regional Water Development and Conservation Plan – 2006
- Original Regional Water Plans for Upper & Lower Flint – 2011
- Water withdrawal permitting moratorium – 2012
- First update of the Regional Water Plans for Upper & Lower Flint – 2017
- Seed Grant: Water Supply Alternatives for Agricultural Surface Water Irrigators in Ichawaynochaway Sub-Basin – 2017
- Agricultural Water Source Conversion for Streamflow Resilience (ASU and EPD ARPA grant) – 2022

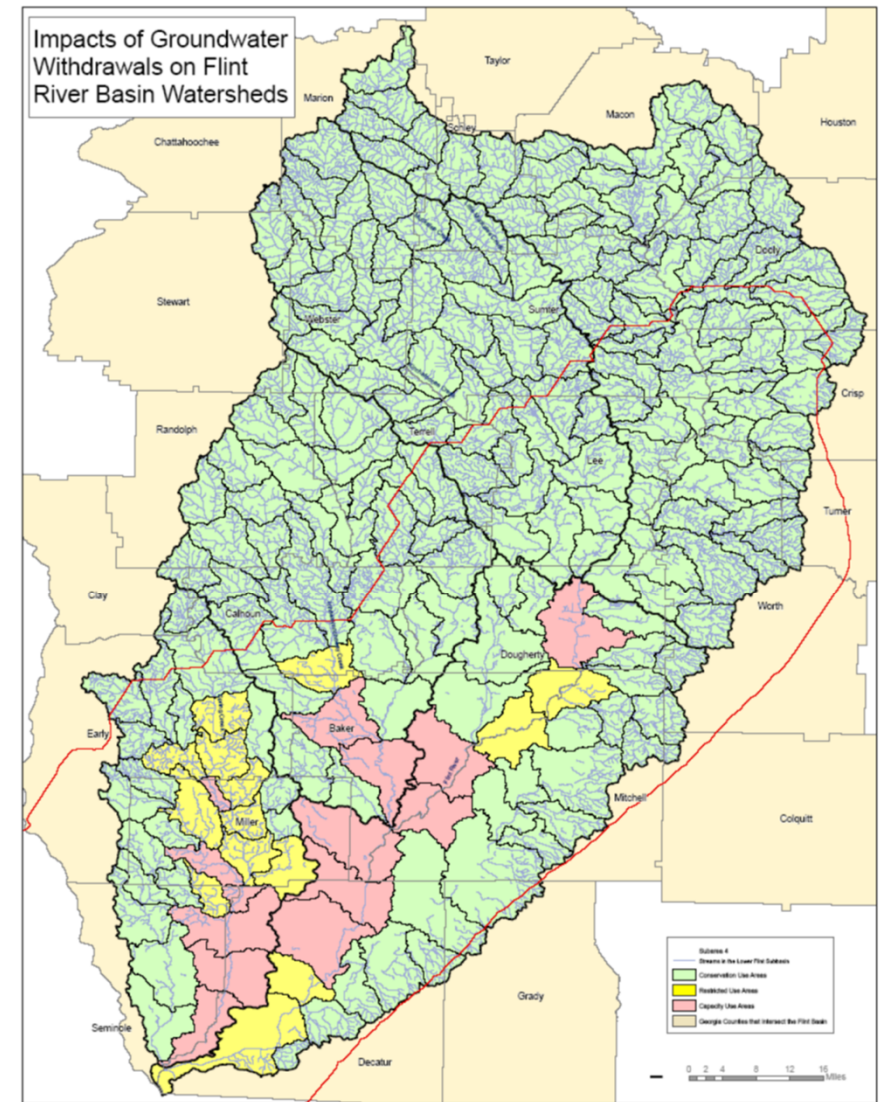


Figure 0.2. Classification of HUC-12 watersheds in the lower Flint River Basin.





# FROST PROTECTION BACKGROUND

- In recent years, various types of citrus, blueberries, and other berry crops have emerged as attractive commodities for some farmers in southwest Georgia.
- These crops cannot be successfully cultivated without frost protection, which can require the application of large amounts of water directly onto plants to protect them during freezing temperatures.
- Water withdrawal permits are required for large amounts of water (100,000 gallons per day or more).
- Frost protection permits are not currently an option for farmers in the lower Flint River Basin (FRB) because of the permitting suspension implemented since July 2012.
- EPD has been evaluating various options for agriculture water withdrawal permitting in the lower FRB.



# FROST PROTECTION BACKGROUND

- Because the use would be limited to the traditional recharge season and limited in quantity, frost protection permits are anticipated to have a negligible effect on flows in the lower Flint River Basin.
  - Frost protection is needed as temperatures reach 35 degrees Fahrenheit.
  - Frost protection permits are anticipated to be used exclusively during the recharge season (October 15 – April 15).
  - Frost protection permits are used only a few days each year.
- As a result, frost protection permits appear to be a reasonable step in re-evaluating the permitting approach for agricultural water withdrawals in the FRB.
- EPD anticipates it will begin accepting applications for frost protection permits from the Floridan Aquifer in the suspension area in September 2023.





## EPD'S PROPOSED PERMITTING FRAMEWORK

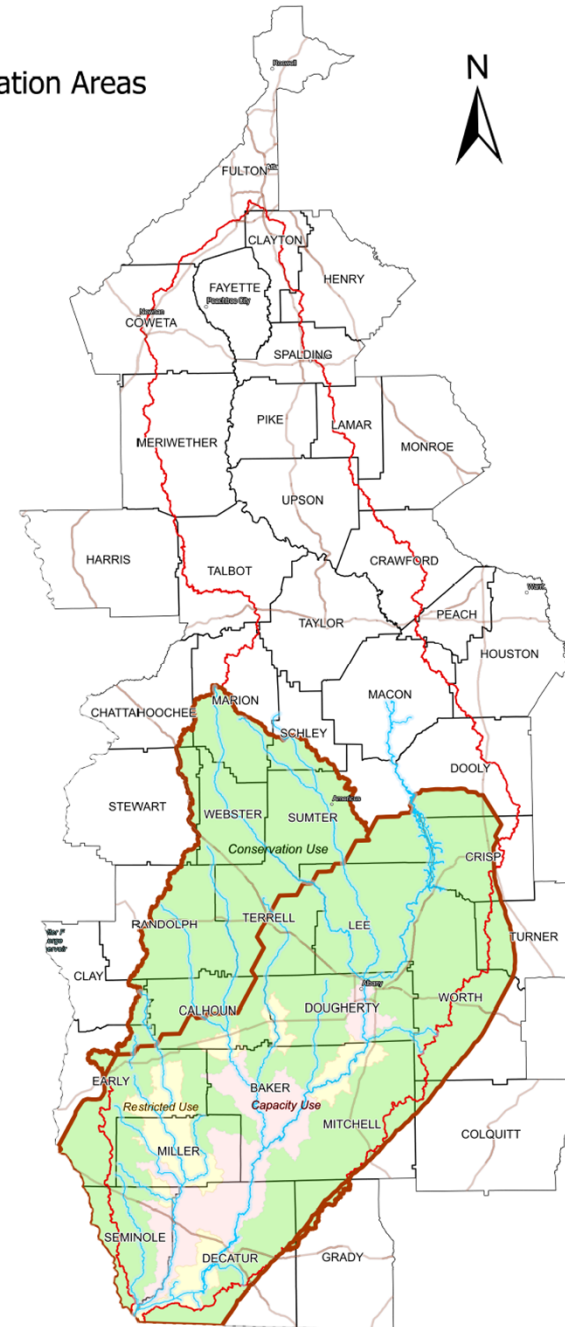
- For Floridan aquifer water withdrawals, frost protection permitting should occur in the green zones, as defined by the 2006 FRB Plan.
- Surface water should not be used for frost protection permits.
- Frost protection permit applicants should be eligible whether or not they hold another existing water withdrawal permit.
- Specific wells should be used for frost protection only, and variable rate motors should not be accepted.
- EPD prescribed telemetry equipment to monitor air temperature and the timing and volume of water withdrawn should be required for all frost protection permits.



# AFFECTED AREA

## Flint River Basin Conservation Areas & Suspension Areas

- Legend**
- Flint
  - Suspension Area
  - Critical Streams Buffer
  - Critical Streams
  - Flint Counties
- FRBPConZones**
- Conservation Use
  - Capacity Use
  - Restricted Use



5/23/2023





# TARGETED OUTREACH

- EPD is soliciting targeted, as well as broad, feedback on the proposed permitting framework.
- EPD shared information about the proposed frost protection permitting framework to:
  - Georgia Farm Bureau
  - Georgia Agribusiness Council
  - Georgia Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association
  - Georgia Association of Groundwater Professionals
  - All Georgia State Senators and Georgia House Representatives whose districts include a portion of the suspension area
  - The Commissioner of the Georgia Department of Agriculture



## UPCOMING MEETINGS:

- Frost protection permitting will be discussed at both the Upper and Lower Flint Regional Water Planning Council meetings.
- EPD will also host a stakeholder meeting on **Wednesday, June 21, from 1 P.M. to 3 P.M.** at the Candy Room at the **Riverfront Resource Center, 125 Pine Avenue, Albany, Georgia, 31701.**
- Written comments will also be accepted through June 30, 2023. Please send an email to [EPDComments@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:EPDComments@dnr.ga.gov) with the subject line “frost protection permits.”
- Written correspondence to the EPD office is also acceptable. Please direct mail to:

Environmental Protection Division

Watershed Protection Branch

Suite 1470A East Tower

2 Martin Luther King, Jr., Dr.

Atlanta, Georgia, 30334





# FEEDBACK ON EPD'S PROPOSED PERMITTING FRAMEWORK

EPD is interested in any reaction, comments, or thoughts on the proposed permitting framework:

- For Floridan aquifer water withdrawals, frost protection permitting should occur in the green zones, as defined by the 2006 FRB Plan.
- Surface water should not be used for frost protection permits.
- Frost protection permit applicants should be eligible whether or not they hold another existing water withdrawal permit.
- Specific wells should be used for frost protection only, and variable rate motors should not be accepted.
- EPD prescribed telemetry equipment to monitor air temperature and the timing and volume of water withdrawn should be required for all frost protection permits.



## SPECIFIC FEEDBACK

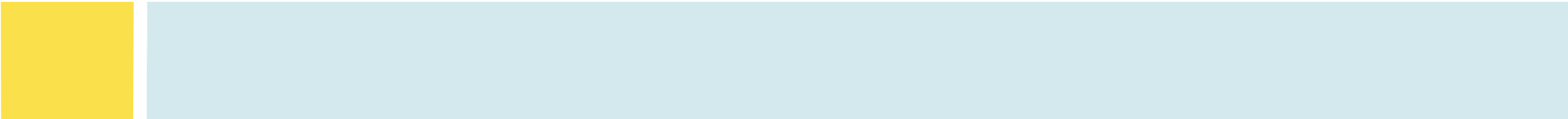
- Are you aware of any constituents with interest in frost protection permits? If so, how many constituents? How many acres?
- Among those with an interest in frost protection permits, do you have any information about the current or planned irrigation practices on those acres?
- Are you aware of interest related to frost protection permits for any crops other than citrus or berries?





## ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Open discussion on any items related to frost protection permitting.





## CONTACT INFORMATION

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Cliff Lewis: [cliff.lewis@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:cliff.lewis@dnr.ga.gov), 229-332-7872

Edward Rooks: [edward.rooks@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:edward.rooks@dnr.ga.gov), 229-472-6210

Marjie Roquemore: [marjie.roquemore@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:marjie.roquemore@dnr.ga.gov), 678-739-6998



# Public Comment





# Regional Plan Review

*Meagan Szydzik, GWPPC*





# Comments Received on Draft UFL Regional Water Plan during Public Comment Period

KR0

- Peter Maholland, Georgia Ecological Services Office, USFWS
- Brandon Baker, Fisheries Biologist, GADNR
- Amy Rosemond, Distinguished Research Professor, Odum School of Ecology, UGA



## Slide 27

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**KRO**

Including this slide at beginning to set up the discussion and to acknowledge the commenters (in our remarks) for reviewing the plan and thanking them for their engagement in the process.

Kristin Rowles, 2023-05-26T17:21:54.224

# Draft UFL Regional Water Plan Comments

## USFWS Comments, May 17, 2023 Letter

Comment	Council Response Notes	Comment Response
By function of this letter, we invite the Regional Water Planning Councils to include our agency into your water planning efforts so that we may assist with development of projects that consider effects to natural habitats, threatened and endangered species, and other fish and wildlife resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Directly invite representatives of USFWS to attend future Council meetings. Invite a presentation from USFWS about wildlife planning considerations at a future Council meeting.</li></ul>	
We recommend Regional Water Plans address the State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP), High Priority Habitats, High Priority Species, and High Priority Conservation Actions within each area thoroughly and uniformly.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The SWAP is described in Section 3.3.2, and the number of high priority species is summarized.</li><li>• Invite GADNR and USFWS to a future Council meeting to increase Council familiarity with High Priority Habitats, High Priority Species, and High Priority Conservation Action to potentially support more specific discussion of these in future updates of the plan.</li></ul>	



# Draft UFL Regional Water Plan Comments

## USFWS Comments, May 17, 2023 Letter

Comment	Council Response Notes	Comment Response
All Plans should contain up-to-date numbers of species of Conservation Concern tracked by the Georgia Natural Heritage Program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Add the list of species to Section 2. Generate the list from the WRD web-based environmental review tool.</li></ul>	
All Plans should contain up-to-date species and habitats protected under the Endangered Species Act.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Add list of species in Section 2. Use the list provided in Appendix 1 to the comments or generate a list from the USFWS IPaC web-based tool.</li></ul>	
All Plans should address Clean Water Act Section 303(d) impaired waters and objectives to bring impaired waters into compliance for the benefit of the community and ecological health in the water regions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Plans include maps and discussion of impaired waters in Section 3. The Management practices in Section 6, to address water quality are, in part, directed at addressing these water quality impairments.</li></ul>	

# Draft UFL Regional Water Plan Comments

## Brandon Baker GADNR Comments – May 15, 2023

Comment	Council Response Notes	Comment Response
<p>Edit Goals #4 and 6 (Section 1)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Goal 4: <u>Protect</u> <del>Sustain</del>-water resources through the three “C’s” – conserving, capturing, and controlling water – <u>for to support</u> the needs of all water users in the region (agriculture, utilities, residential, commercial, industry, forestry, <u>wildlife</u>, <del>and</del> recreation) <u>and beyond</u>.</li><li>Goal 6: Brandon suggests: Ensure that actions taken by this Council support <u>[the]</u> agriculture, <u>recreation</u>, and forestry-based economy of this region.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Does the Council wish to update its goals to reflect Brandon Baker’s suggestions regarding wildlife and recreation?</li><li>Note: In Goal 6 at the right, “the” is an addition for readability; not from Brandon.</li></ul>	

# Draft UFL Regional Water Plan Comments

## Brandon Baker GADNR Comments – May 15, 2023

Comment	Council Response Notes	Comment Response
Support for modeling flows at Carsonville at 100 and 600 cfs. Higher flows (e.g., 600 cfs) are needed for wildlife at different times of the year. (Section 3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• No action needed.</li></ul>	
Support for greater utilization of farm ponds in Management Practice SF-4 as a potential tool to address surface water flows in drought. (Section 6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• No action needed.</li></ul>	





# Draft UFL Regional Water Plan Comments

## Brandon Baker GADNR Comments – May 15, 2023

Comment	Council Response Notes	Comment Response
<p>Edit in Section 3 (p. 3-29): <u>The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) manages</u> important recreational fisheries in the region include <u>eing</u> shoal bass, largemouth bass, <u>sunfish</u>, bluegill, <u>redeer</u>, channel catfish, and flathead catfish. <u>The Department of Natural Resources manages Properties managed throughout the Water Planning Region</u> include State Parks and Historic Sites, Public Fishing Areas, and Wildlife Management Areas <u>throughout the Upper Flint Water Planning Region</u>.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Brandon Baker's comments here add reference to DNR as the manager and update the list of fish in the 1<sup>st</sup> sentence. Changes in the 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence change the structure of the sentence but not the meaning.</li></ul>	

# Draft UFL Regional Water Plan Comments

## Rosemond, May 14, 2023 Letter

Comment	Council Response Notes	Comment Response
A. Concern regarding council representation with preference for appointees without business interests with water, with water planning expertise, having diverse experience with water	Pursuant to Section 14 of the State Water Plan, Council members are appointed by the Governor, Lt. Governor, and Speaker of the House and must reside in the counties of each planning region. The appointing officials may “consider pre-qualified nominees for appointment, as well as such other individuals as they may choose.” GA EPD is open to receiving any nominees for appointment to the Regional Water Planning Councils.	



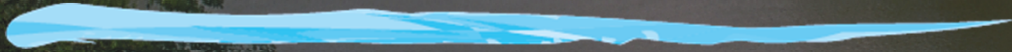
# Draft UFL Regional Water Plan Comments

## Rosemond, May 14, 2023 Letter

Comment	Council Response Notes	Comment Response
<b>B. Concern regarding water resource impairments, and assimilative capacity and water supply issues</b> <b>C. Monitoring, oversight responsibility, funding</b>	The UFL Plan addresses the current water quality conditions in Section 3, including consideration of the Georgia's Integrated 305(b)/303(d) Report. The Council has considered the most current water quality data that has been collected by Georgia EPD and other entities. The Council's Plans continue to stress the need for continuous monitoring, as well as the collection of additional data. Additionally, the Councils also consider surface water quality and quality modeling (resource assessment) results that analyze water quality parameters that correlate with the state's water quality standards. Importantly, these models analyze both current conditions (including model calibration) as well as future conditions based on water demands and returns that are projected 40 years into the future. These models analyze a variety of water quality conditions, including both dry/drought and wet/stormwater-driven conditions, and can continue to be utilized in future planning cycles to analyze extreme weather events (e.g., long-term drought).	



# Regional Water Plan Vote for submission to GAEPD





# Next Steps



# Next Steps

- Final Updated Plan should be submitted to EPD by Friday, June 23
- EPD Director adopts plans by June 30, 2023
- Schedule next Council meetings









# Lunch / Corn Roast

