

Upper Flint Council Meeting

March 21, 2023



**GEORGIA
WATER PLANNING**

waterplanning.georgia.gov

Agenda

Objectives:

- 1) Select high priority management practices
- 2) Review water quantity committee report
- 3) Approve draft plan for public review
- 4) Discuss next meeting and remaining process for plan review and revision

- 9:45 am Registration
- 10:00 am Welcome, Agenda Review – Meagan Szydzik, GWPPC
- 10:10 am Chair’s Report – Chairman Chase
- 10:20 am Planning Timeline and neighboring council coordination – Meagan Szydzik, GWPPC
- 10:30 am EPD Report – Johanna Smith, GAEPD
- 10:40 am Water Quantity Committee Report
- 11:10 am American River’s Seed Grant Update – Ben Emanuel, American Rivers
- 11:30 am ACFS Drought Exercise Report and discussion
- 11:50 am Introduce Management Practice prioritization activity – Courtney Cooper, GWPPC
- 12:00 pm Lunch
- 12:40 pm Discuss Management Practice priorities – Courtney Cooper, GWPPC
- 1:20 pm Discuss outstanding plan questions
- 2:30 pm Public Comment
- 2:50 pm Approval of draft plan for public review
- 3:50 pm Next Steps – Meagan Szydzik, GWPPC
- 4:00 pm Adjourn



Introductions

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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



Planning Timeline

Meagan Szydzik



Summary from last meeting - November 30th

- Discussed water quality assessment results
- Reviewed and discussed committee reports from Water Quality & Quantity Committees
- Discussed outstanding committee issues in break-out sessions
- Discussed plan revisions that needed input from the full Council
- Considered revisions to recommendations from the Inter-Council Coordination Committee
- Learn about seed grant proposals from the region



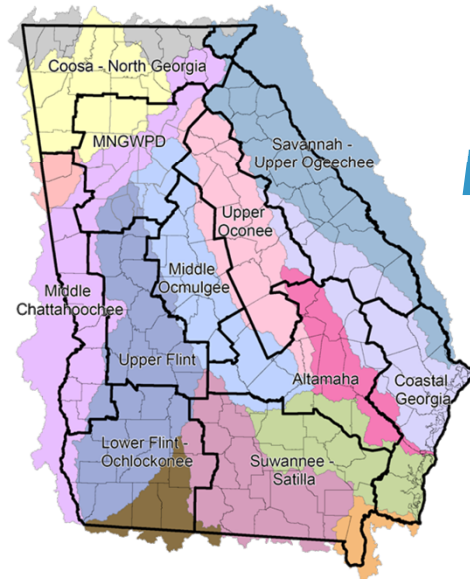
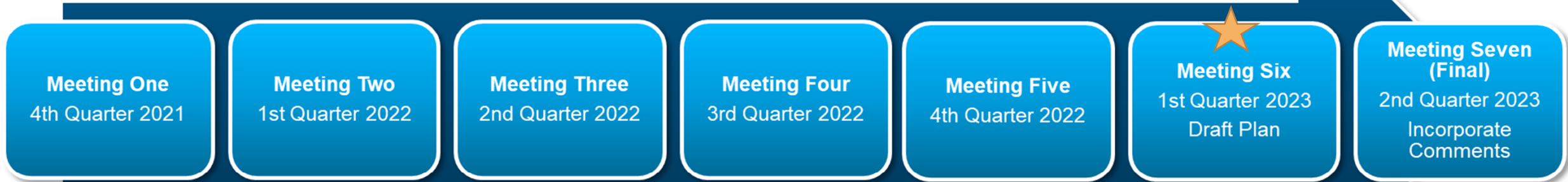
Coordination with Neighboring Councils

- Middle Ocmulgee & Suwannee-Satilla Councils
- Meeting to address key council issues & discussions that might cross council boundaries
- Discussed how we presented the BEAM results and shared our drafts
- The City of Griffin: Potato Creek - facility showing up in the Middle Ocmulgee plan as a challenge (not substantial – around 0.2% of time flow below the 7Q10)
 - Listed this in our UF plan since it is on the Flint and concerns an important utility in the Upper Flint.



Regional Water Plan Update

Regional Water Plan Review and Revision Schedule



EPD targeted date of adoption of revised Regional Water Plan by June 2023



EPD Updates

Johanna Smith



Draft and Final Regional Water Plans

- Council submits Draft Updated Plan to EPD by Wednesday, March 29
- Draft Updated Plan will be put on Public Notice by EPD on March 31
- 45-day public comment period will end on May 15, 2023
- Council reviews/incorporates public comments received during their June meetings
- Final Updated Plan should be submitted to EPD by Friday, June 23
- EPD Director adopts plans by June 30, 2023

EPD Updates

- EPD finalized a Water Quality Trading Guidance on February 7
 - <https://epd.georgia.gov/water-quality-trading>
- Public drinking water systems: lead service line inventories (due Oct. 2024)
 - Rulemaking to address electronic submissions
 - EPD & GEFA implementing an online system to accept & track these submissions
 - <https://epd.georgia.gov/watershed-protection-branch/drinking-water>
- Construction stormwater general permits will be reissued this summer
 - Stakeholder meetings have been held
 - Draft permits will go out on public notice
 - <https://epd.georgia.gov/watershed-protection-branch/stormwater>

FY2023 Section 319(h) Grant Funding

- Currently accepting applications for projects that:
 - Implement watershed management plans
 - Address impaired waters
 - Address NPS pollution
 - Install Best Management Practices (BMPs)
 - Engage in partnerships
 - Collect water quality data
 - Result in measurable water quality improvement
- Submit online applications via the 319(h) Grant Application Portal (GAP) by **APRIL 30, 2023**



<https://epd.georgia.gov/outreach/grants/georgia-319h-nonpoint-source-grant>

FY2023 Section 319(h) Grant Funding

- Cost-Share: 60% Federal/40% Non-Federal Match
- Up to \$400,000 per project
- Estimated FY2023 Total Funding Available: \$2.1 Million
- Preferred Project Period: 3 years
- Who's eligible for this funding?
 - State Agencies
 - City or County Governments with Qualified Local Government status
 - Regional Commissions
 - Soil and Water Conservation Districts
 - Resource Conservation and Development Councils
 - Local and regional school systems
 - State colleges and universities



Contact: Mary Gazaway,
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or (470) 524-0556

Water Quantity Committee Report

Presented by Adam Graft



Water Quality Committee: January Meeting

January 30th

- Reviewed updates made in Section 6 of the Plan relating to Management Practices and Recommendations to the State.

Members Present

- Adam Graft, Gordon Rogers, Teel Warbington, Jack Holbrook, Raines Jordan, and Brandon Lewis



Key Changes to Water Quantity

Section 6 Management Practices

- *Added municipal and industrial LAS in the statement under RM1 (Page 6-8)*
 - *RM1: Restrict the development of **new municipal and industrial** land application systems (LAS) for wastewater treatment*
 - *The Council recommends that new **municipal** and **industrial** LAS be used only as an option of last resort*



Key Changes to Water Quantity

Section 6 Recommendations to the State

- *Added additional language to IN-12 about using information gathered from feasibility studies to support potential interventions to improve flows in the Upper Flint River Basin*
 - *Emphasized the work being done by the Spalding County Feasibility Study*
 - *Also mentions the new seed grant project led by UGA*
- *Check highlighted language on next slide*



IN-12: Conduct a feasibility assessment of interventions that would improve flows in the Upper Flint River Basin. Evaluate each option with respect to costs, expected flow benefits, implementation barriers, and other factors that would affect the likelihood of success. The following potential interventions should be included in the feasibility assessment:

- Convert land application systems (municipal & industrial) in the upper basin to direct discharge
- Establish greater storage capacity in the upper basin
- Reverse inter-basin transfers
- Convert existing septic systems to sewer
- Guide future development to sewer instead of septic
- Changes in reservoir management by upper basin utilities

The Council notes that these are not recommended interventions at this time but rather a set of potential options. Additional information on these options may support policy and planning that can effectively address flow restoration in the upper part of the Flint River Basin. The Council intends to track such information about these options as it becomes available and incorporate it into their future planning efforts.

Information about the feasibility of these options is currently being developed in new studies in the region. The Council wishes to highlight the Spalding County Sewer Feasibility Study by Spalding County Water & Sewage Facilities Authority as an example of a project that will help with the implementation of this recommendation. The study evaluates the feasibility of reducing reliance on septic systems in the county through connection to the City of Griffin sewer system. The study will be on-going through August 2023. The Council addresses related concerns in Management Practice RM-2 for the Council's recommendation addressing prioritization of returning treated wastewater to the basin of origin.

Additionally, a new seed grant project, funded in early 2023 and led by the University of Georgia, will develop information on potential benefits of these types of interventions for upper basin flows. The Council supported the proposal for this seed grant and plans to provide input to the project as it is implemented.



Key Changes to Water Quantity

Section 6 Management Practice

- *Added new Management Practice RM2 based on prior Council meeting, to encourage returning water back to the basin of origin (Page 6-9).*

RM2: Encourage Upper Flint River Basin water utilities to prioritize the return of water back to their basin of origin.

- Prioritize the return of treated wastewater to the basin of origin in this region over alternative methods of treatment or inter-basin transfers (IBT). The Council also encourages full implementation of the GAEPD's rules and regulations surrounding IBT (GA Comp. R. & Regs. R. 391-3-6-.07).
- The Council also supports the evaluation of the feasibility of reversing existing IBT in the Flint River Basin and returning water to the region's surface waters. An example of such work is the Spalding County Sewer Feasibility Study by the Spalding County Water & Sewer Facilities Authority. The project aims to evaluate the feasibility of reducing reliance on septic systems for wastewater treatment through sewer connections for existing and future development via connection to the City of Griffin sewer system. The study will be on-going through August 2023.
- Recommendations to the State WP-4 and IN-12 address actions related to this management practice.



American Rivers' Seed Grant Update

Ben Emanuel, American Rivers



ACFS Drought Exercise Report

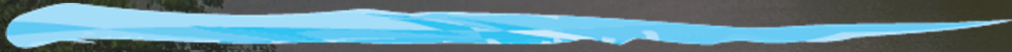


Management Practice Prioritization

Courtney Cooper



Lunch

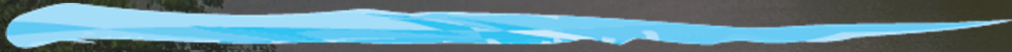


Management Practice Prioritization

Courtney Cooper



Discussion of Outstanding Planning Questions



Outstanding Items

- Updated BEAM Model results
 - Changes shown in next slide for the Wastewater Assimilation Challenges Tables in Section 3 & 5
- Wastewater Discharge Challenges
 - Text explaining a challenge is not considered substantial unless the percentage of time that the instream flow fell below the 7Q10 value is greater than 10% (Page 3-11 and 5-3)
- Table 6.1 Management Practices format changes
 - Includes details addressing responsible parties and implementation timeframes (short-term & long-term actions)



Section 3: Current Results

Table 3-4: Wastewater Assimilation Challenges Indicated in Assessment Results

| Facility | % Time Flow Below 7Q10* | | Required Flow (7Q10) <i>cfs</i> |
|---|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| | Baseline Scenario | Baseline Drought Scenario | |
| Concord: South WPCP | 2.5% | 2.7% | 3.76 |
| City of Warm Springs WPCP | 1.1% | 0.7% | 0.64 |
| Thomaston: Bell Creek WPCP | 2.0% | 2.3% | 13.47 |
| Reynolds WPCP | 1.1% | 1.2% | 33.39 |
| Taylor City: Plant Laurel WPCP | 0.3% | 0.3% | 4.86 |
| City of Oglethorpe | 0.01% | 0.01% | 328.1 |
| International Paper Company | 0.01% | 0.01% | 335.14 |
| Byromville WPCP | 8.4% | 16.0% | 2.85 |
| Cordele: Gum Creek WPCP | 2.6 1.7% | 4.4 2.6% | 2.56 |
| Ellaville WPCP-1 (GA0050105) | 0.05 0.02% | 0.4 0.06% | 0.03 |
| Ellaville WPCP-2 (GA0047767) | 0.7 1.9% | 3.2 4.5% | 10.54 |
| Ellaville WPCP-3 (GA0020931) | 0.0% | 0.01% | 0.11 |
| Additional Facility in Flint River Basin in the Middle Ocmulgee Region | | | |
| City of Griffin: Potato Creek | 0.19% | 0.19% | 0.57 |
| *% Time is calculated as a proportion of the full model period (1939-2018). WPCP: Water Pollution Control Plant [Shortage volumes removed from this table per input from GAEPD.] | | | |

Section 5: Future Results

Table 5-2: Wastewater Assimilation Challenges Indicated in Assessment Results

| Facility | % Time Flow Below 7Q10* | | Required Flow (7Q10) <i>cfs</i> |
|---|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| | Forecast (ag constant) Scenario | Forecast (ag growth) Scenario | |
| Concord: South WPCP | 2.5% | 2.3% | 3.76 |
| City of Warm Springs WPCP | 1.6% | 1.6% | 0.64 |
| Thomaston: Bell Creek WPCP | 1.6% | 1.5% | 13.47 |
| Reynolds WPCP | 1.1% | 1.2% | 33.39 |
| Taylor City: Plant Laurel WPCP | 0.3% | 0.3% | 4.86 |
| City of Oglethorpe | 0% | 0% | 328.1 |
| International Paper Company | 0% | 0% | 335.14 |
| Byromville WPCP | 8.4% | 18.2% | 2.85 |
| Cordele: Gum Creek WPCP | 2.6 1.7% | 4.8 2.8% | 2.56 |
| Ellaville WPCP-1 (GA0050105) | 0.05 0.02% | 0.4 0.05% | 0.03 |
| Ellaville WPCP-2 (GA0047767) | 0.7 1.9% | 4.1 2.6% | 10.54 |
| Ellaville WPCP-3 (GA0020931) | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.11 |
| Additional Facility in Flint River Basin in the Middle Ocmulgee Region | | | |
| City of Griffin: Potato Creek | 0.19% | 0.19% | 0.57 |
| *% Time is calculated as a proportion of the full model period (1939-2018). WPCP: Water Pollution Control Plant [Shortage volumes removed from this table per input from GAPED.] | | | |

Inter-Council Coordination

Coordinated Recommendations with Neighboring Councils

- JT-3: Recommend proactive engagement among Georgia, Alabama, and Florida to collaborate on opportunities to improve planning for shared water resources in the ACF Basin.
 - Pending review by LFO in March
 - Approved by MC & UF



Inter-Council Coordination

Coordinated Recommendations with Neighboring Councils

➤ *Previously deleted Water Policy Recommendation addressing interstate coordination:*

The Council urges the State to seek a timely resolution of current interstate water issues that directly affect the Apalachicola-Chattahoochee-Flint Basin. The Council recommends the development of a tristate framework designed to address interstate water issues in the future and the inclusion of the regional water planning councils within this framework. The Council requests that it be supported in making any updates to this Regional Water Plan as needed to address changes in ACF Basin management as a result of the settlement, resolution, or decision in on-going inter-state litigation or similar events that have the potential to substantially change how the Basin is managed.



Inter-Council Coordination Committee Report

JT-3: Original Text from 2017 Plan

- Consider the creation of a new coordinated, interstate planning organization for the ACF System. Membership in this organization to represent Georgia shall include, but not be limited to, members of the regional water planning councils with water planning regions that include parts of the ACF. Consider the recommendation of the ACF Stakeholders in its Sustainable Water Management Plan regarding an ACF transboundary water management institution as this organization is developed.



Inter-Council Coordination Committee Report

JT-3: Alternative 1

- Consider the creation of a new coordinated, interstate planning organization for the ACF System. Membership in this organization to represent Georgia shall include, but not be limited to, members of the regional water planning councils with water planning regions that include parts of the ACF.

JT-3: Alternative 2 (revised during discussion)

- The Councils recommend the proactive development of and/or engagement with a (an existing) tristate framework designed to address interstate water issues in the future and the inclusion of the regional water planning councils within this framework. Consider providing a framework to update the previous ACF Compact.



Inter-Council Coordination Committee Report

Recommendation to Council

- Ultimately, it was determined that all three councils did not view JT-3 as a priority recommendation to the State; therefore, the Joint Recommendation JT-3 will not be included in the updated plans.
- Each council can discuss the inclusion of this recommendation in separate recommendation to the state.
- Recommended Text:
 - The Council recommends the proactive development of and/or engagement with a (or an existing) tristate framework designed to address interstate water issues in the future and the inclusion of the regional water planning councils within this framework. Consider providing a framework to update the previous ACF Compact.



Inter-Council Coordination Committee Report

Recommended Text:

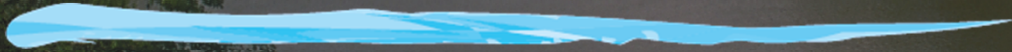
The Councils recommend proactive engagement among Georgia, Alabama, and Florida to collaborate on opportunities to improve planning for shared water resources in the ACF Basin.



Public Comment



Regional Water Plan Draft Update Approval





Next Steps in Plan Review and Revision

Meagan Szydzik



Next Steps

- Next Meeting: June 9th, 2023
 - Final Meeting for this Planning cycle (field trip?)
 - Incorporate comments from Council input and public review
 - Council approval of the Regional Water Plan for submission to EPD Director

