

Memorandum

To: Altamaha Regional Water Planning Council

From: Danielle Honour, CDM Smith

Date: July 27, 2016

Subject: Altamaha Regional Water Planning Council Meeting 2 – Regional Water Plan Review and Revision Process

This memorandum provides the meeting summary of the Altamaha Regional Water Planning (RWP) Council Meeting 2, held on June 23, 2016 at the Oconee Fall Line Technical College (Dubose Porter Center) in Dublin, GA. A joint Council Meeting was held for the six eastern RWP councils (Altamaha, Coastal Georgia, Middle Ocmulgee, Suwannee-Satilla, Savannah- Upper Ogeechee and Upper Oconee) from 10 AM to 3 PM. The Altamaha RWP Council held a brief individual council meeting subsequent to the joint meeting. This memorandum provides a summary of the items discussed at the individual Altamaha RWP Council meeting that was held from approximately 3:10 PM to 4:00 PM and followed the agenda:

1) Debrief with Council Members regarding information discussed during the Joint Meeting

CDM Smith, the Planning Contractor (PC) opened up the meeting and asked if the Council Members had any additional questions or comments from the morning and afternoon portions of the joint session.

Question/Comment: Chairman Jeffords asked when the next meeting would be and what it would cover.

Answer: Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) and the PC responded that September, 2016 is being targeted for the next meeting and it will most likely be another joint meeting. Potential topics will most likely cover resource assessments for forecasted (future) conditions and discussion of water resource gaps.

Question/Comment: Several Council Members (CMs) stated it was difficult to see the graphics during the technical presentations and handouts prior to the meeting would be preferable. There was also a request to make the presentations available digitally so CMs can follow along on their tablets during the presentations.

Question/Comment: A CM requested that a discussion of aquifer storage and recovery (ASR) be provided at the next meeting. The Council is interested in learning more about this topic and its feasibility in their region. It was suggested that the Council review information on ASR available through the South Florida Water Management District (sfwmd.gov) website. CMs have learned

from EPD that there is some funding available to explore the feasibility of ASR in the Floridan Aquifer. The CMs discussed that there are no reservoirs in their region and other alternatives will need to be considered which may include ASR. Vice-Chairman Stavriotis expressed concern about the quality of the water that would be injected into the aquifer and that would need to be evaluated as part of a feasibility analysis.

Question/Comment: CMs reiterated from the morning session that the water use forecast related to swine production needs to be re-visited as the projection for swine appears to be too high.

Answer: Mark Masters from Georgia Water Planning & Policy Center (GWPPC) will be looking into this.

2) Follow-up discussion from June 7, 2016 “Office Hours” Teleconference

The PC asked if the CMs had any follow up questions from the Office Hours teleconference session held on June 7, 2016 and if CMs found the session helpful.

Question/Comment: Chairman Jeffords stated that he found the session useful and it was helpful to touch base on issues in between scheduled council meetings. There were no other follow up questions concerning the material presented at office hours.

3) Council Meeting Business

The CMs then conducted Council Meeting business, which included:

- Approving meeting summary from March 3, 2016 Council Meeting.
- 319 (h) grant project and partner selection discussion.
- New business.

Meeting Summary

The PC asked if there were any questions or comments on the CM1 meeting summary that was distributed at the end of March. The Council did not have any comments and voted to approve the meeting summary.

319 (h) Georgia's Nonpoint Source Implementation Grant

The PC asked if the Council had a chance to review the 2 priority areas for potential 319 funding as well as the potential partners for developing a watershed management plan for priority area(s). Chairman Jeffords stated that the Council would like to pursue the 319 funding opportunity for the priority water area in Montgomery and Wheeler Counties (Peterson Creek, Limestone Creek and Lotts Creek). The Council identified Pine Country RC&D as a partner but would also like to keep the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission involved in the process. Chairman Jeffords asked EPD to provide the Council a summary of the details of the 319(h) grant and what the deliverables will include.

New Business

The PC asked if there was any new or other business the Council would like to discuss.

Question/Comment: Chairman Jeffords asked what is next in the process?

Answer: The PC stated that there will be another office hours session scheduled to follow up on the discussion topics from the Joint Council Meeting.

Question/Comment: Chairman Jeffords asked if EPD has sufficient funding to continue to support data collection in the region.

Answer: EPD responded that the level of funding has not changed but has been adequate to support further data collection. The Chairman encouraged Council Members to reach out to their local government representatives and legislators to ask for continued support.

Question/Comment: CMs stated that they would have preferred an explanation of why saltwater intrusion was not included in the groundwater model results that were presented earlier in the day during the Joint Council Meeting. This is another potential topic that the Council would like to hear more about at future meetings.

Question/Comment: A CM offered an observation that if there are already gaps in some areas, why would additional withdrawals be modeled, which will only further stress the resource and increase the gaps?

Question/Comment: CMs also made a request for additional information to be provided related to the water quality resource assessment. Council would like to learn more about the baseline for water quality in their region, as this will help them make decisions about management practices in order to be proactive about addressing nonpoint source pollution. It would also be helpful for them to understand if the impairments are due to natural occurrences (i.e., low dissolved oxygen) or manmade influences.

Answer: EPD stated that an office hours session on water quality with Dr. Booth could be scheduled in the near future.

Question/Comment: A CM stated that there has been recent activity in the Savannah-Upper Ogeechee (SUO) region related to conservation easements along the river. Is it possible to explore this in our region? Braye Boardman gave a presentation to the SUO Council and could the Altamaha Council get some more information about the process in their own region? A CM stated that the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) is another agency that may also be another potential resource to provide assistance in this area.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 3:55 PM.

5) Meeting Attendance

Altamaha Regional Water Planning Council members in attendance:

- James Mark Burns, Gerald DeWitt, Ed Jeffords, Buddy Pittman, John Roller, and Paul Stavriotis

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Georgia EPD Representatives in attendance:

- Jennifer Welte

Regional Water Council contractors in attendance:

- Danielle Honour (CDM Smith)

Public attendees:

- Brian Mooney (representing Rayonier)
- James Pope (representing Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission)
- Rahn Milligan (representing Pine Country RC&D)