

Memorandum

To: Coastal Georgia Regional Water Planning Council

From: Rick Brown, CDM Smith

Date: June 24, 2016

Subject: Coastal Georgia Regional Water Planning Council Meeting 2 – Regional Water Plan Review and Revision Process Meeting Summary

This memorandum provides the meeting summary of the Coastal Georgia Regional Water Planning 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 regional water planning councils (Altamaha, Coastal Georgia, Middle Ocmulgee, Suwanee-Satilla, Savannah Upper Ogeechee and Upper Oconee) from 10 AM to 3 PM. The Coastal Georgia Council held a brief individual council meeting subsequent to the joint meeting. This memorandum provides a summary of the items discussed at the individual Coastal Georgia Council meeting that was held from approximately 3:15 PM to 4:00 PM.

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 have any additional questions or comments from the morning and afternoon portions of the joint session.

Question/Comment: Overall the early sessions were valuable.

Question/Comment: I agree that the early sessions were valuable but I felt that we needed more time in the afternoon session to spend time discussing shared resources. The information on the resource assessments went into a little too detail regarding methodology and not enough on results. Also some of the graphics were very difficult to see and interpret. It is also important to provide a visual frame of reference to allow for better interpretation of the information.

Question/Comment: Our region has a very unique and difficult situation given the challenge of salt water intrusion in the Hilton Head area and the recent moratorium governing groundwater withdrawals. Additionally, the groundwater permit reduction process that Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) recently completed will result in a reduction in the overall availability of groundwater in the four counties subject to the reductions and moratorium. This leaves the region in a very difficult situation. We need more clarity from EPD regarding what this Council can do to advance solutions and provide for more regulatory and economic certainty for the region.

Question/Comment: We would like the PC to work with EPD to provide more direction to the Council regarding our role in advancing solutions for any gaps in groundwater availability.

2) Follow-up discussion from June 15, 2016 “Office Hours” Teleconference

The PC asked if the Council Members had any follow up questions from the Office Hours teleconference session held on June 15, 2016 and they found the session helpful.

Question/Comment: Yes, the Office Hours format was useful. It is unfortunate that more Council Member did not participate.

3) Council Meeting Business

The PC then conducted Council Meeting business which included:

- Approving the meeting summary from March 10, 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 suggested that, since we do not have a full quorum, we send the summary one more time asking for comments and if none are received we will adopt the summary by consensus.

319 (h) Georgia's Nonpoint Source Implementation Grant

The PC asked Chairman Thompson to update Council on his effort to identify and potential partner that could apply for the 319 funding. Chairman Thompson indicated that in his opinion it is important to identify local resources and expertise in the region to take advantage of this and other future funding opportunities. Several Council members mentioned that they agree with this perspective. Chairman Thompson went on to explain that he has reached out to Georgia Southern as a potential partner and that they have drafted a letter of interest and have reached out to EPD to identify some priority watersheds that can be reviewed to select a project for funding.

Question/Comment: A Council Member mentioned that he liked the approach and also noted that Savannah State may also be a good local resource.

Question/Comment: A member of the Department of Community Affairs mentioned that there is ongoing non-point source pollution planning in the region with the Coastal Regional Commission and there is a good list of Best Management Practices that can be made available to Council.

Question/Comment: A Council Member asked if the Chairman could check back with Georgia Southern and EPD to see if there is a way that we could expand the reach of the project to have more of a regional benefit.

It was agreed that Chairman Thompson, EPD and the PC would work together to get a final recommendation for full Council consideration.

4) New Business

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

Question/Comment: A Council Member mentioned that he noticed, with some concern, that some Councils are having a difficulty with attendance and that they are not able to achieve a quorum.

Answer: The PC stated that for Councils where this has been a challenge they have proposed amendments to their operating procedures to redefine a quorum and facilitate decision making.

Question/Comment: A Council Member stated that the only way to address some of the shared resource gaps we heard about today is to get more specific details and reach out to our neighboring Councils, especially Altamaha and Savannah Upper Ogeechee. There was general agreement that the PC and EPD should set a plan in motion to initiate more inter-council dialogue to advance development of management practices for the identified gaps.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 4:00 PM.

5) Meeting Attendance

Coastal Georgia Regional Water Council members in attendance:

- Benjy Thompson, Michelle Liotta, James Thomas, John Godbee, Pete Peterson, James Vaughn, Phil Odom, Jimmy Burnsed, Reggie Loper,

Georgia EPD Representatives in attendance:

- Jeff Larsen

Regional Water Council contractors in attendance:

- Rick Brown and Lee Wiseman (CDM Smith)

Public attendees:

- Deatre Denion (representing Georgia Department of Community Affairs)