



To: Coosa-North Georgia (CNG) Water Planning Council  
From: Christine Voudy, GA EPD  
Brian Skeens, Jacobs  
Craig Hensley, Jacobs  
Subject: **Meeting Summary: Coosa-North Georgia Water Planning Council Meeting**  
Date: **November 3, 2021**

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### **Welcome and Introductions/Approve Agenda**

Brooke welcomed the council and introduced new members.

The Council Vision and Goals were shown and will be discussed later in the meeting.

The tentative schedule of 2022 Council Meetings (Locations TBD) was shown as follows:

- February 23, 2022
- May 18, 2022
- September 21, 2022
- Q4 2022 (Date TBD)

### **Agricultural Water Use Forecasts**

Council members viewed a pre-recorded presentation by Mark Masters. Mark reviewed the agricultural forecasting updates for the current 2020/2021 planning cycle.

- Question – There has been a large growth in chicken houses, particularly Gordon and Murray. How has this growth been addressed in the forecast?
  - Animal agriculture projections reflect the most current data, which is from 2019. Water use estimates based on type of animal. The influx of animal agriculture growth in 2020 and 2021 is not reflected in the data set that was used. Mark intends to follow up to see what effect those increased numbers of birds may have.
- Question - Are there any counties seeing a decrease in chicken houses?
  - Alex Sullivan: Seeing some decreases in Habersham county and others. Some areas remaining about the same. Some houses may be idle at the moment due to labor issues at the chicken plants.

- Question – Can Mark reach out to Greg Bowman to get a sense for what is happening in Gordon and Murray county regarding animal agriculture growth?
  - Yes, Mark will follow up.
- Mark mentioned that a public dataset will be posted online in the near future.
- Does the 2060 projection take into account urban sprawl reducing agriculture?
  - No, not directly. Some of that is embedded in USDA projections that are, in turn, rolled into the Georgia projections. Our analysis does not get down to the level of detail for each specific county.

### **Seed Grant Updates**

Brooke Anderson provided an update on current seed grant funded projects and upcoming seed grant applications.

- There is one active project, the scope of which includes sampling of 303(d) listed streams in the region.
  - The primary project goal is to reassess water quality and hopefully delist some streams.
  - Erin Lincoln (Tetra Tech) provided a progress update on the 303(d) seed grant project.
  - Details of the update included how to prioritize streams for potential delisting, stream evaluation, developing a prioritization tool, and a summary of the water quality sampling program.
- Question – Is there a way to determine the source of fecal coliform contamination in a stream?
  - It is possible, but the technology is very expensive. Typically, a targeted approach is taken that depends on budget limits. This technology may be used to locate fecal coliform sources on Little Amicalola Creek.
- A seed grant application was submitted Friday, October 29, to study water quality changes relative to varying levels of vertical storage in Lake Lanier.
  - One conjecture that the study hopes to test is whether an increase in storage may lead to increased assimilative capacity.
  - There are multiple wastewater plants, existing and planned, that either directly or indirectly discharge into Lake Lanier. This study will assess the effect of additional discharge into the lake and will guide future decision making.
  - The council expects to receive approval or rejection of the seed grant proposal by January or February 2022.

### **Georgia EPD Updates**

Christine Voudy reviewed the timeline for the planning cycle, including the resource assessments (groundwater availability, surface water availability and surface water quality), industrial, and energy forecasts.

### **Water and Wastewater Forecast Updates (Municipal, Industrial, Energy)**

Brian Skeens reviewed municipal demand forecasts for the current planning cycle.

### **Metro Water District Update**

Danny Johnson provided a brief history of the Metro District (MNGWPD) and its current activities.

- The MNGWPD is currently updating their plan and forecasting.
- Stormwater management forecasts will be a new addition to MNGWPD Plan.
- Question - Is the Georgia Department of Public Health (GA DPH) involved in the premise plumbing initiatives?
  - Premise plumbing sizing is currently based on outdated standards. MNGWPD intends to revise standards to reduce water age and the risk of legionella. So far, MNGWPD has not worked with GA DPH. This initiative is currently on hold, and it likely will not move forward for the foreseeable future.

### **Forest and Water Connection: Maximizing Privately Owned Forests as a Solution to Safe and Abundant Water Supply**

Robert Farris gave a presentation on the effects of forest land on public water supply.

- Urban sprawl and development are responsible for the majority of forest loss in the United States
- Healthy forest land is critical to water quality.
- The Forest and Water Initiative seeks to improve water quality through a voluntary landowner market driven system.
  - The initiative would include direct payments to landowners to maintain natural infrastructure on their land.
  - The initiative is an alternative solution to government purchase of land, which becomes too expensive.
- Question - Are you looking at ways to incentivize conservation development in the housing market?
  - Yes, those are one of the large scale solutions being investigated. The economic values of this approach are being investigated through a study by NC State University.

- Question -There are conservation property tax breaks for 10 acres or more. Should that number be smaller?
  - Conservation value varies based on the property type and location.
- Who is the projected spender providing the revenue for landowners who keep their private land undeveloped?
  - Water utilities in some basins and also end users of fresh drinking water.

#### **Discuss Council Vision, Goals and MOA**

Brooke led a group discussion to revise the council's vision statement and goals. Several council members provided suggestions and these changes will be incorporated into a newly revised vision statement and set of council goals. A redlined version will be sent to council members prior to the next meeting for approval. The MOA was distributed for review and discussion at the next council meeting.

#### **Comments from Non-Council Members, Visitors, or the General Public**

No public comments.

#### **Next Steps and Wrap Up**

Brooke suggested a tentative date of February 23, 2022 for the next council meeting.

Brooke adjourned the meeting.

## Coosa – North Georgia Water Planning Council, November 3, 2021

### Council Members Present

1. Brooke Anderson, Chairman
2. Donald Anderson
3. Jerry Barnes
4. Rebecca Bolden
5. Greg Bowman
6. Eddie Cantrell
7. Larry Chapman
8. Keith Coffey
9. Kyle Ellis
10. Keith Ethridge
11. Robert Goff
12. Terry Goodger
13. Joel Hanner
14. Haynes Johnson
15. Kevin Jones
16. Gary McVey
17. Alex Sullivan
18. Scott Tidwell
19. Allison Watters
20. Brandon Whitley

### Partnering & Other State Agencies

1. Gretchen Lugthart, Northwest Georgia Regional Commission
2. Ritchie Mullen, Georgia Forestry Commission
3. Danny Johnson, Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District
4. Stephen Bontekoe, Limestone Valley RC&D Council
5. Joe Rothwell, Georgia Mountains Regional Commission

### Visitors

1. Erik Peterson, Oglethorpe Power
2. Kathy Webb, CTI Engineers
3. George Kelley, Freese & Nichols, Inc.
4. Joel Hanner, Georgia Power Company
5. Sean Phipps, Lumpkin County Water and Sewer Authority
6. Erin Lincoln, Tetra Tech
7. Robert Farris, Georgia Forestry Foundation

### GA Environmental Protection Division

1. Christine Voudy, EPD Council Lead

### Jacobs Engineering (Planning Contractors)

1. Brian Skeens
2. Craig Hensley

# Coosa North Georgia

## Vision

Enhance the ~~potential and~~ quality of life for all communities through sustainable use of water resources while supporting natural systems in the region and state with partnerships among a broad spectrum of stakeholders.

## Goals

1. Plan for appropriate levels of water storage, water sources, and long-term supply to meet anticipated need for local communities.
2. Minimize adverse ~~effects impacts~~ to local communities and adjacent regions, and, when ~~possible practicable~~, enhance natural systems.
3. Ensure that management practices support economic development and optimize existing water and wastewater infrastructure.
4. Promote ~~alternative~~ technologies that conserve, return, and recycle water; protect water quality; and ensure adequate capacity for water storage within the Coosa-North Georgia region.
5. Promote properly managed wastewater discharges.
6. Educate stakeholders in the region on the importance of water resources, including water conservation, efficiency, ~~and~~ pollution prevention, and source water protection.
7. Identify practices that reduce nonpoint source pollution and while controlling stormwater to protect and enhance water quality and ecosystems ~~in lakes and streams~~, particularly those in Priority Watersheds and listed streams.