Middle Ocmulgee Regional Water Planning Council Meeting

May 14, 2026

Georgia's State Water Plan

waterplanning.georgia.gov

Topics for Today's Meeting

1. Council Business and Updates
2. Implementation Assessment
3. State Water Plan Update, Drought Level 1, Seed Grants
4. Data Centers
5. GFA 2026 Advocacy Issues
6. Council Priorities Discussion

Introductions

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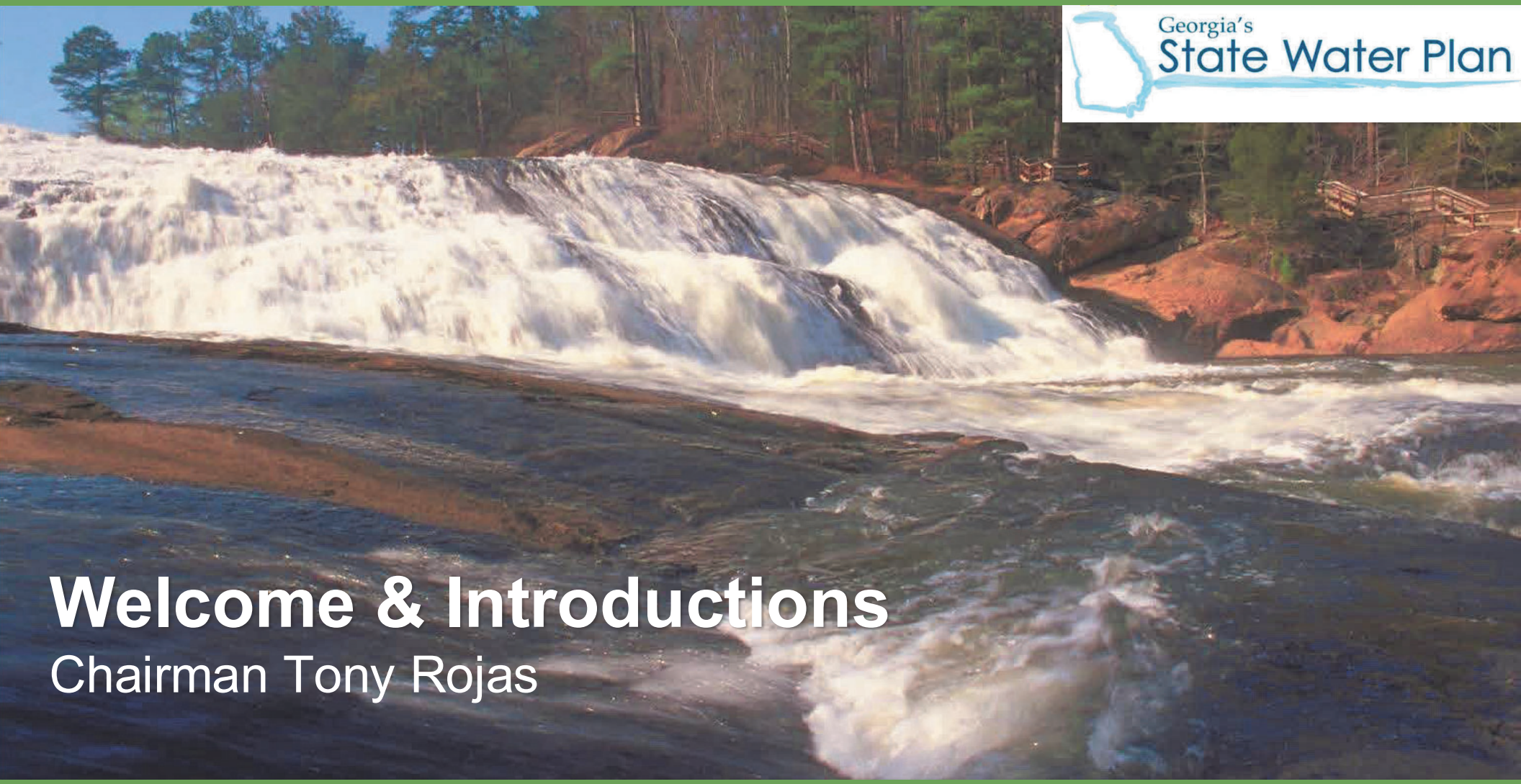

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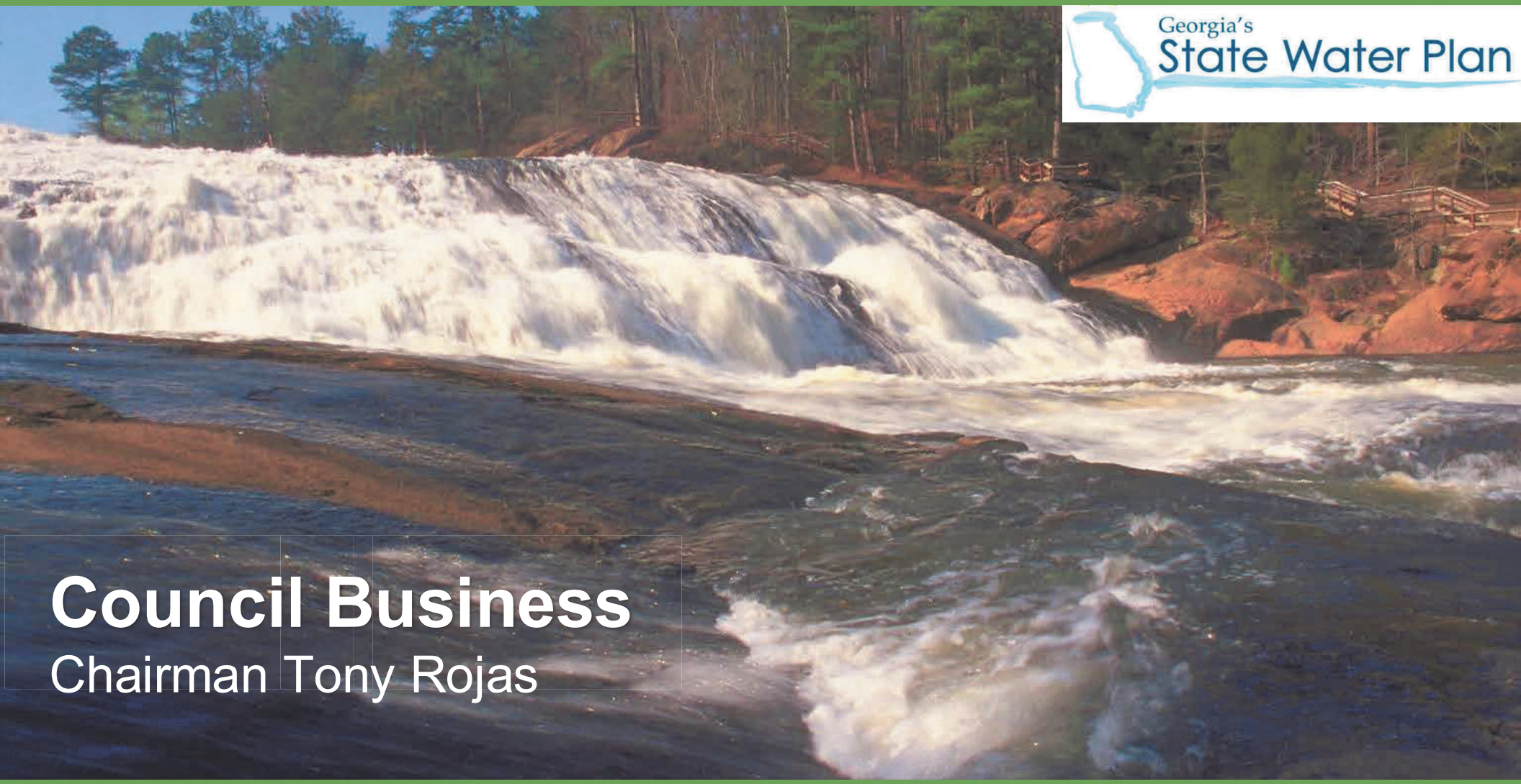
Welcome & Introductions

Chairman Tony Rojas



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Council Business

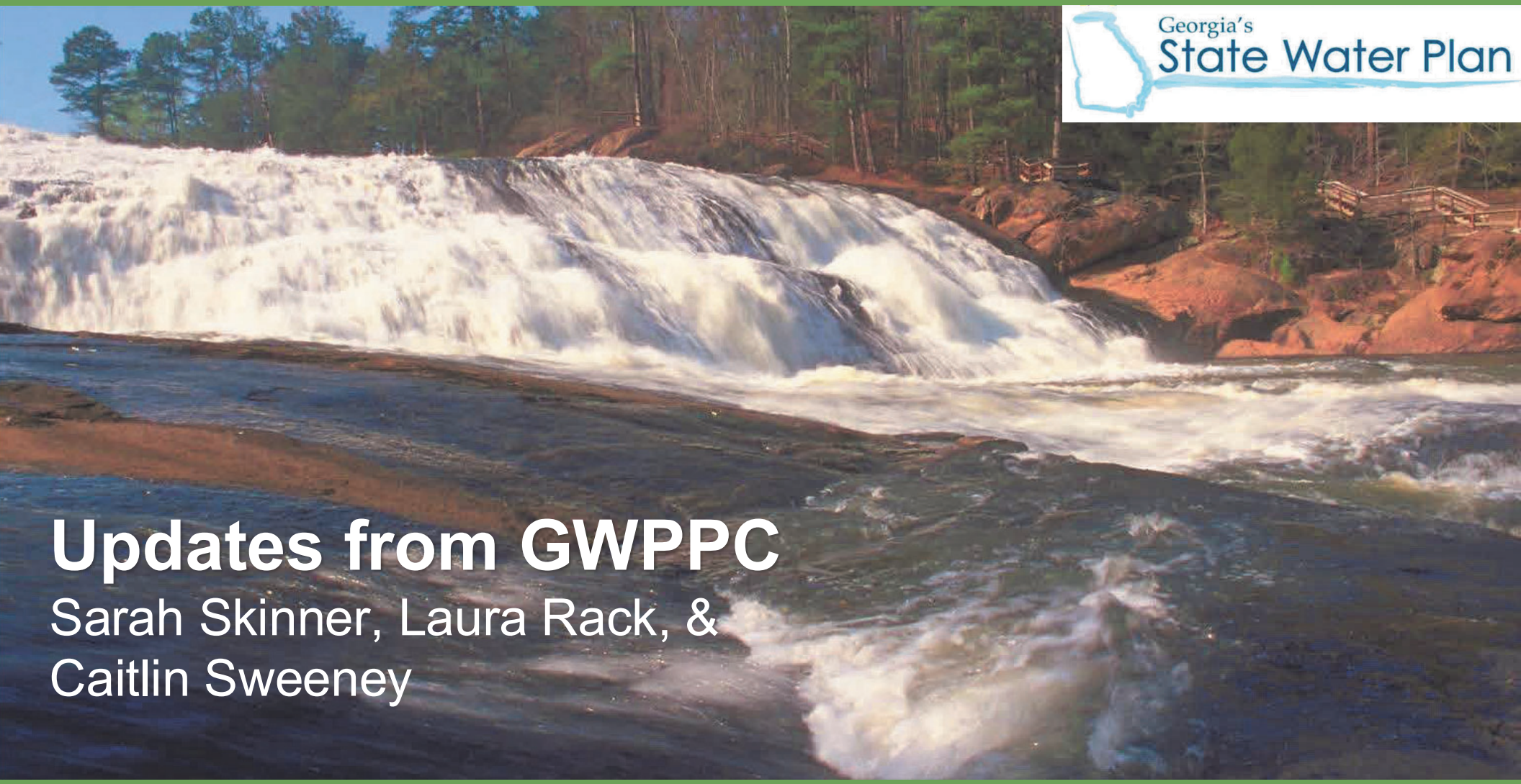
Chairman Tony Rojas

Council Business

- Approve meeting summary from October 8, 2025 Council Meeting
- Approve today's meeting agenda (*one speaker added*)

Council Meeting Agenda

9:30 – 10:00	**Registration and Check-in**
10:00 – 10:10	**Welcome and Introductions; Chairman's Report; Approval of Minutes** - *Tony Rojas, Council Chair*
10:10 – 10:25	**Updates from Georgia Water Planning and Policy Center** - *Sarah Skinner, Laura Rack, and Caitlin Sweeney, GWPPC*
10:25 – 10:35	**Updates from Georgia Environmental Protection Division** - *Sean Earley, GA EPD*
10:35 – 11:00	**Data Centers, DRIs, and Development** - *Greg Boike, Middle Georgia Regional Commission*
11:00 – 11:10	**Georgia Forestry Association 2026 Advocacy Issues** - *Jake Matthews, Georgia Forestry Association*
11:10 – 11:25	**Water Planning for Data Centers: A Utility Perspective** - *Brian Keel, Douglasville-Douglas County Water and Sewer Authority*
11:25 – 12:15	**Data Center Discussion** - *Sean Earley, GA EPD*
12:15 – 12:45	**Lunch**
12:45 – 1:50	**Council Priorities Discussion** - *Sarah Skinner, GWPPC*
1:50 – 2:00	**Public Comments; Closing Remarks; Adjourn**



Georgia's State Water Plan

Updates from GWPPC

Sarah Skinner, Laura Rack, &
Caitlin Sweeney

Regional Water Planning Webinars

Recent Webinars

March 30th	Data Center Development from a Water Perspective
Feb 10th	Stormwater Topics, Tools, and Tips
Dec 11th	Challenges & Opportunities with Septic Management

Link to Regional Water Planning Webinar Recordings

Middle Ocmulgee Implementation Assessment

Caitlin Sweeney, GWPPC

GEORGIA
WATER PLANNING

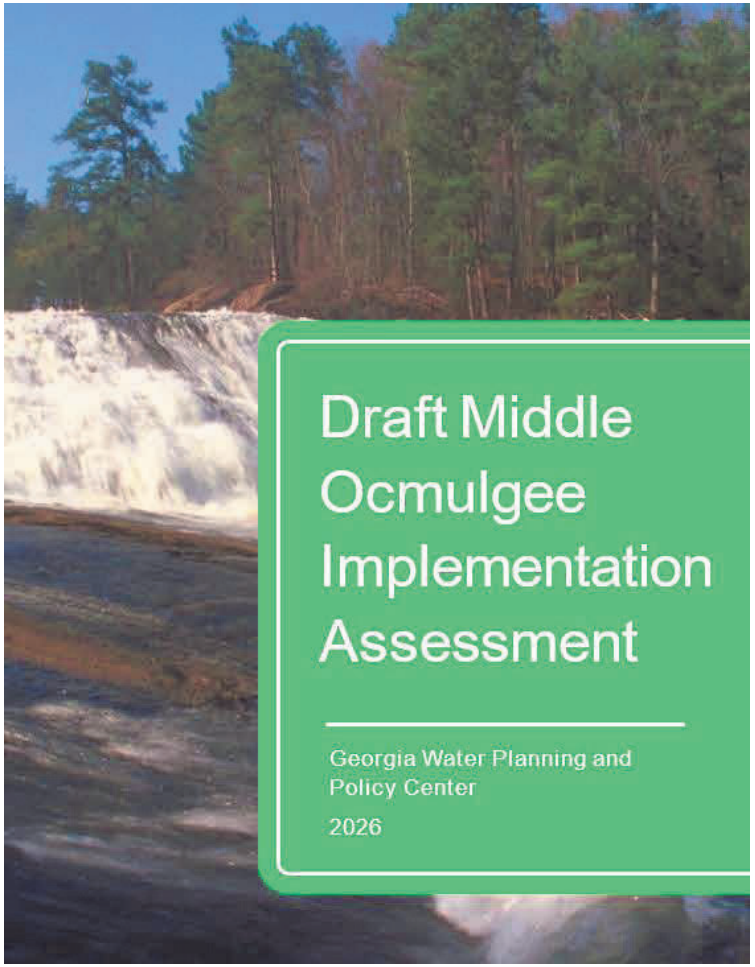
Implementation Assessment

10 Regional Water Planning Councils

Objectives

Provide Councils, EPD, and other stakeholders with information on:

- Water-related projects in their regions that support implementation of their management practices
- Progress in implementing and supporting the regional water planning process
- Council priorities for the next plan update



Overview

- Introduction
- Water Related Projects
- Implementation Highlight
- Updates to Water Resource Assessment
- Looking Ahead for Middle Ocmulgee Regional Water Planning

Project Funding Sources

Georgia Environmental Finance Authority (GEFA)	State Revolving Fund: Clean Water (CWSRF) & Drinking Water (DWSRF); Georgia Fund; Lead Service Line Replacement Program
Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD)	Regional Water Plan seed grants
Governor's Office of Planning and Budget	American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) awards
Department of Community Affairs	Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)
Georgia Department of Natural Resources	Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Program (GOSP)
Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA)	Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP)

Summary of Projects in the Region

Management Practices

- Water Demand Management (Conservation)
- Water Supply Management
- Wastewater and Water Quality

Fiscal Year	Community	County	Action	Plan Element	Total Assistance Agreement
2024	City of Perry	Houston	Constructing a new wastewater treatment plant	Wastewater and Water Quality WW-1	$50,000,000

WW-1: Upgrade and construct wastewater treatment facilities

Implementation Highlight: Newton County Water Resources, the City of Covington, and Newton County Water and Sewerage Authority are coordinating on a proactive plan to manage shared water resources

WATER RESOURCES ANALYSIS

A collaborative effort between Newton County, the Newton County Water & Sewerage Authority, and the City of Covington

September 2024

Implementation Highlight: GA-FIT is protecting freshwater mussels while supporting agricultural water use

The GA-FIT logo.

Water is typically abundant in Southwest Georgia, and irrigation has helped make the region one of the most agriculturally productive in the country. The region is also home to federally listed freshwater mussels that rely on adequate streamflow. Periods of water scarcity put both farmers' access to water and the livelihood of listed mussels at risk. To address this, the regional water plan recommends actions including researching new tools for agricultural water demand (DM6), developing groundwater source alternatives for usage during drought (SF2), and encouraging the development of a Habitat Conservation Plan (SF6). Advised by regional stakeholders and funded through the American Rescue Plan Act, Georgia Flow Incentive Trust (GA-FIT) has been working with partners including Albany State University, Golden Triangle Resource Conservation and Development Council, and Georgia Department of Natural Resources Environmental Protection Division and Wildlife Resources Division. Through GA-FIT's Drought Source Water Alternatives Program, __ new groundwater wells have been installed to switch irrigation from surface water to deeper aquifers during droug
supported the writing
Conservation Plan (H
farmers, hydrologic r
experts worked toget
HCP that, if approved
Wildlife Service, will
about enforcement o
Species Act and wate
vision detailed in the
economy and healthy
result of decades of
data collection, and

Implementation Highlight: Better Back Roads: Addressing the impacts of erosion and sedimentation from dirt roads on water quality.

A pile of sediment eroding from a dirt road[1]

Deteriorating unpaved roads can be significant nonpoint sources of sediment and nutrients into streams. They can also create safety hazards and limit travel under certain conditions. The Upper Flint Regional Water Plan identifies the need to improve implementation of nonpoint source controls to protect water quality (WQ-2).

Unpaved roads in Webster County were restored with Better Back Roads techniques in 2024-2025. The project was funded by a 319(h) grant and Webster County, and project partners included Lower Chattahoochee River Soil and Water Conservation District, Golden Triangle Resource Conservation and Development Council, Coastal Hydrology, and the Georgia Water Planning and Policy Center. Over the course of the project, 3,256 linear feet of road were restored with best management practices including sediment basins, rock check dams, and culvert pipes. This restoration will collectively prevent an estimated 760 tons of sediment, 4,347 pounds of nitrogen, and 1,269 pounds of phosphorus from entering Gill Pond and Fox Creek each year.[2]

The project has additional ongoing benefits as it resulted in a database of all unpaved road-stream crossings in Sumter, Webster, Randolph, Terrell, and Lee Counties and trained road departments in best management practice application (WQ-3). These efforts will make future road restorations easier to prioritize and complete.

A section of dirt road restored with best management practices[1]

1. Golden Triangle Resource Conservation and Development Council
2. Nonpoint Source Project Summary. (2020) *Better Back Roads to Improve Water Quality & Aquatic Habitat in Sumter and Webster County Watersheds.* https://ordspub.epa.gov/ords/grts/f?p=grts:700:::NO:700:P700_PRJ_SEQ:140224

Implementation Highlight: Expansion of McIntosh Reserve Park is conserving habitat, enhancing recreational opportunities, and preserving cultural resources

Short-term actions suggested in the Middle Chattahoochee Regional Water Plan included identifying stream buffers and land areas with the potential for conservation (WQ-4). The vegetation comprising stream buffers protects water quality by maintaining infiltration to minimize flooding, filtering pollutants before they reach the stream, and stabilizing banks. It also provides riparian habitat while creating shade to maintain adequate water temperature of in-stream habitat.

McIntosh Reserve Park[1].

rroll County received a $1,950,000 grant from the Georgia Outdoor
p Program to expand McIntosh Reserve Park by 429 acres. The
nearly doubled the park's size, and it protected over 2,000 feet of
ong the Chattahoochee River and 8,000 feet along Acorn Creek, a
hee tributary. This habitat supports 19 rare, high priority animal and
es, including the state protected Bluestripe Shiner. Park visitors were
y increased opportunities for hiking and paddling, as well as
n of historic Muscogee Creek lands.

. Photo by Brett Albanese, Georgia DNR.

Additional expansions to the park have been funded since 2023, furthering the commitment to protect stream buffers in the Middle Chattahoochee region. This project is part of the Trust for Public Land's Chattahoochee RiverLands initiative.

ttahoocheeriverlands.com/stories/parks-and-recreation/mcintosh-reserve/

Next Steps

Looking ahead for Middle Ocmulgee Regional Water Planning

- update based on the activity later in the meeting

- Implementation Assessment Review and Revision
- Share with Council by end of June 2026

Caitlin Sweeney
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Georgia Water Planning & Policy Center

Georgia's State Water Plan

Updates from GA EPD

Sean Earley

www.georgiawaterplanning.org

GEORGIA
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION DIVISION

Middle Ocmulgee Council Meeting
May 14, 2026
EPD Updates

Sean Earley

DROUGHT RESPONSE LEVEL 1 DECLARATION

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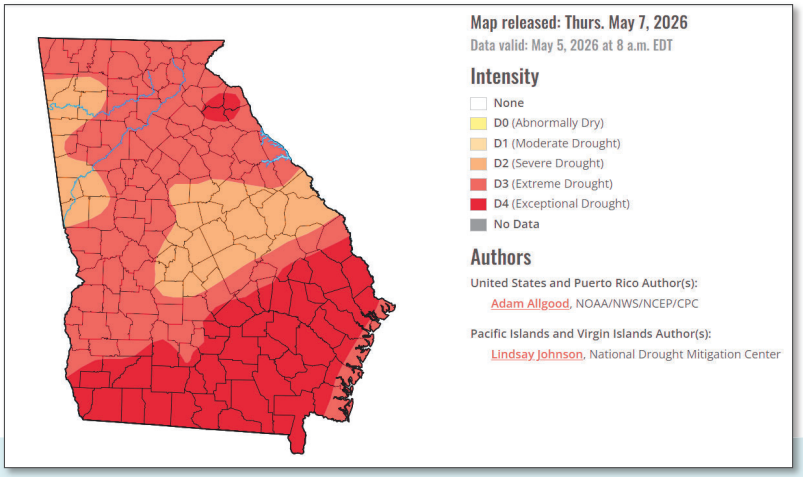
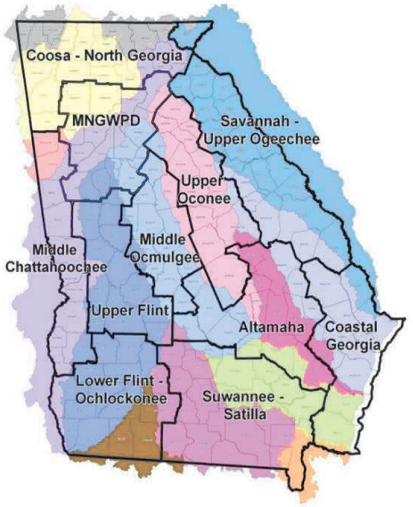
Statewide Drought Response Level 1 Declaration

On April 27, 2026, the Environmental Protection Division (EPD) Director declared a state-wide Drought Response Level 1 for public water systems using surface water and/or groundwater. Under this declaration, public water systems must implement a public information campaign designed to help citizens better understand drought, its impact on water supplies, and the need for water conservation. Outdoor water use between the hours of 4 PM and 10 A.M. is still allowable and unaffected by a Drought Response Level 1. Please see the press release issued by EPD, as well as the information available on EPD's Drought Management webpage, for more details.



RWP SEED GRANT PROGRAM

- Seed Grant submittals closed October 31, 2025.
- Seed Grant awards were approved, and applicants have been notified.
- Contracts are in progress for FY2026 execution.
- FY2027 Seed Grant opportunities should be announced in July 2026.
- 1 Seed Grant awarded that include the Middle Ocmulgee region.



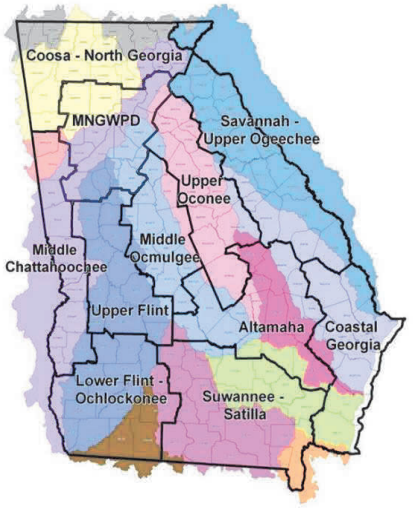
RWP SEED GRANT PROGRAM

Seed Grant award that includes the Middle Ocmulgee region:

Applicant: UGA River Basin Center

Project Title: "Advancing Instream Flow Evaluation in Water Planning"

Goal: Advance the assessment of instream flows for the Upper Flint, Middle Ocmulgee and Upper Oconee Regional Water Councils using instream flow studies beyond the 7Q10 in the Regional Water Planning Process.



STATE WATER COUNCIL UPDATE

- State Water Council met on December 9, 2025, and approved changes as proposed in September 2025.
- Section 14 major changes:
  - Council composition reduced from 30 to 15
  - Council term will increase from 3 years to 6 years
  - Provides dedicated appointments for representatives from the water and wastewater demand forecast sectors
- Completion steps for resolution:
  - ✓ Submitted to the Georgia General Assembly
  - ✓ Passed in the House
  - ✓ Passed in the Senate
  - ✓ Effective upon signature by Governor (signed May 5, 2026)
- Next Steps toward Council appointments:
  - ➢ Nomination process finalized (June 2026)
  - ➢ Receive nominations
  - ➢ Review and send nominations to appointers (this Fall)
  - ➢ All appointments completed (end of 2026)

- more information, please visit the Water Planning website.

Georgia's State Water Plan

Data Centers, DRIs, and Development

Greg Boike,
Middle Georgia Regional Commission

Middle Georgia Regional Commission

Data Centers, DRIs, & Development

Presented for the Middle Ocmulgee Regional Water Planning Council

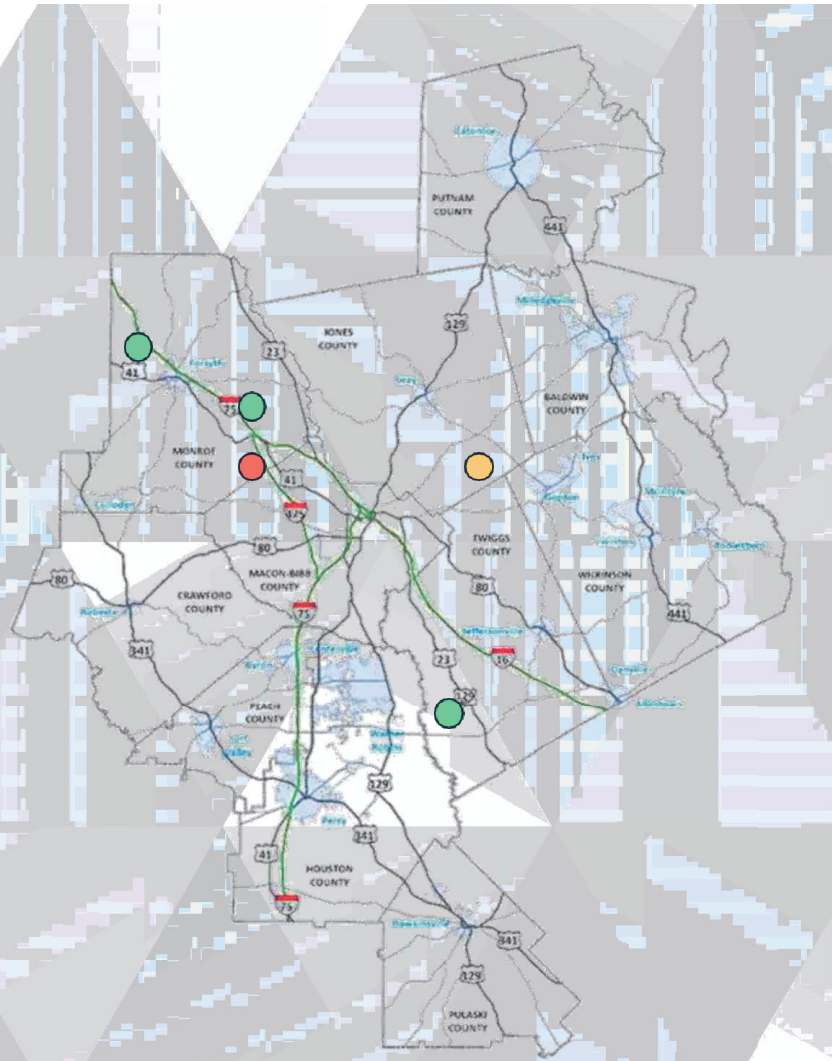
May 14, 2026

Data Centers in Middle Georgia

State of the Region | Middle Ocmulgee Impacts

Middle Georgia Overview

- 11 Counties & 20 Cities
- Most (but not all) data center activity has been in unincorporated counties.
- Zoning actions as of April 2026:
  - Three Approved (Green)
  - One Denied (Red)
  - One Withdrawn (Orange)
- There are likely other projects in various stages of discussion/negotiation, some of which have been in the news already.



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Current State of Approvals

- No communities had “data center” as an existing use in their code before 2025; lots of communities are still figuring out how to respond
- Monroe County: Implemented countywide moratorium after approving one (in a C-1 commercial district) and denying one. New ordinance requires Industrial zoning.
- City of Forsyth approved a conditional use in an Agricultural district.
- Twiggs County: Approved data center as a commercial use. No other restrictions or regulations in place.

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Other Regulations

- Jones County: Adopted a comprehensive data center ordinance. Restrictions tied to zoning (Industrial), buffers, noise, and water usage
- Houston County: No specific countywide ordinance. Perry and Warner Robins have both defined as a conditional use in heavy industrial areas.
- Macon-Bibb County: No specific regulations, but P&Z confirmed it would fall under the “heavy industrial use” standards.
- Crawford County: Under a countywide moratorium on data centers

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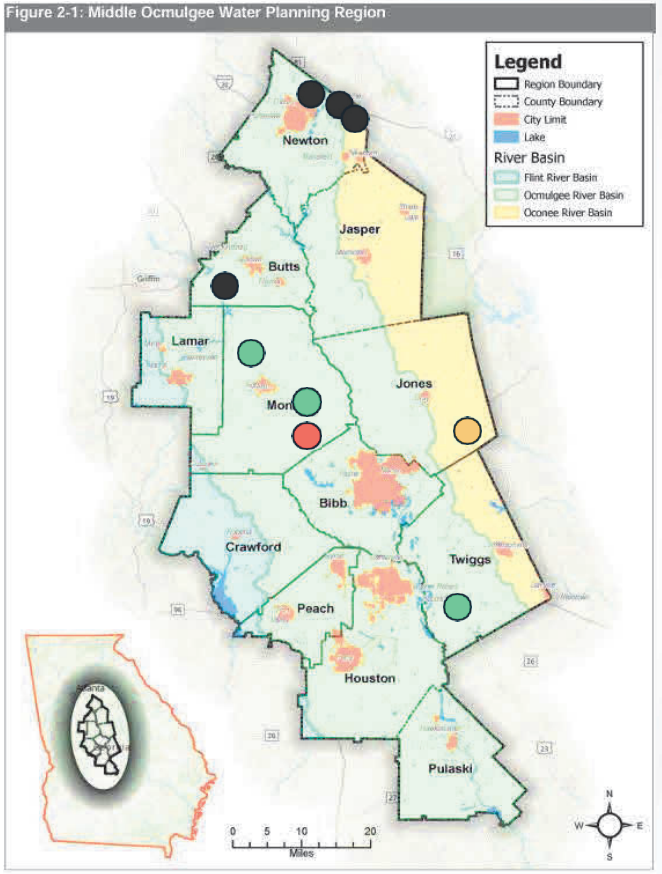
Water Demands: Middle Georgia Proposals

- Monroe County, Rumble Road (Approved, Purchased by Google)
  - 2 MGD (Million Gallons Per Day) water demand
  - 30,000 GPD sewer demand
- Twiggs County, Adams Park Road (Approved)
  - 10,000 GPD water/sewer. Will operate on a private well and septic system
- Monroe County, Bolingbroke (Denied)
  - 1 MGD (Million Gallons Per Day) water demand
  - 80,000 GPD sewer demand
- City of Forsyth, H&H Timberlands (Approved)
  - 1.5 MGD (Million Gallons Per Day) water demand
  - 900,000 GPD sewer demand

Elsewhere in the Middle Ocmulgee:

- Butts County:
  - DRI 4560: Hwy. 16 Interstate Health Development
    - *11 Million Sq. Ft. of Data Centers*
    - *4.54 MGD Water Demand*
    - *1.73 MGD Sewer Demand*
- Newton County:
  - DRI 4428: Gregory Rd. Data Center
    - *1.4 Million Sq. Ft. of Data Centers*
    - *1.08 MGD Water Demand*
    - *0.36 MGD Sewer Demand*
  - DRI 4376: Newton County Technology Park
    - *2.5 Million Sq. Ft. of Data Centers*
    - *0.23 MGD Water Demand*
    - *0.19 MGD Sewer Demand*
  - DRI 231: Stanton Springs (original DRI from 2002)
    - *Up to 8 Million Sq. Ft. of Industrial Space*
    - *0.1 to 0.6 MGD Initial Water Demand*
    - *0.1 to 0.6 MGD Initial Sewer Demand*



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Industrial Water Users in Middle Georgia

- Lots of industries rely on water. Middle Georgia communities sometimes try to recruit these companies.
- From DRIs in the past 10 years:
  - DRI 2714 – Amazon Distribution: 25,000 Gallons Per Day
  - DRI 2719 – Irving Tissue: 1.5 Million Gallons Per Day
  - DRI 3377 – Helms College Campus: 149,500 Gallons per Day
  - DRI 4291 – Oglethorpe Power Plant: 100,000 – 370,000 Gallons per Day
  - DRI 4533 – 225 New Homes: 67,500 Gallons per Day
  - DRI 4590 – Rock Quarry: 100,000 Gallons per Day

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Developments of Regional Impact

About DRIs | New Rule Changes for 2026 | DRI Process Recap

What is a DRI?

- Regional review process for large-scale developments.
- Provides a means of revealing and assessing potential impacts.
- Designed to improve communication between local governments.
- Advisory in nature—local government autonomy is preserved.
- Process is overseen by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, with authority for implementing delegated to Regional Commissions.

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Do I have a DRI?

- Determine scope and type of construction.
- Key information to gather:
  - What type of business or development is proposed?
  - Will there be any new construction?
    - *Building additions, redevelopment, and greenfield construction all count*
  - How many square feet will the final development be?
- Determine when the project is a DRI:
  - Request for zoning, conditional use or variance
  - Annexation
  - Building or land disturbance permit
  - Hookup to a water or sewer system, acceptance of a public street
- Complete the DRI process before FINAL ACTION on any of the above requests.
  - *"A vote by the governing authority of the host local government that is considering action on a proposed project."*

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DRI Thresholds Table

Developments of Regional Impact Development Thresholds		
Type of Development	Metropolitan Tier	Non-Metropolitan Tier
(1) Airports	All new airports, runways and runway extensions	Any new airport with a paved runway; or runway additions of more than 25% of existing runway length
(2) Attractions & Recreational Facilities	Greater than 1,500 parking spaces or a seating capacity of more than 6,000	Greater than 1,500 parking spaces or a seating capacity of more than 6,000
(3) Commercial	Greater than 300,000 gross square feet **or is anticipated to generate more than 10,000 trips per day** ***NEW in 2026***	Greater than 175,000 gross square feet **or is anticipated to generate more than 10,000 trips per day** ***NEW in 2026***
(4) Correctional/ Detention Facilities	Greater than 300 new beds; or generating more than 375 peak hour vehicle trips per day	Greater than 200 new beds; or generating more than 250 peak hour vehicle trips per day
(5) Hospitals and Health Care Facilities	Greater than 300 new beds; or generating more than 375 peak hour vehicle trips per day	Greater than 200 new beds; or generating more than 250 peak hour vehicle trips per day
(6) Hotels	Greater than 400 rooms	Greater than 250 rooms

DRI Thresholds Table

Developments of Regional Impact Development Thresholds		
Type of Development	Metropolitan Tier	Non-Metropolitan Tier
(7) Housing	Greater than 400 new lots or units	Greater than 125 new lots or units
(8) Industrial	Greater than 500,000 gross sq. feet; or employing more than 1,600 workers; or covering more than 400 acres	Greater than 175,000 gross sq. feet; or employing more than 500 workers; or covering more than 125 acres
(9) Intermodal Terminals	New Facilities	New Facilities
(10) Mixed Use	Gross sq. feet greater than 400,000 (with residential units calculated at either 1,800 square feet per unit or, if applicable, the minimum square footage allowed by local development regulations); or covering more than 120 acres; or if any of the individual uses meets or exceeds a threshold as identified	Gross sq. feet greater than 125,000 (with residential units calculated at either 1,800 square feet per unit or, if applicable, the minimum square footage allowed by local development regulations); or covering more than 40 acres; or if any of the individual uses meets or exceeds a threshold as identified
(11) Office	Greater than 400,000 gross sq. feet	Greater than 125,000 gross sq. feet

DRI Thresholds Table

Developments of Regional Impact Development Thresholds		
Type of Development	Metropolitan Tier	Non-Metropolitan Tier
(12) Petroleum Storage Facilities	Storage greater than 50,000 barrels if within 1,000 feet of any water supply; otherwise, storage capacity greater than 200,000 barrels	Storage greater than 50,000 barrels if within 1,000 feet of any water supply; otherwise, storage capacity greater than 200,000 barrels
(13) Post-Secondary School	New school with a capacity of more than 2,400 students; or expansion by at least 25 percent of capacity	New school with a capacity of more than 750 students; or expansion by at least 25 percent of capacity
(14) Quarries, Asphalt & Cement Plants	New facility or expansion of existing facility by more than 50 percent	New facility or expansion of existing facility by more than 50 percent
(15) Solar Power Generation Facility	**300 acres or more *NEW in 2026***	**500 acres or more *NEW in 2026***
(16) Technological Facility (Including Data Centers)	**Greater than 500,000 gross square feet; or covering more than 200 acres *NEW in 2026***	**Greater than 500,000 gross square feet; or covering more than 200 acres *NEW in 2026***
(17) Truck Stops	**A new facility with the capacity to fuel 10 or more trucks simultaneously; and, either one acre of truck parking or 20 truck parking spaces *NEW in 2026***	**A new facility with the capacity to fuel 10 or more trucks simultaneously; and, either one acre of truck parking or 20 truck parking spaces *NEW in 2026***

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DRI Thresholds Table

Developments of Regional Impact Development Thresholds		
Type of Development	Metropolitan Tier	Non-Metropolitan Tier
(18) Waste Handling Facilities	New facility or expansion of use of an existing facility by 50 percent or more	New facility or expansion of use of an existing facility by 50 percent or more
(19) Wastewater Treatment Facilities	New major conventional treatment facility or expansion of existing facility by more than 50 percent; or community treatment facilities exceeding 150,000 gallons per day or serving a development project that meets or exceeds an applicable threshold as identified herein	New major conventional treatment facility or expansion of existing facility by more than 50 percent; or community treatment facilities exceeding 150,000 gallons per day or serving a development project that meets or exceeds an applicable threshold as identified herein.
(20) Water Supply Intakes/ Public Wells/ Reservoirs/ Treatment Facilities	New Facilities	New Facilities
(21) Wholesale Distribution	Greater than 500,000 gross sq. feet	Greater than 175,000 gross sq. feet
(22) Any other development types (includes parking facilities)	1000 parking spaces or, if available, more than 5,000 daily trips generated	1000 parking spaces or, if available, more than 5,000 daily trips generated

Additional Notes on 2026 Updates

- Projects that were not DRIs under the previous iteration of the rules could be determined to be DRIs under the amended rules, IF a subsequent triggering event occurs.
- The host local government is responsible for ensuring the proper completion of the form.
- The definition of affected parties has been broadened. Specifically added are local and regional authorities and regional water councils.
- The threshold for “truck stops” has been increased to avoid including convenience stores and truck parking.
- The definition for wastewater treatment facilities has been clarified to explicitly exclude home-owner septic tanks and include large-scale land-application and spray fields.
- The definition of a “solar power generation facility” was specifically written to avoid including facilities constructed primarily for on-site consumption.

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Congrats, it’s a DRI!

What to expect when you’re expecting a DRI…

What Comes Next?

- Let MGRC know & Complete DRI Information Form (Part 1)
- Information on Part 1
  - Your Contact Info
  - Project Location
  - Type of Project
  - Project Size
  - Developer Contact Info
  - Property Owner Contact Info
  - Requested Action of Local Government
  - Project Phasing
  - Timeline

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What Comes Next?

- Submit DRI Additional Information Form (Part 2) - Don't wait on MGRC
- Information on Part 2
  - Project Overview
  - Additional Info
  - Economic Development Impacts
  - Water Supply Impacts
  - Wastewater Disposal Impacts
  - Transportation Impacts
  - Solid Waste Disposal Impacts
  - Energy Usage Impacts ***NEW in 2026***
  - Stormwater Management Impacts
  - Environmental Quality Impacts

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The DRI Review Timeline (I)

- As the DRI process is ongoing, the host local government may proceed with its development review process, provided that it does not take final official action approving a project until the DRI process is completed.
- Within **5 days** of receiving a **fully and accurately completed** DRI Information Form, the Regional Commission must evaluate whether the project is a DRI.
- Within **5 days** of issuing a DRI determination, the Regional Commission will provide a DRI information packet for review and comment to all affected parties.

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The DRI Review Timeline (II)

- The DRI information packet will also include a notice stating, at a minimum, the following:
  - The beginning and end dates of a 15-day period during which the Regional Commission will accept comments for inclusion in the DRI report to be delivered to the host jurisdiction;
  - The manner in which affected parties should submit comments; and,
  - A list of all of the jurisdictions and affected parties receiving the notice
- Within **5 days** of the conclusion of the 15-day comment period, the Regional Commission must assemble a DRI report containing the following components.

- **5+5+15+5 = 30 Days**
  - Once MGRC receives a fully and accurately completed DRI Information Form.

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Your Final DRI Report

- Your final DRI Report will be transmitted via email and regular mail and directed to the local government planning official and copied electronically to all affected parties.
- Report Format:
  - List any comments received from other stakeholders
  - Any MGRC comments (based on Regional Plan & other documents)
  - Conclusion of DRI Review Process
    - *Advisory in nature.*
    - *No "Finding" presented or issued by MGRC.*
  - Attachments (comments and/or supplemental info provided)
- Once received and reviewed, a local government may take final action.

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DRI Odds & Ends

- DRIs are Public Information
  - Subject to Open Records Requests (along with all comments and documents)
- Appearance sometimes matters more to the public than compliance.
  - Especially when it's a controversial project
- All Comments are Advisory
  - Might not even enforceable
- The DRI Process is just that: only a process.
  - Designed for public entities, not residents; no requirement to accept public comments
  - Based on comments, rather than analysis
  - Not nearly equivalent to an Environmental Impact Statement
  - MGRC comments based on publicly available information and existing plan documents

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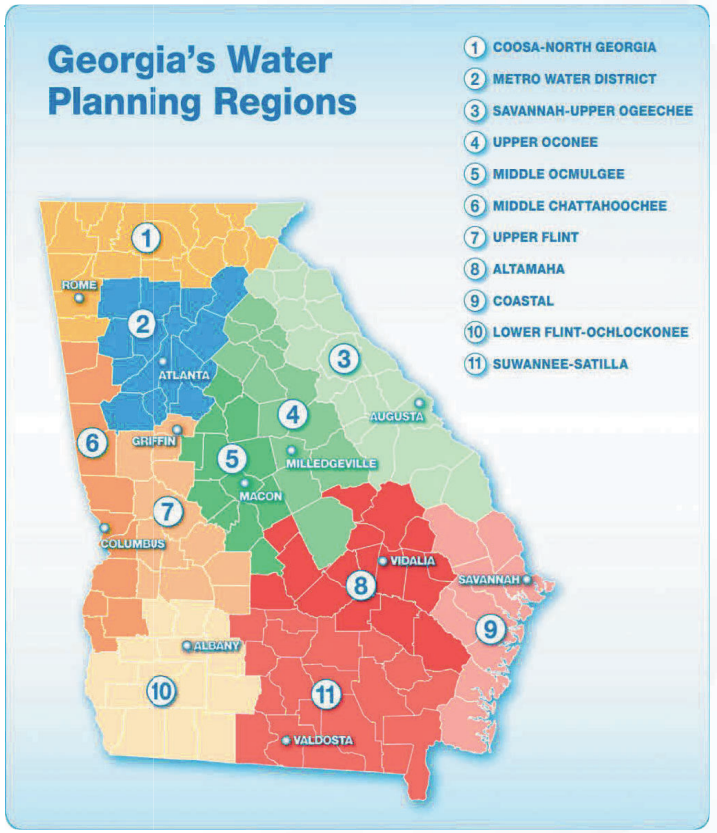
The Development Picture

Why This Matters| Middle Ocmulgee Impact

A Local and Regional Issue:

- Individual communities: capacity of potable water treatment, storage, and distribution system.
- Regionally: overall concern of water quality and water quantity across the river basins.
- Regional Commissions and local planners are looking to our partners:
  - Regional Water Planning Councils.



mgrc Middle Georgia Regional Commission

Growing Water Demands: Population

- Growth is outpacing projections: already near the 2030 projections in 2024

Table 4-1: Population Projections by County

County	2020	2030	2040	2050	2060	Difference (2020 - 2060)	% Change (2020 – 2060)
Bibb	152,150	151,845	148,802	144,734	142,159	-9,991	-7%
Butts	25,174	29,426	31,968	33,957	35,674	10,500	42%
Crawford	12,228	12,052	11,689	11,243	11,160	-1,068	-9%
Houston	157,039	169,507	180,954	190,663	201,754	44,715	28%
Jasper	14,199	15,147	16,096	16,945	18,033	3,834	27%
Jones	28,591	28,729	28,701	28,521	28,857	266	1%
Lamar	19,347	21,228	23,110	25,219	27,856	8,509	44%
Monroe	27,727	28,871	29,702	30,296	31,391	3,664	13%
Newton	112,354	128,770	148,303	170,860	197,976	85,622	76%
Peach	27,375	27,802	27,796	27,506	27,598	223	1%
Pulaski	10,893	10,121	9,332	8,548	7,924	-2,969	-27%
Twiggs	8,086	7,604	7,111	6,719	6,616	-1,470	-18%
TOTAL	**595,163**	**631,102**	**663,564**	**695,211**	**736,998**	**141,835**	**24%**

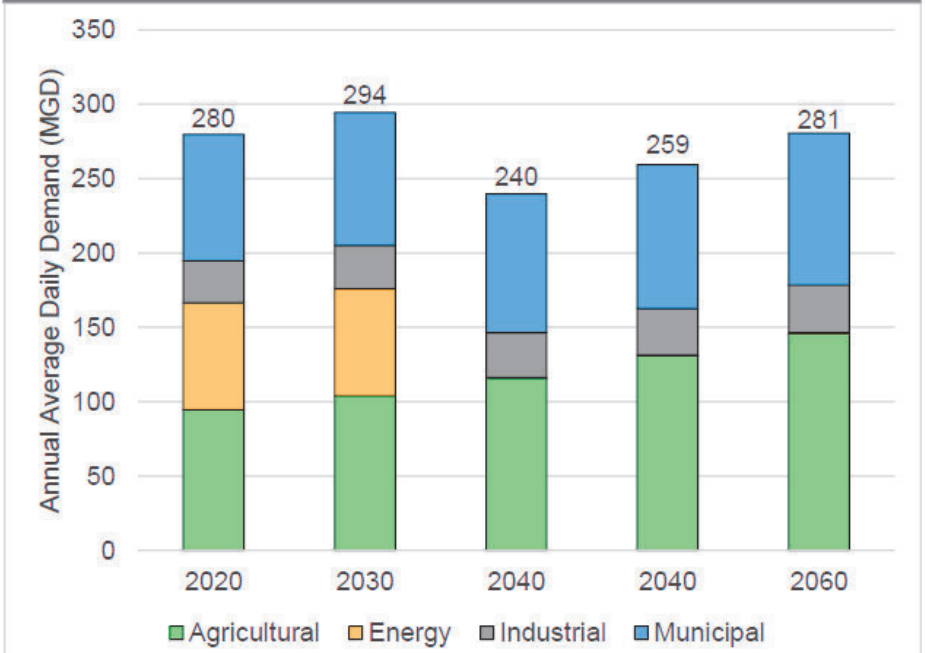
Source: Governor's Office of Planning and Budget (2019)

Middle Georgia Regional Commission

Growing Water Demands: Energy & Industry

- From June 2023 Plan
  - Projected Use Through 2060:
  - Municipal: 85 MGD to 102 MGD
  - Industrial: 28 MGD to 32 MGD
  - Agricultural: 95 MGD to 146 MGD
  - Energy: 72 MGD to 1 MGD
- From Georgia Power 2025 IRP:
  - The 2022 IRP recommended retirement of Plant Scherer Unit 3 by December 2028
  - Plan to extend Plant Scherer Unit 3 from December 2028 through 2035-2038
- Industrial Growth
  - Already ahead of growth projections with new facilities active since 2020.

Figure 4-6: Total Water Forecasts by Sector



Source: Middle Ocmulgee Water and Wastewater Forecasting Technical Memorandum (2022)
Note: The total shown above includes estimated consumptive needs for thermoelectric energy generation

Middle Georgia Regional Commission

Potential Challenges by 2060

Table 5-4: Summary of 2060 Potential Water Resources Challenges by County

County	Groundwater Supply Challenges (Aquifer) [a]	Surface Water Supply Challenges (# Facilities) [a]	Wastewater Assimilation Challenges (# Facilities) [a]	Municipal Water Withdrawal Needs (MGD) [b]	Municipal Wastewater Discharge Needs (MGD) [b]	Assimilative Capacity Challenges for Dissolved Oxygen (# Segments) [c]	Miles of 303(d) Not Supporting Reaches (# Segments) [d]
	Groundwater Availability Section 5.1	BEAM Results: Surface Water Availability Section 5.2	BEAM Results: Surface Water Availability Section 5.2	Future Capacity Comparisons Table 5-2	Future Capacity Comparisons Table 5-3	Water Quality Section 5.3	Water Quality Section 3.3.2
Macon-Bibb			Yes (3)				22.5 (3)
Butts			Yes (2)				31.0 (5)
Crawford				Yes (0.3)			51.1 (7)
Houston	Yes (Floridan)		Yes (3) 1 Substantial				36.2 (7)
Jasper		Yes (1)	Yes (1) 1 Substantial	Yes (0.6)			52.9 (11)
Jones			Yes (1)				31.8 (7)
Lamar		Yes (1)	Yes (2)	Yes (0.2)	Yes (3.1)		7.0 (2)
Monroe		Yes (1)	Yes (2)				62.4 (11)
Newton		Yes (1)	Yes (1)		Yes (0.2)		55.1 (10)
Peach							
Pulaski	Yes (Floridan)		Yes (2)				16.0 (2)
Twiggs	Yes (Floridan)		Yes (2)				6.0 (1)

Notes:
a) "Yes" indicates at least one day of a water supply or wastewater assimilation challenge.
b) A municipal "need" is where the current permitted water withdrawals or wastewater discharges, respectively, is less than the future forecast demands.
c) Potential challenges in assimilative capacity due to dissolved oxygen are for streams modeled to be "At Assimilative Capacity", or "Exceeded" in Figures 5-3 through 5-8.
d) Includes only 303(d) reaches with not supporting status that are fully within each respective county. An additional 191.4miles are shared between two or more counties. 121.8 additional miles are shared with counties outside of the Middle Ocmulgee region. Impaired streams based on 2022 305(b)/303(d) list published by EPD.

- Abundant water resources, but not unlimited capacity everywhere.
- Some communities (especially Macon Water Authority) are in a strong condition for permitted capacity.
- Others have notable supply challenges.
- Need for continued monitoring and regional cooperation

mgrc Middle Georgia Regional Commission

Middle Georgia Regional Commission

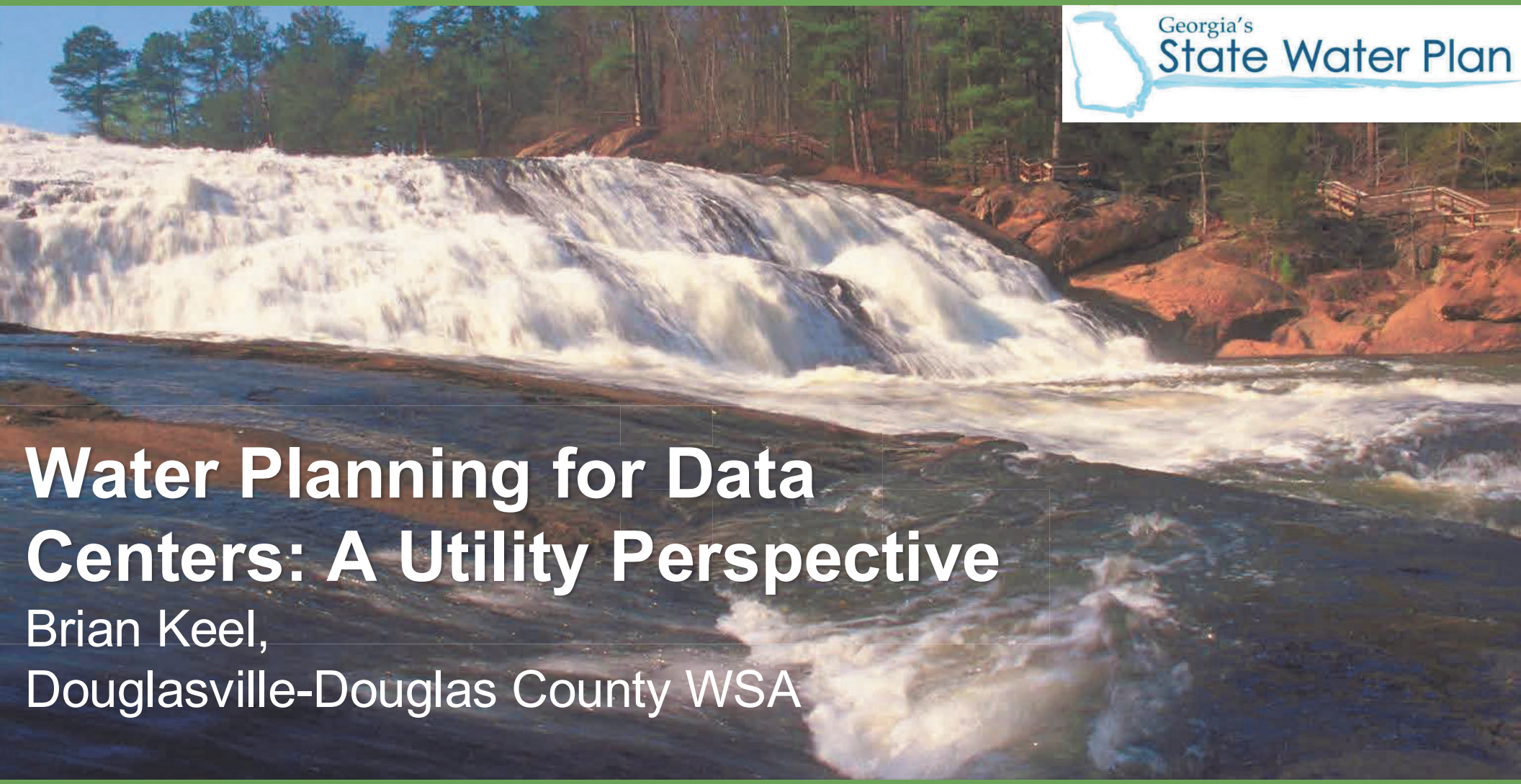
Greg Boike

Director of Planning & Public Administration

gboike@mg-rc.org | 478-722-6945

Georgia Forestry Association 2026 Advocacy Issues

Jake Matthews



Georgia's State Water Plan

Water Planning for Data Centers: A Utility Perspective

Brian Keel,
Douglasville-Douglas County WSA

Middle Ocmulgee Water Planning Council
May 14, 2026

Water Planning for Data Centers: A Utility Perspective

Douglasville-Douglas County Water and Sewer Authority

Brian Keel, PE, CFM

Deputy Director of Engineering

WATER. ENVIRONMENT. COMMUNITY.

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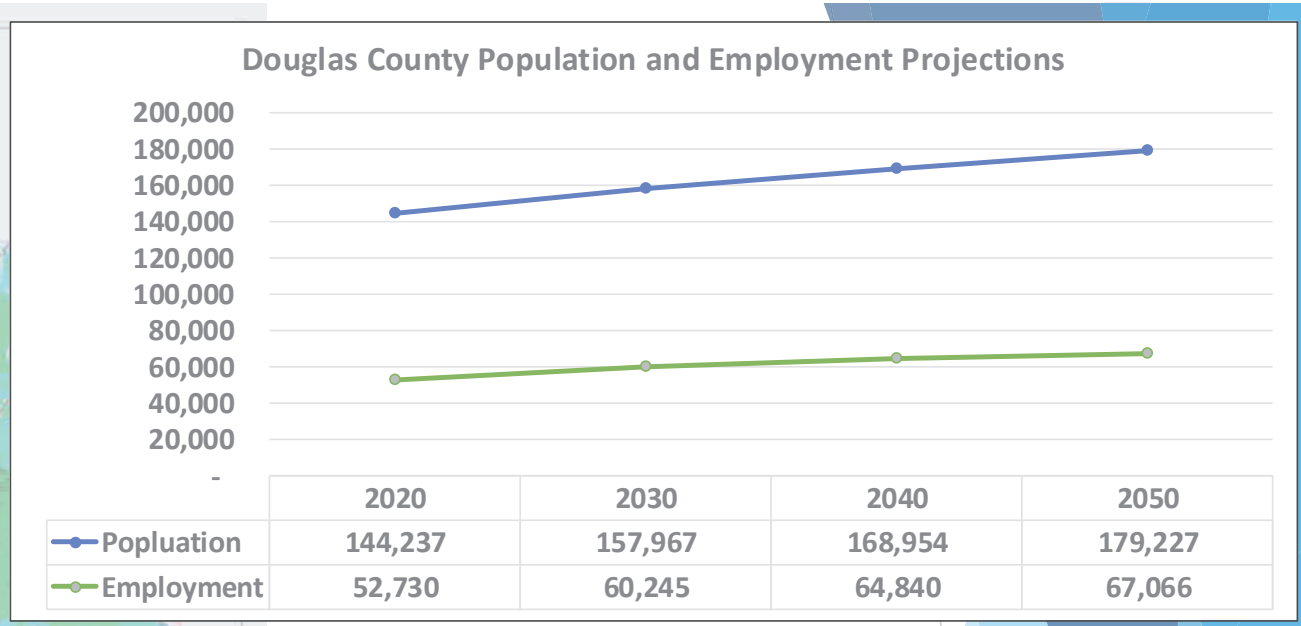
Water Planning: Projections

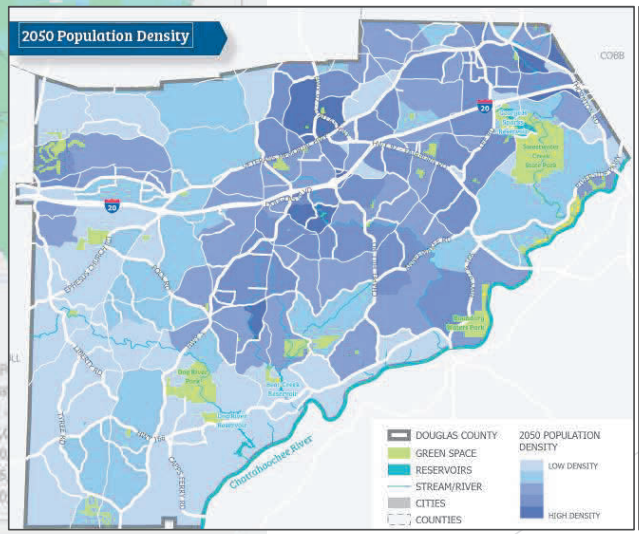
- Atlanta Regional Commission, GA Environmental Protection Division, and community data
- Population
- Business and employment
- Geographic distribution

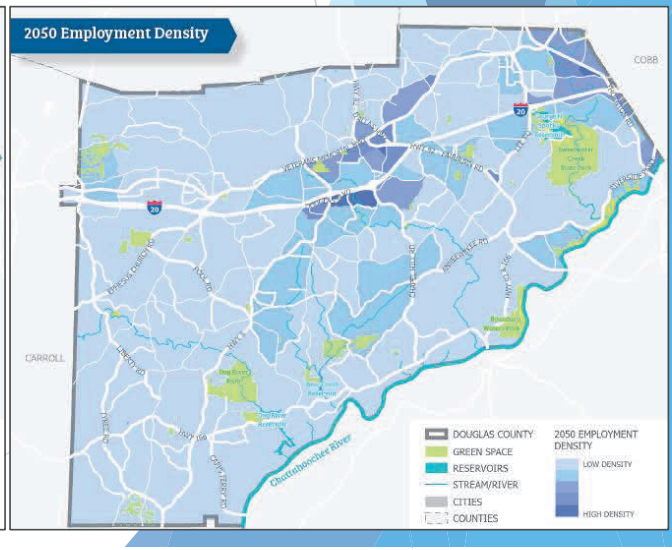
Water is a finite resource!

We can't make more of it; we have to manage what we have.

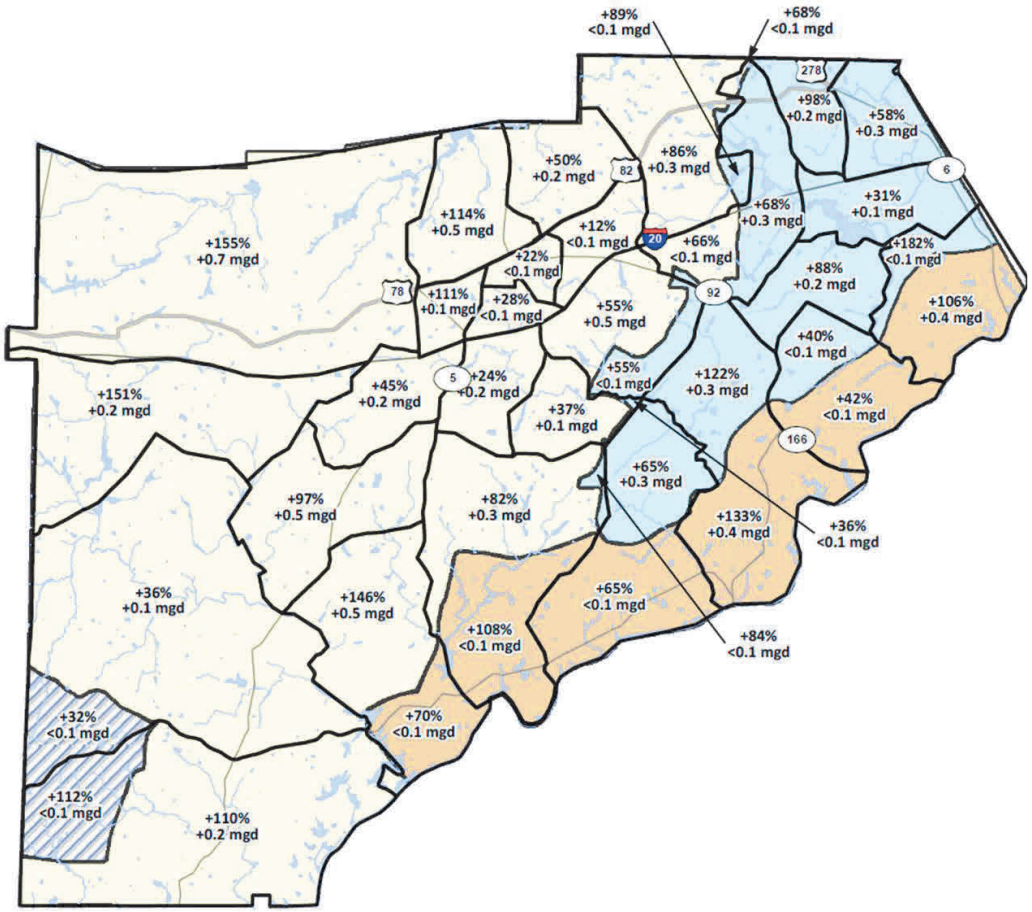


	2020	2030	2040	2050
Popluation	144,237	157,967	168,954	179,227
Employment	52,730	60,245	64,840	67,066





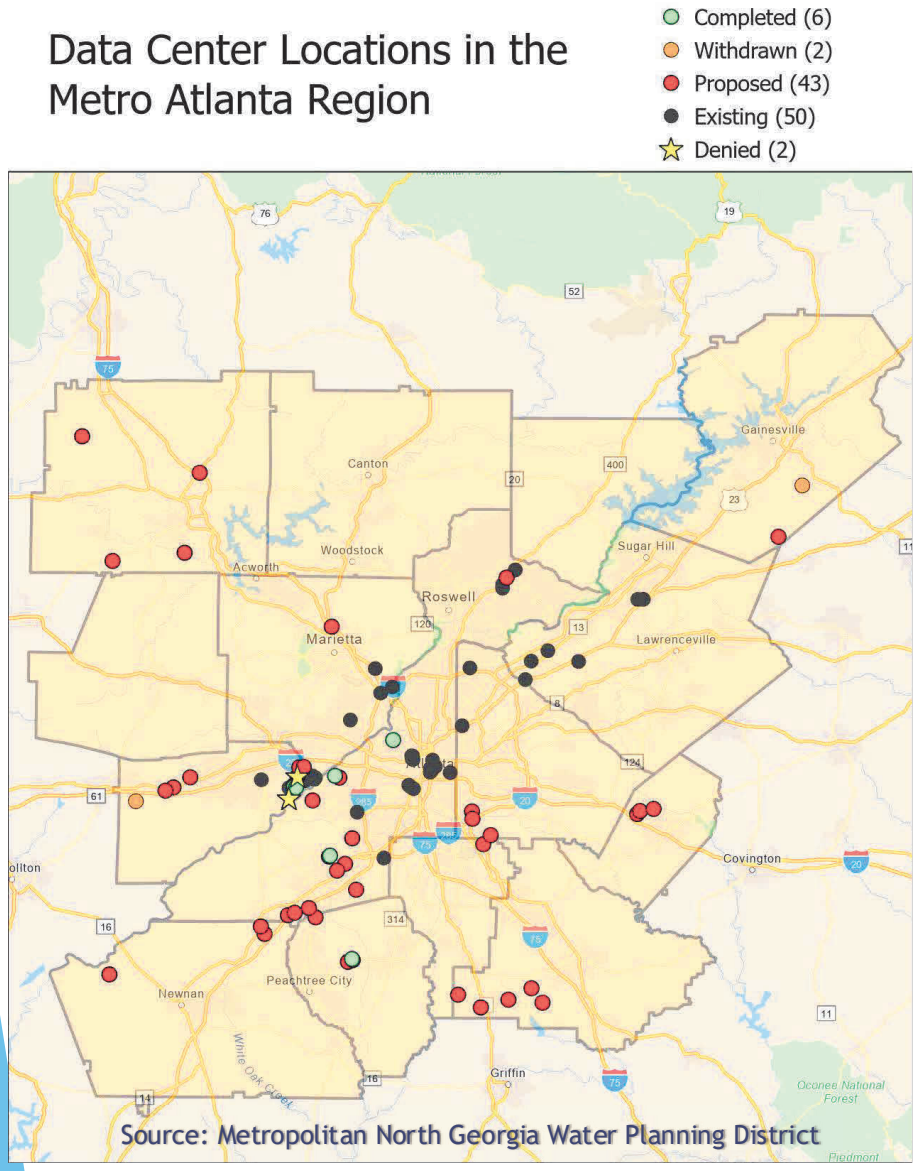
Water Planning for Development



- Developer submits water and sewer needs
- Check WTP and WWTP capacity
- Check needs with Water System Master Plan (long-term plan for future allocations)
- With data centers, peak day demand can vary significantly from average day or annual total
- If over the planned allocation:
  - Availability is limited to long-term plan allocation

    OR
  - Alternate source(s) developed at developer's cost
- Check water and sewer line capacity
- Developer expands/extends infrastructure at its cost
- Development Agreement for complicated cases

Data Center Locations in the Metro Atlanta Region

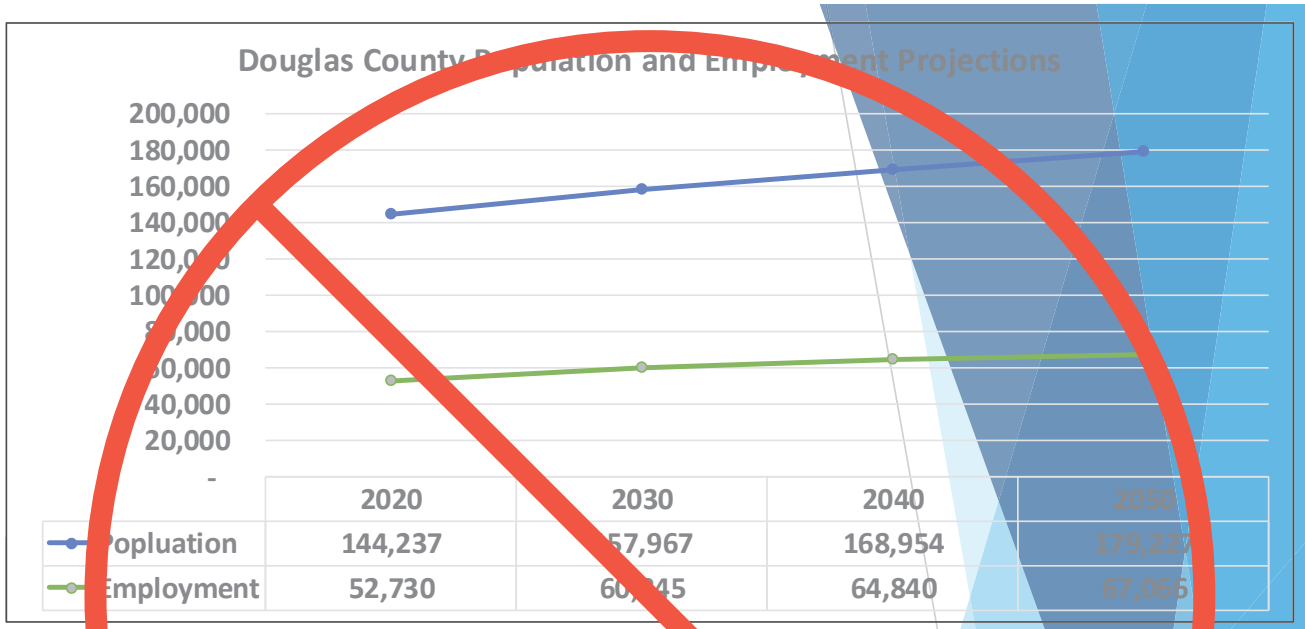


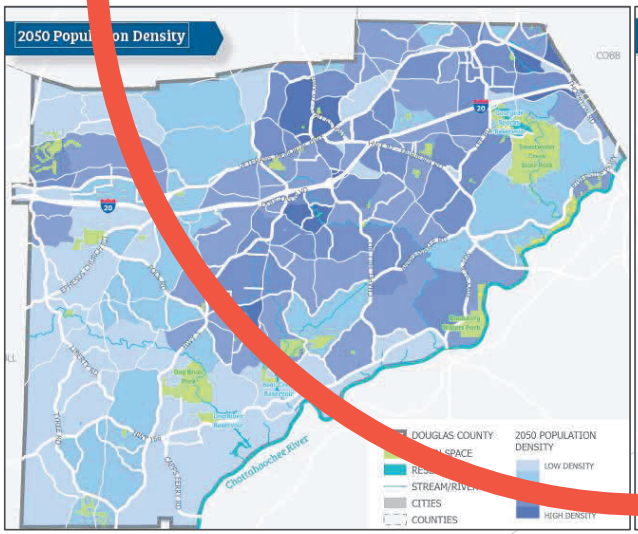
Data Centers in Douglas County

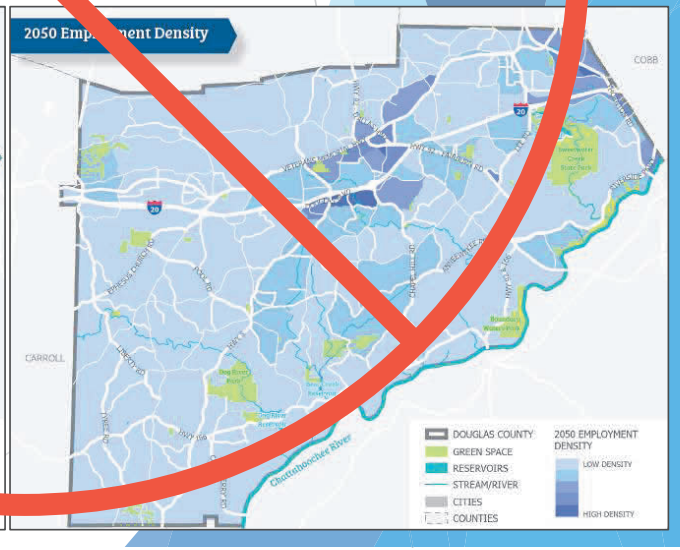
- Around 16 data centers in Douglas County (?)
- We may not know all of them; not all are big water users
- Depends on cooling technology and water/energy nexus
- Of our 16-ish data centers:
  - 1 has special water supply agreement we'll discuss later
  - 3 are same operator/tenant; recently finalized similar agreement
  - The rest fit within our water supply plan
- Most data centers in Douglas County don't use a significant amount of water compared to other development types considering the land area they occupy
- Those that do, we treat like any other large water user (e.g., manufacturing, food processing, etc.)

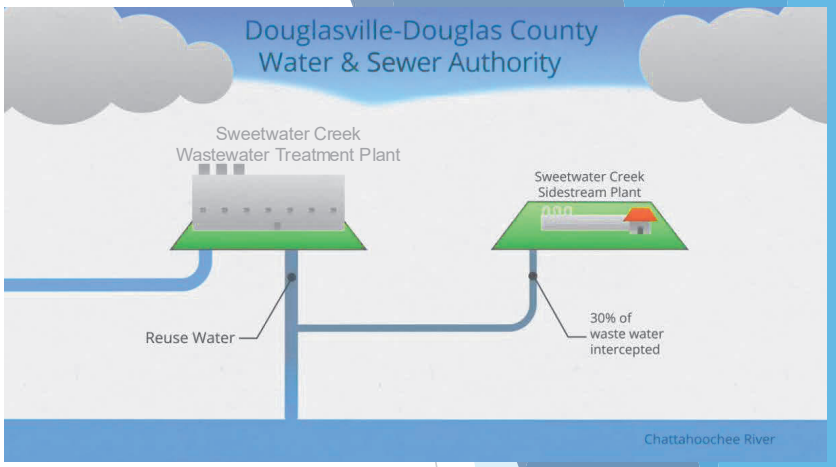
Water Planning: Large Users

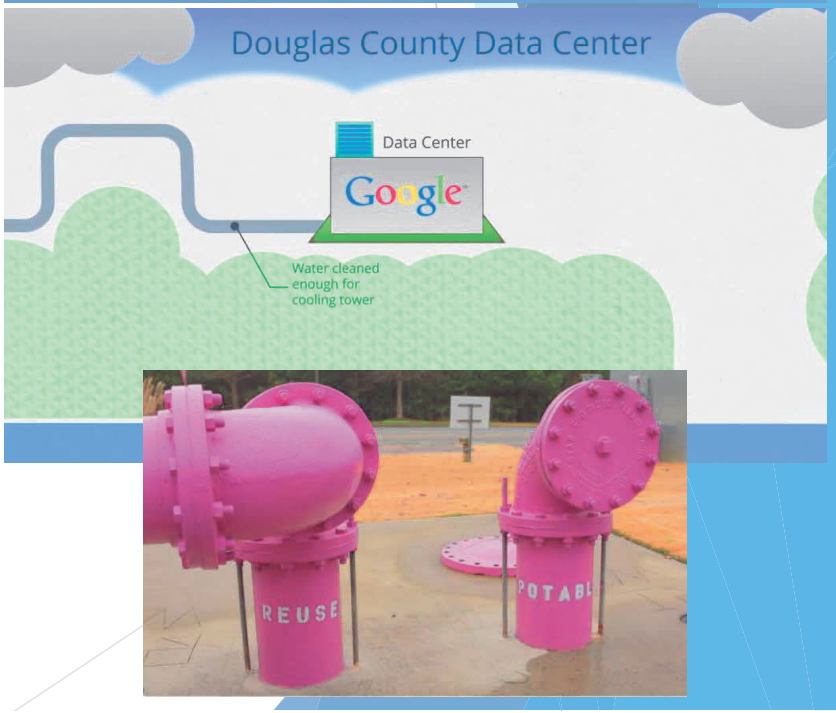
- Is it something the community wants?
- Who answers that question?
- If a development exceeds planned allocation, saying "yes" could mean a trade-off:
  - 50-year water supply → 11 years
  - 7,000 homes → 0 homes
- If the community wants it:
  - Minimize water needs
  - Match best resource to the need
  - Balance resources with benefits








Douglasville-Douglas County
Water & Sewer Authority
Sweetwater Creek
Wastewater Treatment Plant
Sweetwater Creek
Sidestream Plant
Reuse Water
30% of
waste water
intercepted
Chattahoochee River


Douglas County Data Center
Data Center
Google
Water cleaned
enough for
cooling tower
REUSE
POTABL


Thank you!
Questions?
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DOUGLASVILLE - DOUGLAS COUNTY
WATER AND SEWER AUTHORITY

Georgia's State Water Plan

Data Center Discussion

Sean Earley

Council Response to DRI

- Regional Commission notifies GWPPC or GA EPD.
- Metro Water District and ARC have established channels of coordination on DRIs.
- Upper Flint Council created a data center committee in October 2025 before DCA rule change.
- Suwannee-Satilla held vote at last meeting to create a boiler plate response that can be updated. Council Chair and GWPPC will work together.

Atlanta Regional Commission Example DRI Response

"The water resources of the metro Atlanta region are critically important to the region's economic vitality and quality of life.

The region lies in the headwaters of six major river basins, where natural surface water sources are small relative to other major metropolitan areas and in need of a high level of protection.

The firm yield of water supply sources available to individual jurisdictions also varies, and some jurisdictions have larger available supplies than others.

ARC recommends a careful examination by the Water Provider of its capacity to meet peak-day demands for this project, in addition to other current and projected future peak-day demands.

ARC also recommends that the Water Provider require the installation of advanced "waterless" cooling technologies or "near waterless" technology to reduce the burden on the drinking water supplies and increase the resiliency for both the project and the potable water system."

Upper Flint Example DRI Response

The water resources in the Upper Flint region are vital to people, agriculture, wildlife, recreation, and the economy. They are also limited, particularly above the fall line where current permits are either near or slightly exceed sustainable and resilient levels.

During periods of drought, reduced surface water flows negatively impact the region. Water availability from aquifers varies throughout the region, with more available below the fall line than above.

The Upper Flint Water Council recommends new data centers source groundwater from aquifers which have adequate recharge capabilities and won't impact current or future estimated withdrawals. Generally this means that siting data centers in the Piedmont portion of the watershed should be discouraged.

"Closed loop" cooling technology should be implemented in future data center permitting. We recognize that while using this water-efficient technology will conserve local resources it does put a disproportionate water-use impact on neighboring rivers due to massive electric power-supply demands, increasing the water demands for power generation outside of the upper Flint. For this and many other reasons data-center siting should be analyzed and mediated or regulated regionally and statewide, not just on a Council-area basis.

DRI data needs for adequate analysis are: cooling-technology type; average and maximum daily water usage (volume); wastewater-discharge volumes and composition (pollutants); water source; receiving water for wastewater (including for closed-loop system-maintenance water); containment specifications for onsite fuel and chemical storage; receiving water for stormwater runoff; site location; site acreage; acreage of impervious surfaces; power needs; power sources; emergency/alternative water and power sources.

Suwannee-Satilla Example DRI Response

The Suwannee-Satilla Regional Water Council (Council) encourages the management and development of water resources to sustainably and reliably meet domestic, commercial, industrial, and agricultural water needs while ensuring suitable water quality and protecting environmental resources. The surface water resources in the Suwannee-Satilla along with the productive Floridan Aquifer are vital to people, agriculture, wildlife, recreation, and the economy.

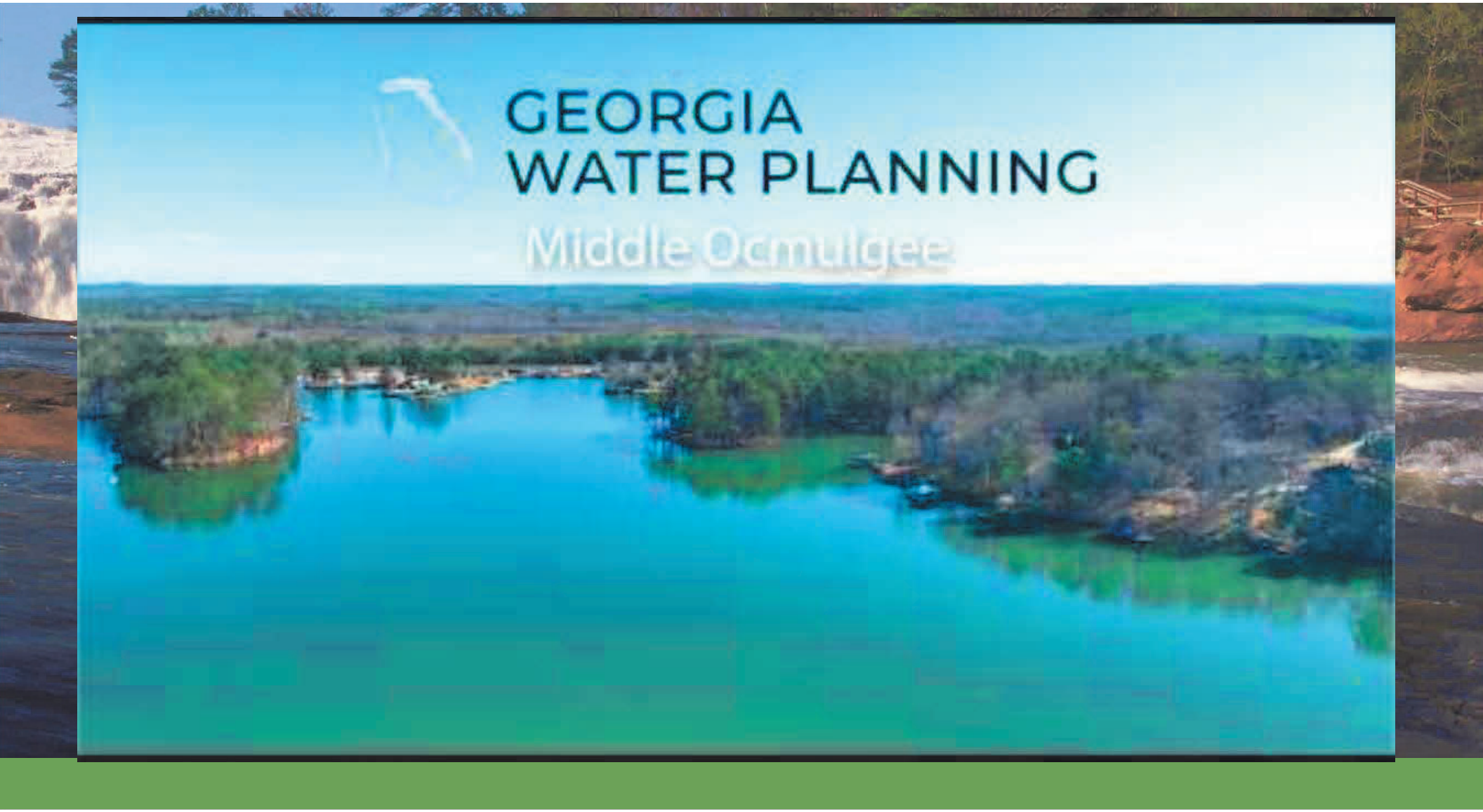
Regarding Project Arrowhead (DRI Project ID # 4689), the Council recognizes that local trade-offs for data center development exist and has identified the following data needs in order to complete an adequate analysis of impact: cooling-technology type; water use (average and maximum daily water usage); water quality (wastewater composition and receiving body), stormwater management, containment specifications for onsite fuel and chemical storage, and impacts to communities and the environment (site location and acreage). Specific to cooling technology, the Council recommends the adoption of advanced low-water or water-free cooling systems that align with regional drought and water-scarcity planning.

On behalf of the entire Council membership, we appreciate the opportunity to comment on the proposed project and encourage a comprehensive assessment of potential impacts. Our Council remains committed to the sound management of our region's water resources and stand ready to assist should this project move forward.

Discuss Middle Ocmulgee Council Next Steps

- Process on moving forward
- Recommend that GWPPC can create draft language for review by Council

Lunch

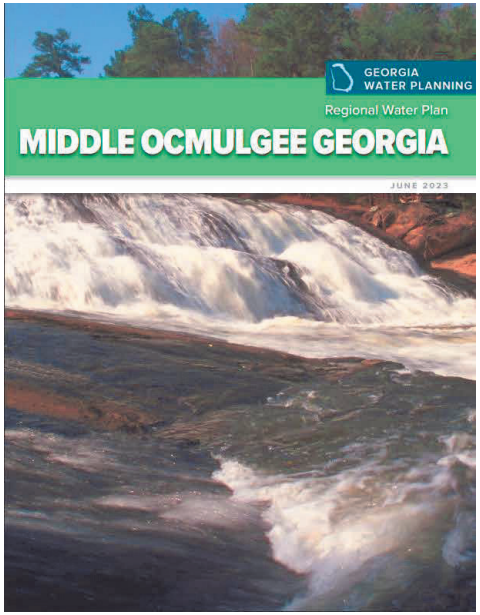

GEORGIA
WATER PLANNING
Middle Ocmulgee

Georgia's State Water Plan

Council Priorities Discussion

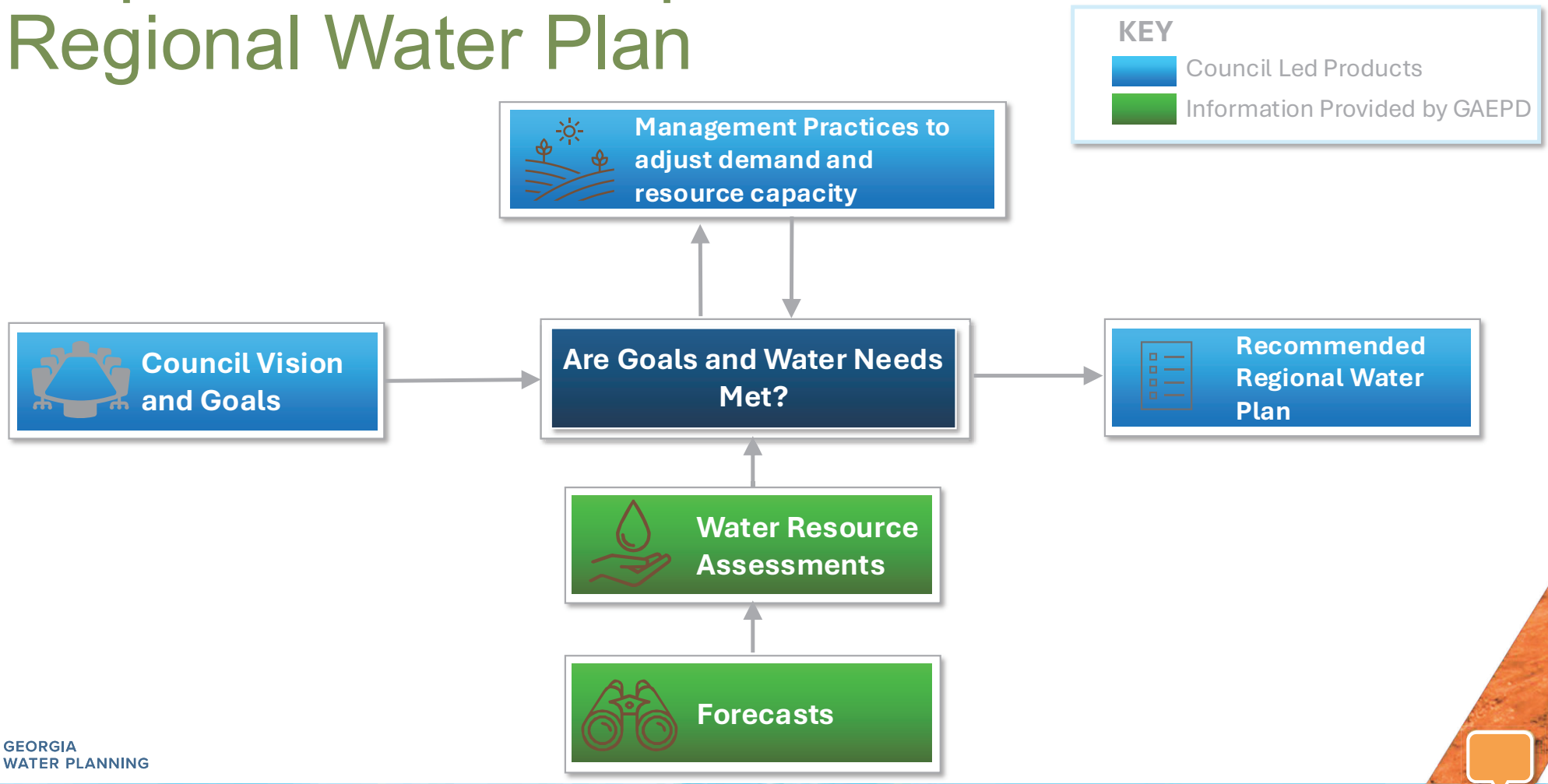
Sarah Skinner

Overview of the Middle Ocmulgee Plan



- Outlines strategies to meet water needs in the region through 2060
- Addresses major water use
- Includes resources assessment
- Forecasts future water resources needs
  - Municipal, industrial, agricultural, and energy
- Forecasts total water demand and wastewater flows
- Encourages 22 management practices

Steps in the Development of the Regional Water Plan



MIDDLE OCMULGEE REGION

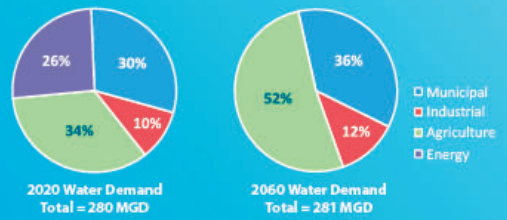
BACKGROUND

The Middle Ocmulgee Regional Water Plan (RWP) was first adopted by the Georgia Environmental Protection Division in September 2011, and as required, updated in 2017 and 2023. The RWP outlines strategies to meet water needs through 2060 and fulfills the Council's vision and goals for the Region. Major water resources include the Flint, Ocmulgee and Oconee River basins as well as the Crystalline rock, Cretaceous sand and Floridan aquifers; approximately 76% of the Region lies in the Ocmulgee River Basin.

OVERVIEW OF MIDDLE OCMULGEE REGION

The Region, which includes 12 counties in central Georgia, is forecast to grow from 607,240 to 737,000 people by 2060. The Region's major population centers include the cities of Covington, Macon and Warner Robins. The Region's leading economic sectors include agriculture, healthcare, data centers, warehouse/distribution and film/entertainment studios. Robins Air Force Base is located in Warner Robins.

FORECASTED REGIONAL WATER DEMANDS



KEY WATER RESOURCES ELEMENTS CONSIDERED BY THE COUNCIL:

1. The Region relies on both surface water and groundwater supplies.
2. Maintaining coordination with neighboring water councils supports effective water resources management by river basin.
3. The Middle Ocmulgee River basin receives water from the Upper Ocmulgee, located in Metro Atlanta. The impact of withdrawals and discharges from this area, as well as land use, on the water quality for Lake Jackson and its tributaries is an important aspect for the RWP.
4. A new management practice category provides focus on utility administration, including utility finance and asset management.
5. A wastewater management practice category was separated from water quality for clarity in the 2023 RWP.

Georgia's State Water Plan
MIDDLE OCMULGEE REGION

https://waterplanning.georgia.gov/water-planning-regions/middle-ocmulgee-water-planning-region

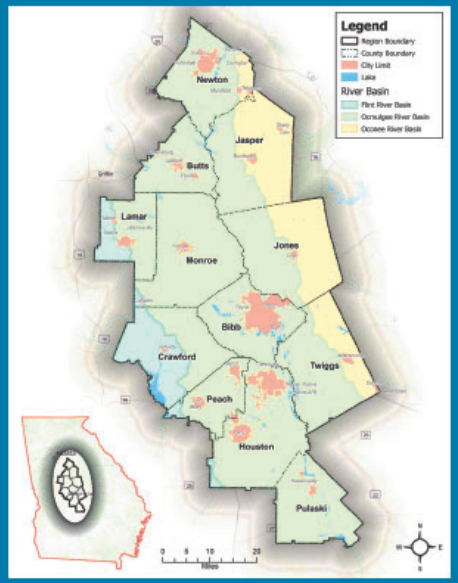
SUMMARY OF 2023 RESOURCE ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Surface Water Availability: The Basin Environmental Assessment Model (BEAM), which enables river basin resource assessments at a finer scale than previously possible, models all facility water withdrawals and discharges. BEAM provides an assessment of water supply availability, against the context of an 80-year period of record (1939-2018), which is reflected in the number of challenge days and total water shortage for modeled facilities.

The BEAM tool assessed 24 water supply withdrawals and 29 wastewater discharges in the 12-county Region. Of these, 12% of withdrawals and 66% of discharges are predicted to have at least one challenge day over the simulation period for 2060 conditions, indicating a possibility of assimilative capacity constraints in the future.

Surface Water Quality: Most streams in the Region have available assimilative capacity with some localized exceptions. GA EPD has established total maximum daily loads (TMDLs) for Lake Jackson. Management of future nutrient loadings through non-point source management and wastewater treatment facilities will continue to be an important element to preserve water quality.

Groundwater Availability: The Crystalline Rock aquifer north of the Fall Line, and the Cretaceous aquifer both have sufficient yield to meet forcasted needs. Pulaski County and portions of Houston and Twiggs Counties have access to the Floridan aquifer, the combined 2060 demand for these areas is between the low and high sustainable yield, indicating a possible future challenge.



MIDDLE OCMULGEE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

To promote stewardship of the Region's water resources, the 2023 RWP recommends 22 management practices, highlighted below:

Administrative: Supports utility management, including utility full cost accounting practices, asset management and local planning (utility master plans, biosolids management and environmental planning).

Water Conservation (Demand Management): Supports implementation of practices such as conservation rate structures and billing systems to better communicate water usage to customers.

Water Supply Management: Practices include consideration of additional water supply sources, maximizing reservoirs and investigating new groundwater sources, evaluating interconnections, promoting beneficial reuse, considering expansion of treatment capacity and investigating impacts of Metro Atlanta's water withdrawals and discharges on water quantity and quality.

Wastewater Management: Practices include considering expansion of treatment facilities, mitigating impacts of septic systems management, and considering the benefits of constructed wetlands.

Water Quality Management: Practices include encouraging stormwater utilities, adopting ordinances to protect sensitive land, considering implementation of stormwater standards for rural areas, watershed protection, and water quality trading.

Recommendations to State: Focus on funding options to support implementation of the Plan, continue support of the Seed Grant program, fund innovative research to address state-wide water resource challenges, such as detailed mapping and modeling of groundwater resources, as well as future policy considerations around in-stream flows.

Council Priorities Activities

- Answer the questions on your sheet individually. (longer answer)
- Answer the prompts at the back of the room. (short answer)

Council Priorities Activities

- Looking back over the past 10-15 years, what changes have you observed in how this region manages water supply, stormwater, and resilience – and what lessons should we carry forward into the next planning cycle?
- When you think about the Middle Ocmulgee region 20 years from now, what does “success” look like for our water resources?
- What water-related issues do you think will most influence the region’s ability to grow and thrive over the next five to ten years?

Vision

"The Middle Ocmulgee Water Council will work so that our water resource, both surface and subsurface, is of exceptional quality and quantity for the well-being and prosperity of all that will follow. Our plan will consider the resource's natural integrity, wise conservation, and prudent management for continuing economic development and enhanced quality of life for all."

Goals

1. Maximize water supply sources to the extent practicable to provide sufficient water supply for the region.
2. Support the protection of natural stream integrity to enhance ecosystem benefits such as water quality, fish and wildlife, floodplain protection, and recreation.
3. Promote conservation of and efficient use of water.
4. Promote properly managed wastewater discharges and beneficial reuse.
5. Support the reduction of non-point source pollution by advocating for enhanced stormwater management and better land management practices.
6. Support the comprehensive planning and management of water resources to maintain a healthy economy, ensure a high quality of life, and protect our natural resources.

Georgia's State Water Plan

Public Comments and Closing Remarks

Chair Tony Rojas

Georgia's State Water Plan

Adjourn