

Savannah-Upper Ogeechee Regional Water Planning Council Meeting

March 23, 2023



**GEORGIA
WATER PLANNING**

waterplanning.georgia.gov

Welcome and Opening Remarks

Council Chair, Bruce Azevedo

An aerial photograph of a swampy landscape with dense trees and water. The image is in grayscale and serves as the background for the slide.

Council Business

Council Chair, Bruce Azevedo

Approve today's
meeting agenda

Approve November
10, 2022, meeting
summary



Georgia's State Water Plan

Savannah-Upper Ogeechee Regional Water Council
Draft Agenda – March 23, 2023

10:00 am

Elberton Arts Center

17 W Church St, Elberton, GA 30635

[Click here to join the meeting virtually](#)

- | | |
|--------------------|---|
| 9:30 – 10:00 a.m. | Council Registration/Guest Sign In
<i>Ashley Reid and Autumn McNeill (in-person)</i>
<i>Lina Yazbak (virtual)</i> |
| 10:00 – 10:05 a.m. | Welcome, <i>SUO Council Chairman Azevedo</i> |
| 10:05 – 10:15 a.m. | Council Business, <i>SUO Chairman Azevedo</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Approve November 10, 2022, draft Council Meeting Summary• Approve today's draft meeting agenda |
| 10:15 – 10:30 a.m. | EPD Updates – <i>Haydn Blaize, Georgia EPD</i> |
| 10:30 – 11:15 a.m. | Review Revisions for Plan Sections 1 - 5, <i>Ashley Reid, CDM Smith</i> |
| 11:15 – 11:30 a.m. | Part I – Management Practices Overview |

30 MINUTE LUNCH BREAK

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| 12:00 – 1:15 p.m. | Part II – Management Practices Breakout Exercise, <i>Ashley Reid, CDM Smith</i> |
| 1:15 – 1:30 p.m. | Soil Amendments Updates – <i>Elbert Co. Chairman Lee Vaughn and Savannah Riverkeeper Tonya Bonitatibus</i> |
| 1:30 – 1:45 p.m. | Next Steps/Public Comments /Local Elected Official Comments |
| 2:00 p.m. | Adjourn |

waterplanning.georgia.gov

Memorandum

Savannah-Upper Ogeechee Regional Water Planning Council

From: Ashley Reid, CDM Smith and Michelle Vincent, Jacobs

Date: November 10, 2022

Subject: Savannah-Upper Ogeechee Regional Water Planning Council Meeting Summary (Subject to Council review and approval)

Welcome, Introductions, and Council Business

Chairman Bruce Azevedo called the meeting to order. Chairman Azevedo called for a motion to approve the prior Savannah-Upper Ogeechee (SUO) Council Meeting Minutes (July 2022). Minor corrections to minutes noted and will be addressed at break. Minutes (as corrected) were approved by motion, second, and unanimous vote.

Chairman Azevedo called for a motion to approve the draft agenda. Agenda was approved by motion, second, and unanimous vote.

Chair Azevedo invited Ashley Reid to give updates related to Regional Planning.

Plan Updates

Planning Schedule Updates

Ashley Reid gave a brief re-cap of the schedule as presented at the July meeting. She updated the Council on the plan schedule to date, which includes an additional six months of planning time, to ensure new Council members are incorporated into the process and that sufficient time is available for completing the plans.

Ashley recognized Brendan Thompson, a newly appointed Council Member.

Seed Grant Updates

Haydn Blaize, GAEPD gave the Council a brief update on seed grant status. EPD has offered a no-cost one-year extension to the FY2020 seed grants with the City of Savannah. For FY2021 – the City of Savannah water monitoring upgrades are in progress. The 2021 project is the second phase to the 2019 project and will be complete on 8/3/2023.

The 2022 Project of water quality on instream function of Savannah is in progress. For FY2022, the urban water complex with City of Augusta is underway. Both FY2022 projects are scheduled for completion in 2024.

Regional grant funds in the region right now are more than \$400K.

FY2023 applications closed on October 31, 2022. Eight applications were received from six different council groups.

Georgia EPD Updates

Haydn Blaize, GA EPD

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**



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,
mary.gazaway@dnr.ga.gov
or (470) 524-0556

Grant Project Updates Cont'd

- Seed Grants FY20: **In Progress – 1 year no-cost time extension**
 - **High Frequency Monitoring and the Effects of Agricultural Water Withdrawal in the Savannah Upper Ogeechee Watersheds**
 - Lead Partner: City of Augusta
 - Date: 4/1/2020 – 9/30/20**23**

Grant Project Updates Cont'd

- Seed Grants FY21: **In Progress**
 - **Upgrading Publicly Accessible Water Monitoring for the Savannah-Upper Ogeechee RWP** – *(Phase II of Seed Grant FY19: Initiating and Upgrading Publicly Accessible Water Monitoring for the SUO and Coastal RWPs)*
 - Lead Partner: City of Savannah
 - Date: 9/1/2021 – 8/31/2023

Grant Project Updates Cont'd

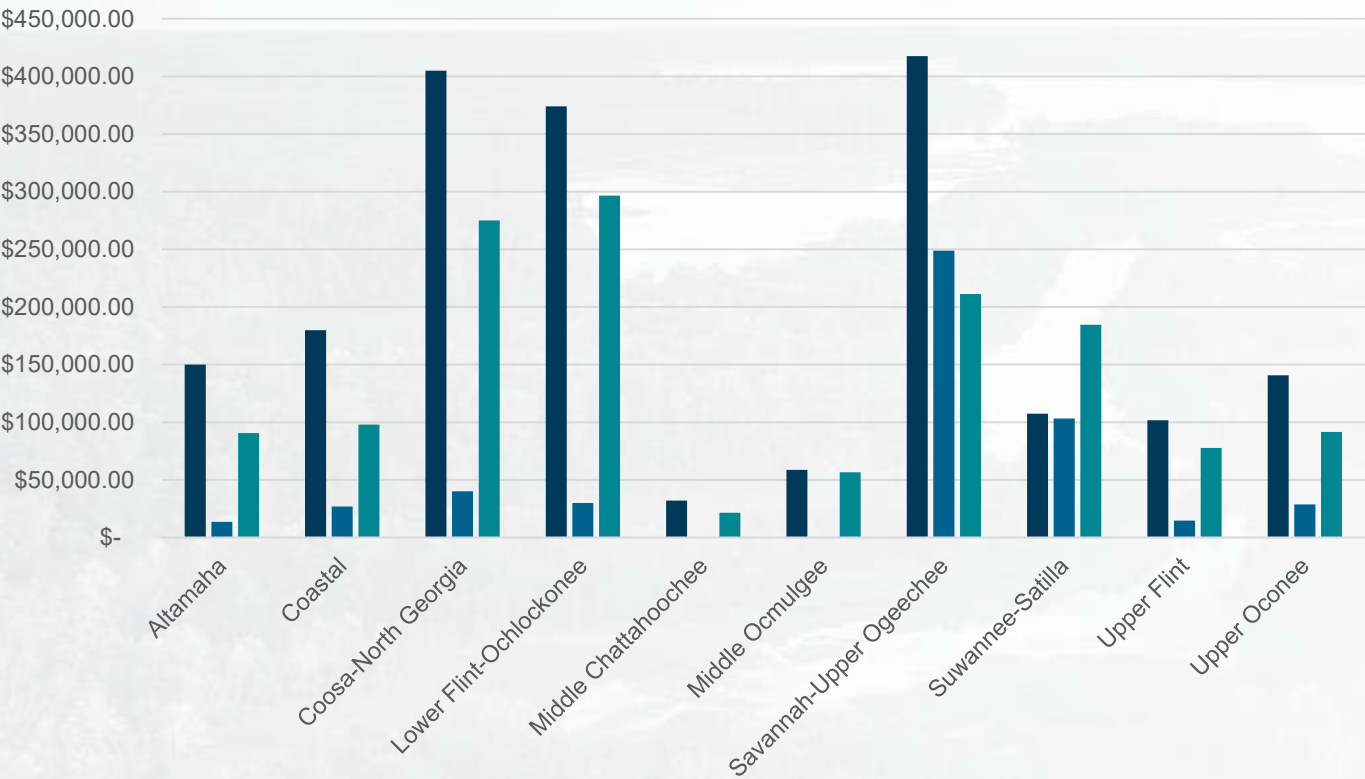
- Seed Grants FY22: **In Progress**
 - **Effect of water quantity on the instream function of the Savannah River**
 - Lead Partners: University of Georgia
 - Award Amount: \$75,000
 - Date: 04/01/2022 – 09/30/2024

Grant Project Updates Cont'd

- Seed Grants FY22: **In Progress**
 - **Pilot study to preserve in-stream water quality and instream flows below an urban pond complex using a real-time control system**
 - Lead Partner: City of Augusta
 - Award Amount: \$75,000
 - Date: 09/13/2022 - 10/31/2024

RWP Seed Grant Funding Totals

RWP Seed Grant Funds By Council
SFY2014-SFY2022



Savannah-Upper Ogeechee Council Funding Totals

Grant Funds: \$417,570
Cash Match: \$248,798
In-Kind Match: \$211,244



Review Revisions for Plan Sections 1-5

Ashley Reid, CDM Smith



Review Revisions for Plan Sections 1-5



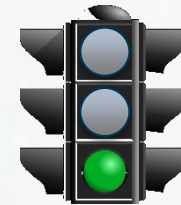
Part I: Management Practices Overview

Ashley Reid, CDM Smith

Addressing Water Needs and Regional Goals

Table 6-1A: Priority Water Management Practices Selected for the Savannah-Upper Ogeechee Planning Region

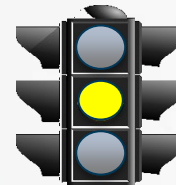
Action(s) Needed	Applicable Area	Description/Definition of Action
Water Demand Management Practices Goals Addressed: 1 (economy and sustainability), 5 (water reuse/conservation), 6 (balance human needs v. habitat needs), 7 (regional planning) Gap Addressed: Potential Minimum Instream Flow Shortage in Ogeechee Basin (WD3 & WD4)		
WD1 - Implement Tier 1 Water Conservation Practices Required by SB370 or the EPD rules for water efficiency and drought management	ALL	<p>Tier 1 water conservation practices include those required by statute (SB370 – Water Stewardship Act) or under the drought management and water efficiency rules adopted by the DNR Board in 2015. Current State rules and regulations address the following water conservation practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water loss auditing requirements for public water systems (serving more than 3,300 individuals), according to IWA/AWWA Water Audit Method^[1] (Ga. Comp. R. & Regs R. 391-3-33, OCGA §12-5-4.1) • Demonstration of progress towards improving water supply efficiency by public water systems (Ga. Comp. R. & Regs R. 391-3-33) • Submittal of drought contingency plans by water withdrawal permittees (Ga. Comp. R. & Regs R. 391-3-6-.07(4) and 391-3-2-.04(11)) • Building code standards for high efficiency plumbing fixtures in new construction after July 1, 2012 (OCGA 8-2-3) • Installation of submeters in multiunit residential buildings and certain retail and light industrial buildings granted a permit for construction after July 1, 2012 (OCGA 12-5-180.1)



Addressing Water Needs and Regional Goals

Table 6-1A: Priority Water Management Practices Selected for the Savannah-Upper Ogeechee Planning Region

Action(s) Needed	Applicable Area	Description/Definition of Action
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Even-odd watering restrictions for non-irrigation outdoor water uses during Drought Response Level 2 and 3 (Ga. Comp. R. & Regs R. 391-3-30)• Agricultural withdrawal permittees to comply with SB370 requirements regarding classification of existing agricultural water permits by status (active, inactive and unused permits)
WD2 – Evaluate/Encourage Tier 2 (Non-Farm) Water Conservation Practices	ALL	<p>The Council supports and encourages the adoption of voluntary water conservation measures and recommends using existing incentive programs to support implementation of such management practices. Some recommended management practices for municipal and industrial permittees may include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conservation-oriented rate structures for residential and/or commercial water customers• Adoption of a beneficial meter calibration, repair and replacement program• Studying feasibility of reuse• Exploring use of grey water• Adoption of replacement or retrofit programs for plumbing fixtures (e.g., toilet rebates)• Offering facility-specific water use audits• Considering rain or moisture sensor shut-off devices for irrigation systems



Addressing Water Needs and Regional Goals

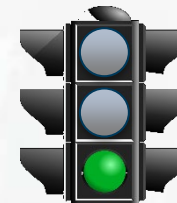
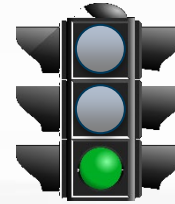
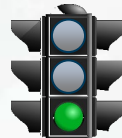
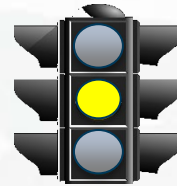


Table 6-1A: Priority Water Management Practices Selected for the Savannah-Upper Ogeechee Planning Region

Action(s) Needed	Applicable Area	Description/Definition of Action
WD3 – Evaluate/Encourage Tier 3 and Tier 4 Agricultural Water Conservation Practices	Ogeechee River Basin	<p>Review and implement applicable agricultural water efficiency and demand management practices that are “beyond basic” to reduce surface water demand and in the Ogeechee River Basin. Some recommended management practices for agricultural permittees may include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using rain sensors on irrigation systems • Irrigating during time of day with low evaporation rate <p><i>Note for WD1 to WD3: The full list of specific conservation goals and tiered conservation practices recommended by the Savannah-Upper Ogeechee Council can be found in Technical Memorandum – Demand Management Practices (August 2011), available on the Council's website.</i></p>
WD4 – Monitor Agricultural Use	ALL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete installation of irrigation meters on all major agricultural withdrawal permittees • Ensure appropriate procedures for reading and maintaining irrigation meters, including a meter calibration and replacement program and provisions for self-reporting • Use monitored data during critical period to improve calibration of existing Resource Assessment model • Review current agricultural withdrawal permits for potential modifications to protect minimum instream flows • Monitor agricultural withdrawals from the Ogeechee River on a continuous basis to prevent development of a potential future supply gap • Evaluate future withdrawal permit request from the Ogeechee River against monitored usage before issuing future permits

Table 6-1A: Priority Water Management Practices Selected for the Savannah-Upper Ogeechee Planning Region

Action(s) Needed	Applicable Area	Description/Definition of Action
Water Supply Management Practices Goals Addressed: 1 (economy and sustainability), 6 (balance human needs v. habitat needs), 7 (regional planning) Gap Addressed: Potential Minimum Instream Flow Shortage in Ogeechee Basin (WS2, WS3, WS4, WS5), Water Infrastructure Need (WS1)		
WS1- Evaluate/Update Local Water Master Plans	ALL	Local entities to re-evaluate every five years based on system demand or other growth factors, to ensure consistency with Regional Water Plan recommendations, as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update population and water demand projections with local details; compare to Regional Water Plan forecast trend and assumptions • Adequacy of water supply sources • Need for additional water supply/ alternatives supply source analysis • Water use efficiency • Treatment and distribution system needs and options • Review and update capital improvements • Review and update funding requirements • Recommended planning horizon: 20 years
WS2 – Monitor Streamflow to Confirm the Frequency and Magnitude of the Predicted Gap	Ogeechee River Basin	Develop streamflow monitoring program to confirm the frequency, duration and magnitude of the predicted gap at existing planning nodes, plus a new node located in the Savannah-Upper Ogeechee Region (Upper Ogeechee)
WS3 – Conduct Instream Flow Studies	Ogeechee River Basin	Conduct instream flow studies at various segments of the basin to determine required instream flow values to be compared to values used in the Resource Assessment Model
WS4 - Increase Groundwater Supplies	Ogeechee River Basin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use feasibility study¹ involving the Eden Node to evaluate replacement of surface water withdrawals with groundwater withdrawals. • Encourage groundwater for agricultural use in the future.



Addressing Water Needs and Regional Goals

Table 6-1A: Priority Water Management Practices Selected for the Savannah-Upper Ogeechee Planning Region

Action(s) Needed	Applicable Area	Description/Definition of Action
WS5 – Decrease Surface Water Use during Low Flow Periods	Ogeechee River Basin	Develop drought management plan to decrease surface water withdrawals for agricultural use during low flow periods

Water Quality Management Practices

Gap Addressed: 1 (economy and sustainability), 6 (balance human needs v. habitat needs), 7 (regional planning)

Gap Addressed: Wastewater Infrastructure Need (WQ1, WQ2, WQ3)

WQ1 - Evaluate/ Update Local Wastewater Master Plans	ALL	<p>Local entities to re-evaluate every five years based on wastewater treatment demand or other growth factors to ensure consistency with Regional Water Plan recommendations, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update population and wastewater flow projections with local details; compare to Regional Water Plan forecast trend and assumptions • Evaluate future wastewater treatment, collection and disposal needs and options • As needed, apply for new or updated existing waste load allocations to ensure compliance with water quality standards • Evaluate septic disposal options for lower density areas without centralized treatment services • Evaluate/update source water protection measures • Review and update capital improvements • Review and update funding requirements • Recommended planning horizon: 20 years
WQ2 - Upgrade Existing Wastewater Treatment Facilities	ALL	As identified by local wastewater master plans or evaluations, increase treatment capacity or improve level of treatment as necessary to meet future capacity needs and/or water quality standards.
WQ3 - Construct New Advanced Wastewater Treatment Facilities	ALL	As identified by local wastewater master plans or evaluations, provide advanced treatment as necessary to meet future capacity needs and water quality standards.

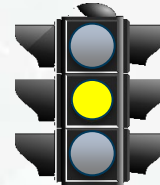
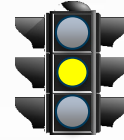


Addressing Water Needs and Regional Goals

Addressing Water Needs and Regional Goals

Table 6-1A: Priority Water Management Practices Selected for the Savannah-Upper Ogeechee Planning Region

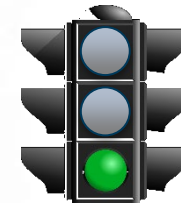
Action(s) Needed	Applicable Area	Description/Definition of Action
WQ4 – Support Forestry Commission Water Quality Program	ALL	Support Georgia Forestry Commission's (GFC) water quality program consisting of MP development, education/ outreach, implementation/ compliance monitoring, and a complaint resolution process
Educational Initiatives		
Goals Addressed: : 3 (stakeholder relationships), 4 (education), 5 (water reuse/conservation)		
ED1 - Develop Regional or Customize State or Other Available Educational Program and Materials for Localized Implementation	ALL	<p>Modify existing state education materials to address regional and local issues and distribute to local governments, land managers, and water utilities for use or further customization. Materials can cover the following topics depending on local needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water conservation and efficiency for municipal /commercial / industrial / agricultural users • Outdoor watering and gardening best management practices for residential users • Water conservation/efficiency for landscape and irrigation professionals • Water conservation/efficiency certification program for professional landscaping and irrigation • Best management practices for agriculture, silviculture, and other land management practices • Pet waste impacts on water quality and proper disposal • Stormwater management • Current water issues awareness, including awareness of drought conditions • Septic tank (OSSMS) installation/maintenance • Protection of sensitive <u>lands</u>



Addressing Water Needs and Regional Goals

Table 6-1A: Priority Water Management Practices Selected for the Savannah-Upper Ogeechee Planning Region

Action(s) Needed	Applicable Area	Description/Definition of Action
ED2 - Promote Coordinated Environmental Planning	ALL	Incorporate regional water planning goals and management practices into local comprehensive planning of land use, transportation, and water resources
<p>Eden Node includes Burke, Glascock, Jenkins, Jefferson, Screven, Taliaferro, and Warren counties</p> <p>WD – Water Demand Management</p> <p>WS – Water Supply Management</p> <p>WQ – Water Quality Management</p> <p>ED – Education Initiatives</p> <p>Source: Technical Memorandum - Management Practices Selection (May 2011)</p>		





30 MINUTE LUNCH BREAK



Part II: Management Practices Breakout Exercise

Ashley Reid, CDM Smith

An aerial photograph of a wetland area, showing a network of water channels and dense forest. The image is in grayscale, with the text overlaid in white. The water channels are dark, and the forest is a lighter gray. The sky is a uniform dark gray.

Soil Amendments Updates

An aerial photograph of a wetland area, showing a network of water channels and dense forest. The image is in grayscale, with the text overlaid in white. The background shows a vast expanse of water and trees, with some buildings visible in the lower right corner.

Public/Elected Officials Comments/Questions



Thank You

Need More Information?

reidan@cdmsmith.com

Haydn.Blaize@dnr.ga.gov