

## Memorandum

*To: Upper Oconee Regional Water Planning Council*

*From: Dale Jones and Zakiya Seymour, Jacobs*

*Date: December 22, 2016*

*Subject: Upper Oconee Council Meeting 3  
Regional Water Plan Review and Revision Process  
Meeting Summary*

This memorandum provides the meeting summary of the Upper Oconee Regional Water Planning Council individual meeting, which took place during the Joint Council Meeting held on November 17, 2016 at the Oconee Fall Line Technical College in Dublin, Georgia. A Joint Council Meeting was held for the six eastern Regional Water Planning (RWP) Councils (Altamaha, Coastal Georgia, Middle Ocmulgee, Suwannee-Satilla, Savannah- Upper Ogeechee and Upper Oconee) from 10 AM to 4 PM. The Upper Oconee RWP Council held a brief individual Council Meeting during the afternoon portion of the Joint Council Meeting. Council Member Hunter Bicknell ran the meeting in Chairman Davis and Vice-Chair Graham's absence. The meeting began with the Planning Contractor reviewing the individual Council agenda. This memorandum provides a summary of the items discussed at the individual Council Meeting that was held from approximately 1:20 PM to 2:30 PM.

### Discussion

#### *Breakout Session Debrief*

The Planning Contractor reviewed a presentation that summarized the resource assessment for surface water, groundwater, and water quality.

Council Member Charlie Armentrout commented that wastewater permitting included only NPDES permits and not land application system (LAS) permitting. He also reminded the Council that Liz Booth mentioned total nitrogen limits, not just ammonia (NH<sub>3</sub>). Charlie then mentioned that future conditions appear to be generally comparable to Round 1 due to changes in the population demand.

Addendum: Land application system permits were included in the municipal wastewater forecast, but they are not included in some of the water quality resource assessment modeling, as they do not involve a direct discharge.

Horace Gee (Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District) stated that the City of Gainesville cannot go any tighter on their limits given the best technology available. However, putting limits on other wastewater plants will help utilities future downstream.

Council Member Charlie Armentrout commented that EPD does not have any regulations for non-point sources. He also stated that nonpoint controls upstream of the lake may be the driver for controlling nonpoint in the future as nutrient management plans are developed to reduce lake nutrient loads.

### ***Management Practices Identified for Review and Revision***

The Planning Contractor reviewed a summary document detailing the Round 1 management practices as well as the management practices highlighted in the interim review process.

The Council requested that a summary of the management practices from Round 1 be sent to them. The Council would respond with written feedback of their thoughts on the need for those management practices moving forward. The Council stated it wanted to complete this task ahead of the next Council Meeting. If additional information is needed to make a decision on revised management practices, that information could be gathered ahead of the next Council Meeting.

### ***Council Coordination Recommendation***

The Council did not see an immediate need for coordinating with other Councils, as the Upper Oconee Council region did not have large surface water and groundwater gaps. The Planning Contractor explained the need for coordination may be driven by political jurisdictions shared between two Regional Councils and the need to coordinate management practices to address gaps downstream.

### ***Report Back***

Council Member Hunter Bicknell gathered the following insights to report back to the Joint Council:

- Upper Oconee RWP does not feel that the more recent farm pond analysis incorporated in the surface water modeling work conducted in the Ogeechee basin needs to be extended to the Upper Oconee Council area or be expanded statewide.
- Upper Oconee RWP would like to see an analysis examining groundwater quality.
- Upper Oconee RWP would like to know if there will be an attempt to analyze the cost and quantify the benefit of certain management practices.
- Upper Oconee RWP would like to have a mechanism to implement best management practices as well as determine how to scale these practices for smaller utilities.

## **Council Meeting Business**

### ***319(h) Grant Project Update/Seed Grant Updates***

Rahn Milligan from Pine Country RC&D provided an update on the 319 Grant Project. The roles

and responsibilities for the various stakeholders are currently being negotiated. The contract should be finalized by the end of the second week of December.

Once the contract is finalized, a watershed advisory council will be established. This advisory council will assist in identifying the locations of the pollutant of concern. The grant project will also include a 12-month water sampling event. Pine Country RC&D would like to convene the Council for their review of the sampling data at the completion of its analysis.

#### ***Approve meeting minutes from June 23, 2016 Council Meeting***

The Council Members present voted to approve the meeting minutes as presented.

#### ***Summary of Subcommittee Council Meeting - Sept 22, 2016***

Addendum: A summary the subcommittee "office hours" teleconference held on September 22, 2016 is included in this meeting summary. Attendees of the teleconference included: Chairman Melvin Davis, Hunter Bicknell, Jennifer Welte (EPD), Christine Voudy (EPD), Dale Jones (Jacobs), and Zakiya Seymour (Jacobs). During the September 22<sup>nd</sup> teleconference:

- Dale Jones and Zakiya Seymour provided an overall progress update and summarized the resource assessments updates provided during the June 23 Joint Council Meeting.
- Hunter Bicknell noted that the increase in surface water usage during 2011-2015 review period was also influenced by the increase in population in the area after the economic downturn in 2008-2010. This growth in population was primarily seen in the northern part of the region.
- Zakiya Seymour reviewed the response provided to Wayne Haynie (Director, Oconee County Utility Department) regarding the demand projections for Oconee County. She forwarded Chairman Davis the email thread for his reference.
- Jennifer Welte stated that advanced materials for the Joint Council meeting will be provided to the Council as soon as possible so that they have a preview of them.
- Hunter Bicknell stated that while Round 1 projections did not recognize the economic downturn, the current projections may be under forecasted if areas begin to experience economic growth again. However, he felt that the current forecast provides a good analysis of current status.

#### ***Potential Future Office Hours/Subcommittee Conference Calls***

Council Member Hunter Bicknell suggested that a subcommittee should no longer be convened due to the number of active Council Members. He suggested that that the next office hours should available to the entire Council.

#### ***New Business***

The Council would like to have its next meeting at the Reynolds Plantation.

Council Member Larry Eley would like EPD to detail if the adjustment in the overall review and revision schedule has any impact to the legislation and if the schedule extension is permitted by

the legislature.

Addendum: The overall review and revision process is guided by State Water Plan and EPD Rules, which states that the regional plans must be reviewed at least every five years. The minor adjustment presented during the Joint Council Meeting has been approved by the EPD Director and is consistent with EPD guidance.

### **Public Comment**

Council Member Hunter Bicknell opened the floor for public comments.

Patti Lanford (Georgia Department of Natural Resources – Wildlife Resources Division) spoke and reminded the Council about the unique nature of their mission statement, cautioned the Council that water conservation was a critical component to ensuring the future of wildlife in the region.

Council Member Stuart Cofer asked if the numbers of point-source polluters gotten better. Ms. Lanford responded stating that the big issue is the non-point source polluters; at some point, non-point source pollution exemptions will have to be reduced or eliminated.

Council Member Stuart Cofer mentioned that there are several best management practices that exist. Ms. Lanford stated that the issue is with those that do not comply.

Council Member Hunter Bicknell expressed the Council's appreciation to Ms. Lanford for her dedication to the Upper Oconee Regional Water Planning Council and the Georgia Department of Natural Resources.

### **Meeting Attendance**

#### Upper Oconee Regional Water Planning Council Members in attendance:

- Charles Armentrout; Hunter Bicknell; Stuart Cofer; Larry J. Eley; Linda S. Gantt; Benjamin Tarbutton; Wayne Haynie attended as a proxy for Melvin Davis

#### Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District Members in attendance:

- Horace Gee (representing the City of Gainesville, Georgia)

#### Georgia EPD Representative in attendance:

- Christine Voudy

#### Regional Water Planning Council Planning Contractors in attendance:

- Dale Jones, Zakiya Seymour (representing Jacobs)

#### Public Attendees:

- Greg Boike (representing the Middle Georgia Regional Commission)
- Harold West (representing the Georgia Forestry Commission)
- Patti Lanford (representing Georgia Department of Natural Resources – Wildlife Resources Division)