



Georgia's State Water Plan

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: **October 9, 2019**

Welcome and Introductions/Approve Agenda

Brooke welcomed, introductions made, and Brooke made motion to approve agenda.

- Motion – Berg, second O-Bryant – all in favor of approving agenda

CNG Council Members

Brooke discussed new council member appointments.

- Council is down by several members.
- Plan to submit recommended list to governor's office in a few weeks.

CNG Website Updates

Craig Hensley gave updates on the CNG Website.

- Primary change: incorporating Water, Stormwater, and Wastewater from the regional water plan to the main page for easy access.
- Question – List of council members on site?
 - A list is available and location on the website was shown.
- Question – number of hits for website data?
 - Question was not immediately answered, but the information can be gathered.

Seed Grants status

Brooke Anderson shared an update on seed grant applications for the region.

- Christine Voudy - \$300k in grants available. Must be specifically used for Water Plan Implementation projects. Up to \$75k per approval.
 - Must be approved by council chair and used for regional water planning purposes.
 - 10% cash match required from applicant.
- Brooke – Partnership uses membership dues to cover this match.
- Christine Voudy – Handout passed out about nutrient trading in Georgia. Stakeholder meetings take place during October 2019.
- Brooke discussed past grant studies, including nutrient trading pilot studies and point source pollution.
- Christine Voudy - New withdrawal application package in development requires applicants to list all management practices that apply to them and discuss how they will comply/implement those management practices.
- Brooke – Not pursuing a new nutrient trading project until council can move forward with EPD. Council needs to be connected and engaged through the process.
- John Bennett – How many counties in CNG are members of Partnership?
 - Brooke – Only about half the counties are members.
- Brooke - 303(d) listed streams EPD seed grant project idea
 - Proposing evaluation of 303d listed streams in CNG region.
 - Mapping all streams
 - Prioritization
 - Lab testing and analysis
 - Top 10 or 20 streams – monitoring plan – sample and evaluate with the intent of de-listing.
 - Evaluate past standards that led to streams being listed versus today’s standards.
 - Goal: reduce the number of listed streams in region and create a prioritized list of listed streams to be evaluated/remediated.
 - Partnership/Council would solicit proposals from engineering firms for the work including qualified labs local to streams.
 - Intent is to do as much desktop and field work as possible with the budget available.
 - O’Bryant – Does this replace TMDL program?
 - Brooke – no, enhances/compliments it.
- Brooke – Asked for motion to approve 303(d) listed stream seed grant project and move forward with application
 - Motion – Mike Berg

- Second – Jerry Crawford
- Council Approval – Unanimous approval

Resource Assessment Status

Christine Voudy (EPD) gave an update on water resource assessments for the CNG region.

- Groundwater availability – Piedmont and Blue Ridge region aquifers not near sustainable yield.
- Surface water availability – New modeling efforts are increasing the number of nodes in the model
- Water quality/assimilative capacity
- Discussed current drought conditions in Georgia.
 - Comment – actual drought conditions may be more severe than models show.
 - No official drought status announced, but internal discussions at EPD are ongoing.
- Brian Skeens – Updates on water quality and when to share with council?
 - Christine – Possibly ready by next council meeting. Recommended breaking up information and modeling sessions one piece at a time.

Population projections and water demand forecasting

Brian Skeens discussed updates to population projections and water demand forecasts for the region.

- Updates show a more optimistic, generally more upward trend in population projections.
- Tom O’Bryant – Should ask about private water systems, new industries, and private wells connecting to public water system.

Birds of Prey

Samantha Lawson, the Assistant Park Resource Manager at Amicalola Falls State Park, led a birds of prey meet and greet demonstration with Fabio, the black vulture.

Aquatic Biodiversity of the Coosa River Basin

Ani Popp gave a presentation on Aquatic Biodiversity of the Coosa River Basin.

She also discussed the Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Program (GOSP) Fund which coordinates and administers funding to provide stewardship for state parks, state lands, and wildlife management areas; support local parks and trails; and protect critical conservation land.

<https://gadnr.org/gosp>

NRCS Programs Overview

Stephen Bontekoe (USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service – NRCS) spoke about the 2018 Farm Bill, the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), the National Water Quality Initiative (NWQI), and the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) for the state of Georgia and Coosa-North Georgia region.

- NRCS helps connect farmers with resources and direction to Improve their land to be more habitable and suitable for conservation efforts - protecting waterways and other natural resources - 2018 Farm Bill/ NWQI (Water Quality Improvements)
- 10% of 2018 Farm Bill funds are required to go towards protection of drinking water sources - RCPP
- Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) - matching 1\$ of value to 1\$ of cost (doubling value of initial investment). May use non-USDA federal dollars to match.
- <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/ga/programs/financial/?cid=nrcseprd1313473>

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

No public comments.

Next Steps and Wrap Up

Brooke asked for suggested topics or programs to include.

- Brian – Water and land use planning
- Keith Coffey – non-point source nutrient reduction – new ideas? Alternatives?

Brooke asked the council's opinion on having an additional meeting in 2019.

- Jerry Crawford – Agrees that an additional meeting, 2 full meetings per year (in addition to short meeting at Partnership Education Seminar), would make sense and help better educate the council.
- Mike Berg – Also agreed an additional meeting would be beneficial with the next round of plan updates coming up.

Brooke asked the council for suggestions for future meeting locations.

Brooke adjourned the meeting.

Coosa – North Georgia Water Planning Council, October 9, 2019

Council Members Present

1. Brooke Anderson, Chairman
2. Donald Anderson
3. John Bennett
4. Mike Berg
5. Greg Bowman
6. Keith Coffey
7. Jerry Crawford
8. Haynes Johnson
9. Tom O'Bryant

Elected Officials

1. N/A

Partnering & Other State Agencies

1. Matt Dabrowski, Inland Paper Rome, GA
2. Katie Hammock, Black & Veatch
3. Alex Sullivan, Fieldale Farms
4. Sean Phipps, Lumpkin County WSA
5. Kyle Ellis, City of Calhoun
6. Corey Babb, Wood E&IS
7. Glen Maxim, GFC
8. Julianne Meadows, Northwest Georgia Regional Commission
9. Ani Popp, Georgia DNR
10. Makayla Ferrari, Georgia DNR
11. Stephen Bontekoe, Limestone Valley RC&D Council

GA Environmental Protection Division

1. Christine Voudy, EPD Council Lead

Jacobs Engineering

1. Brian Skeens
2. Lesley Brewer
3. Craig Hensley