

COOSA-NORTH GEORGIA REGION

BACKGROUND

The Coosa North Georgia Regional Water Plan was first adopted by the Georgia Environmental Protection Division in September 2011. As required in the Water Planning Act (2008), the Regional Water Plans are required to be updated on a 5-year cycle and a revised plan was adopted in 2017. The Plan is the product of the work of the Coosa North Georgia Regional Water Planning Council. The Regional Water Plan outlines strategies to meet water needs through 2050 and fulfill the Council's vision and goals for the region. Major water resources in the region include the Coosa, Conasauga, Coosawattee, Etowah and Oostanaula River Basins, and the Crystalline rock and Paleozoic rock Aquifers.



SUMMARY OF 2017 RESOURCE ASSESSMENT RESULTS

GROUNDWATER AVAILABILITY: No new analysis of groundwater availability was conducted as part of the Regional Water Plan update process. No groundwater sustainable yield issues were identified based on current demands and conditions.

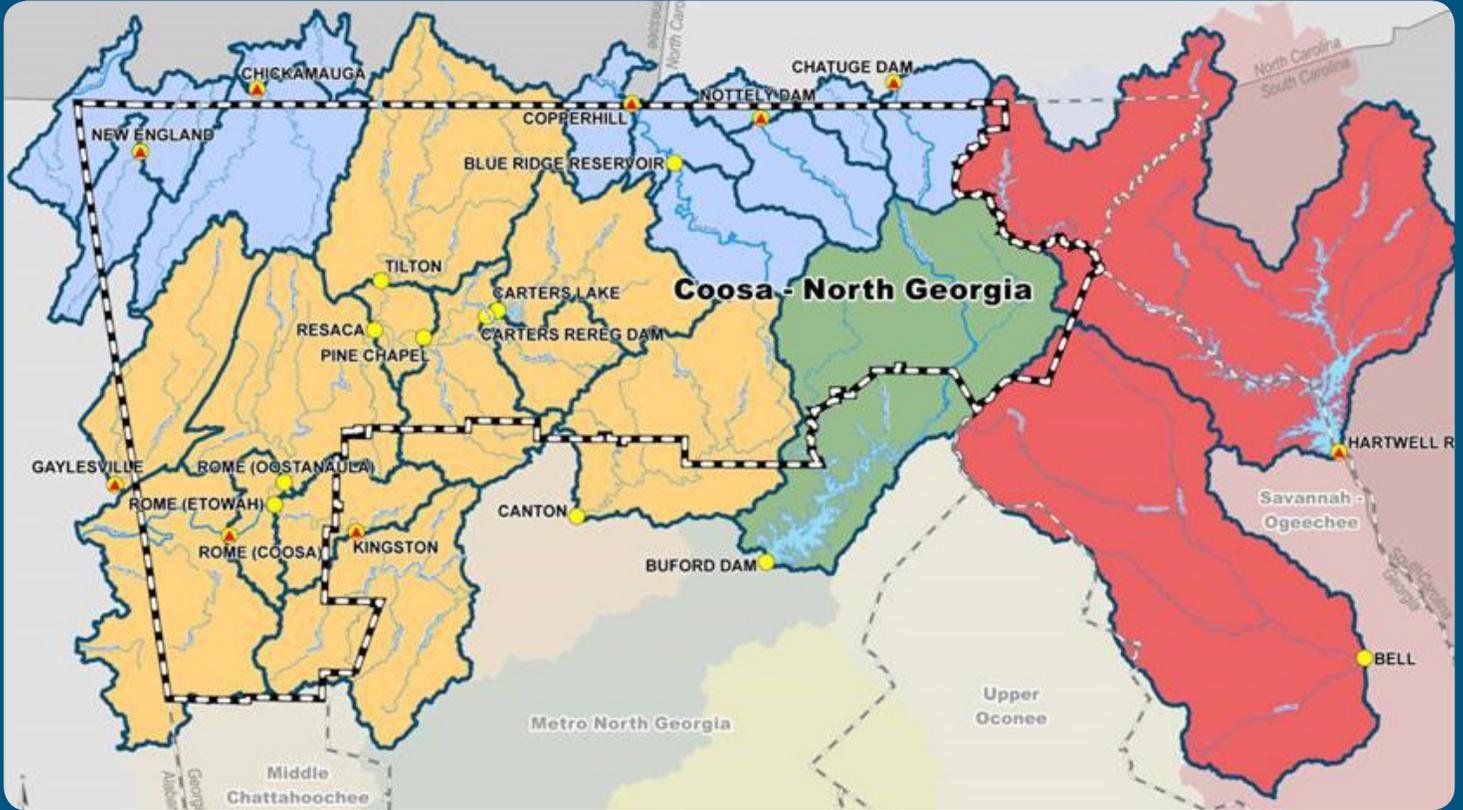
SURFACE WATER AVAILABILITY: Resource assessment modeling results show that the Tennessee Basin has potential gaps for two modeling nodes (New England and Chickamauga) but the gaps were small (1.3 to 4 mgd). There was only one potential gap in the Coosa Basin at the Gaylesville node (5.8 mgd) and no potential gaps were predicted in the Chattahoochee Basin.

SURFACE WATER QUALITY: The resource assessment model results indicated that most of the streams within the region have available assimilative capacity, with some localized exceptions. GAEPD has developed TMDLs for chlorophyll-a for Lake Allatoona (Etowah River Arm and Allatoona Creek Arm), Carters Lake (Coosawattee River Embayment and Woodring Branch), and is developing a TMDL for Lake Lanier that addresses nutrient loadings. For future conditions, dissolved oxygen modeling results showed that assimilative capacity can be managed through point source effluent limits. Management of future nutrient loadings to the major lakes will require improvements in wastewater treatment and reductions in non-point sources.

KEY WATER RESOURCE ISSUES BEING ADDRESSED BY THE COUNCIL IN THE 2017 PLAN

1. Groundwater resources in the region are generally limited; most of the water supply needs are met with surface water sources.
2. The region covers multiple river basins including the Chattahoochee, Tennessee, and Coosa basins which can complicate water resource management.
3. Regional topography makes it a challenge to share resources and water supply infrastructure cost effectively.
4. Targeted water quality concerns in Lake Weiss, Lake Allatoona, Carters Lake and Lake Lanier.
5. Coordination with neighboring water councils to effectively management water resources by basin.
6. Improved implementation of Best Management Practices (BMPs) to address water conservation, wastewater management, and water quality across the region.

KEY WATER FEATURES OF THE COOSA-NORTH GEORGIA REGION



SUMMARY OF 2017 MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE STATE

For the 2017 update, the Council reviewed the previously adopted management practices and revised them to improve effectiveness based on the Council’s experience. New management practices were also incorporated and adopted. The 2017 update outlines 41 management practices subdivided in the following categories:

WATER CONSERVATION: Support implementation of water conservation activities that are required by state law (Stewardship Act practices), and practices that are beneficial for all communities such as education and public awareness programs.

WATER SUPPLY MANAGEMENT: Practices include encouraging the development of water master plans, mapping existing reservoirs and considering expansions, considering new groundwater wells, encouraging indirect potable reuse, considering construction of new WTP or expansion of existing facilities, encouraging the implementation of asset management, and source water protection.

WASTEWATER MANAGEMENT: Practices include encouraging the development of wastewater master plans, implementing education and awareness programs, promoting septic system management, implementing sewer system mapping, maintenance and rehabilitation programs, implementing grease management programs and develop a sanitary sewer overflow (SSO) emergency response program.

WATER QUALITY: Practices include implementing of nutrient management programs, promoting forestry BMPs, encouraging local government participation, considering post-development stormwater BMPs, encouraging pollution prevention and good housekeeping practices, stormwater

education and awareness programs, considering regional BMPs, encouraging stream buffer protection, implementing comprehensive land use planning, supporting TMDL implementation, considering credit trading, sampling and testing 303(d) listed streams, and supporting nontraditional NPDES permitting.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE STATE: Identify long-term funding mechanisms, provide coordination between the Council and local and state agencies, coordinate planning efforts and ACT Basin negotiations, support local monitoring efforts by volunteer groups, develop program to meter agricultural withdrawals, develop regulatory framework to implement nutrient trading and interbasin transfer, support BMP demonstration projects, and support commercial water audits.

