

Georgia Department of Natural Resources
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March 27, 2009

MEMORANDUM

TO: Council Members

FROM: Rick Brownlow, CH2M HILL

SUBJECT: Kick-Off Meeting Summary
Coosa – North Georgia Water Planning Council Meeting

CC: Tim Cash
Becky Champion
Kevin Farrell
Jeff Larson
Rob McDowell
Marla Hill, CH2M HILL
Chrissy Thom, CH2M HILL

**Georgia Comprehensive Statewide Water Management Plan
Regional Water Planning**

Kick-Off Meeting Summary

Meeting Date: March 13, 2009
Location: Georgia Aquarium
Attendees: See List

1) Council Member Introduction

Rick Brownlow (CH2M HILL) introduced himself as a contractor with EPD and explained that the purpose of the Council will be to work to develop the Regional Water Development and Conservation Plan for the Coosa-North Georgia water planning region. Rick noted that the blue index cards distributed should be used to note questions for the closing session with Carol Couch. Rick then introduced Dr. Becky Champion from GAEPD, who welcomed the group, thanked them for their commitment, noted that this has been a long time coming, and requested that everyone let her know if there is anything needed.

Rick continued, explaining that a big part of the Kick-Off meeting is provide an opportunity for everyone to get to know each other and for the councils to be introduced to many of the state-wide water issues. With that, the group was asked to introduce themselves. Each Council member present introduced him/herself and gave his/her occupation.

2) Agency Member Introduction

Facilitator Marla Hill and technical consultant Chrissy Thom introduced themselves, and the Council breakout meeting began.

3) Water Planning “35” Exercise

Council members were asked to answer the question, “What is the most important thing to keep in mind as we move as a group through this regional planning process?” After each person developed an answer, the members were asked to discuss their answers with five other council members, individually. During each discussion, the members were to divide seven points between themselves, based on negotiation of the merits of each answer, and record the number of points they received. Following the exercise, planning consultant Rick Brownlow and facilitator Marla Hill asked for and recorded the top 10 scored responses. They are as follows:

| Score | Response |
|--------------|--|
| 29 | Connectivity between counties |
| 22 | Achieving balance between economics and environment |
| 20 | Careful planning, conservation, and use, addressing needs of growing communities and the economy |
| 20 | Represent different aspects and needs with a common goal and purpose |
| 19 | Product must benefit entire state, not just region |
| 19 | Stay focused on main issue in developing the plan and put selfish interests aside |
| 19 | How to maintain minimal flows during drought for withdrawals and discharge assimilation |
| 18 | Best interest of my grandchildren and their peers |
| 17 | Agreement on sustainable and enhanceable plans |
| 17 | Work together towards a mutual goal, doable, implementable plan |
| 15 | Diversity of backgrounds |

4) Council Notebook Walk-Through

Planning consultant Rick Brownlow went through the Council notebooks and took questions from the Council. A brief summary of that interchange follows:

- Gantt chart – important to note that the regional plan will only be one part of the work that is being done as part of the implementation of the Comprehensive State-wide Water Management Plan. Looking at forecasting and allocation for region; UGA is working on

population forecasting. Working to develop strategies to reconcile each region's demand for water resources with the availability determined in the resource assessments will be challenging.

- Council meeting schedule – general idea is to meet on a quarterly basis—try to be respectful of how busy people are. First meeting will likely be between now and mid-May. The purpose of the meetings will be to aid in visioning and understanding the technical work that will be going on. In the first meeting, we will begin with organization and move to some of the technical “heavy lifting.”
- Methods of communication—coordination with other basins—There will be a website to communicate information. Will post info electronically and only necessary items will be printed out in hard copy. May have need for some hard copy mailings and telephone lists.
- Evaluation form—Members were requested to complete the evaluation form to inform EPD about any necessary needs or requests to make sure that they are giving folks what they need to move forward with the process.
- A copy of the Georgia Comprehensive State-wide Water Management Plan was included in the binder.
- Final question for consideration: Dr. Jim Kundell discussed this a little bit in the morning's plenary session: What are the most important features of our region that we need to keep in mind? The larger body adjourned, so there was no discussion of this question.

5) Questions and Discussion

Question: Will the list of contacts be sent to everyone?

Response: Depends on what the group would like to do. The group agreed to share contact info with each other but not to post it to the website.

Question: Has anyone been contacted by the media?

Response: None yet, but Rick noted that this will be a high profile project and that members may be contacted.

Question: How long will meetings last?

Response: Reasonably expect most of the day, perhaps 9 am to 4 pm or so.

Question: Where will meetings be held?

Response: We are seeking suggestions for meeting locations. Please send Rick an email if you'd like to offer to host at your facility or have a suggestion for venue. Members discussed Dalton Utilities, Power's House, Stephen Gray's poultry farm (for a meeting and then to tour the organic poultry facility). Rick mentioned that we are sensitive to making anyone have to travel too far across the region, but as we get further into the process, we will branch out more.

Question: What is Habersham County’s role with this council? Habersham is not connected with this watershed. County draws from the Chattahoochee/Savannah basin.

Response: Habersham is not the only one in this situation; White and Walker Counties are also. It will be the job of this council to look at management practices for each part of our planning region. We will cover different basins in our plan.

Question: I understand the concept of doing the study to determine resources, looking at future population growth, etc.; beyond that, what kind of metrics will we be looking at to determine the allocation for residential, industrial, etc?

Response: Essentially the council will be reviewing and recommending a number of “management practices” that water users in the planning region can employ to meet their individual needs while ensuring that there are adequate resources for others in the region and adjacent regions. Practices could include items such as better conservation, better allocation, new reservoirs, water supply issues, etc.

Question: Are new reservoirs in the scope of our work?

Response: Yes. We need to determine how we manage our resources and augmenting existing supplies is one potential management practice. The role of the council is to make decisions for the plan—EPD is relying on them for this and does not have all the answers. Outside members from the council will have the opportunity to weigh in on the process, but EPD has tasked each council with actual development of the plan.

Question: Can we share approaches/findings from other councils?

Response: Yes, the website will be the best way to do this to make sure everybody has the same access to information.

Question: What’s the process for the different councils to interact?

Response: We expect quarterly meetings of each council and then joint meetings between multiple councils. The strategy is not completely worked out yet.

Question: Will there be a connection to the work of the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District?

Response: There should and will be some connection given the watershed connections between the Coosa-North Georgia region and the Metro district. Although the Metro district is on a different planning schedule, we need to look at their plan for inputs. Everyone understands that over time, we will need to adapt as we take a look with overlapping elements of plans, particularly at the next Metro update.

Coosa – North Georgia Water Planning Council, March 13, 2009 Kick-off Meeting

Members Present

1. David Ashburn
2. Irwin Bagwell
3. Tim Banks
4. Kenneth Beasley
5. John Bennett
6. Mike Berg
7. Charlie Bethel
8. Tim Bowden
9. Keith Coffey
10. Don Cope
11. Kelly Cornwell
12. Katie Dempsey (ex officio)
13. Gerald Dunham
14. Pat Gober
15. Stephen Gray
16. Jerry Jennings
17. Haynes Johnson
18. Sherry Loudermilk
19. Dick Martin
20. Tim Mercier
21. Tom O'Bryant
22. Lamar Paris
23. Sam Payne
24. Todd Pealock
25. Chip Pearson (ex officio)
26. David Pennington
27. Jimmy Petty
28. Frank Riley
29. David Westmoreland

Members Not Present:

Doug Anderton

Partnering Agencies

Leamon Scott, DCA

Keith Gilmer, GSWCC