

Georgia Department of Natural Resources

Environmental Protection Division, Watershed Protection Branch
4220 International Parkway, Suite 101, Atlanta, Georgia 30354
Linda MacGregor, P. E., Branch Chief 404/675-6232
FAX: 404/675-6247

June 23, 2009

DRAFT MEMORANDUM

TO: Council Members

FROM: Jeff Larson, GA EPD
Bill Martello, JJG

SUBJECT: Council Meeting 2 Summary
Savannah-Upper Ogeechee Water Planning Council

Georgia Comprehensive Statewide Water Management Plan Regional Water Planning

Council Meeting 2 Summary

Meeting Date: June 17, 2009
Location: Catechee Golf Club, Hartwell Georgia
Attendees: See list

1) Welcome and Council Member Introduction

Ron Cross, Council Chairman, welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for attending. Council members, EPD staff, planning consultants, partnering agencies, and other attendees introduced themselves.

2) Agenda and Council Meeting 1 Minutes

Ron Cross presented the revised agenda for the meeting to the Council for approval. A motion and second were made to adopt the agenda without modifications. No discussion was forthcoming and the agenda was approved as presented.

The meeting summary for Council Meeting 1 was distributed during the sign-in session. This presented the council members who had not reviewed the meeting summary an opportunity to do so and comment on the meeting summary. There were no comments.

Bill Martello (Planning Contractor Council Coordinator) recapped the key goals for Council Meeting 2.

3) Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), Operating Procedures and Rules for Meetings

Jeff Larson (EPD Assistant Branch Chief) presented the proposed changes that were captured and submitted to EPD for review. EPD then evaluated and concluded all recommendations could be and were accommodated for the Savannah-Upper Ogeechee Council. Council can have further discussion on proposed changes, or can accept and sign.

Chairman Cross requested a motion to approve changes incorporated in the MOA. A motion and 2nd were made.

The MOA was PASSED unanimously, and the MOA document was passed around for signatures. Twenty one signatures were obtained during the meeting. Chairman Cross will send an email to the council members not present asking them to sign the MOA at Council Meeting 3. After the missing signatures have been collected a signed copy of the MOA will be distributed to the entire council.

4) Planning Process Overview

Martello gave the Planning Process Overview presentation. No questions were asked.

5) Population and Employment Projections

Martello delivered the Population and Employment Projections presentation. The population projections are not EPD's, but from the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget (OPB), which contracted with the Carl Vinson Institute of Government (CVIOG) at the University of Georgia, and will be the new official State forecasts. They are to be finalized by mid-August.

Chairman Cross noted to the council that the date to submit comments regarding growth projections has been extended from June 12th to June 30th.

Question - Can a list be sent to the council of everyone that received the disc/information?

Response: The introductory DVD was sent by EPD to Mayors or Commission Chairs on the mailing lists of Association of County Commissioners of Georgia (ACCG) and Georgia Municipal Association (GMA). The DVD also was sent to all the members of the Water Planning Councils.

Question – Why is there a sag in year 2040 in all the population graphs?

Response – That is a question to ask Dr. Brown when he joins in a conference call later in the morning. All comments on population and employment forecasts are due to EPD by June 30, 2009.

Question– Why are the Regional Development Centers (RDCs) data/responses different than those of the EPD?

Response – That is a question for Dr. Brown. The EPD data may be more current than projections done by the RDC's.

Question – Who should respond/address the growth projections?

Response – If you are a member of the council or have received a letter/disc then you should

respond.

Question – Are types of jobs being predicted?

Response – Yes (in the Employment projections).

Comment – Ron Cross voiced his concern that growth has been well documented for 25 years with a consistent track record. The projections appear to be significantly lower than historical growth.

Question – Where was the slide for Stephens County?

Response – The slide was missing by error. (Note: Bill Martello will provide the population projections chart to Don Dye – Council member from Toccoa-Stephens County.)

Comment – It appears that everything goes up with the exception of textiles. These projections would be challenged. .

Conference Call with Dr. Warren Brown A short break was held, following which, Warren Brown joined the meeting by telephone conference call. Warren Brown joined UGA in January 2009, from Cornell University. He gave a detailed overview of the process. This process used trends from both the 1990s (between 1990 and 2000 census) and since 2000, and was based on models developed by the University of Texas-San Antonio.

The workforce projections were developed using confidential data from the Department of Labor in 50 different industry classifications. They started with a statistical model that included recessions and expansions; this model was then expanded to include regional, state-wide and industry trends. The model was adjusted to keep growth from getting too high and to account for the current economic situation for 2008 to 2010. Finally, adjustments were made to retail employment upward in the far future to match population projections.

Brown explained the alternative projection scenarios. Scenario 1.0 indicated that the rate of net migration from the 1990s would continue through 2040, which was the limit of University of Texas-San Antonio study. The 2000 to 2007 Scenario was adjusted based on trends for the first seven years of 2000s. Scenario 0.0 included no net migration, and was included for analytical purposes. The Scenario 0.5 assumed half the migration rate from 1990 to 2000. The workforce-adjusted scenario ties total population growth to jobs growth (the population projections were dampened to match the projected employment growth). The dip is a function of the transition of the two time periods that needs to be addressed. There is no such precision as implied from this dip.

This evaluation is completely based on past trends and does not consider a water shortage or other major limitations to growth. That needs to be added from Councils/EPD/planning consultants.

Process for input of local knowledge: Please complete the forms provided and return to planning consultant or via EPD website as well as regional planners in your community.

http://georgiawaterplanning.org/pages/forecasting/population_and_employment/june_30_deadline_for_input.php

Question – Can CVIOG explain why the projection for Columbia County is listed at 110,000 but Columbia County projections show growth at 143,000 in the year 2050?

Response – A growth rate this high is hard to explain and especially hard to maintain. Numeric is more accurate than a percentage over time. The sum of county population equals to state totals. Totals must be defensible. An estimated year 2050 population of 16 million has been listed for the State of Georgia and provisions are likely to increase.

Question – Is the final total going to be the state total backed out to the county projections?

Response – The county projections will be combined to develop the State totals.

Question – Charlie Newton of McDuffie County asked what ground rules and factors were used for projections.

Response – Demographic trends, survival, fertility and migration. The economist Dr. Jeff Dorman from UGA developed the workforce and employment projections. Other factors included adjusted population with employment outlook, aging population, and attractiveness of the region (for retirement).

Comment/Question– Madison County commented that their concentration was on the number of request for water and sewer lines being installed. RDC projected 89,000 + for growth and your projections are 33,900. Why are RDCs projections so much higher?

Response – This is the reason we are requesting feedback. We may be consistent with trends but we may also be missing major development information. While we are trying to be strict with defining development – development should already be in the pipeline.

Question – Are you dealing with RDC regarding the projections or going in a different direction?

Response – Yes, we have asked RDC for feedback.

Question – L. Walker of Rabun asked if CVIOG is looking at employment projection for textiles which are extremely low. However, pulp and paper projections are high. Has the information been shared with the forestry department?

Response – We will speak to the folks in forestry. Tenia Workman gave the contact name of Bob Israel at the forestry department as she felt Bob would bring life to the data.

Question – There is high growth along the Interstate 85 corridor. Projections don't seem to indicate this growth, are you waiting on this information from the council?

Response – The population information was gathered from the Census. Two areas of information not counted or factored into the equation is (1) seasonal and (2) secondary homes. Trends are driving these projections as well. If projections have not shown up to date then the information is not included. If there are specific projects taking place this information should be submitted by the council.

Question – Where decline is shown in population for Elbert County, what is the reason for this?

Response – The way the demographics were put in it shows as a decline in areas where growth is low but shows an increase in larger areas.

Question – What is the percentage of error in the study year-date?

Response – Currently this is not known.

Question – Is the key to the exercise that information provided back to CVIOG will influence the data?

Response – Yes, but feedback will not guarantee the final information will make everyone happy. The main purpose is to look for gaps.

Comment/Question – Projections given are based on historical data. Does this mean you must know if the lots have been platted? Should it be distinguished between platted and lots for sale?

Response – Yes, information will be distinguished by building permits and census identifying occupied housing.

Question – Council members have been tasked with getting information by June 30th, 2009 with soft spots mentioned. Will the council be able to review this data prior to submitting feedback?

Response – Yes, but what the council needs to understand is that the current timetable and contract for CVIOG is with the Office of Planning and Budget. The population projections will be used for many entities in the future (funding for transportation, health care and education etc.). There will be workshops with RDCs and other State partnering agencies in the Fall to further improve the forecasting process. CVIOG is planning on updating the projections every two years.

Question – When do you project getting the forecast completed?

Response – By mid or end of August.

6) Agriculture Water Demand Forecasts

Cliff Lewis of EPD gave the Agricultural Water Demands presentation, with the following questions were posed by the group:

1. *Is there any data that suggests how many inches of water are required (for irrigation)?*
 - There is not a comparative narrative in this forecast. UGA has analysis for this and Dr. Gill Landry should be contacted for this information.
2. *What percentage is surface water and groundwater for permitting?*
 - It's 50/50 – fall lines are more towards surface water with a trend moving toward ground water over the past ten years.
3. *Are aquifer levels measured and is there a stress on it?*
 - Yes, the monitoring has mostly been done by USGS and their data is utilized in conjunction with others
4. *Are there restrictions on agriculture?*
 - Yes, mainly in the Flint River Basin. At one point there was a six-year moratorium in that area. Also, agriculture permits are not issued based on capacity.
5. *Will this presentation be on the website?*
 - Yes.

7) Modeling 101

Bill Martello presented the modeling introduction information. Models are developed to simulate real-world systems

Question – Since we are in a recession and people have left, are any charts going to take this information into consideration?

Response – Yes. The current recession has been incorporated into the workforce and employment projections.

Comment - The UGA percentage of error is needed by the council so that it may be incorporated into the council's calculations.

8) Resource Assessments

Bill Martello went over the resource assessment presentation.

Question – Are the tools/models being used by Georgia consistent with those of South Carolina?

Response – The modeling tools used by Georgia are consistent with what is being done in South Carolina. Modeling tools for the Savannah River Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL) are being jointly used by both Georgia and South Carolina.

Question – Are tools being used on the main stem compatible with those not being used on the main stem?

Response – Yes.

Question – When will EPD provide a range of discharge allocations?

Response – The council should be given this information in October/December timeframe.

Comment – Chairman Cross addressed the council asking them to keep in mind a document will be available for the council to say yea or nay. If there is a nay there must be another solution/agreement in place to submit to the lawmakers that Dr. Couch will be meeting with.

9) Creating a Regional Vision

Bill Martello presented an assignment on regional vision for council members to complete for prior to Council Meeting.

Question – Will the economic value brought to an area regarding lakes be discussed?

Comment – A grassroots effort is being put together to determine this information. People want it to be cost shared. How does the drought contingency plan need to be changed? Quality of life – if lakes are full and flooding begins – this aspect must also be taken in to consideration.

Question – Is there data available for droughts, hurricanes, and floods?

Response – This data is available from USGS and NOAA.

Question – Is there a model for distributing water within individual basins? Will this be looked at?

Response – EPD sees this as a second part of the Water Council mission.

Comment - The non-permeable area affecting groundwater recharge is only at 25 percent. The most influence is the recharge area. We need to know what it is and how to take charge of it. If it is sealed off it is going to influence what is available for recharge.

Response – Jeff Larson stated that the State Geologist are overseeing a study along with a consultant to determine the groundwater availability.

10) Public Involvement Plan

Martello discussed the status of development of the public information program by EPD.

11) Local Elected Officials Comments

Larry Guess, Mayor of Elbert was present and commented that he felt “we need a level playing field”.

12) Public Comment

- Is there a watering restriction on lawns? In Columbia County 11 million gallons per day (mgd) is used in the winter; 31 mgd is being used during the summer. 31 mgd is recommended to be used for Columbia County.
- Diverting water will only increase the need for water in Atlanta
- Permitting of water should not exceed quantity available during droughts
- Biomass electricity and fuel uses a large amount of water. Asking that all regions look at this. This trend will create new demands.

13) Meeting Wrap-up

- Calendars for September 2009 were distributed to the Council to aid in scheduling the next meeting. EPD’s goal is to have the next meeting between September 8 and 18.
- Request to repair the website so that the council can access links.
- Council members to return questionnaires to CVIOG at UGA by the deadline or via website
http://georgiawaterplanning.org/pages/forecasting/population_and_employment/june_30_deadline_for_input.php
- Council would like to know what the desired outcome should be for the CM3 (preliminary agreements/accomplishments)
- Council would like to receive presentations in advance

Meeting was adjourned by 3:30 p.m.

Meeting Attendees

Council Members in Attendance

Ron Cross, Chair
Scott MacGregor
Tom Weidmeier
Deke Copenhaver
Bruce Azevedo
Braye Boardman
Don Dye
Jerry Boling
Charlie Newton
Chris McCorkle
Ralph Hudgens

Pat Goran
Lee Webster
Tenia Workman
Stan Sheppard
Larry Walker
Dan Fowler
Barry Cronic
Larry Guest
Robert Jenkins
Tom Jordan
Tim McGill

Council Members Not in Attendance

Charles Cawthon
Mike Eskew
Patricia Goodwin (Alternate)
Toye Hill
Eddie Madden
James H. Newsome
Lewis Sanders
Tom McCall

Staff in Attendance

Jeff Larson – EPD
Bill Martello – JJG
Marla Greene – JJG
Inga Kennedy – PEQ
James Davis – PEQ

Partnering Agencies and General Public

Jon Huffmaster – Georgia Farm Bureau of Macon
Deatre Denion– State Department of Community
Dennis Black – Georgia Farm Bureau of Macon
Robert Amos – Georgia Soil and Water Conservation Commission - Athens
Peyton Sapp – University of Georgia
Jim Hussey – Senator Saxby Chambliss Office
Amanda Wrona – The Nature Conservancy - Savannah
Frank Carl – Member of the Public
Sam Booker – Member of the Public

Summary of CM2 Evaluation: Information Needs

Council members were asked to complete an information needs evaluation form to answer questions to help target the information that EPD develops to assist them in the selection of water management practices that would meet the goals for the Middle Ocmulgee Water Planning Council.

Question 1: First, consider your personal level of knowledge about the following topics. Please circle the number that indicates how much you know about each topic, with 1 indicating very little and 5 indicating a great deal.

Results: The results show the average of the 21 Council Members who completed the form.

Topic	Average
Ways to protect groundwater resources in your planning region	3.29
Ways to protect surface water resources in your planning region	3.48
Ways to protect water quality in your planning region	3.43
Ways to restore water quality in your planning region	3.05
Water chemistry with respect to water quality	2.52
Sediment and erosion rules and management	3.33
Stormwater primer & innovative technology/practices	2.95
Agricultural water use in your planning region	3.19
Energy water use in your planning region	2.86
Energy water use around the state	2.86
Industrial water use in your planning region	3.10
Municipal water use in your planning region	3.29
Per Capita water use in your planning region	2.76
Outdoor water use in urban areas and conservation methods	2.95

The results show that based on the averages that the three topics that Council members feel that they have ample knowledge of include:

1. Ways to protect surface water resources in your planning region
2. Ways to protect water quality in your planning region
3. Sediment and erosion rules and management

The result show that based on the averages that the three topics that Council members feel that they are lacking knowledge of include:

1. Water chemistry with respect to water quality
2. Per Capita water use in your planning region
3. Energy water use in your planning region

Question 2: Which of these topics will be most important for your Council as a whole to explore? Please select the five topics that you think will be the most important for your Council to consider.

Please rank your five choices from most to least important using 1 to indicate most important and 5 to indicate least important:

Results:

Topic	Average	Number of votes
Ways to protect groundwater resources in your planning region	2.57	7
Ways to protect surface water resources in your planning region	1.94	16
Ways to protect water quality in your planning region	2.93	14
Ways to restore water quality in your planning region	3.50	4
Water chemistry with respect to water quality	N/A	0
Sediment and erosion rules and management	4.00	6
Stormwater primer & innovative technology/practices	3.00	2
Agricultural water use in your planning region	2.89	9
Energy water use in your planning region	3.00	5
Energy water use around the state	4.50	2
Industrial water use in your planning region	3.56	9
Municipal water use in your planning region	3.75	8
Per Capita water use in your planning region	2.75	4
Outdoor water use in urban areas and conservation methods	3.25	4
Other:	N/A	0

Note: Not all Council members completed Question 2 correctly; therefore, the results for Question 2 do not include three Council member's results, as they did not appear to be completed correctly. In reviewing the results of question #2, it was difficult to qualify the actual topics that are the most important because of the different responses. Some of the above results had one vote, while others had 12.

Using the both the average and the overall number of votes, the top three topics that will be most important to the Middle Oculmugee Council are as follows:

1. Ways to protect surface water resources in your planning region.
2. Ways to protect water quality in your planning region.
3. Agricultural water use in your planning region.

Question 3: Are there planning efforts in other states or other parts of Georgia that you are aware of and think we should factor into our process?

- Salt River Project in Arizona
- South Carolina
- Use in Atlanta
- Forestry BMPs

Question 4: Are there particular management practices or issues not listed above that you want to explore?

- Tributaries
- Irrigation Pilot Program being conducted by Nature Conservancy in southwest Georgia
- Protecting recharge areas of aquifers
- Stream Buffer
- Ways to develop surface water supply
- Water Conservation
- Groundwater recharge area protection
- Flood Control

CC: Tai-Yi Su, JJG
Inga Kennedy, PEQ