Georgia Department of Natural Resources

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October 20, 2010 (Revised)

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Council Members

FROM: David Ashley, JJG/Jacobs

SUBJECT: CM#7 Meeting Summary
Middle Ocmulgee Water Planning Council Meeting

CC: Kevin Farrell, GA EPD
Charlotte Weber, JJG/Jacobs
Tai-Yi Su, JJG/Jacobs

Georgia Comprehensive Statewide Water Management Plan
Regional Water Planning

CM#7 Meeting Summary

Meeting Date: September 22, 2010
Location: EMC Training Center

1) Welcome and Introduction

Council Chairman Richardson welcomed the group. Chairman Richardson thanked everyone for their participation and reminded the Council that the draft deadline of January 2011 was not negotiable, as confirmed by Director Barnes.

The Council has been busy with 4 subcommittee meetings and several conference calls that have been well attended. The subcommittee members are doing very important work. There has been a lot of interest in instream flow and 7Q10. Chairman Richardson mentioned that both he and Co-chair Copeland have received many form letters from interest groups and individuals about minimum instream flow requirements. He stated that the Council does not have the resources or time to research this issue; however the Council can address it by include in the Regional Water Plan a statement to encourage EPD to continue researching and reviewing its current policy on this issue. He also mentioned that the subcommittee discussed this issue as well in their last

meeting and recommended this to be a topic for the upcoming joint council meeting in October.

Chairman Richardson welcomed the newest member of the Council, Mr. Gator Hodges from Butts County (who replaced former Council member Van Whaler).

2) Review and Formally Adopt Council Goals

Charlotte Weber and David Ashley provided an overview of the Middle Ocmulgee Council adopted vision and the draft goals recommended by the Technical Subcommittee. The subcommittee focused on making the goals "actionable" to support the selection of water management practices. The subcommittee also tried to clarify the draft goals to avoid future misinterpretation.

Bembry commented that he understood that the subcommittee's intention to set more actionable goals. However, he felt the current draft goals lost an important message by omitting the phrase "Promote development patterns". The Middle Ocmulgee region is blessed with special water resources and a high quality of life. Growth planning is important to protecting the water resources. John recommended revising the goal to allude to the fact that there are appropriate and inappropriate places for development to occur.

Weber responded that the goal "Promote stewardship" was intended to communicate this thought.

McSwain felt that the original goals included stronger statements on the stewardship of natural resources such as promoting water conservation and maintaining the integrity of natural systems. McSwain would like for the emphasis on stewardship of natural resources to be reincorporated into the goals.

Chairman Richardson commented that there are a number of water management practices (for example – protect sensitive lands) that will be presented later in the afternoon that support stewardship of natural resources.

McSwain encouraged the group to strengthen the goals as the goals lead the selection of water management practices. Bembry commented that it is important to achieve a "balance" in the goals. McSwain felt that reading the list of goals, they are very focused on water supply and the word "balance" will help place more priority on preservation and conservation.

The Council discussed the concept of "improving" a natural system. The intent was really to restore the natural system functions that may have been impacted because of human intervention.

Dickey was concerned that the proposed language might preclude the Council from considering new reservoirs, because these would impact natural systems. McSwain responded that the added emphasis on natural systems would not negate the existing goals. He stated that six of the draft goals support meeting water supply needs and it seems appropriate to include one goal to support natural systems.

Co-chair Copeland commented that the draft goal "*support* nonpoint source pollution by advocating better land management practices" was revised by the subcommittee. The subcommittee wanted to focus the goals on actions within the Council's charge. The Council can recommend, support, or encourage, but cannot effectively "reduce" anything.

Bembry recommended that "support development in an appropriate manner" might be suitable language. The Council discussed that the use of septic systems is a problem in some areas of the region and that the Council could support the DCA's efforts to minimize septic systems without interfering with zoning board responsibilities.

Briley commented that the goals of the Council should not be limited to their authorities because they are still a goal for the region.

Bass responded that the Regional Water Plan was called for in State law and therefore will be a legal document. The Council should not include language that puts land owners' rights to water resources in jeopardy. The Council does not want to end up in the same situation as Atlanta, facing the loss of Lake Lanier. The Council should not extend their authority in the Regional Water Plan and should focus on policies that can be enforced.

Parsons commented that there was little point in setting lofty goals when EPD seems lacking the staff to enforce current regulations. She cited the example of Monroe County developers not doing a good job on erosion and sediment control and choking the life of streams. Ashley mentioned that the enforcement of erosion and sediment control is most of the times delegated to local government and not by EPD.

Copeland agreed that specific goals supporting the protection of natural resources were important and an oversight of the subcommittee. The recommended revision "improve stream integrity" has been interpreted differently by several committee members, so the recommended revision needs to be clarified.

Chairman Richardson suggested changing the goal to read, "Support the protection and improvement of natural stream integrity and the recreation it provides".

Rojas suggested removing the word "improve" because of concerns about the extent that others might envision this effort. He advised that natural integrity is a very subjective term.

The Council voted on removing the words "and improvement" from the revised goal. The motion carried.

The Council voted on adopting the goals (see next page). The motion carried.

Middle Ocmulgee Water Planning Region Goals (Adopted *9.22.2010)*

- ***Maximize existing water supply sources to the extent practicable.***
- ***Support the protection of natural stream integrity and the recreation it provides.***
- ***Promote sufficient water supply for the region.***
- ***Promote efficient use of water.***
- ***Promote properly managed wastewater discharges and beneficial reuse.***
- ***Support the reduction of non-point source pollution by advocating better land management practices.***
- ***Support planning and management of water resources to maintain a healthy economy and ensure a high quality of life and to protect our natural resources.***

3) Water Usage in the Kaolin Processing Industry

Special guest Lee Lemke from Georgia Mining Association gave an overview of Georgia's Kaolin Industry. Randall Quintrell, who represents China Clay Producer Association, gave a presentation on "*Water Usage in the Kaolin Industry: Water Balance Assessments and Forecasts***"**.

Question: Is the Kaolin industry increasing, decreasing, or holding steady?
Response: The kaolin industry is "mature". Their business currently varies based on the use of paper, which is often an indicator of the economy. There are a number of emerging industries that are likely to increase the demand for kaolin, such as ceramics and nanotechnology. The kaolin industry has extensive research laboratories that are identifying new uses for kaolin. The process has become more efficient over time.

Question: One of the arguments for increasing the Plant Washington water use was that the kaolin industry would use less water in the future; is that true?
Response: The kaolin industry will be here for the next 50 years.

Randy Quintrell gave a presentation of water use for the kaolin industry, along with their definition of consumptive use.

The Council discussed the consumptive use and return numbers presented at CM#6. The kaolin industry is using a different definition for consumptive use that was developed before the State Water Plan. The return flows are high because the kaolin industry uses groundwater and stormwater to process kaolin and then returns that water to the streams.

Copeland asked the kaolin industry representatives to stay for the presentation on the Cretaceous aquifer by Dr. Kennedy. He hopes that they will help identify solutions to the region's ground water resources challenges.

The kaolin presentation has been given to a number of EPD leadership including Dr. Kennedy, Linda MacGregor, and Kevin Farrell.

Copeland asked if the total forecasted demand for 2050 is still the projected need.

Response: The kaolin representatives responded that the original forecasts were based on employment and there is not a strong correlation between employment and kaolin water demands (or demands from the pulp & paper industry). The permit applications were based on detailed business projections and the volume of water needed. Each kaolin producer analyzed their business plan to see if it still reflected future plans. The current permitted volumes are anticipated to meet the future needs.

Copeland asked how they could be certain that they need the water one of the two facilities in the region is currently not in operation?
Response: There are a number of new technologies, such as nanotechnology, that may drive the demand for kaolin in the future. This facility may reopen in the future.

Copeland commented that operating groundwater wells costs a lot of money. Using a greater percentage of reuse water from the ponds will be less expensive than pumping groundwater for process water.
Quintrell explained that because kaolin floats, the ponds need a lag time for the particles to settle. The facilities are recycling as much water as possible. Energy costs drive the level of recycling.

Bembry stated that he appreciates the industries mitigation efforts for quarries that have reached their full potential. He asked if the quarry sites could also be used for drinking water reservoirs. If there are 100,000 acres permitted with 40,000 active sites, what is the potential to use these impacted areas for water storage?
Response: Quarries are typically much deeper than reservoirs and the mining life can be 30 – 50 years. Clay quarries could be used for water storage when they are fully mined.

Ray asked; are the kaolin industry groundwater withdrawal permits metered and for a specific location?
Response: Yes. The permits are for specific locations with pumping limits. They are not metered.

There were additional questions on how the unaccounted for water percentage and the wastewater return ratio were calculated. Quintrell showed a slide with projected 2050 demand and wastewater flow which showed the wastewater flow was calculated to be 1.29 times the water use demand. He stated their consultant Craig Smith who conducted the water balance study (and was out of town on the day of the meeting) would be able to answer exactly how these numbers were calculated.

4) Subcommittee Update

Chairman Richardson thanked the ten Technical Subcommittee members for their participation in the 4 subcommittee meetings and one conference call since the subcommittee was formed in May. Ashley provided a summary of the work from the Water and Wastewater Demand Forecast, Resource Assessment, and Management Practice subcommittees. Ashley asked if any subcommittee members asked if they had comments.

Rojas commented that many of the meeting materials for the subcommittees are coming so close

to the date of the meeting that everyone is reacting as quickly and thoughtfully as they can.

Bembry mentioned that other Councils have requested extensions from EPD, but based on discussions with Director Barnes this is not an option. Bembry is concerned about the accuracy of the planning data, given that there is only one node for the region. He recommends sending a formal letter from the Council to EPD requesting an extension and expressing concern in the data accuracy due to the small number of planning nodes.

Farrell stated that the lack of long-term USGS gage stations is a reality. He suggested that the Council recommend additional gage stations in the Regional Water Plan for the next update. He added that there is no proof to lead to a conclusion that the data is incomplete with only one planning node. Su stated that consideration of a new planning node below Macon discharges is possible using synthetic streamflow [Note from Planning Contractor: synthetic flows can be derived from the closest long-term gage station at Macon]. Recommendations to EPD can be included in Section 7.4 of the draft plan.

Chairman Richardson concluded that the Council would send a letter to EPD and include a recommendation for new gages and additional planning nodes in Section 7 of the Regional Water Plan.

5) Review Initial Draft Sections of the Regional Water Plan

Ashley announced that the Draft for Sections 1 – 5 have been reviewed by EPD and a list of 86 comments were returned. Most of the comments are relatively minor and being addressed.

Ashley walked the Council through the submitted Plan sections.

Chairman Richardson commented that the existing population numbers shown in the presentation did not look consistent with the population numbers provided by EPD. These numbers will be checked. [Note from Planning Contractor: Existing population shown in the slide was for the year 2007. Section 4 of the draft plan showed the population forecasts for 2010 to 2050.]

Hodges asked about the conservation storage in Lake Jackson reduces over the planning horizon. Ashley stated that surface water availability reflects the Jackson node and not just Lake Jackson. The decrease in future surface water availability is the result of the planned Newton County reservoir and projects in the Metro Water District. Reservoirs capture flows upstream and thereby reduce downstream flows. Increases in water demands upstream also reduce downstream flows.

It was explained that the Jackson node results reflect the demands in the region as well as those upstream of the region. The water demands increase in the future and therefore there is less water available for new demands; even with new reservoir projects.

Rojas asked about the permit numbers in Table 5-2. It was confirmed that footnotes associated with this Table explain the difference between river and lake permits.

Rojas commented that Sections 1 – 5 mainly reflect information provided by EPD and was curious as to the nature of the comments received.

Ashley responded that many of the comments are minor and suggested different phrasing.

Richardson added that the information provided by EPD was reviewed closely by the Council and any discrepancies were addressed with EPD ahead of submitting the draft. He offered to share the comments with interested Council members over lunch.

Ashley reminded the Council that Sections 6 – 8 are due October 15, 2010.
CM#8 will be tentatively on Nov. 4, 5, or 10th.

Chairman Richardson introduced Kevin Clark and Kevin Kelly with GEFA who joined the meeting.

6) Resource Assessment Updates

Tai-Yi Su provided an update on the surface water quality resource assessment results. Updated 2050 demand condition results were presented for the Assimilative Capacity for dissolved oxygen (DO). She first showed the color-coded map for baseline condition and initial future assessment using full permit limit in the model. The 2050 forecasted demand conditions added "planned projects" on EPD file. The planned project included "Tier 1" projects: Approved wastewater load allocation and projects which also has a design development report, environmental impact document, or an anti-degradation report has been filed and are considered near-term projects. Tier 2 projects included projects that have a wastewater allocation application on file but have not advance beyond this stage. If these projects do not meet the forecasted 2050 demand or if the county does not have any planned project on file, an assumption was made to increase the flow proportionally based on the planned capacities of the planned projects, or the existing discharge quantities from existing plants.

The Council asked for clarification regarding the definition of permit limits. The permit limit is the concentration of pollutants based on the highest levels in the permit. If flows increase in the future, the facility may need to provide a higher level of treatment to meet the permit limits.

There were additional questions about the changes between the existing and future resource assessments. Some streams in the region changed from "red" and "yellow" to "blue" in the Oconee Basin which reflected improvements in existing treatment facilities, for example the ongoing upgrades in Athens-Clarke County. There are also streams that are not mapped in the existing resource assessments but are mapped in the future, reflecting the construction of new wastewater treatment facilities.

Mark Wyzalek (Technical Committee member from Bibb County) asked whether the models use the NPDES permit standards for summer or winter months, where the permit values are different based on season.

Farrell confirmed that the lower permit values were used as they are more conservative.

Bembry asked for confirmation that the DOSAG models are based on critical conditions, or 7Q10 flows. This was confirmed. Wyzalek asked for confirmation that the water quality and water quantity model used different critical condition streamflow data. Su answered that the critical conditions for the models were defined differently.

Clarification was provided on the planning assumptions for future conditions. The future wasteloads were assumed to be a value that would meet water quality standards. In some cases, EPD has already asked facilities to relocate discharges and/or increase treatment levels so the planned improvements are in progress. The model uses current DO standards.

Chairman Richardson requested a break for this presentation to allow Dr. Kennedy to present on the Cretaceous Aquifer work before lunch.

Su provided an update on the lake and watershed models after lunch. The DOSAG models are based on 2007 stream flow and actual discharge data while the lake and watershed models used data based on 7-year hydrologic and climatic records (2001-2007). The watershed models primarily look at nutrients, such as phosphorus and nitrogen. The watershed model reflects the watershed upstream of Lake Jackson. It was confirmed that the existing condition watershed models are based on current discharges and not on the worst case permit conditions. The lake and watershed models predicted potential violation of chlorophyll a concentration at the mid-lake station (current standard is 20 μg/L) and nitrogen concentration (current standard is 4 mg/L); most of the nutrient loads (both total phosphorus and nitrogen) are shown to come from point sources (from the discharges from the Metro District]. The only tributary watershed to have more non-point source contribution is the Alcovy River watershed near Newton Factory. Approximately two-third to three-quarter of the nutrients loads were predicted to come from point sources for the Yellow River, South River and Tussahaw Creek tributary watersheds. It was discussed that the increase in nitrogen levels in the future is associated with a number of different sources in addition to wastewater treatment discharges, such as fertilizer and other non-point source pollution.

Chairman Richardson commented that one of the recommendations from the Governors Contingency Task Force was to reconfigure wastewater discharges in Gwinnett County to the Chattahoochee River. He asked what effect this action would have on the Middle Ocmulgee.
Farrell responded that the nitrogen load would likely decrease but added that the stream flows in the Middle Ocmulgee would also decrease.

The Council discussed the likelihood of maximum wastewater discharges during the low flow stream conditions. Farrell commented that EPD permits wastewater discharges to protect natural resources and the basis for the permits is not likely to change.

Farrell asked about the role of point sources versus nonpoint sources in the increase in nutrient loads in the Jackson node.

Ashley responded that the wasteload from the Metro Water District increases mainly from

increases in Clayton and Henry Counties. Nonpoint source pollution loads were increased in the model based on land use information and existing stream water quality data. Su stated that DeKalb County discharge to the Ocmulgee Basin was kept at 56 MGD in the model as quantity beyond 56 MGD is required to be returned to the Chattahoochee River Basin based on the Metro District Wastewater Plan.

Hodges asked if new reservoirs, like the Tussahaw, reduce the nutrient load.
Response: It was explained that new reservoirs do not change the nutrient loads in the system, but may retain some of the load in upstream lakes. Farrell added that in modeling assumptions the future wastewater flows increase but the total phosphorus loads do not increase, because EPD will require the permit holders to reduce their discharge concentration in the future to meet annual loading limits. Marci Seleb (Technical Committee member from Butts County) commented that there are still nutrient problems, even with the increased treatment standards.

The Council discussed current EPD permitting practices. Wyzalek commented that permits are based on discharges into a stream and not necessarily conditions in the watershed. Farrell explained that the permits were based on the models and information that were available and does not see a change in EPD permitting practices.

Rojas expressed some concern moving forward with the models if they are going to serve as the basis for future permits instead of just being a tool for regional water planning. Farrell responded that the Regional Water Plans will not identify specific permit limits. While the models may be used for future permitting decisions, this was a parallel process to the regional water planning process.

Rojas commented that previous cost estimates at Macon Water Authority showed that upgrading one wastewater treatment plant to reduce phosphorus level would cost approximately $500,000 in chemicals annually. The annual operations budget for the wastewater treatment plant is approximately $2.2 million per year. Increasing treatment levels would create a significant long-term expense.

Briley recommended that the concerns in the validity of the models be included in the plan along with any recommendations to the State.

7) Groundwater Resource Assessments

Dr. Kennedy provided an update on the groundwater availability resource assessments. New information regarding current and future withdrawals was received in April 2010. The new data includes final results from the agricultural forecasts completed by Dr. Hook as well as final municipal and industrial demands provided by the Council. The current sustainable yield for the prioritized Cretaceous aquifer was estimated using a baseline withdrawal level of 124 MGD based on USGS data. The new data shows higher projected 2010 demands and indicated higher "baseline" withdrawal quantity. The modeling team tested the sensitivity of the groundwater models to the changes in data and found that the change in transmissivity associated with the new information changed the results. Therefore, the models are being revised for the Cretaceous aquifer.

Transmissivity is the ability of an aquifer to yield water, or the permeability multiplied by the saturated thickness. The transmissivity was calculated based on the existing groundwater levels and estimated current withdrawals. Because the current withdrawals were higher than expected, the calculated transmissivity levels changed. For the Cretaceous aquifer the sensitivity analysis showed that the change in transmissivity changed the simulated drawdown from 3o feet to a few feet.

The agricultural demands from Dr. Hook were provided in 5 ranges. The summary considered both the 50% and 75% agricultural demands.

Chairman Richardson asked what the change in sustainable yield in the Cretaceous aquifer means for the Middle Ocmulgee Council and specifically Peach, Houston, and Twiggs counties. Kennedy responded that the sustainable yield for the aquifer will likely increase. The current groundwater models show that the model criterion for drawdown is the limiting parameter. With the new transmissivity, the limiting parameter may be the reduction in baseflow instead of drawdown. Until the modeling is completed, he could not provide an estimate for the new sustainable yield.

Bembry asked if the Cretaceous aquifer suffered from sinkholes like the Floridan. Dr. Kennedy responded that the Cretaceous aquifer was more sandy versus the limestone Floridan aquifer, so sinkholes were not as big of a problem.

Copeland asked about the timeline for the Council receiving results from the revised models. Kennedy responded that the results would not be available until mid-December.

Copeland commented that based on the map in the previous baseline resource assessment; there were no areas in the Cretaceous aquifer in the Middle Ocmulgee region where the benchmark metrics showed sustainable yield issues. Copeland asked if it was safe to assume that if the sustainable yield is increasing, that there will not be any challenges for the Middle Ocmulgee Council to address.

Kennedy responded that it was not a safe assumption. If the sustainable yield metric is reached in a portion of the aquifer, the entire aquifer will need to address the gap. There could be a gap in the Cretaceous aquifer in the future, it just may be a smaller gap.

Wyzalek expressed concern in the quality of the resource assessment data as a basis for planning. If the new assumptions yielded such different data, would new data available next year continue to dramatically revise the results?

Dr. Kennedy responded that the new data used was developed for the State Water Plan by Dr. Hook. The final results from Dr. Hook's work were not available until April 2010 and were different from the 2009 estimates from USGS that were used in the original baseline models. The intensity and level of new data is not likely to occur outside of the State Water Plan effort.

Copeland asked if the distance between the simulated wellheads was still about 25-feet apart. Kennedy responded that the large models use a simulated grid and assign the demand to the

center of that grid. The regional model used a 1-mile grid. For the sub-regional models, a 2000-foot grid was used. In a well field design, which is a different exercise than planning, a smaller grid would be used.

Su commented that the metering data for agriculture use is still not widely available and that was the reason the baseline withdrawal level was estimated, not measured. Kennedy concurred. The USGS estimates were based on talking to the farmers. Dr. Hook's irrigation estimates are based on measurements of the wetted acreage and the type of crops.

Kennedy also reviewed the resource assessment results for the Crystalline Rock aquifer. He recommended using the lower range of sustainable yield (0.01 MGD/square mile) from the Piedmont water budget sample basin for planning purposes. He reminded the Council that the sustainable yield presented for the Crystalline Rock aquifer is only for two sample basins. In order to determine whether these results are suitable to the Middle Ocmulgee region, it is important to compare the stream flows in the month of September for the location in the region to those for the sample basins. The hydrology in the drainage basins may not be similar to the sample basins. The Crystalline Rock aquifer is a reasonable source of supply for irrigation, some industrial process water, small municipalities, or private residences.

Chairman Richardson commented that he was concerned about using the 0.049 MGD/square mile number published in the baseline resource assessments because the availability of water is tied to the presence of a fracture. Kennedy recommended using the 0.010 MGD/square mile number in the baseline resource assessment to account for the uncertainty associated with fractures and clearly stating in the plan that this assumes similar characteristics between the Middle Ocmulgee River Basin and the Piedmont water budget sample basin.

Bass recounted a meeting with some well drillers. There are approximately 14,000 customers in the State that use water from the Crystalline Rock Aquifer. While the yields are low, it is an important supply to rural areas and smaller and organic farms. He warned that the Council should be cautious to consider these needs, and not to assume that there is no water available just because the yields are low.

9) Water Management Practices

Ashley gave an overview of the draft water management practices list developed based on comments from the subcommittee. A polling tool was used to solicit feedback from the Council on the draft list of water management practices.

Infrastructure water management practices were not ranked by the Council because if a utility or local governments needs water, then these management practices will be a high priority and selected based on local conditions (generally surface water for north of the Fall Line and groundwater for south of the Fall Line). It was discussed by the Council that some of these may be more feasible than others. The subcommittee recommended providing flexibility to the utilities based on local conditions.

Programmatic water management practices were polled to determine their relative weighted

importance. Each Council member gave the practices a rank of low, medium, or high priority. An average was taken for each proposed management practice. The ranking reflects the practice and not the examples provided as options of how to implement the practice *[Note: see powerpoint slides summary for ranking results]*.

Regarding the use of the Georgia Stormwater Management Manual, Adams commented that for urban areas with MS4 permits, the Georgia Stormwater Management Manual was already required for new developments. The response was that this management practice could extend this practice to the smaller rural communities. Planning contractor would modify the table to include the wording for rural areas.

Council members discussed that practices to reduce runoff from impervious surfaces are expensive; cost and effectiveness should be considered for these practices.

The Council discussed whether stormwater utilities should be a practice limited to urban areas or whether it should extend to rural areas. Council members added that in the City of Covington, the City was responsible for maintenance of stormwater BMPs, since the property owners often don't have resources or know how to care for these BMPs (such as stormwater ponds), turning them over to the government may ensure they function as they were designed. These fees are based on impervious areas. It was discussed that population density instead of population might be a better determination criteria for the need for a stormwater utility. The Council members discussed that a stormwater utility was just a method for funding stormwater system maintenance that was desperately needed in many communities.

10) October 6th Joint Meeting

Based on previous e-mail communications, the following Council and subcommittee members volunteered to attend the joint meeting: Copeland, Bass, McSwain, Ray, Hopkins, and Golmitz. Chairman Richardson has a conflict in the morning but plans to attend in the afternoon.

Co-chair Copeland will participate as a panelist in the "2050 Water Supply Needs" panel discussion. The Middle Ocmulgee Council also was selected to have panel representation on the topic "Council Coordination" and needs one more council member to participate in the panel. Hodges also volunteered to participate in the joint meeting with other Councils.

Chairman Richardson commented that the joint meetings in the past were very informative and he encouraged as many council members as possible to attend.

11) Local Elected Official and Public Comments

Les Ager, a retired DNR employee provided a public comment as a concerned citizen. He encouraged the region to play an active role in developing the Regional Water Plan. He recommended the Council institute a moratorium on additional water supplies and withdrawals until the models are completed and accurate. Ager's written comments are included in the Attachment of this meeting summary.

12) Wrap Up/ Next Meeting

Ashley announced that EPD has set aside $100,000 in 319 grants per Council for priority nonpoint source projects. The projects do require a 40 percent local match and must be for nonpoint source pollution reduction. The Council will discuss projects to include in the Regional Water Plan in future meetings.

Chairman Richardson thanked everyone for their participation and urged everyone to ask any questions.

McSwain asked if the presentations would be available to the Council members. The presentations and voting will be summarized on the Council website under "View All Documents".

The next meeting is tentatively planned for the beginning of November.

Meeting Attendees

Council Members in attendance

Russ Adams
Tony Bass
John Bembry
Jason Briley
Ben Copeland Jr.
Keith Dalton
Jerry Davis
Robert Dickey
Richard Haddock
Charlie Harris
Gator Hodges
Larry McSwain
Hal Newberry
Harvey Norris
Eva Persons
Barry Peters
Robert Ray
Elmo Richardson
Tony Rojas
William Whitten

Council Members not in attendance

Blair Cleveland
Jim Ham
Bobby Hamby
William Lazenby
Paul Leath
Jay Matthews
Terry Scarborough
Thomas Wicker

Staff in attendance

Kevin Farrell (EPD)
Ted Hendrickx (EPD)
David Ashley (Jacobs JJG)
Tai-Yi Su (Jacobs JJG)
Charlotte Weber (Jacobs JJG)
Kim Shorter (AECOM)

Partnering Agencies and General Public

*Adriane Wood (Department of Community Affairs - DCA)
*Keegan Malone (Georgia Soil and Water Conservation Commission)
*Jimmy Evans (Georgia DNR Wildlife Resources)
*Karol Kelly (UGA Cooperative Extension – Bibb County)
*Kevin Clark (GEFA)
*Kevin Kelly (GEFA)
*Lynn Cobb (Keep Georgia Beautiful, DCA)
Don McGough (Georgia Farm Bureau)
Bill Stembridge (Regional Representative for Senator Saxby Chambliss)
Skip Langley (Regional Representative for Senator Johnny Isakson)
Mark Wyzalek (Macon Water Authority, Technical Subcommittee Member)
Mike Hopkins (Newton County Water and Sewerage Authority, Technical Subcommittee Member)
Marianne Golmitz (City of Warner Robin, Technical Subcommittee Member)
Les Ager (retired fisheries supervisor GA DNR)
George Popham (City of Forsyth)
Lee Lemke (Georgia Mining Association)
Randy Quintrell (China Clay Producer Association)
Marcie Seleb (Butts County Water and Sewerage Authority, Technical Subcommittee Member)
Heather Duncan (Macon Telegraph)

**Indicates attendee represented a partnering agency*

Attachment

Public Comment (by Les Ager)

I've got a long history with DNR. In 1975, I began work as a fisheries biologist with the Game & Fish Division of DNR and continued in a similar capacity until my retirement just a couple years ago. Throughout my career and now beyond, I and most of my counterparts within WRD have been frustrated with the "lack of protection" afforded our aquatic systems by our sister division EPD. As a regulatory agency, EPD is under tremendous political pressures to be industry friendly, and receives little support to be environmental friendly. When their former director spoke about the current instream flow policy at your last meeting, he confirmed those pressures when he indicated that the choice for a minimum instream flow policy was guided largely by the economic impact such a policy would have on applicants and not its ability to protect aquatic resources. Since its inception in the early 70's EPD's past has largely been marked by their protection of applicants and less with their protection of the environment. Many of you are already aware of EPD's posture and that is why you are skeptical of some of the information that they have provided to this council.

You are right to be skeptical. Skeptical of the gap analysis, of the models, and of the minimum instream flows used to protect our wildlife. And when your reasonable requests for credible information regarding instream flows was answered at the last meeting you got a watered-down analysis of the importance of adequate instream flow. The WRD presentation at your last meeting, in my opinion, was framed to avoid your detection of the significant difference in the stance of the scientists within the Wildlife Resources Division (WRD) and those in the EPD, with regards to what constitutes sufficient protective stream flows. WRD fisheries personnel not only share your skepticism, but they know from the evidence that EPD's instream flow policy is not adequately protective of our aquatic resources and they have been working to improve that policy since at least 1995, when WRD published an analysis of this issue in a report that has not been shared with you.

EPD's reluctance to allow you to hear uncensored recommendations from WRD or from SEAP can only lead you to a single conclusion. Their leadership has determined that the best science and engineering should not be used to guide the council's efforts. I believe that is public policy at its worst and I think many of you do as well. But in the face of all but untrustworthy information, what are you to do.

EPD may make you write a plan within the schedule they have been given, but you don't have to put what they want in it. I urge you to insist that models used to provide the projections you need be subject to the most transparent of independent scientific review. Failing that, as they have, I believe you have an obligation to reject the finding of the unfounded models and

recommend a moratorium on new water withdrawals or wastewater discharges until credible data is forthcoming. Compounding existing poor policy by plans that are just as flawed will not improve Georgia's water woes. Remember, once the water plans are in place, it very well may be that the opportunity for more sensitive environmental considerations will be lost. Once all of the water in a stream is allocated to other purposes, how will additional instream flows ever be provided, regardless of how critical that may be to protect valuable aquatic resources in some streams.

Furthermore the scientific community outside of EPD is clearly united in their opposition to monthly 7Q10 as an option in the minimum instream flow policy used by EPD. I think you are obligated to express that in your work product and to strongly urge the DNR Board to abandon that option for future use in both models and as new permit conditions, and to adopt the more favorable options already available in the current policy.