

Coosa-North Georgia Supplemental Document: Summary of Public Outreach and Coordination Activities

PREPARED FOR: Georgia Environment Protection Division

PREPARED BY: CH2M Hill

COPIES: Kevin Farrell/GA EPD
Ted Hendrix/GA EPD

DATE: May 4, 2011

This memorandum describes the public outreach and coordination activities associated with the development of the Coosa-North Georgia (CNG) Regional Water Plan. The CNG region includes 18 counties in the Coosa River Basin - Catoosa, Chattooga, Dade, Dawson, Fannin, Floyd, Gilmer, Gordon, Habersham, Lumpkin, Murray, Pickens, Polk, Towns, Union, Walker, White, and Whitfield. Efforts were made to contact representatives in each county within the planning region to ensure that adequate opportunity to provide input into the Regional Water Plan development process was available for interested stakeholders.

CNG Council

The Coosa-North Georgia Council is composed of residents of the region appointed by the Governor, Lt. Governor, and Speaker of the House to prepare a Regional Water Plan. Appendix A lists the CNG council members and their County of origin.

Council Coordination and Procedures

On June 17, 2009, the Coosa-North Georgia Council formally adopted a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the Environmental Protection Division (EPD) of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs. This MOA demonstrates a commitment to work toward the development of regional water and conservation plans called for in the Comprehensive Statewide Water Management Plan (HR 1022) and as declared in the Comprehensive Statewide Water Management Planning Act (O.C.G.A. §12-5-520). The purpose of the MOA is to establish procedures and processes to guide regional water management councils in the development of water management and conservation plans and to ensure coordination between councils and local governments. The MOA requires each Council to adopt a Public Involvement Plan (PIP) based on a statewide template.

Combined the MOA and PIP for the CNG Council defines the following:

- Rules for Meeting Conduct – Meetings must be open with a reasonable amount of time allowed for both oral and written stakeholder and public comment. A 24-hour notice is

required before all Council meetings. EPD adopted recommended Rules for Meet Conduct on June 12, 2009, to guide Council Members, planning contractors, and stakeholders from the general public in discussions during Council meetings. These rules specify meeting roles, preferred methods for discussions, requirements for set meeting agendas and written summaries for each meeting, provisions for allowing public comment and meeting adjournment. A copy of the Rules for Meeting Conduct for the CNG WMC is provided as Appendix B.

- Operating Procedures – The CNG WPC adopted Operating Procedures for the CNG Council on June 12, 2009. These define membership, leadership, rules for meetings, and decision processes. A quorum is defined as a majority of the membership and consensus for the Council is considered to be two-thirds majority vote. The WMC elects a Chair and Vice Chair on an annual basis, communications to Council members are via mail, email and telephone. A copy of the Operating Procedures is provided as Appendix C.
- CNG website – A website for all meeting notices and materials is located at: <http://www.coosanorthgeorgia.org>. Additional materials, including memorandums and public notices from EPD also are located on this site.

For more specific details, the MOA can be downloaded from the CNG website¹, and the PIP is included in this supplement as Appendix D.

CNG Meetings

Following the meeting procedures defined in the MOA and PIP, the CNG WPC participated in a series of meetings, including two Joint Council meetings coordinated by EPD.

Council and Joint Council Meetings

Table 1 summarizes the primary topics covered and actions taken at each of the CNG Council meetings while detailed summaries of each meeting, including premeeting materials, agendas and presentations can be downloaded from the CNG website².

Table 1
Summary of Coosa North-Georgia WPC and Joint Committee Meetings

Meeting Type	Meeting Date	Topics Discussed	Decisions Made
Kick Off Meeting	March 13, 2009	Vision for Georgia's Water Resources Overview of planning process and schedule	Discussed Memorandum of Agreement (MAO) Methods of communication for Councils
Council Meeting 1	May 8, 2009	Water planning process MOA, operating procedures, and meeting rules Regional geography and resources Introduction to trends affecting water including population and employment	Election of John Bennett, Chair, and David Ashburn, Vice Chair

¹ http://www.coosanorthgeorgia.org/pages/regional_water_planning/coosa-north_georgia_council/index.php

² http://www.coosanorthgeorgia.org/pages/regional_water_planning/coosa-north_georgia_council/meetings.php

Table 1
Summary of Coosa North-Georgia WPC and Joint Committee Meetings

Meeting Type	Meeting Date	Topics Discussed	Decisions Made
		forecasts Election of Council officers	
Council Meeting 2	June 17, 2009	Example of management practice by Dalton Utilities Revisions to the MOA Agriculture water demand forecasts Resource assessments Creation of a regional vision Review of initial public involvement plan Population and employment forecasts	Approval of the revised MOA
Council Meeting 3	September 16, 2009	Example of management practice by Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) Planning guidance Visioning for the Council Refinement of population and employment data Methodology for municipal and industrial forecasts Initial results for agriculture forecast Process for resource assessments	Initial draft vision statement to be finalized at CM 4
Council Meeting 4	November 18, 2009	Stream buffers and other alternatives to protect water quality Updates to municipal forecasts and the methodology for municipal and industrial forecasts Approaches for agricultural and energy forecasts Council vision and draft goals Water quality resource assessments Groundwater resource assessment	Adoption of Council Vision Statement
Joint Council Meeting 1	January 26, 2010	Resource assessments for surface water and groundwater availability and water quality Next steps for resource assessments and Councils	Next steps for Councils

Table 1
Summary of Coosa North-Georgia WPC and Joint Committee Meetings

Meeting Type	Meeting Date	Topics Discussed	Decisions Made
Council Meeting 5	March 31, 2010	<p>Results for water demand forecasts (municipal, industrial, agricultural, and energy)</p> <p>Overview of the Metro North Georgia Water Planning District</p> <p>Initial resource assessments (water quantity, groundwater, and water quality)</p> <p>Council water management goals</p> <p>Introduction for management practice selection</p> <p>Review of draft Table of Contents (TOC) for the plan</p> <p>Review of the Public Involvement Plan</p>	<p>Adoption of Council goals</p> <p>Adoption of the Council Public Involvement Plan</p>
Council Meeting 6	July 14, 2010	<p>Presentation by Georgia Power</p> <p>Update on water demand forecasts and resource assessment modeling</p> <p>Management practice guidance</p> <p>Reports from the management practice subcommittees</p> <p>Management practice selection process</p> <p>Break out groups to discuss initial management practices</p> <p>Process for water development and conservation plan</p>	<p>Section of Management Practice Prioritization Committee</p>
Council Meeting 7	September 15, 2010	<p>Election of new Council officers</p> <p>Weiss Lake TMDL, Georgia phosphorus reduction requirements, and Northwest Georgia Regional Water Resources Partnership</p> <p>Georgia instream flow policy</p> <p>Resource assessment gaps</p> <p>Tour of the Rome lock and dam</p>	<p>Re-election of John Bennett, Chair, and David Ashburn, Vice Chair</p> <p>Selection of the following practices for recommended implementation by the State; 1) commercial water audits, 2) meter agriculture water withdrawals, 3) study septic systems effect on water quality, 4) conduct</p>

Table 1
Summary of Coosa North-Georgia WPC and Joint Committee Meetings

Meeting Type	Meeting Date	Topics Discussed	Decisions Made
		Regulatory and policy recommendations from the Council for the State Management practice scoring and initial selection	long-term ambient trend and biological monitoring Scoring and selection of initial management practices
Joint Council Meeting 2	October 6, 2010	Panel discussions on the following; 1) Water quality issues: nutrients and assimilative capacity, 2) agricultural water use and availability, 3) water supply needs through 2050, 4) coordination amongst councils, local governments, and neighboring states	
Council Meeting 8	November 17, 2010	Review of draft plan	
Council Meeting 9	February 23, 2011	Adoption of draft plan for public comment	
Council Meeting 10	<TBD>	Adoption of final plan	

Subcommittee Meetings

Subcommittees were formed to obtain information required for completing assessments and forecasts, for obtaining local knowledge within subareas of the planning region, and for additional Council member input in the identification, weighting, scoring, and final selection of management practices.

The Municipal and Industrial Subcommittee is comprised of representatives from permitted utilities and industries, and the subcommittee's focus is gathering data related to current and anticipated water withdrawals and discharges. Four subcommittees were formed to focus on geographical subareas, defined by river basins, within the planning region. These are the 1) Chattahoochee Subcommittee, 2) Etowah Subcommittee, 3) Oostanaula Subcommittee, and 4) Tennessee Subcommittee. The purpose of these subcommittees is to provide localized input on forecasts, assessments, management practice identification, and management practice selection. By obtaining localized input, some selected management practices can be targeted to more specific areas where they are most likely to be implementable and effective. The Management Practice Scoring Subcommittee is responsible for providing input on potential management practices, the weighting of potential management practices, and the management practice scoring and selection process. A summary of subcommittee and ad hoc committee meetings and conference calls is provided in Table 2.

Table 2
Summary of Coosa North Georgia WPC Subcommittee and Ad Hoc Committee Meetings

Meeting Type	Meeting Date	Topics Discussed	Information Obtained/Decisions Made
Municipal and Industrial	December 15, 2009	Current, planned, and	Obtained current and

Table 2

Summary of Coosa North Georgia WPC Subcommittee and Ad Hoc Committee Meetings

Meeting Type	Meeting Date	Topics Discussed	Information Obtained/Decisions Made
Forecasting Subcommittee		anticipated water demand	future water demand information from M&I users
Chattahoochee Subcommittee	June 3, 2010	<p>Overview of Coosa – North Georgia Water planning areas</p> <p>Review of additional planning guidance memo from EPD Director Barnes</p> <p>Review “Existing Conditions” Resource Assessment (RA) results for the planning area</p> <p>Review revised final water demand forecasts for the planning area</p> <p>Subcommittee brainstorming on key water resource issues within the planning area</p> <p>Discussion about potential management practices for the planning area</p>	<p>Obtained feedback about specific gaps</p> <p>Obtained feedback from Council members and stakeholders regarding additional sources for data</p> <p>Identified potential management practices for the planning area</p>
Etowah Subcommittee	June 3, 2010	<p>Overview of Coosa – North Georgia Water planning areas</p> <p>Review of additional planning guidance memo from EPD Director Barnes</p> <p>Review “Existing Conditions” Resource Assessment (RA) results for the planning area</p> <p>Review revised final water demand forecasts for the planning area</p> <p>Subcommittee brainstorming on key water resource issues within the planning area</p> <p>Discussion about potential management practices for the planning area</p>	<p>Obtained feedback about specific gaps</p> <p>Obtained feedback from Council members and stakeholders regarding additional sources for data</p> <p>Identified potential management practices for the planning area</p>
Oostanaula Subcommittee	June 9, 2010	<p>Overview of Coosa – North Georgia Water planning areas</p> <p>Review of additional</p>	<p>Obtained feedback about specific gaps</p> <p>Obtained feedback from Council members and</p>

Table 2

Summary of Coosa North Georgia WPC Subcommittee and Ad Hoc Committee Meetings

Meeting Type	Meeting Date	Topics Discussed	Information Obtained/Decisions Made
		<p>planning guidance memo from EPD Director Barnes</p> <p>Review “Existing Conditions” Resource Assessment (RA) results for the planning area</p> <p>Review revised final water demand forecasts for the planning area</p> <p>Subcommittee brainstorming on key water resource issues within the planning area</p> <p>Discussion about potential management practices for the planning area</p>	<p>stakeholders regarding additional sources for data</p> <p>Identified potential management practices for the planning area</p>
Tennessee Subcommittee	June 9, 2010	<p>Overview of Coosa – North Georgia Water planning areas</p> <p>Review of additional planning guidance memo from EPD Director Barnes</p> <p>Review “Existing Conditions” Resource Assessment (RA) results for the planning area</p> <p>Review revised final water demand forecasts for the planning area</p> <p>Subcommittee brainstorming on key water resource issues within the planning area</p> <p>Discussion about potential management practices for the planning area</p>	<p>Obtained feedback about specific gaps</p> <p>Obtained feedback from Council members and stakeholders regarding additional sources for data</p> <p>Identified potential management practices for the planning area</p>
Management Practice Scoring Subcommittee (Conference Call)	August 17, 2010	<p>Reviewed feedback on initial scoring results</p> <p>Scores for management practices that appeared to be high or abnormal</p> <p>Additional references to further define management practices</p>	<p>Means for calculating and illustrating results via bar charts</p> <p>Means for scoring data by sector</p>

Other Outreach Activities

Local Government and Utility Coordination

A process was developed and followed to ensure that representatives from all local governments and public utilities within the CNG planning region have the opportunity to provide information and participate in the planning process.

An initial search was performed to locate readily available information from GA EPD or on the Internet. This includes existing Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) and TMDL Implementation Plans and plans prepared by regional planning councils, water management districts, and academic institutions. A number of stakeholders, who may have interest in the planning process, were identified through the initial search.

A list of all water withdrawal and National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits was obtained from EPD and attempts to contact representatives from all identified permitted entities were initially made via telephone and email. Permittees were asked to provide information regarding current water usage, planned capital improvement projects, and anticipated water needs that are not yet included in planning documents.

Follow up requests for information (RFIs) were mailed to each identified permittee. In addition, a letter was sent to each Council member asking for input on contacts at local governments and industries that use and discharge water or that have plans detailing future capital improvements and/or that contain current and planned management practices. In addition to the list of permittees and contacts provided by Council members, contacts for all county and incorporated municipalities were identified. An RFI was mailed to each entity on the contact list. An ftp site was developed to aid respondents in providing information for use in the planning process. For RFIs returned due to incorrect addresses, new contacts were located and RFIs were resent via mail or email. Telephone calls were made to permittees and contacts identified as being significant water users or having known capital improvement or management plans who did not respond to the initial RFI.

Lastly, two local government meetings were held to get feedback from each of the local communities prior to the commencement of the public comment period as reflected in Table 3.

Meeting Type	Meeting Date	Topics Discussed
Helen Local Government Meeting	April 28, 2011	Draft plan
Dalton Local Government Meeting	May 4, 2011	Draft plan

Public Outreach

Time is reserved at the end of each CNG WPC Meeting for public comment from elected officials and the general public. Stakeholders are asked to sign in prior to participating in the public comment session to ensure that the interest group represented can be documented. During these sessions, comments from elected officials and stakeholders from the general public focused on the following:

- Importance of the accuracy of the population projections used in forecasts,
- Finding a way to make the public more aware of meetings and to encourage the provision of information,
- Concerns over proposed reservoirs and the potential for interbasin transfer,
- Potential legislation banning interbasin transfers,
- Existing interbasin transfers and the potential need for interbasin transfer in some areas,
- Requests for additional handouts to be available at Council meetings for attendees from the general public,
- The importance of considering the ecosystem and the significant economic impact of recreational fishing in Georgia,
- A request for additional study on instream flow by the EPA Scientific Engineering Advisory Panel and concerns over the development of the 7Q10, and
- The need for direction on how the Council will operate and fund itself in the future.

Additional public comment was obtained through communications directly to WPC members and the planning contractor. For example, emails related to concerns about the water usage and population forecasts data were emailed to the planning contractor and numbers were reviewed and refined based on feedback from stakeholders. All input from stakeholders is considered in the development of the final plan.

Appendix A- Coosa North-Georgia Water Planning Council Members

Appendix A: Coosa-North Georgia Council Members

Name	City	County
Doug Anderton	Lookout Mountain	Dade
David Ashburn, Vice Chair	LaFayette	Walker
Irwin Bagwell	Cave Springs	Floyd
Kenneth Beasley	Dahlonega	Lumpkin
John Bennett, Chair	Rome	Floyd
Mike Berg	Dawsonville	Dawson
Charles J. Bethel	Dalton	Whitfield
Tim Bowden	Dahlonega	Lumpkin
Keith Coffey (Alternate)	Ringgold	Catoosa
James Donald Cope	Dalton	Whitfield
Kelly E. Cornwell	Fairmount	Gordon
Gerald R. Dunham	Cornelia	Habersham
Pat Gober	Dawsonville	Dawson
Stephen Gray	Clarksville	Habersham
Jerry Jennings	Rome	Floyd
Haynes Johnson (Alternate)	Jasper	Pickens
Sherry Loudermilk	Epworth	Fannin
Richard H. Martin	Cedartown	Polk
William T. Mercier	Blue Ridge	Fannin
Tom O'Bryant	Cleveland	White
Lamar Paris	Blairsville	Union
Sam Payne	Calhoun	Gordon
Todd Pealock	Clarksville	Habersham
David E. Pennington, III	Dalton	Whitfield
Jimmy F. Petty	Crandall	Murray
Frank M. Riley	Hiawassee	Towns
David Westmoreland	Ellijay	Gilmer
Representative Katie Dempsey (Ex-Officio)		
Senator Chip Pearson (Ex-Officio)		

Appendix B- Coosa North-Georgia Rules of Conduct

Appendix B: Coosa North-Georgia Water Planning Council Rules for Meetings

Rule 1: Purpose of rules

A. These rules of conduct specify expectations and meeting processes to guide Water Planning Councils and their members in development of recommended Water Development and Conservation plans. The rules are subordinate to (1) regional water planning guidance provided by EPD, (2) the MOA between the Coosa-North Georgia Council, EPD, and DCA, and (3) the Operating Procedures adopted by the Coosa-North Georgia Council.

Rule 2: Meeting Roles

A. The Chair of the Council will preside at Council meetings. The Chair's responsibilities include working with the Regional Planning Contractor to prepare draft agenda, facilitate Council deliberations, and ensure productive discussion at Council meetings. The Chair will also work with the Regional Planning Contractor to guide the Council through consensus decision-making and voting processes.

B. The Vice Chair of the Council will perform the Chair's duties in that person's absence and will be responsible for reviewing and keeping copies of meeting summaries and decisions recorded by the Regional Planning Contractor.

C. Council members will actively participate in Council deliberations, following guidelines for communications listed below. Any member can offer verbal or written proposals for the group's consideration. Members are responsible for communicating their opinions on proposals under discussion and offering revisions to make proposals more acceptable.

D. Regional Planning Contractors will support the Council in development of the WDCP. Contractors will provide technical resources and neutral facilitators to work with the Chair and assist Council members in finding mutually acceptable solutions. As specified in consultation with the Council Chair, planning contractors may facilitate Council meetings, guide consensus decision-making and/or voting processes, and work with members during and outside of meetings to resolve differences. Contractors will also serve as recorders during the meeting and produce meeting summaries for review and approval by the Council.

E. EPD Representative. Each Council will have a designated representative from EPD who will attend Council meetings as an information resource. The EPD representative will be available to answer questions about the planning process and provide feedback on Council progress to date, as requested. The representative is also available to talk with members of the media. Finally, the representative can access other resources within EPD to answer technical questions that may arise during Council deliberations.

Rule 3: Communications

A. In order to have open and productive discussions, Council members agree to the following rules and will follow them in Council meetings and other communications regarding Council business:

1. One person will speak at a time. Members will refrain from interrupting each other and from side conversations that distract others from listening to the person speaking.
2. Each person will speak for themselves rather than attempting to speak for others at the table.
3. Members will strive to listen, be open-minded and maintain a sense of humor.
4. Each person will make every effort to stay on track with the agenda and avoid grandstanding or digressions.
5. Members will seek a better understanding of different interests and perspectives and try to find common ground.
6. Members will refrain from personal attacks, statements blaming others for specific actions or outcomes, and aggressive verbal or nonverbal behavior or sarcasm.
7. Members will seek to resolve differences and disputes within the Council's planning process, with assistance from the Regional Planning Contractor, rather than attempting to use external channels to influence Council deliberations.

Rule 4: Meeting agenda and Meeting Summaries and Minutes

A. The Council Chair will work with the Regional Planning Contractor to prepare a draft agenda. Each agenda will state the meeting's purpose and include a checklist of intended results. Meeting agenda will focus on the elements of WDCP development specified in the regional planning guidance.

B. Agenda will include the beginning and end times for the meeting, discussion topics and action items, estimated time limits in minutes for each topic, and the name of the person leading each topic.

C. The agenda and supporting or background material such as Meeting Summaries and Minutes will be distributed in advance of each meeting (electronically or by regular mail). Materials will be delivered in sufficient time for review prior to each meeting.

D. Members will be given a chance to read and modify the agenda at the beginning of each meeting. Before proceeding, the group will reach agreement on the agenda, including meeting purpose, intended results, and anticipated decision points.

E. The Planning Contractor will produce written summaries of each meeting, documenting all decisions and highlights of the discussion that led to those decisions. Summaries will be distributed to Council members for review before the next meeting.

F. The Meeting Summary and Minutes of the previous meeting shall be subject to approval at each meeting. The summary and any action items that do not require individual consideration may be placed on the agenda at the beginning in a “consent agenda” section. This information will be provided ahead of time or before the start of the meeting.

G. Consent agenda items will not be discussed individually unless any member requests that they be removed from this section and placed on the regular agenda as a separate item for discussion.

Rule 5: Discussion of issues

A. Any item that is on the agenda as approved at the beginning of the meeting may be discussed. A motion or a second is not required. The Chair or Planning Contractor will introduce the item or topic and, when appropriate, lead the Council in open discussion to identify potential actions or solutions.

B. To assist in developing WDCP content, planning contractors will produce background information provided by Council Members and/or GA EPD and may propose alternatives for Council review and consideration.

C. Any Council members may make verbal or written proposals to the Council. Written proposals should state the problem or concern to be addressed and then state the proposed solution.

D. Non-members may make verbal or written proposals to the Council as specified in the Public Involvement Plan adopted by the Coosa-North Georgia Water Planning Council.

E. Whenever possible, written proposals should be provided to the Chair and Planning Contractor so they can be distributed for review prior to each meeting.

F. All members will be given an opportunity to speak or ask questions. Any member can suggest changes to a proposal, and the proposal can be modified with group agreement.

G. The Chair or the Planning Contractor’s facilitator will ensure that pros and cons are discussed and that all points of view are encouraged.

Rule 6: Decision making

- A. After a proposal has been presented, the Chair or the Planning Contractor will lead the Council through open discussion of pros and cons. All members will be given an opportunity to speak at least once on each proposal.
- B. After thorough discussion, the Chair or Planning Contractor will re-state the proposal with any modifications made as a result of the discussion. The Chair or Planning Contractor will then test for consensus: *“Who can’t live with this agreement or course of action as modified to meet the all of the interests expressed so far?”*
- C. The Chair or Planning Contractor may ask members to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement.
- D. Members who do not agree with a proposal will be asked to offer modifications that are acceptable to them and include the elements that other members have said are necessary for their concurrence: *“What improvements can you suggest that will make it more acceptable to you while continuing to meet the interests of everyone else with a stake in the issue?”*
- E. The Chair or Planning Contractor may also offer modifications to meet outstanding interests.
- F. Following further discussion, the Chair or Planning Contractor will again test for consensus. If consensus has not been reached after a reasonable discussion period, the Chair or the Planning Contractor may recommend tabling the item to allow the Planning Contractor to work with individual members or a subcommittee to develop an alternate proposal that addresses their concerns.
- G. The Chair may, after a reasonable discussion period and effort to address outstanding concerns, call for a vote on the proposal. A simple majority (50 percent plus one of the members present) can over-rule the Chair’s call for a vote.
- H. If the Chair’s call for a vote is over-ruled, the Chair may appoint a sub-committee to revise the proposal or develop an alternate proposal that meets the outstanding concerns.
- I. When voting on a proposal, approval by a two-thirds majority is required for its acceptance. If the Council cannot achieve the two-thirds majority on two sequential votes, the Council will use a simple majority to make the decision. Votes may be by show of hands or written ballot. Any member may request a written ballot.
- J. All decisions made by consensus and by voting will be recorded in the summary of each meeting along with documentation of minority opinions.

Rule 7: Public notice and comment

- A. The Regional Planning Contractor will advertise Council meetings as specified in the Public Involvement Plan adopted by the Coosa-North Georgia Water Planning Council.
- B. A period for public comment will be provided at each regular Council meeting and will be included in meeting agenda. Written comments will also be accepted at each regular Council meeting. The Council may adopt time limits or other guidelines for public comment as needed.

Rule 8: Ending the meeting

A. There will be time on the agenda at the end of the meeting for the Chair or Planning Contractor to summarize the progress made at the meeting in relation to development of the draft WDCP. The summary will include any follow-up action steps agreed to by the group, clarifying the tasks, responsible parties and time limits.

C. Council members may suggest improvements for future meetings. The Chair or Regional Planning Contractor will implement feasible ideas at the next meeting.

D. Standard procedure will be for the Chair to close the meeting when the agenda is complete or the scheduled ending time is reached. Meetings will only be extended if there is a need that cannot be met through other means (e.g., subcommittee work between meetings) and if there is substantial agreement among the members present to do so.

Appendix C- Coosa North Georgia Operating Procedures

Appendix C

COOSA-NORTH GEORGIA WATER PLANNING COUNCIL OPERATING PROCEDURES

I. NAME AND PURPOSE

The name of this organization shall be the Coosa-North Georgia Water Planning Council.

The purpose of the Coosa-North Georgia Water Planning Council is to prepare a recommended regional Water Development and Conservation Plan that promotes the sustainable use of the water resources of the planning region, through the selection of an array of management practices, that will support the region's and state's economy, protect public health and natural systems, and enhance the quality of life for all citizens. The Water Development and Conservation Plan will identify management practices that will be used to ensure that forecasted water resource needs are met.

II. DEFINITIONS

Advisory body of local elected officials – Group composed of one representative from each county and city in the water planning region, to provide recommendations and input on regional population, economic and employment forecasts and on other data and information required for preparation of the water development and conservation plan.

Chair – The individual responsible for presiding at council meetings.

Consensus – Cooperative development of mutually acceptable decisions. A consensus decision is understood to mean that Coosa-North Georgia Water Planning Council members have had an opportunity to express their views, understand the decision and, given the efforts made to address different interests, are willing to live with the specified course of action.

Council members – Individuals who have been appointed by the Governor, Lt. Governor, and Speaker to serve on the Coosa-North Georgia Water Planning Council through the process specified in the Georgia Comprehensive State-wide Water Management Plan.

EPD – Environmental Protection Division.

Operating Procedures – The procedures by which the Coosa-North Georgia Water Planning Council will handle their activities.

Quorum – The minimum number of Council members required to be present at a meeting before any business can be transacted. In the case of the Coosa-North Georgia Water Planning Council, 50 percent plus one of the filled appointee positions shall constitute a quorum.

Regional Planning Contractor – EPD provided Contractor who will assist and support the Coosa-North Georgia Water Planning Council with planning, organizing, preparing, and writing a water development and conservation plan.

Rules for Meetings – The rules guiding Council members during Council meetings and deliberations.

Two-thirds majority vote – Sixty-seven percent or more of the Council members present at a meeting.

Vice-Chair – Individual selected by the Council that in the absence of the Chair performs the duties of the Chair.

Water Council Leadership – Chair and Vice Chair

Water Planning Regions – Those regions established by the Georgia Comprehensive State-wide Water Management Plan.

III. COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

Council Members. Individuals that represent interests such as agriculture, forestry, industry, commerce, local governments, water utilities, regional development centers, tourism, recreation and the environment. The Governor appointed thirteen members plus one alternate; the Lieutenant Governor appointed six members plus one alternate and the Speaker of the House appointed six members plus one alternate. The Lieutenant Governor and Speaker also each appointed a non-voting ex officio member from among the membership of the Senate and House.

Term of Office. Members shall have a three-year term with re-appointment at the pleasure of the initial appointing authority. Ex-officio members appointed by the Lieutenant Governor and Speaker shall serve two-year terms. In the event of a vacancy, the official who made the initial appointment shall appoint a replacement to serve the remainder of the applicable term.

IV. COUNCIL LEADERSHIP

General Powers. The Coosa-North Georgia Water Planning Council Leadership shall function within existing State laws and regulations and shall follow guidance provided by EPD.

Number and Qualifications. The Coosa-North Georgia Water Planning Council shall have one Chair and one Vice Chair. The Chair and Vice Chair shall be selected by a two-thirds majority vote and shall serve a twelve month term.

The Chair of the Council. The Coosa-North Georgia Water Planning Council shall select a Chair. The Chair shall preside at all meetings of the Coosa-North Georgia Water Planning Council. The Chair shall work with the Regional Planning Contractor to ensure that all meeting notices are provided in a timely manner. The Chair shall also work with the Regional Planning Contractor to identify the purpose and necessary outcomes for each meeting and ensure that those outcomes are achieved. The Chair shall convey requests of the Council to EPD and DCA.

The Vice-Chair of the Council. The Coosa-North Georgia Water Planning Council shall select one Vice Chair. In the absence of the Chair, the Vice Chair shall perform the duties of the Chair. The Vice Chair shall be responsible for reviewing and keeping written copies of meeting summaries and decisions recorded by the Regional Planning Contractor. The Vice-Chair may convey requests of the Council to EPD and DCA.

Selection of Chair and Vice-Chair. The initial Chair and Vice-Chair shall be selected by two-thirds majority vote of the members present at the first regular meeting of the Coosa-North Georgia Water Planning Council. At the end of the first one-year term and every year thereafter, the Council shall select a Chair and Vice Chair by two-thirds majority vote.

V. DECISION MAKING

Decision-Making. The Coosa-North Georgia Water Planning Council shall attempt to reach consensus in its decision making, as described in its Rules for Meetings. In the event consensus on a decision cannot be reached in a reasonable time period, the Council may make decisions by a two-thirds majority vote. If the Council cannot achieve the two-thirds majority on two sequential votes, the Council will use a simple majority to make the decision. The Chair, after a reasonable discussion period, may initiate a vote on a decision, unless over-ruled by a simple majority (50 percent plus one) of the members present at the meeting.

Participation in decision making. All members of the Coosa-North Georgia Water Planning Council who are present at a meeting may participate in discussion and efforts to reach consensus. For purposes of voting on Council decisions, each member shall have one vote. Alternate members will be eligible to vote if counted to constitute a quorum. If any alternate members are counted to constitute a quorum, all alternates present at the meeting shall be eligible to vote. Ex-officio members are non-voting members of the Council. Any member can send a designee to a meeting for information purposes only, but that designee will not participate in Council deliberations or voting.

Non-Represented Interests. Government agencies, individuals, local governments, and other organizations not directly represented by a water planning council member are encouraged to participate during designated public comment periods during Council meetings, however, non-represented interests will not act as voting members of the Coosa-North Georgia Water Planning Council.

VI. MEETINGS AND GOVERNANCE

Regular Meetings. A regular meeting of the Coosa-North Georgia Water Planning Council shall be held once per quarter in 2009, 2010, and 2011 (time period might be shortened if the Water Development and Conservation Plan is completed and adopted by the Director prior to June 2011). The notice of the meeting must be posted on the Council website and local newspaper(s) and distributed in such a manner so as to allow for public participation. The Coosa-North Georgia Water Planning Council is encouraged to schedule its regular meetings on days and times that allow for full and diverse participation.

Other Meetings. Joint meetings with other water planning councils and additional meetings of the Coosa-North Georgia Water Planning Council will be held as determined by the Council or EPD. The notice of these meeting must be posted and distributed in such a manner so as to allow for public participation.

Open Meetings. The Coosa-North Georgia Water Planning Council shall conduct open meetings. The Council shall give at least 24-hour notice of any meeting and post the announcement in a public place(s). A meeting agenda or summary of topics shall be published with the notice. The Coosa-North Georgia Water Planning Council is intended to be a public endeavor, with input from all who want to contribute.

Meeting summaries and Minutes. The Regional Planning Contractor working with the Council shall keep accurate meeting summaries and minutes of all Coosa-North Georgia Water Planning Council meetings. All meeting summaries and minutes shall be subject to approval at the subsequent Coosa-North Georgia Water Planning Council meeting. The meeting summaries and minutes shall be made available to the public.

Quorum. A majority of the total membership of the Coosa-North Georgia Water Planning Council shall be present before specifying consensus agreement or voting on any major decisions at each meeting. If a quorum is not present (see definition in Section III), a majority of the members present may adjourn the meeting without further notice or may choose to meet and discuss issues but may not take any actions.

Subcommittees. The Coosa-North Georgia Water Planning Council shall have the ability to establish subcommittees made up of Council members to facilitate dialogue and resolution of issues and conflicts within the water planning region, with adjacent water planning regions, or with water planning regions that rely upon shared resources. The Chairman shall solicit nominations for subcommittee participation with final composition of each subcommittee ratified by the Council.

Presumption of Assent. A member of the Coosa-North Georgia Water Planning Council who is present at a meeting at which action on any matter is taken shall be presumed to have assented to the action unless the dissent of such Member is recorded by being entered in the summary of the meeting.

Resignation of Chair, Vice Chair and Members. Any Chair, Vice Chair or Member may resign at any time by submitting a resignation in writing to the Director of EPD who will notify the appointing officials. Such resignation takes effect from the time of its receipt by State officials unless a date or time is fixed in the resignation, in which case it will take effect from that time. Acceptance of the resignation shall not be required to make it effective.

Participation by Non-Members. Public participation in the Coosa-North Georgia Water Planning Council process is encouraged by expressing views and opinions to the council Members. The Chair may adopt special rules of discussion consistent with the Public Involvement Plan on a case-by-case basis, however a reasonable amount of time must be provided to solicit and collect public comments during each meeting.

Rules for Meetings.

After EPD review and comment, the Coosa-North Georgia Water Planning Council will, by consensus or a two-thirds majority vote, adopt Rules of Meeting based on a template provided by EPD. Once adopted, the Rules for Meetings shall be the regular meeting method of the Council and any subcommittees it establishes.

VIII. AMENDMENTS

These operating procedures and the Council's Rules for Meetings shall be reviewed annually. After EPD review and comment, the procedures may be altered, amended, or replaced by new operating procedures by consensus or by a two-thirds majority vote of the Coosa-North Georgia Water Planning Council members. All Members shall have received written notice of any and all proposed changes to the operating procedures at least two weeks prior to the date such changes are to be acted upon.

Approved:

06/12/2009

Appendix D- Coosa North-Georgia Public Involvement Plan

Appendix D: Coosa-North Georgia Public Involvement Plan (PIP)

Regional water planning councils will adopt a Public Involvement Plan based on the following template. The template establishes the basic public involvement activities to

be undertaken by all regional water planning councils. It also provides for additional elements to be adopted at the discretion of individual water planning councils.

The Chair of the regional water planning council will use discretion in permitting additional public comment or adjusting to adapt to specific meeting timelines and constraints, so long as the intent and expectations described below are followed.

The regional water planning councils with assistance from regional water planning contractors should complete the following form, including specifying additional elements that may be identified by each council.

The regional water planning councils, assisted by their regional planning contractors, will follow the adopted Public Involvement Plan to provide opportunities for meaningful input from key stakeholders, the members of local government advisory body, and the general public.

Guiding principles

The Coosa-North Georgia regional water planning council recognizes the benefit and importance of providing opportunities for diverse input throughout the regional water planning process. The principles of the public input process are:

- Stakeholders and regional water planning council members will treat each other with respect and dignity;
- All participants will have an open mind and participate openly and honestly;
- The regional water planning process will continue with concurrent public comment throughout;
- Georgia EPD will provide public notice and take public comment on draft regional water plans after they are submitted;
- Stakeholder comments will be pertinent to the topic of the meeting at which they are expressed; and

- Input from the public, key stakeholders, and the members of the Local Government Advisory Body will be considered and incorporated in regional water planning council work products.

Regional water planning councils may add expectations to this list as deemed necessary. Meeting materials will be posted to the Coosa-North Georgia water planning region website.

Key stakeholders

The key stakeholders for the Coosa-North Georgia water planning region are identified below. All members of the public will have opportunities for input, even if not specifically identified in this section.

- Local Government Advisory Body – includes one representative from each city and county within the water planning region
- Neighboring regional water planning councils – water planning councils that share borders and/or water resources
- Regional Commissions – agencies supporting local and regional comprehensive planning
- Agriculture – includes water permit holders for agricultural applications
- Businesses – includes local businesses (this audience may be sub-divided into more specific categories)
- Industries – includes industrial water permit holders and municipally-supplied industrial facilities
- Forestry – includes owners of managed forest lands and the forest products industry
- Institutions/educational/schools – includes public and private schools as well as Institutions
- Tourism – includes public and private organizations related to local travel and

Tourism

- Recreation – includes citizens and industry related to recreational water uses
- Environment – includes citizens, agencies, and groups focused on environmental protection
- Public – any citizen interested in the regional water planning process

Regional water planning councils may add key stakeholders to this list as deemed necessary.

Procedural criteria

Time will be provided at every regional water planning council meeting for input from stakeholders and the public. The procedural criteria are intended to ensure the public respects the regional water planning council's schedule constraints and the regional water planning council respects the public's opportunity to present relevant and different opinions.

To facilitate a fair and efficient process, the Coosa-North Georgia water planning council has adopted the following procedures for public comment.

- All regional water planning council meetings will be open meetings
- Stakeholders will be provided an opportunity to provide comments pertinent to the topic of the meeting in which they are expressed
- Time will be provided at the end of all Coosa-North Georgia regional water planning council meetings for public comment
- Provisions for written comments will be made at all regional water planning council meetings

The Chair of the regional water planning council will use discretion to manage public comment under different circumstances in ways that enable the council to progress with its work and respect those who want to comment.

Regional water planning councils may add to this list as deemed necessary.

Meeting announcements

All regional water planning council meetings will be open meetings, including at least a 24-hour notice of any meetings. The following provisions will be made for all planning council meetings to inform the public of upcoming meetings.

- Posted on the Coosa-North Georgia regional water planning council website with a meeting agenda or summary of topics to be covered, meeting time, and meeting address.
- Posted at the meeting location with a meeting agenda or summary of topics to be covered, meeting time, and meeting address
- Meeting summaries will be posted on the Coosa-North Georgia regional water planning council website

Regional water planning councils may add to this list as deemed necessary.

Stakeholder and public comment opportunities

Specific opportunities during the regional water planning process for stakeholder and public input include but are not limited to the following.

Meetings of the Coosa-North Georgia regional water planning council

Coosa-North Georgia regional water planning council website (documents will be posted periodically with timeframes for comment and mechanisms for comment clearly stated)

- Letters may be mailed to Georgia EPD
- Emails to the regional water planning council and/or Georgia EPD
- Georgia EPD public notice period for the resource assessments
- Georgia EPD public notice period on the draft regional water plans

Regional water planning councils may use their discretion to permit additional stakeholder and public comment opportunities, as deemed appropriate.

Local government officials

Much of the implementation of the regional water plans is the responsibility of local governments; therefore input will be sought from the local government officials on the following specific topics.

- Regional population, economic and employment forecasts
- Fiscal implications of water management practices
- Draft regional water plan

The regional water planning council and local government officials should identify proper communication pathways. The following actions are intended to coordinate activities of the local government officials with the regional water planning councils.

- Local government officials will be provided an opportunity at the (beginning, during, end) of the regional water planning council meetings to comment on the regional water planning process and items on the meeting agenda
- Local government officials may provide written comments to the regional water planning council, as needed.

Regional water planning councils may add to this list as deemed necessary.

Other regional water planning councils

In order to plan and coordinate the use and protection of shared water resources, the regional water planning council will coordinate with adjacent and hydrologically connected councils throughout the regional water planning process. Georgia EPD will convene some meetings to discuss shared water resources, such as on the current resource assessments.

The regional water planning councils will use the following communication pathways to coordinate with adjacent regional water planning councils.

- Members of the regional water planning council will attend shared resource meetings and other joint meetings
- At the discretion of the Chair, an opportunity may be provided at regional water planning council meetings for announcements or progress reports from adjacent regional water planning councils

The Chair of the regional water planning councils may use their discretion to provide additional coordination with adjacent regional water planning councils, as deemed appropriate.

Regional water planning councils may add to this list as deemed necessary.

Review and consideration of public input

The objective of this process is to gather relevant and diverse input to improve the quality of the recommended regional water plans. Once public comments are received from the public and key stakeholders the regional water planning council with the assistance of the regional planning contractor will consider and address these comments. Written comments and web comments will be summarized and provided to the regional water planning council members. Verbal comments will be summarized and included in meeting summaries