



Georgia's
State Water Plan

Update: Agricultural Water Demand
November 20, 2009

www.georgiawaterplanning.org

Re-cap from Last Meeting

The steps in forecasting agricultural water demand included the following:

1. Determine “baseline” irrigated acreage.
2. Identify withdrawal sources (groundwater, surface water, ponds).
3. Project major crop acres through 2050.
4. Calculate crop water needs for wet, normal, and dry years.
5. Project agricultural water withdrawals 2011-2050.

***Input still sought to identify data gaps in forecasts.
Forecasts available through council website.***

Background

- Issue: Some livestock, dairy, poultry, and nursery agricultural water-uses are not captured in the current Agricultural Water Demand Forecast (AWDF)
- Members of these sub-threshold water-use sectors (<100,000 GPD) feel they are not represented in Georgia's water planning efforts and believe their exclusion diminishes their economic importance to Georgia
- Solution: Investigate options for including these smaller water uses in regional planning council efforts

Challenges

- EPD does not permit (regulate) majority of sub-threshold agricultural water-uses (< 100,000 GPD)
- Sub-threshold users seek inclusion in Georgia's water planning efforts without becoming regulated
- Some Councils have formed sub-committees to investigate sub-threshold agricultural water-use (including Lower Flint Ochlockonee)
- Methodology and results of research may be inconsistent if sub-committees are not provided with a structure

On-going Efforts

- Georgia Farm Bureau (GFB) has facilitated representation of sub-threshold agricultural water users on water planning councils
- Two meetings held to discuss issues relevant to these water users: September 30 and October 16
- Partners:
 - Albany State University
 - Georgia Agribusiness Council
 - Georgia Cattlemen
 - Georgia Department of Agriculture
 - Georgia Environmental Protection Division
 - Georgia Farm Bureau
 - Georgia Green Industry
 - Georgia Milk Producers
 - Georgia Poultry Federation
 - Georgia Soil and Water Conservation Commission
 - University of Georgia
 - Water Council / Subcommittee Member(s)

Status and Goals

- To provide state-level effort eliminate data collection inconsistencies among sub-committees of WPRs, but to include them in the effort.
- To engage leaders of from various agricultural sectors
- To provide a “snap-shot” of current data in these agricultural water-use sectors, as opposed to projections of growth
- To present data collected to councils at Council Meeting 5 (and to subcommittees prior to CM5)

The Councils will decide on how to include sub-threshold agricultural water-use in its regional plan.