



# Upper Flint Water Quantity Committee Report February 7, 2011

# UF Water Quantity Committee

- Cliff Arnett, Chair
- Michael Bowens
- Donald Chase
- Eddie Freeman
- Jack Holbrook
- Terrell Hudson
- Buddy Leger
- Dick Morrow
- Jim Reid
- Randy Starling
- Lamar Perlis
- Gene Brunson



# Committee Meeting: January 26, 2011

- Meeting summary: pp. 24-28 of pre-meeting packet
- Reviewed changes in Jan. 21<sup>st</sup> draft
- Discussed further plan revisions
- Developed recommendations to Council for today's meeting



# Section 3.2.1 (page 3-4)

New statement of the council's position on the model assumptions regarding withdrawals for reservoir filling in the upper part of the basin (see ¶4):

*The Council's position is that the modeling assumptions regarding withdrawals to fill upstream reservoirs do not reflect actual conditions, and as a result, the current assumptions result in an overestimation of flow shortfalls in the Flint River Basin. The Council recommends that future modeling to assess surface water flows in the Flint be preceded by an evaluation of actual withdrawals to fill reservoirs in the Upper Flint in order to support the development of improved assumptions about such withdrawals and more accurate modeling of surface water flows.*



# Section 6.1 (page 6-3)

In the 2<sup>nd</sup> bullet point (regarding 2008 Biological Opinion):

- Change the 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence to read as follows:  
“The consultation will continue ongoing depth distribution data collection and analysis to determine the minimum flows needed in order to protect listed species.”
- Add a footnote referring to the statement of the Council’s position on this issue on page 7-12.

# Section 6.2 (page 6-10)

Add a statement to section 6.2 (Selected Water Management Practices for the Upper Flint Region):

- Water conservation is a top priority management practice in this plan. The Upper Flint Water Council recognizes that water users have already invested in and implemented a substantial portfolio of conservation practices in the region. Their prior conservation efforts should be recognized and taken into account in the design of conservation programs and policies.



# Section 7.4 (page 7-13)

Add a Water Policy Recommendation to Section 7.4 to recommend:

- Conservation policy and regulations should be designed to recognize and credit water users for conservation practices that they have already implemented and target consumptive over nonconsumptive uses as a priority for conservation. Additionally, conservation policy and regulations be designed with an emphasis on cost-effectiveness as a key criterion.



# New Management Practice (Page 6-7)

**DM8:** Create an awards program to recognized agricultural irrigators for exemplary implementation of best management practices for water conservation.

- Program to be modeled after Georgia Forestry Commission awards program for BMP implementation.



# DM5 – Page 6-6

Management Practice	Description/Definition of Action
<p><i>DM5: Use irrigation suspension only through implementation of the Flint River Drought Protection Act, only by voluntary means, with notification to farmers <del>in</del> <u>January as early as possible</u>, and only as a last resort when other options are not available to address severe flow depletions.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Council supports voluntary implementation of the Flint River Drought Protection Act <u>by GAEPD</u> through an irrigation suspension auction, when absolutely necessary in abnormally dry periods and when other options are not available to address severe flow depletions.</li><li>• GAEPD should provide notification of possible use of the Flint River Drought Protection Act before the March 1 deadline. Notification to farmers in January would inform planting decisions and help to reduce the cost to farmers and to the state for irrigation suspension. <u>The Council acknowledges the need to improve drought prediction tools to support earlier notification and supports GAEPD efforts to develop better predictive tools.</u></li><li>• The Flint River Drought Protection Act has not had adequate funding in recent years, and a reliable source of funding is needed to support voluntary suspension.</li></ul>