



REGIONAL COMMUNITY INSTITUTE OF NORTHEAST FLORIDA, INC.

Water Committee Meeting

Wednesday, June 14, 2017, 2pm

Camden County Planning and Development Office

107 Gross Road, Kingsland, Georgia, 31548

Meeting Summary

Chair White introduced himself and staff and asked participants to introduce themselves. The Chair noted that public input is always welcome. He reviewed the summary of the May 10 meeting, including the ideas that might be considered as the committee thinks about recommendations. He reminded the group what questions it asked related to today's subject, Communication:

- Attainable, can get it done/enforcement
- How to best communicate
- Interstate cooperation

The committee had a brief discussion regarding the "R" code, and it was agreed it was a useful tool. There was detailed discussion regarding whether the representation of Georgia has been broad enough and there was general agreement that it has not been, especially as the committee may consider recommendations that might be implemented in the St. Marys River basin. Several organizations and individuals were identified as "must come" to the upcoming meetings where we will discuss what the committee wants to recommend. The organizations included:

- FL Department of Environmental Protection and the GA Department of Natural Resources
- Southern Environmental Law Center
- St. Marys River Management Committee
- St. Marys Earthkeepers
- GA Coastal Regional Commission
- Both GA Regional Districts that include the St. Marys River basin

Mr. Montague agreed to provide contact information where he had it.

There was discussion of data sharing. Most or all data is on STORET, but this has not led to seamless coordination because it is a system that is not that easy to use and there is no way to know that new data has been added unless it is constantly monitored. It was mentioned that there is a quarterly teleconference run out of FDEP in Tallahassee that includes JEA, COJ and local DEP that may be a model. It was asked how much water, if any, could be taken out of the St. Marys. This question reiterated the need for broad representation from GA, since that question should not be discussed without the right stakeholders in the room.



The committee was interested to know that USGS, USACE, GA and FL have been creating a common model for the aquifer: NEFSG. The North Florida Water Initiative website has minutes of meetings. It is larger than just GA/FL and is coupled with a surface water model. It covers from Orlando to the Gulf to the Atlantic to South of Macon to SW South Carolina. It was used for the North Florida Regional Water Supply Plan, and eventually is planned to be used as a permitting tool.

The group recommended a conference call or Go to Meeting be added to the upcoming recommendations meetings so that no stakeholder has to miss the discussions.

It was agreed that a “fundable” category of recommendations might be considered by the committee. This would mean that a recommendation could be considered doable if there were a viable funding source identified, as well as partners willing to go for the funding. As in previous meetings, staff is noting ideas that come up, to be considered as the committee considers recommendations at the end of the process:

- USACE may provide an opportunity for funding
- Add whichever are the right agencies in GA to the quarterly data/information-sharing conference call organized by FDEP
- Up the profile of the NEFSG so that it can be completed more quickly
- Make recommendation on monitoring
- Make recommendations on data sharing
- Make recommendations on a practical way to communicate
- Do a FL/GA compact. Make it a model for interstate cooperation
- Coordinate the advocates/ oversight for the St. Marys: Earthkeeper, Riverkeeper, Management Committee. What does each do? Is there overlap? Can efficiencies be created?
- Have an annual conference on the St. Marys

The Chair asked for public comment but there was none. The next meeting will be July 12 at NEFRC. The meeting ended at 3:45 pm.

Upcoming Meeting Dates: 7/12, 8/9 and 9/13