Review of River Basin Planning

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A River Basin Plan answers four questions:

- What is the basin's current available water supply and demand?
- What are the current permitted and registered water uses?
- What will be the basin's water demand over the next 50 years, and will the water supply meet the demand?
- What **water management strategies** and **policies** can be employed to ensure the supply meets or exceeds the projected demand over the next 50 years?

What We Will Do to Accomplish that Goal

Phase 1	- Learn about the basins water resources - Become familiar with rules and laws governing water use - Evaluate water demand projections - Become familiar with the modeling tools
Phase 2	- Evaluate current and future water availability issues - Identify and quantify shortages, select surface water conditions, reaches of interest and groundwater areas of concerns

What We Will Do to Accomplish that Goal

Phase 3	- Develop and evaluate **water management strategies** - Recommend and prioritize strategies

Phase 4	- Develop **legislative, policy, technical and planning process recommendations**
	- Prepare the **River Basin Plan that:**
	  - Includes an ***implementation plan***
	  - Identifies ***drought response initiatives***
	  - Considers ***public input***

Water Management Strategies

Water management strategies mitigate/eliminate water shortages or increase water supply

- Demand side (water conservation measures)
- Supply side (new water sources)

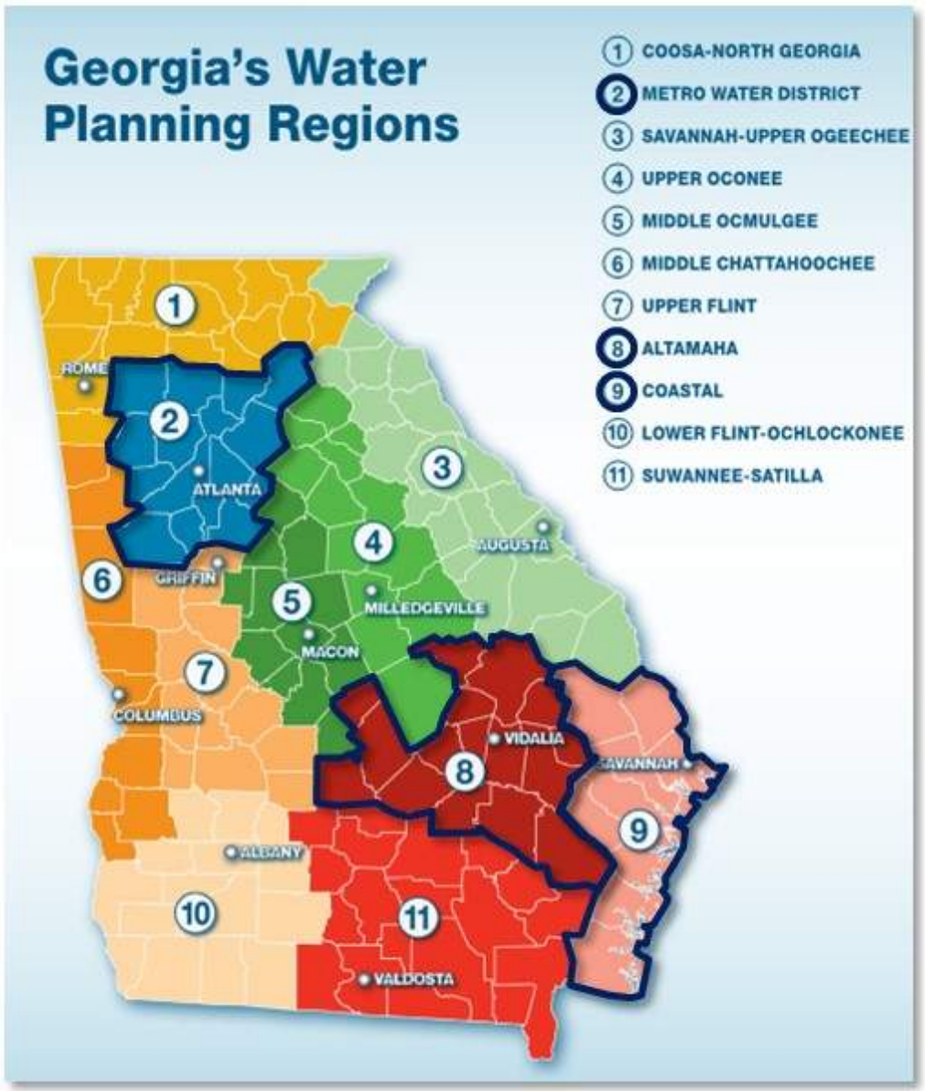
***Examples with potential for application in the Edisto Basin*:**

- **Expanding municipal water conservation programs**
- **Reducing agricultural water use through water audits**
- **Optimizing conjunctive use of groundwater and surface water**
- **Developing or improving small impoundments in the higher order tributaries**
- **Coordinated drought/low-flow water use reductions to maintain instream flows**

RBCs will make Technical, Legislative and Process Recommendations as part of the River Basin Plan

- **Technical**
  - Need for additional data, decision-making tools
  - Need for studies on specific topics/issues
- **Policy, Legislative, or Regulatory**
  - Revisions to existing laws and regulations
  - New laws or regulations
  - Recurring funding
- **Process**
  - Changes to RBC membership, bylaws, procedures, etc.

Examples - Regional Water Plans in Georgia

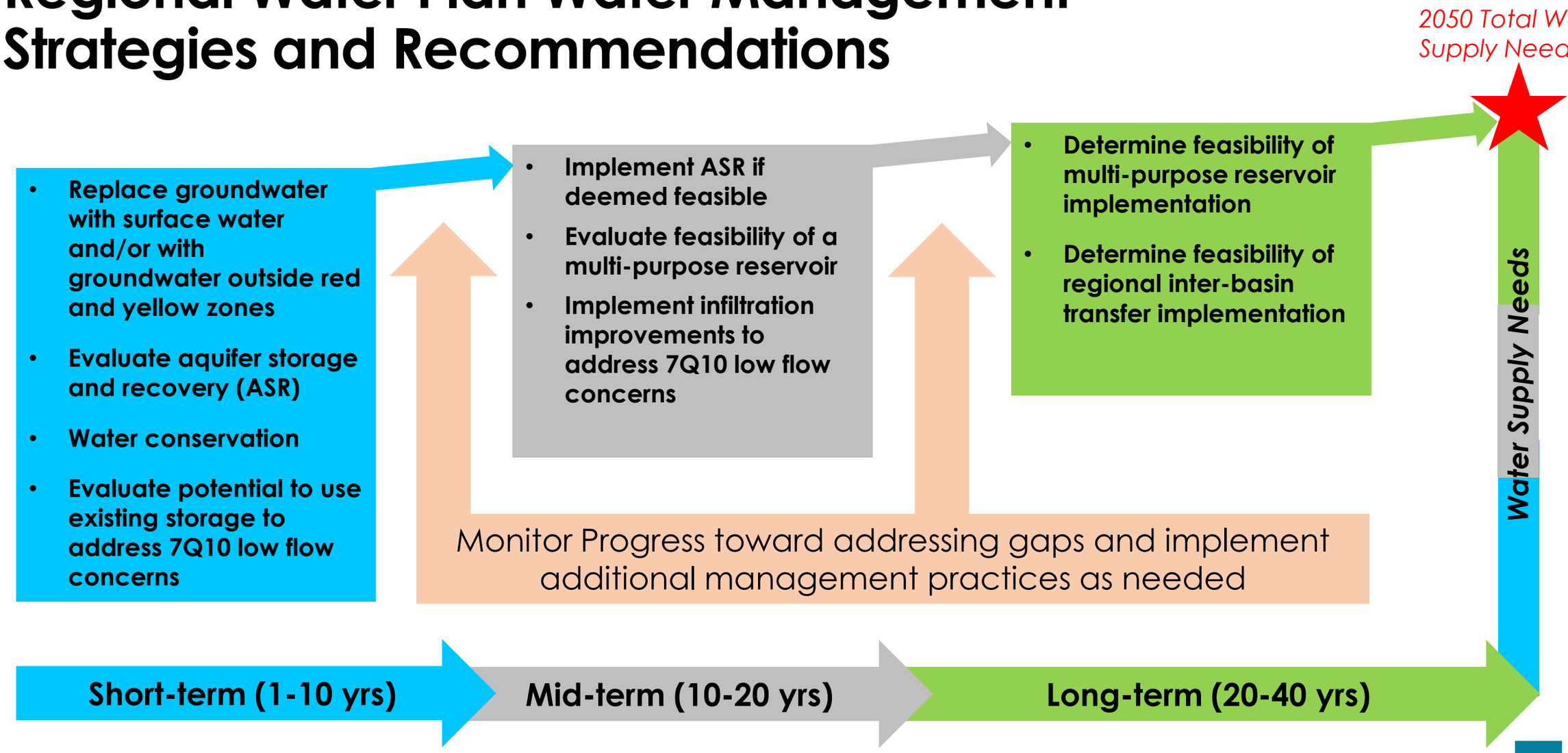


Georgia's Regional Water Plans

https://waterplanning.georgia.gov/regional-water-plans

Coastal Georgia Region

Regional Water Plan Water Management Strategies and Recommendations



Planning Period 2010 - 2050

Upper-Flint
Regional Water Plan Recommendations (examples)

Technical and Information Needs

- Evaluate additional low-flow statistics for use in surface water availability resource assessment.
- Improve estimates and forecasts of water use by the energy sector to support regional water planning in Georgia.
- Complete a comprehensive assessment of baseline implementation of water conservation and water quality Best Management Practices by agricultural producers.

Policy, Legislative and Regulatory

- Irrigation suspension be used only through implementation of the Flint River Drought Protection Act, only by voluntary means, with notification to farmers before March 1 when possible, and only as a last resort to address severe flow depletions.
- The Council urges the General Assembly and state policymakers not to preclude interbasin transfer (IBT) as an option for future water management in the region.

Technical and Process

- Recognize the critical need for better use of existing storage and for more storage in the Apalachicola-Chattahoochee-Flint (ACF) System and develop a plan for additional storage working with other councils in the ACF basin.

Suwannee-Satilla
Regional Water Plan Recommendations (Examples)

Technical and Information Needs

- Work with EPD's Agricultural Water Metering Program and Partner Programs to improve agricultural water use data collection and management
- Support completion, maintenance and improvement of the Agricultural Water Use Measurement Program
- Research the percent loss and consumption of irrigation water applied to crops. Research varieties of crops that require less water and are more drought resistant.

Policy and Funding

- Support Georgia Agricultural Conservation Incentive program, which provides funding support to help implement conservation practices
- Focus funding support and permitting assistance to projects and programs aimed at addressing gap areas