

ACFS

Governing Board Meeting

Columbus Trade Center

Columbus, GA

May 30-31, 2012

Welcome, Introductions, Meeting Objectives and Agenda

The Governing Board (GB) meeting started at 9am. Charles Stripling welcomed the GB. He introduced Billy Turner, who welcomed the GB to Columbus. Stripling discussed the complexity of the tasks in which the ACFS is engaged and noted the importance of remembering that the tasks are complicated and perhaps cannot be simplified, by referring to the acronym KICS, which he defined as: keep it complicated stakeholders. Next, the GB members introduced themselves, and Gail Bingham reviewed the agenda and meeting materials with the GB.

Old Business

Billy Turner made a motion to accept the March GB meeting summary, and Brad Moore seconded the motion. ***The motion was approved by consensus.***

SWMP/IFA Update

Brad Moore provided an update on the status of the Sustainable Water Management Plan (SWMP)/Instream Flow Assessment (IFA) and Technical Oversight and Coordination Work Group (TOCWG) activities. His slides are available on the website. To date, Phase A has been completed, and B&V and Atkins are currently working on the tasks in Phase B. Moore reviewed the tasks underway and costs to date for the project. Moore explained several major issues currently facing the TOCWG: resolving work plan and schedule issues, evaluating the need and method for peer review, funding, and developing a common vision of the SWMP/IFA.

Next, Moore discussed the suggested revisions to the work plan. He reviewed a table that summarized work plan approach revisions and schedule revisions for the project. Moore reviewed the cost increases associated with the suggested schedule and process changes. The total cost increase is \$256,254. Next, Moore discussed areas in the project that could lead to future cost escalation or project delays. He referred to these as discovery issues. In summary, for 2012 and 2013, to complete the SWMP/IFA and to cover ACFS administrative costs, ACFS will need approximately \$1.5 million. To date, ACFS has raised about \$800,000.

## Discussion:

- It is not a surprise that we need more money for this project, but we need to avoid surprises. The moving target for fund-raising target needs to stop.
- Will the instream flow analysis (IFA) be hard-wired into the model (as constraints)? Brad Moore responded that they might be, but that doesn't mean that the model will always attain them. Steve Simpson, Black and Veatch (B&V), said that they can make any quantitative flow or level a model constraint.
- I want to make sure we can turn model constraints on and off as desired for analysis. Steve Simpson said this is possible.
- It is a concern to some stakeholders that one interest group does not have a preference in the model. We all have wants, needs, and desires; we need to be careful about equity and fairness among interests in this process.
- Let's try to be sure that the members' concerns and interests are represented in the TOCWG, where we will address these questions.
- Will there be a range of acceptability for each performance metric? Steve Simpson responded that this will be addressed in the measures of success for the Water Management Alternatives (WMAs).

Brad Moore said that the TOCWG will work to make sure that everyone's interests are represented in the performance metrics. Gail Bingham said that the GB consensus in December aims to affirm that all interests are represented in the performance metrics.

Brad Moore said that the purpose of the TOCWG is to provide for technical review at a detailed level during the SWMP/IFA. The TOCWG welcomes input, comments, and suggestions, but the committee is not asking for your approval of the revised work plan today. The committee is asking if you can support the revised approach, given its increased costs and longer time frame. The work plan is a work-in-progress. It is a solid plan, but it will be subject to change.

Copies of the revised work plan (May 24<sup>th</sup> version) and the proposed motion were distributed as handouts.

Next, Kristin Rowles reviewed a motion recommended to the GB recommended by consensus by both the TOCWG and EC. The motion approves Phase C of the SWMP/IFA (see attached copy of the motion, pages 16-17). Rowles and Moore clarified items in the motion in response to GB members' questions. Rowles said that the motion would not be considered for approval until the second day of this GB meeting in order to give the GB members time to review the motion and related materials. James Emery, a TOCWG member, said to GB members that they should consult TOCWG members if they have questions about the motion. He said that the TOCWG has worked hard on the work plan and recommends this motion with a full consensus. The members of the committee represent the GB members and can address their questions and concerns. Brad Moore finished by saying that regular communication from the TOCWG to the GB members would be a part of the SWMP process going forward.

## Update from The University Collaborative

Chad Taylor introduced Shannon Bonney to review TUC's research on institutional options for water management. Her slides are available on the website. In this research, interviews were conducted with

representatives of various water management institutions. The project included regulatory institutions and non-regulatory institutions, and Bonney reviewed advantages and disadvantages of each. She reviewed a broad range of functions of institutions that were analyzed. She discussed the range of scopes, membership, decision-making, staffing, funding, and sources of authority for institutions included in the project. The interviewees provided recommendations for the design and implementation of a new water management institution. Bonney said that TUC will be providing a report with analysis and recommendations to the ACFS. The report will also include case studies on institutions analyzed in the study. The draft report will be forthcoming on June 13, with a review meeting in Albany GA on June 28 and comments due from the ACFS by June 30. The final report will be completed by July 10. Chad Taylor said that tomorrow the GB will consider a notice to proceed on the remainder of the cost for this project.

## **LUNCH**

### Information Session: USGS WaterSMART Program

Brian Hughes of the USGS Georgia Water Science Center provided an overview of all of the components of the WaterSMART program in Georgia and introduced the speakers: Jacob LaFontaine and Elliot Jones of USGS. Slides from their presentations are available on the website.

Elliot Jones provided a presentation the WaterSMART groundwater modeling effort in Georgia. Groundwater modeling will be focused on the Upper Floridan aquifer in the lower part of the ACF basin. The Upper Florida is a karst aquifer that is highly permeable and capable of yielding large quantities of water to the rivers. This water enters the rivers through springs and steeples in the system. The Upper Floridan aquifer is very large; it can hold 100 times as much water as Lake Lanier. This large volume of water cannot all be used, but the volume of useful water from this aquifer is 4 to 5 times more than that in Lake Lanier.

The groundwater model allows for simulation of the whole system along variables such as withdrawals, land use, and climate. Jones and Torak completed a groundwater model for the Upper Floridan in 2006. That model has been updated by recent USGS work, and in the WaterSMART project, it will be further modified. After it has been updated, the model will be integrated with surface water model, which is being developed concurrently.

A GB member asked Jones what he thinks about Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR). Jones said that he does not have an opinion on ASR.

Next, Jacob LaFontaine presented the WaterSMART surface water modeling effort in Georgia. The model will use data layers from the USGS NHD Plus database. The model is designed to support further development in the future. It is a coarse resolution model, but pieces of it may have finer resolution pieces available now or in the future. LaFontaine reviewed the modeling steps and calibration. He described that the groundwater and surface water models will be coupled using a more soft "link" than was used in the previous USGS model in this area. USGS will add a module to the model that will allow for analysis of water gains and losses in the system.

After the groundwater and surface water models are developed, they will be used to evaluate changes in water use, land use, and climate. The flow information will be provided to the WaterSMART ecological modeling team for use in their work and to inform stakeholders and decision makers in the ACF.

Discussion:

- Q. It looks like the models will be highly focused on the Flint area. Is that true? A. Yes, we need to provide better results on the linkage between surface and groundwater in that region and that is a priority of the project.
- Q. What do you do about evaporation from lakes in the model? A. The large mainstem reservoirs are coded to account for evapotranspiration.
- Q. How do you account for interbasin transfers (IBTs)? A. These will be captured in the water use database used for the model.
- Q. Northwest Florida has the Upper and Lower Floridan aquifers. Salinity in the Lower Floridan is a problem that impedes use. Are there other aquifers in the system that cannot be used? A. Yes, but not in aquifers that are connected to the river system, like the Upper Floridan.
- Q. Is there potential to improve the quality of these aquifers? A. It is possible, but these aquifers are very deep, and it may not be worthwhile. They do not have much storage or extraction potential, and their quality is low.
- Q. How might your work validate (or not) our Instream Flow Assessment (IFA) and when? A. We need more information on your IFA work, but we can take a look at that. We will have flow data into the Bay in our results, but we are not preparing a salinity model for the bay. Results from the modeling work will be available in 2014.
- Q. Can your model be used to optimize the availability of groundwater and surface water in the ACF? A. We can perform a lot of what-if scenarios with the model once it is set up.
- Q. What about the Chipola River? What will we learn? A. This model will help us to better understand the Chipola River; the previous model did not. I hope there will be interim products that can be shared with ACFS and opportunities for consultation between ACFS and USGS in the next two years as ACFS develops its SWMP/IFA.

Elliott Jones offered to send a reference for a paper that describes on-going work to use the groundwater model to evaluate the impacts of agricultural pumping in the Flint. The paper was presented at the American Water Resources Association 2012 Spring Specialty Conference: [http://www.awra.org/proceedings/Spring2012/doc/abs/ElliottJones\\_f9c2a359\\_7986.pdf](http://www.awra.org/proceedings/Spring2012/doc/abs/ElliottJones_f9c2a359_7986.pdf)

In closing, Charles Stripling noted that the Upper Floridan Aquifer is of central importance to the ACFS SWMP, and agricultural water use is an important component affecting this aquifer.

#### Information Session: Georgia and Florida State Environmental Protection Leadership

Charles Stripling introduced Linda MacGregor (Georgia Environmental Protection Division) and Janet Llewellyn (Florida Department of Environmental Protection Office of Water Policy). First, Linda MacGregor gave a presentation on agricultural permits and meters in Georgia. Slides are available on the website.

Linda MacGregor explained Georgia's water withdrawal programs for municipal, industrial and agriculture started in the late 1980's. There are about 20,000 agricultural water withdrawals permitted

in Georgia. The Georgia Soil and Water Conservation Commission began installing meters for permitted agricultural water withdrawals in 2003. The first usable dataset from this program was available in 2007, and it was used in the Georgia regional water planning effort. She explained that there are restrictions on permitting in areas of the Flint River Basin as a result of the Flint River Plan (2005). She also explained that the Flint River Drought Protection Act can be used in drought years to reduce irrigation effort. A drought was not declared in 2012 because it was believed by the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (GAEPD) that a reduction in irrigation would not have a negligible impact on river flows. It is expected that modifications to the Flint River Drought Protection Act will be proposed in the 2013 legislative session.

Next, Llewellyn and MacGregor gave overviews of their agencies' water programs. Llewellyn described Florida's water management programs. Her slides are available on the website. She described Florida's five water management districts, which are supported by ad valorem taxes and which conduct water permitting and planning in the state. With respect to water supply, in Florida, all users need a permit for withdrawals, except for private domestic wells. Permits limit use by type, duration, and amount. Use cannot be harmful to water resources and, where they have been set, minimum flows and levels must be met. Use must be reasonable, beneficial (for some economic purpose), and efficient, and it cannot disrupt the use of another user. The permits spell out specific conservation requirements.

The water management districts set standards for minimum flows and levels for priority areas. A minimum flow or level is the level at which further withdrawals would be significantly harmful to the ecology of the area. It is not a single level, but rather a minimum hydrograph. Over 300 minimum flows and levels have been adopted in Florida so far. Another tool for water management in Florida is water reservation. A water management district may reserve water from permit applications as needed for the protection of fish and wildlife or public health and safety. A water reservation was set in 2006 for current flows in the Apalachicola River and tributaries, excepting a small existing withdrawal by the City of Port St Joe. As a result, there will be no further permits for water withdrawal in the Apalachicola.

Florida water management districts began adopting regional water supply plans within their districts about 10 years ago. These plans look forward 20 years to determine needs and options. Water reuse and desalination are both important water sources in Florida. New reservoirs are not really an option given regulations and topography. Beginning in 2005, the state began providing grants for the development of alternative water supplies. 327 projects were funded.

During periods of drought, Florida has a graduated program of drought management practices. At this time, four of five water management districts have mandatory water use restrictions in place due to drought conditions.

Next, Linda MacGregor talked briefly about Georgia's water policy programs. She said that GAEPD conducts water permitting, monitoring, assessment, and technical assistance in the state. Over the past few years, the regional water management councils in Georgia developed the state's first set of regional water management plans. Currently, GAEPD is supporting implementation of the Water Stewardship Act and the Water Supply Act.

Next, Gail Bingham led a panel discussion. She started the discussion with questions received from GB members in advance.

Q. How can the ACFS SWMP and the state's water management plans (including the regional water plans) be coordinated or integrated?

MacGregor: ACFS is very impressive. We are very committed to providing support and input. We would be happy to review ACFS work products.

Llewellyn: I agree. I am impressed with this group. I am very encouraged by the progress you are making.

Q. Do your governors know about ACFS?

MacGregor and Llewellyn: Yes.

Q. With respect to the Georgia 2010 Water Stewardship Act, how is implementation going and what is the status of the water loss audits?

MacGregor: GAEPD is currently reviewing information received from the large water systems. We will be conducting a validity test of responses and tracking how the systems perform over time (relative to their previous performance). I believe that the utilities are already using the information to reduce water losses.

Q. How does Florida assess the health of Apalachicola Bay?

Llewellyn: There is a lot of good data, and we will try to use it.

Q. Can you assist with data and reviews of our work products?

Llewellyn: We can, and we did with the recent Atkins literature review. It is important that we all start with the same technical base upon which to make the policy choices.

MacGregor: I am sure that we can provide helpful information. We are happy to share it.

Q. How do newly required detention ponds affect flows?

MacGregor: I know of no study that has looked at this in detail, but I think it is something that we do need to find out more about.

Q. What is Florida's current approach to dredging in Apalachicola River?

Llewellyn: The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACOE) does the dredging. We issue the permits. At this time, there are no permit applications for dredging from the USACOE. There is one for snagging (removing fallen trees from the channel).

Q. Is there a concise water use dataset available in Georgia?

MacGregor: We have the data, but it is not all concise in format. If we have it, we can share it with you. We are working to improve that dataset.

Q. Regarding the USACOE's revisions to the ACF Water Control Manual, what considerations do you think are important?

Llewellyn: For Florida, our focus is protection of the Apalachicola River and Estuary. We would like for the manual to share adversity among all the interests in the ACF system. However, planning is needed as well; revisions to the Water Control Manual are not enough.

MacGregor: I echo Janet's comments. In Georgia, we are looking for how our management efforts can improve upon the USACOE's management in the system.

Q. How is GAEPD implementing the regional water plans? What is the status of water conservation and drought rules per the statewide water management plan? What improvements do you anticipate in the Flint River Drought Protection Act?

MacGregor: The regional water plans guide state permitting and funding. We consider whether permit applications are consistent with the regional water plans. With respect to the Flint River Drought Protection Act, we will embark on a conversation with the stakeholders in the basin this summer. There is more information available to us now on agricultural use and aquifer health. I invite you all to participate in that process. With respect to water conservation and drought rules, we have drafted proposed rules, and we are working on modifying those based on review comments. We expect more public discussion of these rules in the future. Regarding water conservation, in the Water Stewardship Act, several conservation measures are being implemented (e.g., requirement for sale of only high efficiency water fixtures in the state). For water supply, the Georgia Environmental Facilities Authority has received applications for several water supply projects across the state.

Q. Are there withdrawal limits and permit duration limits for Georgia's agricultural water withdrawal permits?

MacGregor: No time limits on the permits. Use is limited based on pump capacity and acreage. There may be changes proposed to these in the future.

Q. Has Florida collected information on the health of the Bay?

Llewellyn: I do not know the extent of salinity modeling in the Bay, but I expect there is information available. We can help to identify it so there are not unnecessary expenditures.

Q. Why was there not a drought declaration in the Flint in 2012? And how might changes to the Flint River Drought Protection Act in 2013 improve management?

MacGregor: We will be asking the stakeholders what they think would work better than our current tools in periods of drought. Our modeling shows that reductions in irrigation would not help with streamflows given current conditions (e.g., current aquifer levels).

Q. Is in-stream flow a part of permitting decisions in Georgia? In Florida, when you have the minimum flows and levels set, how do you proceed if you are already in violation of the minimum flow and level?

Llewellyn: The statute says that we are to expeditiously develop a recovery strategy, but there has to be a timeframe over which you shift to new supplies, implement conservation, etc.

MacGregor: For Georgia, permits in the Flint River Basin are restricted based on estimated impact (by zone) on river flows.

Q. Are all withdrawals for agriculture metered in Georgia now? Do you meter agricultural water use in Florida? How is the data from meters used?

MacGregor: We do not have 100% coverage in Georgia at this time, but we are close to full coverage in our priority areas in south Georgia. We use the meter data primarily in planning, and we provide the data to the users for their own management.

Llewellyn: All permittees above a particular use level must report use. The Districts vary in their requirements. Reporting is the permittee's responsibility. We use the data in permitting and planning.

Q. We need funding to support our work, especially in assessing Apalachicola Bay health. Can you suggest how to approach the states for funding?

Llewellyn: I will take that message back. Our funding decisions are made by the legislature. Cost-sharing (for example, among the three states) would make any proposal more attractive.

MacGregor: It is important to cast your net and ask about funding for your priorities.

Q. Do we have an inventory of quarries around the state that could be used as reservoirs in Georgia?

MacGregor: I do not think that we have a dataset like that. We are aware of a handful of quarries that might possibly be options for water storage.

Stripling noted that ACFS had asked Alabama to participate in this panel, but did not get a positive response. Then, he thanked MacGregor and Llewellyn for participating.

#### SWMP/IFA Consultant Status Report

**Tom Singleton, Atkins:** Slides are available on the website. Singleton said that the TOCWG is doing an extraordinary job. With respect to cost increases, Atkins does not anticipate cost increases in the work that is planned and on-going. Task 1 was completed on budget and on schedule. The current tasks evaluating data gaps and science needs will be completed June 20. The bulk of the remainder of the work is the development of the IFAs for the Apalachicola River. It has not yet been started, but the task order has been issued. Singleton emphasized that Atkins is not developing a single number. Atkins will be looking at needs for low, medium, and high flows, not just low flows. He said that how ACFS chooses to use the info is up to you. The IFA will be like a gas gauge; it will let you know when supplies are being stressed or exhausted. He said that the conceptual IFAs will identify data that can be used, needed data, and the benefits of that data. With respect to HEC-RAS modeling, Singleton said he will be going back to the TOCWG to discuss the need for this work further. A question was asked about why there is such a difference in the amount of scientific information available in the Apalachicola as compared to the Chattahoochee and Flint Rivers. Singleton said that the estuarine research reserve in Apalachicola Bay has generated a lot of scientific information about the estuary.

**Steve Simpson and Robert Osborne, Black and Veatch (B&V):** Steve Simpson and Robert Osborne from B&V led the group in an interactive demonstration of hydrologic modeling using tennis balls passed around the meeting tables. The demonstration illustrated various model components, with a focus on model constraints and performance criteria. After the demonstration, Simpson provided a status report on B&V's on-going work on performance metrics (Task 2) and model inputs (unimpaired flows and water balance, Tasks 4.2 & 4.3). Kristin Rowles said that as a part of Task 2, the sub-basin caucuses would meet over the summer to discuss performance metrics. She referred to the previous list of performance metrics developed by ACFS in 2010 as a starting point that will be reviewed, modified, and amended in this process. She said that she would be contacting GB members soon about dates for caucus meetings in July, and the GB members will also receive preparatory materials for the meetings. At the meetings, the caucus members will review the existing list of performance metrics and discuss the need for modifications and additions. Simpson and Rowles both noted that if performance metrics can be

quantified, that will be ideal, but B&V and the TOCWG will work to assist members in quantifying metrics. Rowles noted that the TOCWG would continue to work on performance metrics in the summer and fall, with the objective of GB consensus on the metrics at the December GB meeting. Information from the IFA will be available in October, and the TOCWG and caucuses will have time and opportunities for discussion of the IFA results relative to performance metrics in the fall. Consensus on the performance metrics in December is intended to be agreement that all interests are represented in the performance metrics.

Discussion:

- Who can/should attend the summer caucus meetings? All ACFS members are encouraged to participate. The TOCWG will discuss whether to involve any non-members in the caucus meeting.
- Does the water demands analysis address evaporation in the water balance? Evaporation will not be addressed in the water demands water balance, but it will be addressed in the model.
- How will withdrawals from tributaries be accounted for? They will be aggregated at the nodes in the model. There is a dataset for agricultural withdrawals that can be allocated to the tributaries. There will likely be some data gaps (e.g., agricultural withdrawals in Alabama).
- What dataset are you using for metropolitan Atlanta future water demands? The data used in the Georgia state water planning process included demand data for metropolitan Atlanta, and it will be first source of data.
- What is difference between “proposed” and “growth-based” future withdrawals? For example, the planned Longleaf power plant is a proposed withdrawal and population growth based withdrawal estimates are growth-based.
- Are tributary impacts captured at nodes? Yes.
- How will you assign groundwater impacts to nodes? We will look to the work EPD used in the Georgia regional water planning process (the 2006 Torak/Jones model) to estimate groundwater pumping impact to nodes.

#### Information Session: Drought in the ACF Basin

John Feldt from the River Forecast Center provided a briefing on current conditions, trends, and outlook for river conditions in the region. His slides are available on the website. Feldt showed how a tropical system can make a significant improvement in stream conditions. He said that we usually get one tropical system over the ACF every other year, and tropical systems should not reliably be expected to provide significant relief in the ACF. He said that the tropical forecast is normal this year. If we move to an El Niño, we are more likely to get rain in the recharge system, but it is not clear if we will get an El Niño or slide back into La Niña (for a third year). The outlook is for above normal temperatures for the summer. We have equal chances of an above or below normal tropical storm season. We can expect drought persistence with some possible improvement in southern part of the ACF system.

Next, Dave McLain, Apalachicola Caucus Chair, presented recommendations from the Apalachicola Caucus about current drought conditions. He asked: What can ACFS do? The Apalachicola Caucus proposes the five actions listed on the 2<sup>nd</sup> page of the attached draft motion (pages 18-19), including an emergency meeting among the three state governors to discuss mitigation of the economic and ecological impact of the drought, USFWS action to prompt assistance for the Florida seafood industry

workers during the drought, significant water use restrictions in all three states, ACFS advocacy for federal legislation to require and authorize the regime and lake levels needed to sustain the health and productivity of fisheries and habitat for ACF Basin rivers and lakes; and opportunities to involve the stakeholders of the ACF Basin in effective action to mitigate the adverse impacts of this prolonged drought.

Discussion of the proposed motion:

- I do not support imposing more restrictive requirements at this time. My city has invested in a reservoir to assist us in getting through a drought period. Instead I would suggest that the three states be asked to contribute to the ACFS SWMP work.
- The motion needs to be fair and equitable to everyone. For me to agree, I would need to greatly expand the whereas statements significantly to address all interests or remove specific references to one interest group. The important message here is to tell the governors that ACFS is here and what we are doing.
- As a water system manager, we are in as severe a drought situation today as we were in 2007, but today we are selling 30% less water than in 2007, without the restrictions we had in 2007. I recommend that you modify #3 to say “encourage conservation” instead of “impose significant water use restrictions”.
- I have a problem with recommendations #2, #3, and #4. I am not sure what #2 means. Georgia has mandatory restrictions that have been in place since 2007. If you change #3 as described in the comment directly above, I would agree with it. #4 is just too big. I think you need to strike #2 and #4.
- It seems like we are headed toward watering this down. I agree with mandatory restrictions throughout the system. However, Alabama does not have authority other than the Governor’s police powers to do this. I support the idea of mandatory restrictions, but it could be difficult to achieve if all three states do not do it.

Bingham proposed continuing the discussion in the morning.

#### Public Comment

**Todd Rasmussen, UGA:** Rasmussen said that he went to one of the very early meetings of the ACFS and that it is great to see the progression of this project over time. He said that there is a network of faculty in the Southeast with an interest in water management issues. Thermoelectric production during drought periods is a concern; the energy-water nexus is a common theme in southeastern water management. The network has several proposals to develop research and information tools to assist this generation and the next generation in addressing their water management problems.

**Dave Yates, Union of Concerned Scientists:** Yates brought some publications to share from the Union of Concerned Scientists. The organization is concerned about the nexus of water and energy use and management and wants to create more awareness of the related issues. Yates said he is very interested in meeting with ACFS members and discussing the work of the ACFS and the Union of Concerned Scientists.

### Break for the Day

At the conclusion of the day's meeting, Billy Turner introduced Richard Bishop to provide an overview of the whitewater course project in Columbus. Bishop explained the status of the development of the whitewater course on the Chattahoochee River, and then, the GB and others in attendance were invited to take a tour to see the new whitewater course.

### Reconvene Governing Board Meeting

Charles Stripling opened the meeting at 8:20am. Gail Bingham reviewed the agenda for the day.

### Discussion/Approval of Phase C of the SWMP/IFA

***A motion was made by Chad Taylor to approve the Phase C motion. It was seconded by Paige Estes.***

In discussion of the motion, a member asked for an assessment from the fund-raising committee regarding the level of comfort with ACFS' ability to raise the funds to cover increased costs. Brad Currey reported on the outlook for the campaign. He reported he is cautiously optimistic that with time, by the end of this year, the campaign may be able to raise the remainder of the needed funds. Currey said that the fund-raising goal cannot continue to be a moving target. ***The motion was approved by consensus.***

### Notice to Proceed for The University Collaborative

Chad Taylor explained that the total cost for the institutional options project was \$15,000, of which \$2,500 remains to be paid to TUC. The proposed motion would approve the remaining \$2,500 for payment by the Executive Committee upon completion of the project. ***A motion for the notice to proceed was made by Bill McCartney. It was seconded by Billy Mayes. The motion was approved by consensus.***

### Drought Resolution Discussion

Discussion continued of the proposed motion from the Apalachicola Caucus regarding drought conditions in the ACF. The following comments were made:

- The motion should focus on encouraging stakeholders to act to address drought with conservation practices and to communicate their concerns on the impacts of drought.
- We have too many irons in the fire at this time.
- The motion is very specific to the Apalachicola Caucus. Some of the other regional caucuses and some of the interest groups may disagree with the recommendations in the motion. The motion should not favor one interest group at the detriment of another interest group.
- I disagree with the accuracy of some of the "whereas" statements.
- What would we do if the governors asked us what we recommend? Are we ready to respond?
- I am in favor of a statement acknowledging this problem and that it is important to many of our members.

- I am pleased that there is support for an edited version of this motion.
- I would support the motion if it does not mention a specific sub-basin and focuses on the overall situation.
- I do want to direct the motion to the governors.
- The purpose of the motion is to try to recognize the severity of the current drought conditions.
- This drought is more severe than 2007. In 2007, Georgia imposed drought restrictions on water use, but this year, neither the state of Florida or Georgia has called for any drought management actions.
- If the states ask us what they should do, we should encourage them to contribute to the ACFS SWMP/IFA work.
- I would not ask for money now.
- Do we know that it is a fact that the Flint River and groundwater levels in Southwest Georgia are at historic lows? For groundwater, we are not at historic lows. Stream flows are lowest observed for this time of year, but not all-time lows.
- At present, GAEPD does not have the authority to cut back on water use.
- We need to specifically say what we expect the governors to do about the drought conditions.
- We should use “respectfully request” instead of “call for” in the “now therefore” line of the motion.
- Should it be the ACFS that takes this action at this time? Does it position us better for the long-run?
- I do not know if I would want for this to be the first interface for ACFS with the governors. When we started this organization, we agreed not to interface with the states until we had definitive recommendations on water management.
- If we do anything, it should be done in a friendly way that notes our concern and asks the governors to consider what can be done.
- In the past, the ACFS considered a resolution that asked the governors to recognize this organization. I do not think that resolution ever passed. It is noteworthy to consider this important issue. We need to consider how we spend our intellectual and political currency. There is support here for a resolution, with editing and changes.
- We need to be more specific about what actions we are asking the governors to take.
- I would like to see the 3<sup>rd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> whereas statements and recommendations #2-4 removed.
- Why not address this motion to the environmental agency heads instead of the governors? Ask the agency leaders for an assessment of the facts of the situation and ask them what their plans of action are.
- I agree with taking some kind of action relative to drought conditions. We have an Intergovernmental Affairs Committee that should take on developing a motion for the GB.
- When one sub-basin has a major problem, it affects all of us. Our mission is to develop a Sustainable Water Management Plan and to understand the instream flow analysis. I would like to see us stay focused on that. I do not think that we should expend our political capital now. I would be willing to sign a letter from us as individuals to the governors to ask them to do something.
- The SWMP needs to provide the answer.

Bingham presented several process options:

1. Dave McLain has a revised motion to consider.

2. The GB could give the motion and the comments to a smaller group to work on the motion and bring it back to the GB.
3. The GB could agree on a couple of elements for a letter from the Chair to address this issue.
4. ACFS could prepare a news release on this issue.
5. Do nothing.

Bingham summarized the discussion by noting that there were common themes that the issue is important and affects us all. She noted that there were questions as to whether the timing is right. There were several specific suggestions for edits. She added to the above process options the possibility of sending letters as individuals or sending a letter from ACFS that asks what the states are doing rather than calling for action.

Stripling said that we need to do what is best for the organization right now. He said that anything that is very specific will not pass. He said he could live with a simple letter from ACFS to the governors about the drought. The EC could approve the wording at its meeting next week.

The following comments were made:

- Individual letters would not be effective across state lines.
- I would support a general letter from ACFS to the states citing the critical nature of the drought.
- If we send a letter, we should prepare a press release as well.

Next, Stripling presented ideas for the outline of a letter from ACFS to the governors:

Introduction:

- Extreme drought conditions are being experienced throughout the southeastern United States and causing hardship throughout the ACF basin
- On May 1, the Corps of Engineers announced that federal reservoirs in the basin would be operated in Exceptional Drought mode

Middle paragraph

- Describe ACFS

Request

- ACFS members request that the Governors provide information about their plans to minimize the impacts of the drought on the residents and natural resources in the basin.
- Offer that ACFS will work with the governors to address this issue.

Stripling asked that the GB entrust word-smithing of the letter to the EC.

***Tim Thoms made a motion that ACFS would send a letter as described. Deron Davis seconded the motion.***

Discussion of motion:

- Would it be accompanied by a press release? That decision would be for the EC.
- The letter should reflect the concerns of the entire basin.
- Comments regarding the letter should be sent to Mark Masters by Friday.

- I would like to see the Education and Outreach Committee help to get the word out about the drought.
- I trust the EC to write the text, but should there be some Intergovernmental Committee members involved in the preparation of the letter? The Intergovernmental Committee will try to hold a conference call on Friday in order to provide input to the EC.
- The letter should be copied to other state leaders.
- What is our product? It is the Sustainable Water Management Plan. We need to remember to focus on that. Until we have that, we are just making noise with the governors.

***The motion was approved by consensus.*** Stripling said that the GB's work on this motion was good practice for the work ahead on the SWMP/IFA.

#### Information Session: Tri Rivers Waterway/Apalachicola Riverkeeper Navigation-Ecological Flows Study

Billy Turner introduced Steve Burns, who provided an overview of historical navigation use and projects in the basin. His slides are available on the website. Next, Dan Tonsmeire introduced the speakers on the navigation-ecological flows study:

- Charles Stover, Alabama Power
- Steve Leitman, Florida State University

The study was funded by the USDA. The speakers' slides are available on the website. Tonsmeire said that the study found that there are real possibilities for conjunctive uses in the system.

Tonsmeire presented some "lessons learned" from this study that can be useful to ACFS:

- These are complicated issues. Despite the consultants' best efforts to explain, they are still hard to understand.
- Expect real discomfort in defining performance criteria.
- A lack of data and information can blur the answer.
- Litigation may leave our answer on the sidelines.
- Working together builds trust and helps us to solve the problems we face and allows us to consider the problems of all the stakeholders, not just our own.

#### Committee and Work Group Status Reports

***Finance Committee and Fundraising:*** Mark reviewed the financial report in the pre-meeting packet. He said that an audit was done last year and will be completed at the end of this calendar year. We are using the audit in grant applications.

A recommendation from the committee to amend the budget was presented by Jim McClatchey (attached, page 20). This recommendation addresses the need to fund tasks approved in Phase C and leave the organization with approximately \$130,000 at the beginning of 2013. ***Brad Currey made a motion to adopt the recommendation, and Betty Webb seconded the motion. The motion was approved by consensus.***

Next, Brad Currey gave a fund-raising report. There is a fund-raising summary in the pre-meeting packet. Currently, the campaign has raised just over \$800,000. They believe that current requests will yield about \$400,000. There are additional prospects to call upon. Currey is cautiously optimistic that a goal of \$1.5 million can be attained.

**Membership:** Jim Poff gave the committee report. The membership recruitment events held in conjunction with GB meetings will not be continued; instead the committee will use a more targeted individual-to-individual recruitment approach.

**Intergovernmental Affairs Committee:** Billy Turner reported that there is still an effort underway to meet with representatives of all three state governments. He also reported that General Semonite with the USACOE has been replaced by Eric Conrad. Members can meet Conrad tonight at the Tri-Rivers meeting. Betty Webb gave the committee report. A hand-out with the committee's directive and a committee work plan was distributed. She noted the importance of initiating more contact with agency representatives to educate them about ACFS activities. Webb requested that if members have requests or motions that relate to contacting government agencies, they should route them through the Intergovernmental Affairs Committee first. Brad Currey reported that the fund-raising case statement has been shared with the Georgia Economic Development Department, Sam Olens (Georgia's Attorney General), and Gary Black (Commissioner of the Georgia Department of Agriculture). Deron Davis said that the Education and Outreach Committee can work with the Intergovernmental Affairs Committee on content for and distribution of the ACFS newsletter. Marilyn Royal noted the importance of contacting and educating more elected officials within our basin.

**Education and Outreach Committee:** Deron Davis gave the committee report. Davis said that the summer issue of the newsletter could be focused on current drought conditions. Davis thanked several GB members and others for their support on education and outreach activities. Davis said he has talking points that can assist members with media contacts. These are attached to this meeting summary (page 21).

#### Wrap Up and Next Steps

Greg Elmore announced that Jim Phillips will serve as chair of the Issues Committee. Billy Turner thanked the meeting sponsors, including: Middle Chattahoochee Water Coalition, Columbus Water Works, MeadWestvaco, Southern Nuclear Operating Company, Tri-Rivers Waterway Development Association, Columbus GA Chamber of Commerce, City of Dothan AL and LaGrange-Troup County Chamber of Commerce.

Mark Masters said that the next GB meeting will be at Unicoi State Park near Helen, GA from September 12-14.

Stripling observed that this was a meeting that ACFS members will look back on as a key step along the way in terms of our accomplishments and the organization's maturity. He said that we can address the complexity we face by organizing, building relationships, and trying to work together. The meeting was adjourned at noon.

## **Motion to Authorize the Phase C of the Sustainable Water Management Plan (SWMP) and Instream Flow Assessment (IFA)**

Move that the ACF Stakeholders Governing Board (GB) adopt as Phase C of the Sustainable Water Management Plan and Instream Flow Assessment the tasks listed on the next page and further authorize the Executive Committee (EC) to proceed, within the context of existing funds and upon recommendation of the TOCWG, in executing contractual arrangements to Black & Veatch, Atkins and the facilitation team for completion of the Tasks in this Phase of the SWMP and IFA. The cost of Phase C is \$134,573, for a total approved SWMP and IFA cost-to-date of \$578,933.

The following conditions apply:

1. Approval of this and other Phases for the SWMP and IFA are assumed to require only a one-step consensus approval by the Governing Board.
2. Significant changes in timeline, budget or deliverables, as determined by the TOCWG, to a Task within this Phase after approval by the Governing Board shall require an additional consensus approval of modifications by the GB. Any new work not referenced in the description of Tasks in this Phase shall require a separate consensus approval by the Governing Board.
3. The EC shall have the authority to negotiate and execute Task Orders and contract modifications for the Tasks (and sub-tasks) within this Phase and other Phases (previously approved by the GB) upon the recommendation of the TOCWG. The EC shall have the authority to authorize payment for completed Task Orders and execute subsequent Task Orders within GB approved Phases without additional GB approval. The TOCWG will provide recommendations to the EC for approval of completed Task Orders and payments.

Tasks numbers in this Phase reference the task numbers used in the Black and Veatch Workplan Technical Memorandum of 5-24-2012 for the SWMP, which is inclusive of the Tasks for the Atkins IFA.

Black and Veatch has submitted a detailed SWMP and IFA work plan, revised based on comments from the TOCWG. The best estimate at this time for the completion of the full plan is \$1,155,000 over a period of 24 months (ending December 2013). Future phases of this work plan may need to be modified as current uncertainties are clarified, subject to available funds and with the understanding that these future phases will be brought to the Governing Board for approval.

Tasks	Cost	Estimated Completion
Atkins IFA Sub-Task: 4.1.5 Develop Conceptual IFA's for Chattahoochee and Flint Rivers [Task 3.5 from the Atkins proposal] <i>(The objective of this sub-task is to recommend an approach for future IFA's for the Chattahoochee and Flint.)</i>	<b>\$8,000</b>	Sept 2012
Black and Veatch SWMP Sub-Tasks: 5.2 Solicit Stakeholder Recommendations, 5.3 Screen WMAs, and 5.4 Water Management Alternatives Technical Memo <i>(The objective of this set of sub-tasks is to develop agreement on the set of Water Management Alternatives to analyze with the SWMP model.)</i>	<b>\$22,361</b>	Task 5.2: Dec 2012 Task 5.3: Jan 2013 Task 5.4: TBD
Black and Veatch SWMP Sub-Task 6.1: Conduct Iterative Basin Assessments: Develop Progressive Comparison to Existing Conditions <i>(The objective of this sub-task is to provide model outputs that describe existing conditions using a progressive approach that starts with unimpaired flows.)</i>	<b>\$50,000 (need this portion of the \$102,141 total for this task)</b>	Dec 2012
Additional Facilitation costs needed for Kristin and Gail above current facilitation contracted for 2012 (\$54,360)	<b>\$38,612</b>	Dec 2012
Additional B&V support to attend Task 2 sub-basin caucus meetings to develop performance Criteria and for Georgia Water Resources Institute cost increases associated with Task 3	<b>\$10,600</b>	Dec 2012
WMA Expert Panel (September GB Meeting)	<b>\$5,000</b>	Sept 2012
TOTAL Amount Desired to be approved at May GB meeting to keep project on revised work plan schedule	<b>\$134,573</b>	



*Working together to share a common resource.*

## **Proposed Resolution**

### **Apalachicola Sub-Basin Caucus, ACFS**

**May 17, 2012**

#### **Extreme Drought Conditions in ACF Basin - Call to Action**

- **WHEREAS: D4 Extreme Drought Conditions in the ACF Basin are being reported by the Southeast Climate Consortium (SECC) and National Integrated Drought System (NIDIS).**
- **WHEREAS: Lowest observed historical readings are being recorded on Flint River and groundwater levels in areas of southwest Georgia.**
- **WHEREAS: Extremely high, prolonged salinity levels in Apalachicola Bay associated with loss of estuarine habitat and significant oyster mortality are being reported by Apalachicola National Estuarine Research Reserve.**
- **WHEREAS: Shrimp harvests in Apalachicola Bay and eastern Gulf have diminished to levels that will not support commercial shrimping reported by commercial fisherman.**
- **WHEREAS: Crab harvest is likewise below historical lows and cannot support commercial harvesting.**
- **WHEREAS: Salt water species rarely seen in upper portions of Apalachicola Bay indicative of a prolonged depletion of normal freshwater flows necessary for a healthy estuarine habitat are being observed by commercial fisherman.**
- **WHEREAS: Forecast by weather and climate experts at all levels is for continued Extreme Conditions to prevail for the next three months as a minimum.**

- **WHEREAS:** On May 1<sup>st</sup>, the Corps of Engineers decided to move its operation of Federal reservoirs in the ACF Basin into Exceptional Drought Operations mode essentially further reducing the minimum water flows allowed to the Apalachicola System.
  
- **WHEREAS:** Despite these repeated Federal assessments of extreme drought conditions and forecast of continued drought, the States of Georgia, Alabama and Florida have not yet called for additional available water conservation measures for water users in the Apalachicola-Chattahoochee-Flint (ACF) River basin.
  
- **NOW THEREFORE:** The Apalachicola-Chattahoochee-Flint Stakeholders (ACFS) call for the following consequent actions:
  1. That the Governors of Florida, Alabama, and Georgia meet in an emergency session to assess joint and unilateral actions available to mitigate the significant economic and ecological impact of this prolonged drought on the people and communities of their states
  2. That the US Fish and Wildlife Service issue a call for action that will prompt effective action to assist and provide Florida seafood industry workers relief during the ensuing crisis.
  3. That all three State Governors encourage and impose significant water use restrictions to conserve the water to help all water users survive the drought.
  4. That the ACFS advocate for Federal legislation to require and authorize the Corps of Engineers to determine and meet the Ecological Instream Flow Regime and Lake Levels required to sustain the health and productivity of the fisheries and habitat for the ACF Basin rivers and lakes.
  5. That the 3 States and the Federal government seek opportunities to involve the Stakeholders that comprise the communities of the ACF Basin in effective action to mitigate the adverse impacts of this prolonged drought.



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Apalachicola Sub-Basin Caucus, ACFS  
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ACFS Finance Committee

May 30, 2012

A discussion on amending the 2012 Annual Budget to accommodate a motion from the GB to approve next Phase of work on the SWMP/IFLLA.

- Next Phase does not spend more than ACFS has in hand;
- Given what ACFS has in hand, if we spend all of the funds budgeted, including the proposed increase, ACFS would have roughly \$130,000 remaining for the operation of the organization during 2013.

The Finance Committee recommends the following change to the 2012 ACFS Annual Budget:

<b>Line Item</b>	<b>Current</b>	<b>Proposed</b>	<b>Change</b>
SWMP (B&V)	\$250,000	\$333,000	\$83,000
IFA (Atkins)	\$140,000	\$148,000	\$8,000
Facilitation (RESOLVE)	\$67,500	\$93,300	\$25,800
Org Needs (Rowles/Panel)	\$125,000	\$142,000	\$17,000

Total proposed budget increase: \$133,800

**ACF Stakeholders  
Media Outreach Talking Points  
May 14, 2012**

1. What is ACFS
  - a. ACF Stakeholders represents municipal, industrial, environmental, recreational and agricultural interests throughout the Apalachicola-Chattahoochee-Flint river basin, from North Georgia to the Gulf of Mexico.
  - b. We are seeking consensus-driven approach to sustainable water management in the basin that balances the region's water needs.
2. We have raised almost \$1 million to help meet our goals.
  - a. Sustainable Water Management Project to develop one or more alternatives for meeting the region's needs based on data driven analysis.
  - b. Do Better Project is our effort to inventory the current water conservation and water efficiency efforts happening through the system. The idea is to identify the best and best-used practices so they can be applied to future sustainability efforts.
3. Tri-state legal battle
  - a. The legal and political wrangling has been going on for 21 years. It was our disappointment with the lack of progress on the political and legal front that led, in part, to the formation of ACFS.
  - b. We're seeking a different path: a non-litigated, consensus-driven approach. We believe that a consensus reached outside of the courts will result in a more sustainable solution than one handed down by a judge.
4. The region is entering a period again of extreme drought.
  - a. Extreme drought is re-emerging throughout Georgia, including across the state line into Alabama and Florida. It affects stream flows, groundwater levels and reservoir levels throughout the ACF river basin. (US Drought Monitor, 5/8/12)
  - b. In some parts of the basin conditions are worse than in 2007 (i.e., Lower Flint)It's far too early to know if we are facing conditions similar to 2007.
5. What are the local water issues
  - a. Why is the Chattahoochee so important? How does the area use the river?
  - b. Provide an update on Whitewater-Columbus and how that might affect the Tri-State Water discussions.