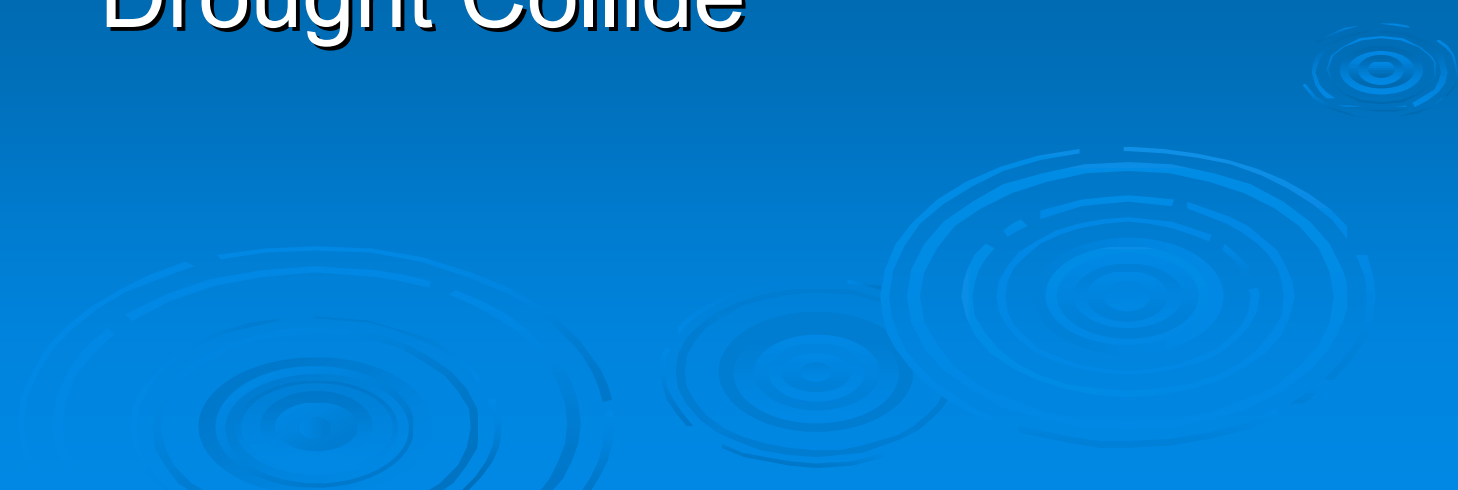


# The Atlanta Water Crisis

When Growth, Politics, and  
Drought Collide



# How Do You Tell The Story?

- Corps Drains Lake Lanier Like a Bath Tub!
- GA EPD Says 90 Days of Drinking Water Left in Lanier.
- Climatologist Says Drought of the Century! No End in Sight!
- Judge To Decide If Atlanta Has Any Rights to Lanier.
- Local Utilities Say: Let Your Lawn Die.
- Cost of Georgia's Drought: Pike Nursery Declares Chapter 11.

# What's with Georgia

- Political Division in the State(s)
- 2 Georgia's
  - Metro Atlanta
  - Rest of Georgia
- Disputes with 4 of our 5 Neighbors
  - Tri-State Water War – AL, FL, and GA
  - Tennessee River Dispute – TN
  - Floridan Aquifer – SC.

# Metro North GA Water Planning District

- Created by the GA Legislature in 2001.
- Tasked with Ensuring the Supply and Quality of Atlanta's Water as the Region Grows.
- 16 Counties Considered Metro Atlanta
- More than 70 Local Governments and Providers.
- 3 Plans: Watershed, Wastewater, Water Supply and Conservation.
- Plans finalized in 2003.
- Updated Every 5 Years.
- Compliance Audited by EPD.
- Permits are Subject to Compliance.
- Currently Undergoing an Update.

# Tri-State Water Wars

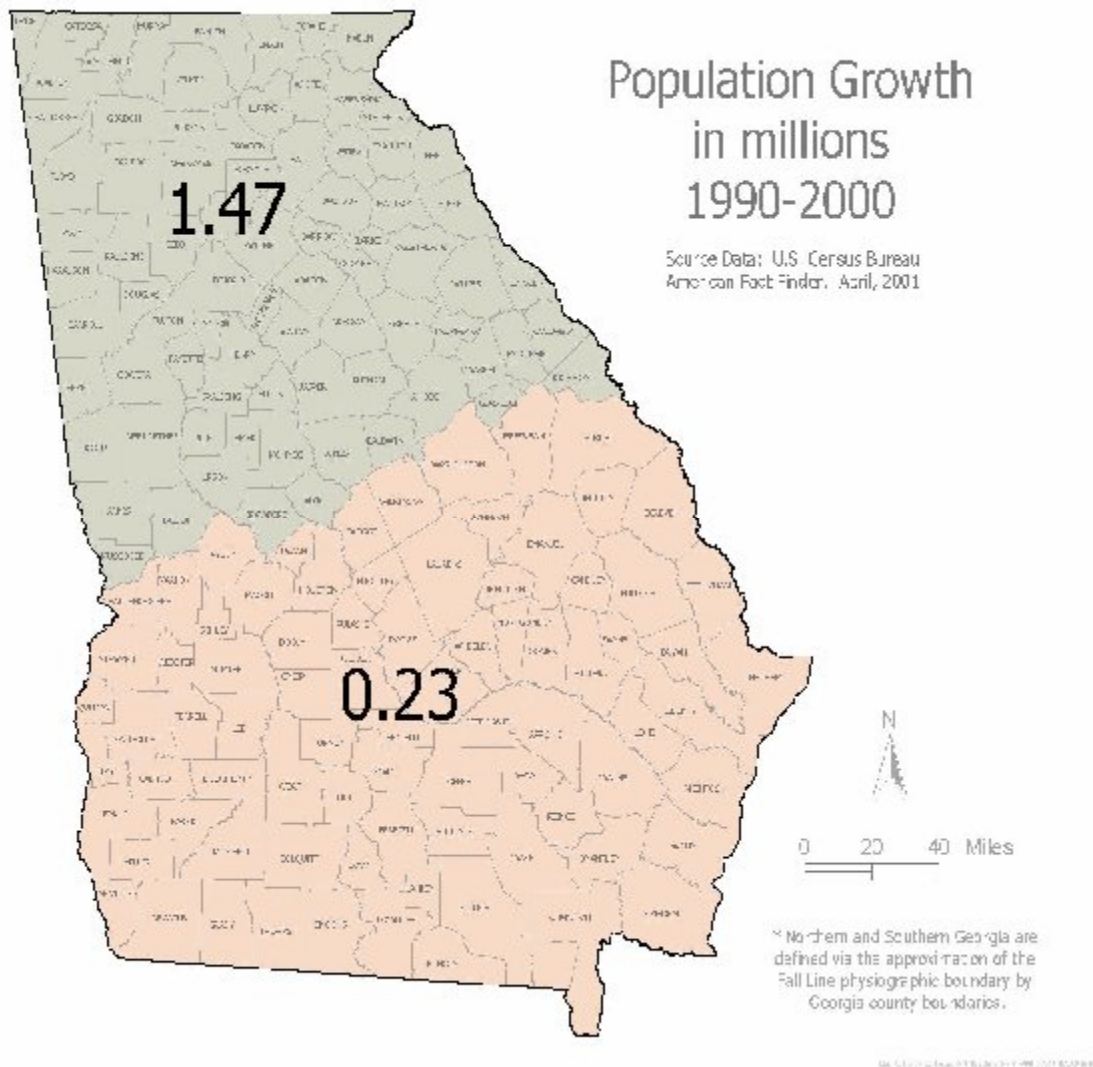
## Man Vs. Mussel

- Comprised of more than a Dozen Lawsuits
- Ongoing for 19 years.
- ACT and ACF Basins.
- Multi-Jurisdictional River Basins and Federal Reservoirs.
- Smallest River basins in the US to support a Major Metro Area.
- Atlanta at Headwaters.
- Atlanta represents 2% of Flows at Appalachicola Bay.

# The Contested Basins



# It is NOT the Growth!



- Metro Atlanta added more people than 44 states during the last decade (1.2 million).
- Chattahoochee River is one of the smallest rivers in the United States to supply a major metropolitan area's water needs.
- Development and land-use patterns threaten water quality.

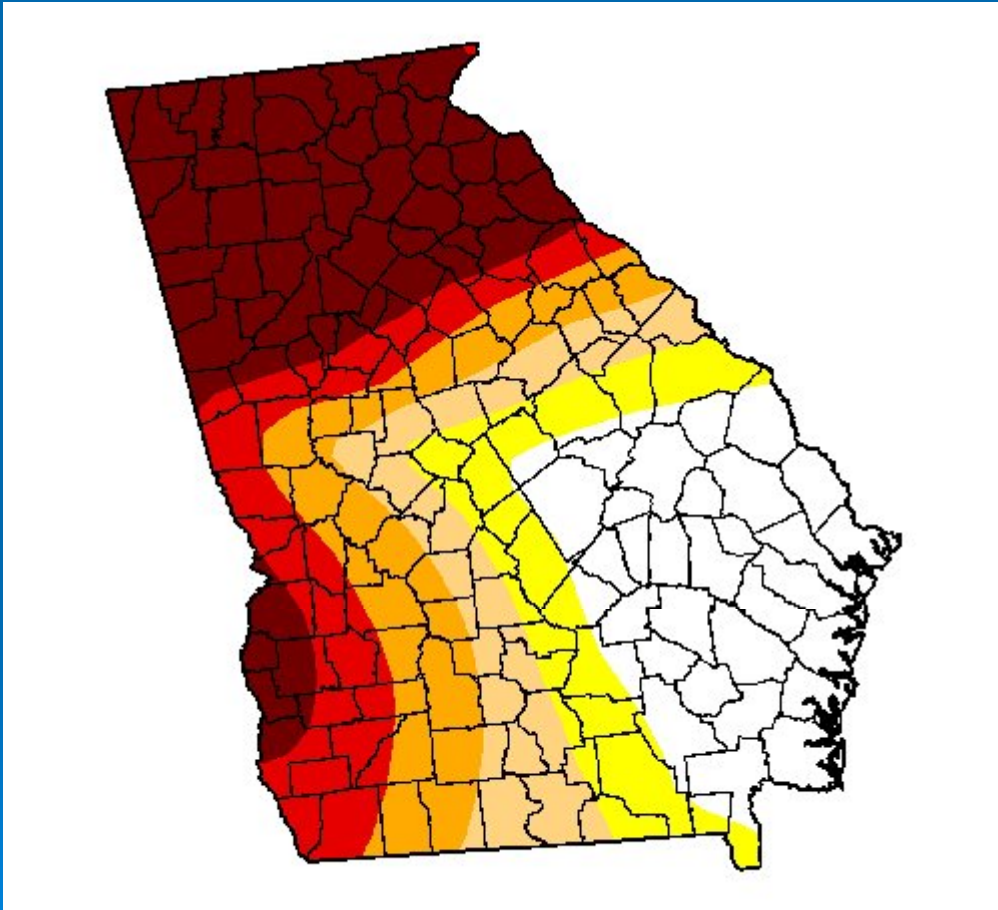
# A Tale of Two States

	Total Population in 2006 (millions)	50-year Avg. Annual Precipitation (inches)	Land Area (sq. miles)	Avg. Annual Water from Precipitation (trillion gallons)
Georgia	9.3	50.1	58,910	51.3
Florida	17.0	54.5	58,664	55.6

- In 30 years or so, Georgia will have 16 million people, like Florida does now.
- Florida, and many states with less water than Georgia, manage water more intensively than Georgia.
- We must manage water better as we grow.



# It's the DROUGHT!



- Fall 2005- Decreased Rainfall.
- Spring 2006 – Hydrologic Drought. (Level 1 Declared)
- Spring 2007 – Level 2 Declared.
- July 2007- Surpassed every indicator for level 4 Drought.
- September 28, 2007 – Declared Level 4 Drought
- Drought is Devastating on a surface water system.

October 2, 2007

# Lake Lanier

- Drinking Water Source for more than 3 Million people
- ACF Basin (Apalachicola Chattahoochee Flint Basin)
- 38,000 Surface Acres 690 Miles Shore Line. - Appx. 625 billion gallons water at full pool
- 1040 Sq. Miles Drainage Area
- Currently 15 feet below normal for the year.
- Lowest level for this time of the Year.
- Only Outflows are for wastewater assimilation.

# Lake Allatoona

- Drinking water source for 800,000 people
- ACT Basin (Alabama Coosa Tallapoosa Basin)
- 1210 Surface Acres - 270 Miles Shore Line – Appx. 120 Billion Gallons of Water
- 1100 Sq. Miles Drainage Area.
- Currently 4 feet below for the year.
- Held at Minimum Outflows allowed by law.

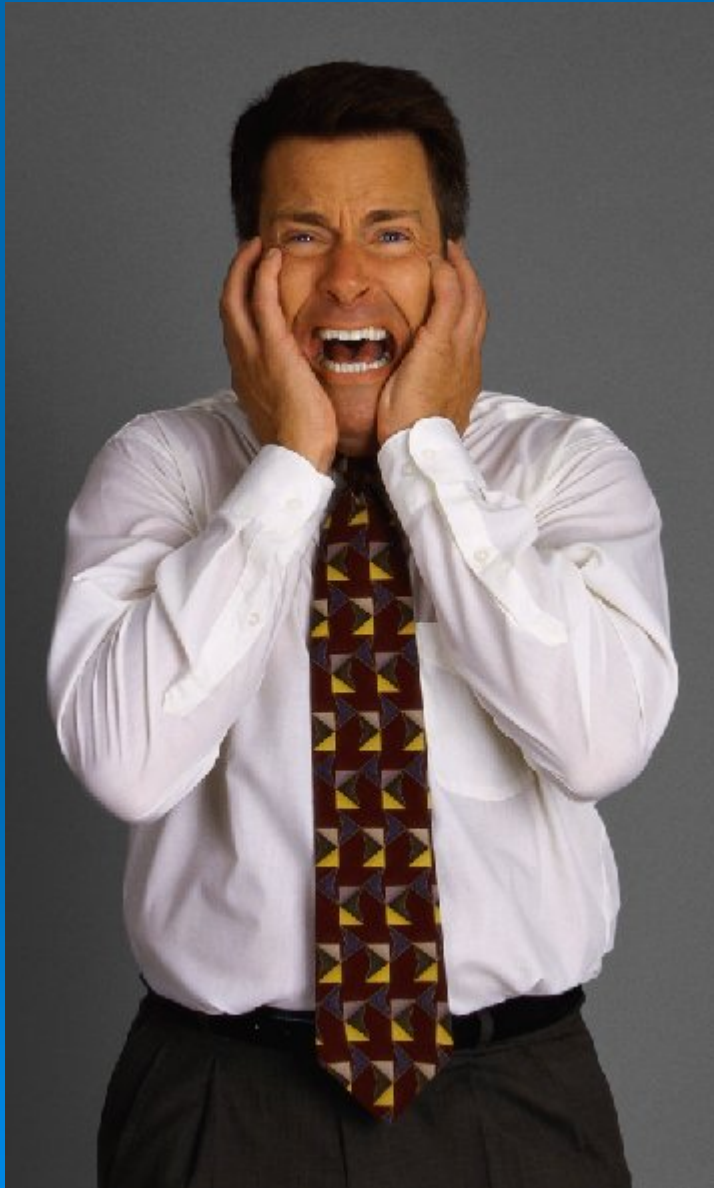
# The Crisis Was Exaggerated?



Lake Allatoona in October 2007

– dropping 1 ft/week

# What Do You Do?



# What Did Georgia Do?

- September 28, 2007 – Declared Drought Level 4 for 64 Counties – Total Ban on Outdoor Watering.
- October 23, 2007 – Governor Perdue Issues Mandatory 10% reduction from winter use for all affected utilities.
- October 25, 2007 – Governor Perdue holds a Press Conference from the bed of Lake Lanier “Conservation is useless.”
- February 2008 – Declares Pools can be opened, hand watering is allowed, and extends the new landscape exemption to 10 weeks.
- March 2008 - GA EPD advises we begin our dry season in a much worse position than last year.

# The 2008 Legislative Session

(The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly)

- State-wide Water Plan Passes – We have a plan to make ...a plan.
- Reservoir Bill Passes – with an incentive for a sales tax holiday on WaterSense Products & \$40 Million in Water Supply Project Grants.
- September 2008 State Cuts grants to make up for a 1.6 Billion Budget Shortfall.
- Legislation to redraw the state line and stick Metro Atlanta's "Drinking Water Straw" in the Tennessee River.
- House Bill 1281 Passes by 80%



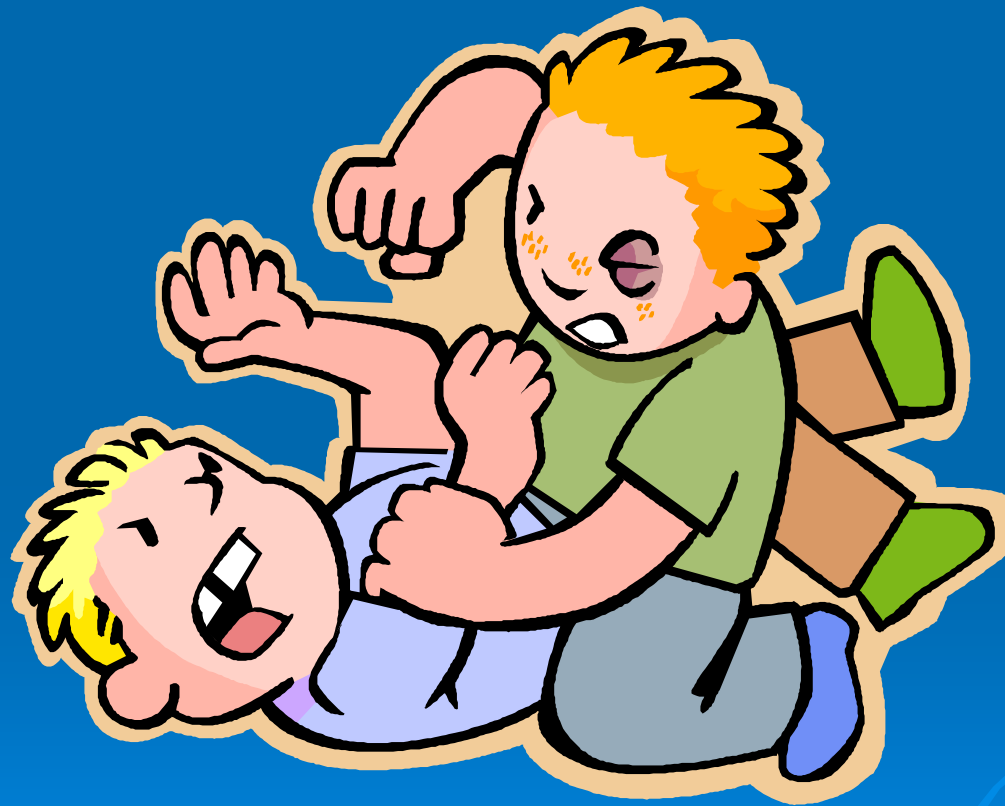


# HB1281

- Brought forth and lobbied by the Green Industry.
- “We will stop Joe Operator from walking to the reservoir with a yardstick and deciding we’ll have a ban today!”
- State law that stripped local utilities of the ability to make any restrictions different from the state, in order to protect supply.
- Additionally, if we do and it is approved by the state we are subject to legal challenge by any affected stakeholder even a homeowner.

# Whiskey is for Drinking...Water is for Fighting!

(AKA: State Water Planning)




# Impacts

- Green Industry Lost \$3 Billion Dollars and Thousands of Jobs.
- Utilities Lost Millions in revenue.
- Relationships between Environmentalists, the State, Stakeholders, and Water Purveyors have disintegrated.
- Atlanta has lost new businesses opportunities.
- The Water Industry has lost professionals.
- Rate increases have been required.

# Results

- The affected North Georgia Area cut their water use by 15%.
- Lake Allatoona had a chance to recharge.
- The state devised a method for utilities not dependent on the Chattahoochee basin to apply for loser restrictions.
- We discovered the Drought Management Plan as written cannot be put on the ground.
- People are beginning to see we have a water problem...not the drought.

# It is Darkest Before the Dawn

- Currently Drafting the State-wide Water Conservation Implementation Plan.
  - Revising the State Outdoor Water Use Rules.
  - Revising the State Drought Response Plan.
  - Creating the Regional Water Districts for the State-wide Plan.
  - Dovetailing of Water Quality and Quantity Concerns.
- 

# Lessons Learned

- Drought Response is NOT Conservation.
- We Have a Water Problem.
- Water has been so underpriced it cannot weather an economic drought.
- There is Not One Solution for the Region.
- Voluntary Conservation is Unlikely to Work in a Historically Water Rich Region.
- Water Efficient Ethic Takes Time to Take Hold.
- Crisis Breeds Concern.

# Steps Toward Change

- Started a Regional Toilet Rebate Program.
- Initiated Discussions on “Smart” growth.
- Increased Interest in Green Building.
- Conservation is being considered in supply planning.
- Conservation Plans and Progress Will be Considered in future Permitting.
- The Operation Manual for ACT Basin is being rewritten.

# Thank You

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