

Input for Groundwater Workgroup: #2A Management Structures June 1, 2016

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Workgroup mtg: April 29, 2016

Alternative Management Structure Workgroup considered two concepts:

- 1) Examined non-profit in Alabama that provides forum to discuss watershed issues. Concluded that a forum for groundwater permit holders might be valuable for information sharing and establishing relationships that would improve conflict resolution.
- 2) Reviewed Surface Water Management Act section on Voluntary Allocation Agreements. Concluded that the language might be a valuable option for groundwater permit holders.



Draft Forum Concept

What: Meeting held 2-4 times per year to share information and get to know the perspectives and challenges of groundwater users in Eastern Virginia Management Area.

Why: Easier to deal with scarcity and conflicts when you have established relationships and shared baseline knowledge. Easier to establish relationships in low stress environment prior to crisis.

Who participates: working level representatives from entities that hold permits, state agencies, technical experts (aka Participants in Groundwater Workgroups)



3

Draft Forum Concept

Typical Topics:

- State of resource: reports on water levels, salinity, subsidence
- Policy options: reports on other states or regions
- Resource management: number/changes to permits, economic development issues, emerging sector (Ag, industrial) concerns, cost of water

Structure options: Who should set agendas and administer forum

- DEQ
- PDCs in Coastal Plain
- University
- DEQ grant open to all including NGOs and consultants (based on existing grant for Watershed Roundtables)



4

Voluntary Allocation Agreements

Mission H2O call tomorrow: 9-10am

Conference Line 877-506-4272; pass code 159 865

Workgroup discussion:

- Voluntary agreements or contracts possible now. Is there a benefit to more structure? Some say status quo is Wild West.
- Would PWS take voluntary reduction if business asked? Is it better for existing users to pick new users?
- Voluntary agreements would allow wider range of penalties for violating agreement.

