

Georgia Department of Natural Resources

2 Martin Luther King Jr., Dr., Suite 1152 East Tower, Atlanta, Georgia 30334
Noel Holcomb, Commissioner
Carol A. Couch, Ph.D., Director
Environmental Protection Division
(404) 656-4713

For Immediate Release

December 16, 2005

Georgia EPD Issues Report On Agricultural Water Use In Flint River Basin

The Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) has released a report on agricultural water use in the state's Flint River basin, which includes recommendations for improvements in water resource management, especially during times of drought.

The report, titled "*Recommendations for the Flint River Regional Water Development and Conservation Plan*," is based on the scientific findings of a six-year study of agricultural water use and its effects on the Flint River and its tributaries. A stakeholder advisory committee consisting of farmers and other citizens of the Flint River basin, assisted by a Technical Advisory Committee, helped develop the recommendations. The full report is available on the Flint River Basin Plan Web site at www.gadnr.org/frbp/.

"The research shows that the water resources of the Flint River basin must be more carefully managed, especially during drought," said EPD Director Carol A. Couch. "This report will help EPD develop a plan to improve water management in the region so that we can again consider applications for agricultural water use."

EPD issued a moratorium on new surface water irrigation permits and Floridan aquifer groundwater permits in December 1999, because of concerns that farm use of water during drought was having an adverse impact on the Flint River. The Flint River begins in Clayton County in metropolitan Atlanta and flows southward through the farming country of southwest Georgia before ending at Lake Seminole in the extreme southwest corner of the state.

EPD is considering the report's recommendations in drafting an agricultural water use permitting strategy, and will consider any comments received regarding the recommendations. Comments will be accepted through January 13, 2006. Comments may be e-mailed to rob_mcdowell@dnr.state.ga.us or sent to: Flint River Basin Plan, Georgia Environmental Protection Division, 2 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive, Suite 1152, Atlanta, GA 30334.

Contact: Rob McDowell (404) 657-6251