SECTION 2: DEFINITIONS

In the sections that follow, the terms defined below are highlighted in bold the first time they are used.

1) "Assimilative capacity" is the amount of contaminant load that can be discharged to a specific waterbody without exceeding water quality standards or criteria. Assimilative capacity is used to define the ability of a waterbody to naturally absorb and use a discharged substance without water quality becoming impaired or aquatic life being harmed.
2) "Basin" refers to the land area that drains to one of the 14 river basins that cover all or parts of Georgia's mainland landmass: the Altamaha, Chattahoochee, Coosa, Flint, Ochlockonee, Ocmulgee, Oconee, Ogeechee, Satilla, Savannah, St. Marys, Suwannee, Tallapoosa, and Tennessee river basins.
3) "Condition(s)" in permits means any limitation established by the Director on water withdrawal, wastewater discharge, or drinking water permits.
4) Conservation-oriented rate structure: a rate structure adopted by a water utility or water provider that is designed to reflect the cost of providing water, send a price signal about the marginal cost of additional water, and encourage efficient use of water by customers.
5) "Consumptive use" is the difference between the total amount of water withdrawn from a defined hydrologic system of surface water or groundwater and the total amount of the withdrawn water that is returned to that same hydrologic system over a specified period of time.
6) "Consumptive use assessment" is the water reliably available for consumptive use over a specified period of time from a defined hydrologic system of surface water or groundwater source in a dry year, beyond the quantities needed to meet in-aquifer needs or flow regime requirements, which EPD will establish. A consumptive use assessment will establish a baseline that may be increased through either selected modifications of the source, such as increasing water storage capacity, or supplementing the source. This baseline for the water available from each water source will be provided for the purposes of regional planning. Water use above the baseline defined by the consumptive use assessments may be permitted by EPD in normal and wet years.
7) "Director" is the Director of the Environmental Protection Division of the Department of Natural Resources.
8) "Division" means the Environmental Protection Division of the Department of Natural Resources.
9) "Dry year" means the time period of lowest precipitation and streamflow for which water supply and wastewater facilities are designed and operated.
10) "Excess capacity" means the amount of water supply available in a water supply reservoir over and above the water demand expected to be placed on the reservoir's storage and the storage dedicated to other purposes.
11) "Flow regime" is a description of the pattern of flow variability for an individual surface water source. Flow regime involves the magnitude, timing, duration, frequency and rate of water movement.
12) "Full yield" means the maximum amount of water that a reservoir can supply for a specific purpose during a specified time interval under a given set of assumptions related to drought and reliability, when that specific purpose is the only one for which the active storage is used.
13) "Future" means the time period over which one might reasonably forecast water uses and users.
14) "Green infrastructure" is an interconnected network of protected land, water, and other open spaces that supports native species, maintains natural ecological processes, sustains air and water resources, and contributes to the health and quality of life for Georgia's communities and people. In the context of stormwater management, green infrastructure refers to those systems and practices that use or mimic natural processes to facilitate stormwater infiltration, evapotranspiration (the return of water to the atmosphere either through evaporation or by plants), or reuse on-site.
15) "Grey water" is the wastewater produced from baths, showers, washing machines, dishwashers and other appliances.
16) "Human use" refers to all the ways in which water is employed for human benefit, including public health purposes, human consumption, agricultural and industrial production, recreational, municipal, and commercial purposes. This list of uses is not in priority order and does not alter priorities for water use established by the Georgia Code.
17) "Hydrologically connected" means the process whereby defined surface areas and/or subsurface areas drain to common points or regions under natural conditions.
18) "Impervious surface" means any surface such as pavement, roofs, roadways or others surface material that water does not permeate.
19) "Instream uses" means all those human and ecological uses of water which occur within the banks of rivers and streams, including waste assimilation, hydropower production, recreation, maintenance of aquatic habitats, and support of biological integrity.
20) "Interbasin transfer" is a withdrawal or diversion of water from one river basin, followed by use and/or return of some or all of that water to a second river basin. The river basin from which the withdrawal or diversion occurs is termed the 'donor' basin, and the river basin to which all or a portion of the water is diverted and returned is termed the 'receiving' basin.
21) "Intrabasin transfer" is a withdrawal or diversion of water from a point within a sub-basin within one of Georgia's 14 major river basins, followed by the use and discharge of some portion of that water into a second sub-basin within the same river basin.
22) "Low impact development" is a comprehensive land planning and engineering design approach to stormwater management that attempts to mimic a site's pre-development hydrology by using techniques that filter, store, and detain runoff close to its source and aid in infiltration and evaporation.
23) "Management practices" are reasonable methods, considering available technology and economic factors, for managing water demand, water supply, return of water to water sources, and prevention and control of pollution of the waters of the state.
24) "Natural systems" means the biological, ecological, and physical systems that arise and persist through mechanisms of nature as opposed to having been designed, constructed, and operated by mankind.

25) "Non-point source pollution" is diffuse contamination including sediment, litter, bacteria, nutrients, metals, oils, grease, chemicals and other pollutants entering bodies of water. Non-point source pollution may be transmitted by stormwater runoff, precipitation, atmospheric deposition, drainage, and/or seepage. Stormwater itself may also detrimentally alter a stream's hydrology, flow rate, temperature, and other physical and biological characteristics.

26) "Offstream uses" means the purposes for which water is withdrawn from streams, rivers, lakes, or aquifers.

27) "On-site sewage management "system(s)" means a sewage management system other than a public or community sewage treatment system that serves one or more buildings, mobile homes, recreational vehicles, residences, or other facilities designed or used for human occupancy or congregation, and which is permitted by a local county board of health under rules promulgated by the Department of Human Resources. Such term shall include, without limitation, conventional and chamber systems, privies, and experimental and alternative on-site sewage management systems that are designed to be physically incapable of a surface discharge of effluent that may be approved by the Department of Human Resources.

28) "Permit holders" means those persons or entities that have been issued a signed permit by the Director to supply drinking water, withdraw surface or ground water, or discharge treated wastewater or stormwater.

29) "Point source pollution" is contamination that emanates from discharges of treated wastewater or stormwater regulated under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES).

30) "Raw water interbasin transfer" is the transfer of untreated water from a site in a political jurisdiction of a donor river basin to a second political jurisdiction in a receiving river basin for treatment, use, and disposal in the receiving river basin."

31) "Reclaimed water" is wastewater that has received treatment to urban water reuse standards, meets the treatment criteria specified in EPD's reuse guidelines, and is utilized at a reuse area or is sent to a designated user for reuse. Reclaimed water can include municipal wastewater, industrial wastewater, or treated effluent.

32) "Return flow" refers to that portion of withdrawn water that is returned to surface water or groundwater systems, and is then available for other uses.

33) "Reservoir" means a lake or pond that is designed, constructed, and operated for the purpose of storing water for some period of time.

34) "Septage" means the liquid or solid material removed from an on-site sewage management system, cesspool, portable toilet, type III marine sanitation device, or a similar system that receives only domestic sewage. Septage does not include liquid or solid material removed from an on-site sewage management system or similar treatment works that receives either commercial wastewater or industrial wastewater. Septage does not include grease removed from a grease trap.

35) "Stormwater" means stormwater runoff, snow melt runoff, and surface runoff and drainage.

36) "Sustainable" means using resources to meet current needs without unreasonably foreclosing the ability of future generations to meet their own water needs.

37) "Sustainable yield" is the amount of water a source can supply for current and future water needs without unreasonably foreclosing the ability of future generations of humans to meet their own water needs. Sustainable yield can be increased through selected modification of the water source.

38) "Values and opportunities provided by historic flow regime" means the beneficial uses to which the waters of a flow regime are put by humankind and nature, and the values and opportunities created by placing such flow regimes to these beneficial uses.

39) "Water conservation" is the beneficial reduction of water use, water waste, and water loss.

40) Water Council" is the coordinating committee composed of 14 individuals, established by O.C.G.A. §12-5-524, representing the Georgia Legislature, State officials, and the public, whose responsibility it is to recommend a comprehensive statewide water management plan to the General Assembly

41) "Water permit" includes any permit administered or issued by the EPD related to water or watershed protection, including drinking water supply, surface or ground water withdrawal, wastewater discharge, and stormwater.

42) "Water planning region" is a geo/politically defined area that includes one or more water quantity and/or quality resources.

43) "Water reuse" is the use of reclaimed water as a substitute for another generally higher quality water source. Reclaimed water can be reused for the beneficial irrigation of areas that may be accessible to the public (such as golf courses, residential and commercial landscaping, parks, athletic fields, roadway medians, and landscapes) and for other beneficial uses such as human uses, cooling towers, concrete mixing, and car washes.

44) "Water resource" is a body of surface water or groundwater that is available or potentially available for offstream and/or instream use, including agricultural, industrial, residential, recreational, or environmental activities, among others. Water resources may include freshwater bodies, brackish waters, and ocean water.

45) "Water supply reservoir" is a lake or pond constructed and operated to store water primarily for the purposes of public water supply.

46) "Water use efficiency" generally addresses how efficiently water is used or the act of achieving a water use function with the minimal amount of water that is technically and economically feasible.

47) "Water use" means utilization of water for natural and human uses. See also human use, instream use and offstream use.

48) "Water users" means those who utilize water for human uses.

49) "Watershed" means the land area tributary to a given point along a stream or river.

50) "Watershed permitting" is an approach to developing wastewater permits for multiple sources within a defined geographic area or watershed.