

**Announcement**

To: Interested Parties

From: Judson H. Turner



Date: July 30, 2012

Re: Suspension of Consideration of Agricultural Withdrawal Permits in portions of the Lower Flint and Chattahoochee River Basins

As of this date, I am suspending consideration of applications for agricultural water withdrawal permits in portions of Southwest Georgia. The suspension will affect the following:

- Applications for new permits for withdrawals from the Floridan aquifer or from surface waters in the area known as Subarea 4, where surface water and groundwater are closely interconnected;
- Applications for permit modifications that would increase pump capacity or irrigated acreage associated with withdrawals from the Floridan aquifer or surface waters in Subarea 4;
- Applications for new permits to withdraw surface waters in the Spring Creek, Ichawaynochaway Creek, and Kinchafoonee-Muckalee Creek sub-basins in the Flint River basin; and
- Applications for permit modifications that would increase pump capacity or irrigated acreage associated with withdrawals of surface water in the Spring Creek, Ichawaynochaway Creek, and Kinchafoonee-Muckalee Creek sub-basins in the Flint River basin.

A map of the area affected by the suspension is attached. For more information on specific locations affected by the suspension, contact the Agricultural Permitting Unit in Tifton at 229-391-2400.

Permitting in other parts of the Flint and Chattahoochee River Basins will continue to be conducted following applicable rules and guidance, including the 2006 Flint River Basin Plan and the 2011 Regional Water Plans.

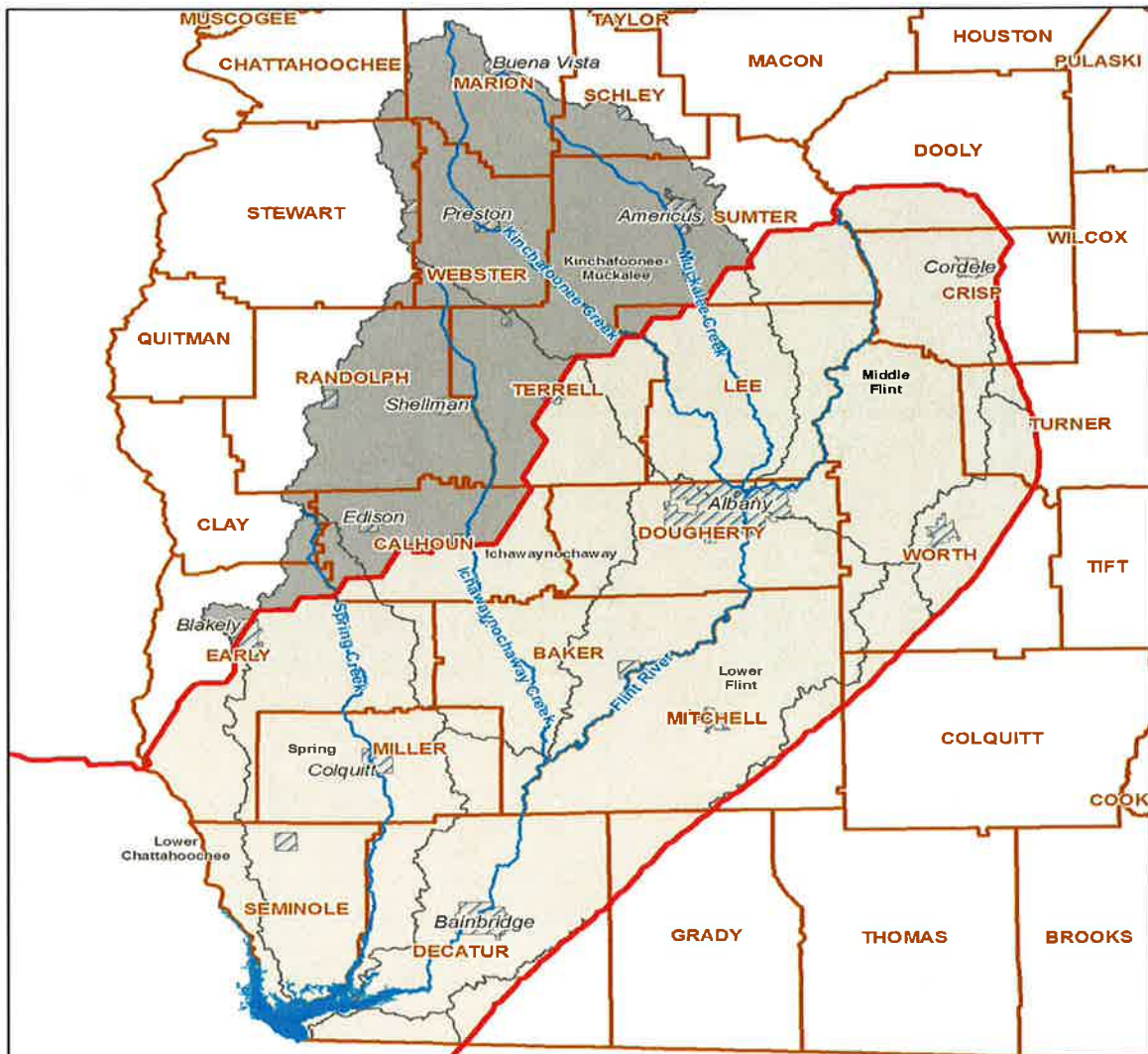
The suspension does not apply to applications already received as of this date. All applications for withdrawals in the affected area received on or before today will be processed following applicable permitting procedures.

I am taking this action under the authority provided by the statutes that regulate water withdrawal permitting in Georgia (O.C.G.A. §§12-5-31, 12-5-96, and 12-5-97).







The water resources affected by the suspension are significant sources of water for irrigation. A continued increase in withdrawals from these resources may ultimately lead to unacceptable impacts to existing users or compromise the sustainable capacities of these resources. Suspending consideration of permit applications in this area will allow time to update the tools used to assess the condition of water resources in the region and evaluate the impacts of increased water use.

The suspension will be re-evaluated annually starting in November 2013. Lifting of the suspension will be dependent on progress in updating of assessment tools and evaluation of the condition of the affected water resources.

I recommend that applications for withdrawals not be filed while the suspension is in effect. A \$250 application fee is required for each withdrawal application in the Flint River Basin and those funds cannot be held during the suspension. In addition, the assessment process may well result in changes to the permit application. Consequently, it would be best to wait to file any applications for withdrawals in the affected area until the suspension is lifted.



dbetts 7/26/2012

-  Subarea 4
-  Lake Seminole
-  Counties
-  Cities
-  SW Suspended
-  GW and SW Suspended