

**SYNOPSIS OF  
THE PROPOSED NEW RULE OF THE  
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION DIVISION  
RELATING TO REGIONAL WATER PLANNING, CHAPTER 391-3-32**

**Chapter 391-3-32 Preparation of Regional Water Development and Conservation Plans.**

**Purpose:** The purpose of Section 391-3-32-.01 is to provide minimum uniform statewide regulations for the preparation of Regional Water Development and Conservation Plans. Regional Water Development and Conservation Plans will be written to promote the sustainable use of Georgia's waters, through the selection of an array of management practices, to support the state's economy, to protect public health and natural systems, and to enhance the quality of life for all citizens.

**Main Features:** As provided in the Comprehensive State-wide Water Management Plan, the characteristics of water resources and water users vary significantly in differing regions across Georgia. Protecting the ability of the state's water resources to meet needs for water supply and assimilation of wastewater will require regional, resource-based plans that identify the management practices appropriate to the resources and users in each region.

All terms used in this Rule shall be interpreted in accordance with the definitions listed in the Comprehensive State-wide Water Management Plan.

Regional Water Planning Councils shall oversee preparation of Regional Water Development and Conservation Plans. All Regional Water Planning Councils shall execute a memorandum of agreement with EPD and the Department of Community Affairs. Regional Water Development and Conservation Plans shall be developed in accordance with the requirements of the State Water Plan and guidance to be provided by the Director.

Regional Water Planning Councils shall submit recommended regional Water Development and Conservation Plans to the Director for review and approval. Before taking action to adopt any regional Water Development and Conservation Plan, the Director shall provide public notice of the recommended plan and a comment period of at least forty-five days.

Water Development and Conservation Plans will be subject to review by the appropriate regional Water Planning Council every five years.

The Director shall use adopted Water Development and Conservation Plans to guide decisions regarding permitting. Plans will also guide state grants and loans from the Georgia Environmental Facilities Authority for water-related projects within that water planning region.

**STATEMENT OF RATIONALE**  
**Rules for Regional Water Planning**

**Chapter 391-3-32 Preparation of Regional Water Development and Conservation Plans.**

The basis of this rule is to have regional water development and conservation plans that identify management practices to be employed to ensure that forecasted water and wastewater needs can be met without exceeding the water quantity and water quality capacities identified in resource assessments. The regional water management plans will be reviewed by the EPD, and if they are consistent with established guidance, adopted by EPD. EPD will ensure that water planning is carried out consistently and equitably across water planning regions, and that the resultant plans will lead to management of water resources so that opportunities for current and future use of water resources are maintained.

Once adopted, the plans would be implemented by the water users in the water planning region and the EPD Director will make permitting decisions based on the plans. Plans will also guide state grants and loans from the Georgia Environmental Facilities Authority for water-related projects.

This revision is not expected to result in significant additional costs to the Department of Natural Resources or to the regulated community. No costs will be imposed on local governments or the general public.