

# 2018 Challenges Ahead

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## REGIONAL ISSUE

# Maintaining Regional Water Planning and Stewardship

## BACKGROUND

Securing a clean, abundant water supply is vital to the Atlanta region's economic future.

This is critically important as metro Atlanta continues to grow. The Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District, staffed by ARC, forecasts the 15-county region will add nearly 3 million people by 2050.

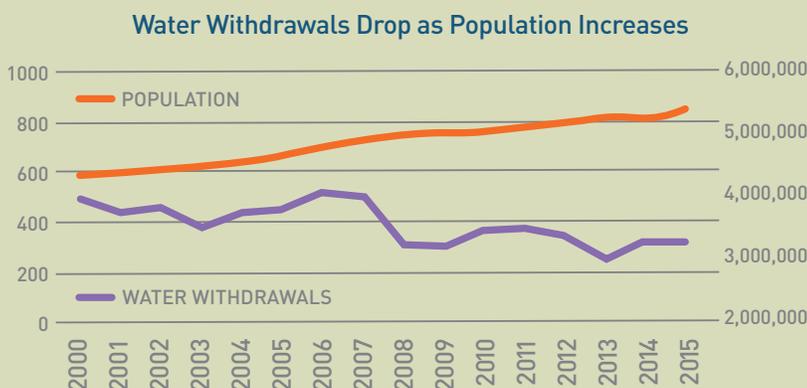
Metro Atlanta has unique challenges when it comes to water supply and management. We rely almost entirely on surface water, as a thick layer of granite underground means access to groundwater is negligible. We're also located along small rivers at the headwaters of six major river basins. And while we receive abundant rain most years, periods of drought are not uncommon.

The good news: If our water resources are properly managed, we'll be able to meet our long-term needs.

The Atlanta region has made great strides in water management and conservation. Robust conservation measures are now in place, including a toilet rebate program to replace old, inefficient models and "tiered" rates that encourage conservation.

These programs have been a huge success. Today, total water withdrawals in the region have dropped by more than 10% since 2000, even as our population has increased by more than 1 million.

But our continued prosperity depends on using water wisely, including continuing to invest in – and build on – our award-winning water conservation and efficiency programs.



## INSIGHTS & INNOVATION

In June 2017, the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District Board approved a Water Resource Management plan that brings together water supply and conservation, wastewater management, and watershed management into a single, integrated plan for the entire metro region.

The plan, developed with robust stakeholder input, includes a range of action steps that build on the Metro Water District's water conservation and management achievements. These new measures include:

- Expanding the residential toilet rebate program to include apartment buildings and other multi-family housing units
- Requiring new irrigation systems for large landscapes to include pressure regulators, master shut-off valves and flow sensors.
- Requiring utilities to identify and reduce real water system losses to meet goals set for 2025.
- Requiring increased coordination among local government departments and other stakeholders to improve overall water management.

## REGIONAL PLANNING DISTRICT

The Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District, staffed by ARC, was created in 2001 and includes 15 counties and 95 cities. The Atlanta region is the only major metropolitan area in the country with more than 100 jurisdictions implementing a long-term comprehensive water management program that is required and enforced.



Atlanta Regional Commission