



May 17, 2007

Dr. Carol A. Couch, Chair
Georgia Water Council
c/o Georgia Environmental Protection Division
2 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive, SE, Suite 1152
Atlanta, Georgia 30334

Dear Dr. Couch:

The Georgia Industry Environmental Coalition (GIEC) appreciates the opportunity to participate in the EPD-sponsored stakeholder process as part of the Georgia Water Council's effort to develop the first-ever comprehensive, statewide water plan. It is in this stakeholder capacity that we submit these comments.

GIEC was surprised and disappointed to hear EPD officials say at the April 30 Statewide Advisory Committee (SAC) meeting that EPD did not intend to share with the SAC, or any of the Advisory Committees, a preliminary draft of the statewide water plan policy framework before presenting, or recommending, a draft to the Water Council.

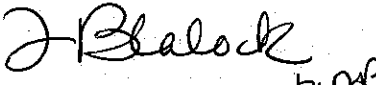
Since March 2006, SAC members have formally met eight times and collectively have spent hundreds of hours reviewing meeting packets, seeking necessary water resource-related data, and providing thoughtful input throughout this initial water plan stakeholder process. It remains difficult to gauge how much of the Advisory Committee's input will be incorporated in the draft planning framework because EPD has offered little in terms of response to comments and no preliminary draft framework. Therefore, GIEC believes it is inappropriate for EPD to recommend its first draft of the water plan framework to the Water Council without first providing an opportunity for the Advisory Committees to review and provide meaningful comment.


If a draft water plan policy framework that has not been reviewed and commented on by the SAC is presented to the Water Council, we hope that EPD indicates clearly that the framework is a draft working document. As such, extensive stakeholder input should be expected and sought by EPD and the Water Council.

We remain appreciative of EPD's effort on this important initiative and the continued use of stakeholder involvement throughout the planning process.

Sincerely,

GEORGIA INDUSTRY ENVIRONMENTAL COALITION


Tanya Blalock, Chair *by OSP*
Water Resources Workgroup


Katie Kirkpatrick, P.E. *by OSP*
Chairman of the Board

cc: GIEC General Membership