

From: <gary.hoover@srs.gov>
To: <DeanM@bjwsa.org>
Date: 10/23/2007 6:37:20 AM
Subject: FYI: 2 Water Articles re. GA
cc: <ChrisP@bjwsa.org>, <EdS@bjwsa.org>

Dean,

FYI.

augustachronicle.com

Water action may lead to rationing

By Walter C. Jones
Tuesday, October 23, 2007
ATLANTA

- Gov. Sonny Perdue's declaration of a state of emergency in 85 counties could trigger broad efforts to deal with north Georgia's record drought. Actions could range from curbing commercial uses, ordering water systems to boost their rates to encourage conservation or imposing rations, observers say.

During the weekend, Mr. Perdue got busy.

He returned from an Asian trade mission to sue the federal government, issue his declaration and seek a similar emergency declaration from President Bush.

He is hoping that either his lawsuit or a presidential declaration will get the Army Corps of Engineers to slow the release of water from dams on Chattahoochee River lakes before they fall below the intake pipes that feed drinking systems.

A presidential decision could come any day or weeks from now.

The lawsuit is expected to go before a judge Nov. 4 or 5, according to Maj. Daren Payne of the Corps' Alabama headquarters.

"I don't expect any change on (Corps release levels) any time soon," he said.

The federal emergency would allow low-interest loans for businesses and possibly assistance to individuals who have been affected by the drought. Mr. Perdue's emergency declaration will allow the state to begin using its resources to help communities running out of water - by using National Guard tankers to truck it in, for example.

While there are no specific funds for disaster assistance, the Georgia Environmental Facilities Authority has already made a \$200,000 emergency grant to the city of Hogansville to connect to nearby LaGrange's water system.

Today, the authority is expected to approve a \$75,000 grant for the south

Georgia city of Rochelle to redrill its primary well.

Sierra Club lobbyist Neill Herring said Mr. Perdue's efforts are three years and \$20 million overdue.

"I think the governor is making up for the mistake when he failed to fund the water plan when he first got into office," he said. "I don't think this is going to be productive, this business of asking the federal government for easy credit. Credit for what, to buy rain?"

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OFFICIAL PROTESTS

MONTGOMERY, Ala.

- Gov. Bob Riley has sent a letter to the president, urging him to deny a request by Georgia's governor for a disaster declaration. He said such a declaration would put people and jobs in Alabama at risk.

He wrote that honoring the request that less water to be released from Lake Lanier "would be a radical step" against the interests of Alabama.

Mr. Riley wrote that he understands the needs of Atlanta residents, but said his state can't just let Georgia take control of the reservoir's water to the detriment of Alabamians who live and work downstream.

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