

St. Marys River Management Committee Reports

August 3, 2026

Attendees:

Baker - Commissioner Ronald Mann, Danny Norton (FL Co-Chair)

Nassau -

Camden -

Charlton - Chip Campbell (GA Co-Chair), Commissioner James Everett, Merrill Varn (Secretary)

Other - Claire Feazel (SMRMC Admin), Cori Hermle (SJRWMD), Ronnie Pollock (Charlton County Road Superintendent)

- The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. A quorum was not present; reports were received but no business was conducted
- Treasurer's Report - \$11,578.40 (as May 31, 2026)

Old Business/Reports

Land Use (including public access)

Baker -

- Boat Ramp - Delay due to FEMA reimbursement and the Florida Forest Service \$380,000 grant - FFS extended grant period by 2.5 years - Demolition on-going - Contract has been let - Waiting on funding to be released by FEMA - Plan for construction has been approved by FEMA
- Development Projects - Multiple projects within Baker County may impact the St. Marys River. Approximately 680 homes within the first two developments that would be on city sewer and city water
 - Barber Point Development - old golf course - on 23A - No update for August
 - Nehemiah Point - southernmost development on 23A - entrances and exits have been approved by Baker County Board of Commissioners - No update for August
 - Mid Pointe Development - Initial Application submitted for unincorporated Baker County - Consultant reviewing project on County's behalf - Water and Sewer would come from a Jacksonville-area developer - waiting on developer to respond to request for information
- Maple Set Recreation Area - Improvements at John M. Bethea State Forest, the upper most access point to the river - No update for August
- Reynolds Bridge - connection between northeast Baker County, Florida and southwest Charlton County, Georgia is currently closed. Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) has the \$8.5 million dollar rebuild is scheduled for 2028 on their Draft Tentative Five-Year Work Program - No update for August
- Plant AS - Project to build large-scale greenhouse - there are no agreements in place for developers to proceed - No update for August
- National Park Service – Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance program (NPS-RTCA)
 - Review of 2, 4, 7, and 11-mile kayak trails within Baker County on river from Moniac to Boy Scout Camp
 - Shoals Park - Working on Canoe Trail - Also working to make the area more accessible and kid friendly - Baker County has made improvements, but is still waiting on NPS for next steps.
- Steele Bridge Road - FEMA funding improvements to make drainage updates and cross drains to the road - Plans should be available within the upcoming months

Nassau -

- On Island
 - Boutique Hotel - No update for August
 - Bioethanol plant - Concern with land use plan - \$6.6 million lawsuit filed against City of Fernandina Beach - City has until November to respond - No update for August
 - Beach re-nourishment - No update for August
 - Atlantic Seafood Property - Lessee vacated - building most likely to be demolished - No update for August
 - Inland Fernandina Beach - Concern about stormwater management. New areas are flooding from lighter rain events - No update for August
 - Waterfront Park - No movement on construction. Work began in the spring, but stopped during the summer - No update for August
 - New Fishing Pier - Possible seawall and parking construction - in front of Alachua - No update for August
- Mainland
 - Townhouse Development - No update for August
 - New Race Track development west of I-95, near the Florida Welcome Center - approximately 600 acres - No update for August
 - BOCC continues to negotiate for future conservation easements. One property is approximately 1,400 acres - No update for August

Camden -

- Blue Bridge - Mediation completed and working to complete the deed transfer - No update for August
- Raydient Development - Taylor Morrison has begun construction on *Esplanade at St. Marys*, a residential subdivision and golf course - concern remains surrounding adequate water retention on site. It may be possible to obtain storm water plans - Originally anticipated to open around February/early 2026 - Final 9 holes of the golf course opened in August 2026; all 18 holes opened
- Temple Creek - Boardwalk complete - Interpretive Trail is under construction - Camden County Public Works is working on project, completion anticipated in the late Fall 2026 - No update for August
- Data Centers - Camden County has enacted a Moratorium on Data Centers - No update for August
- Oscar Oaks Subdivision - Proposed for the NE corner of the St. Marys Road and GA Hwy 40 - appears to be accessible from St. Marys Road

Charlton -

- Charlton Camp Pinckney County Park Boat Ramp - GA-DNR conducted a technical review in March 2025 and sent a letter to Charlton County identifying necessary improvements - Progress on this item is currently paused as discussions with the County continue
 - Still working with subject matter experts and working towards putting the right people in conversation - Charlton County Road Superintendent Ronnie Pollack participated in the meeting discussion to gain clarity
- Raydient - The Refuge, featuring 12 lots ranging from +/-20 to +/-45 acres along the St. Marys River, has been advertised as “coming soon” from Raydient Rural. This is near the Atlantic White Sturgeon protection area - No update for August

Water Quality

- NPDES - No new or renewed permits in Camden County or Charlton County that would impact the St. Marys River
- Spanish Creek 319 - Grant extended through October 2026. Three more pump outs have been completed. 45 total pump outs have been completed
 - The exact location of the pollutants is still to be determined
- Septic Think Tank - Project is currently on hold, but there is still a need to do septic tank maintenance talks with any HOAs on both the Florida and Georgia sides of the river and its tributaries - No update for August
- E&S spreadsheet
 - Florida requires a 25' buffer for wetlands, but not for surface waters. The committee continues to work towards a 25' construction buffer for Florida; No update for August
 - Georgia does not have Nitrogen and Phosphorus (N/P) regulations; No update for August
- FL TMDL Planning - No update for August - Need to identify someone to take lead on this project. There is a need to identify the baseline for N/P
- Georgia EPD Comprehensive Nutrient Permitting - No update for August
- Folkston Wastewater Treatment Plant - No update for August - Pender Lloyd, Folkston City Manager, reported that construction has begun on the new system, which will increase capacity to 1.25 MGD. The project is scheduled for completion in December 2026, with some final installations potentially extending into the first two quarters of 2027. The current facility has a capacity of 1.0 MGD.
 - The GEO Group is in the process of converting the D. Ray James prison facility to expand ICE capacity, bringing the total population to approximately 2,800–3,000 individuals. When both the prison and ICE facility were previously at capacity (3,000), the city's treatment facility was processing 0.75 MGD - No update for August

Water Quantity

- Four County Stormwater
 - Baker County - Working to schedule presentation from Fara Ilami at an upcoming meeting
 - Vulnerability Assessment Complete - Presentation tentatively scheduled for September/October
 - Camden County - County has begun work on stormwater grant, but waiting on progress update - No update for August
 - Charlton County - Vulnerability and Stormwater- EPD's Base Level Engineering Map is completed and is being uploaded to the online viewer. Updates are slowly being added to the St. Marys River Watershed - No update for August
 - Work in-progress by Georgia Department of Natural Resources Coastal Resources Division (CRD) and St. Marys Riverkeeper may help with Vulnerability Assessment - No update for August
- City Stormwater rehab -
 - Focusing on collecting updates for October Meeting
 - Folkston Stormwater improvements - No update for August
 - Macclenny - Nearing completion of Phase II and anticipate applying for Phase III - No update for August

- Georgia Water Councils -
 - Suwannee-Satilla Water Council - Looking for new council members
 - Coastal Water Council - Looking for new council members

Regulatory/Comp Plans

- Nassau County No Wake Zone - Currently on hold - No update for August
- Baker County Comprehensive Plan - Consultants completed the draft and are finalizing the final version

Administrative

- Discussion regarding absent members
- Mr. William Story, representing Camden County, resigned his seat on the committee
- The online tool has been updated and the link has been replaced on the website

County Projects

- Possible new project for 2026
 - Updates to ARC Story Map - Goal of adding new GIS layer to identify areas for possible conservation - Will need to engage third-party to assist with this effort - No update for August

New Business

- Baker County has questions about WaterFirst North Florida funding in the St. Johns River Water Management District - SJRWMD Representative Cori Hermle shared that the previously introduced project is not moving forward - The title is still tied to the budget appropriation - There still needs to be a water reclamation or wetland recharge project in the SJRWMD, so there is funding attached - The recharge project will be within the SJRWMD area

Partner Reports

- St. Marys Riverkeeper (SMRK) - No update for August
- St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD)
 - Prior to the meeting, Cori shared current water shortage conditions and several helpful resources on drought conditions and water use
 - SJRWMD is still in a water shortage - aquifer levels are declining because the rainfall is not keeping up with the evaporation - The water levels are still higher than anticipated even with the drought conditions

Committee Member Reports

- No reports for August

Public Comments

None

Adjournment

Meeting Adjourned at 7:38 p.m.

Next Meeting September 14, 2026 Callahan Fire Department