

St. Marys River Management Committee Reports

March 2, 2026

Attendees:

Baker -

Nassau - Bill Cochran

Camden - Chris Roland

Charlton - Chip Campbell (GA Co-Chair)

Other - Claire Feazel (SMRMC Admin)

- 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

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 - No update for March
- 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 - No update for March
 - Barber Point Development - old golf course - on 23A
 - Nehemiah Point - southernmost development on 23A - entrances and exits have been approved by Baker County Board of Commissioners
 - Mid Pointe Development - potentially for unincorporated Baker County
- Maple Set Recreation Area - Improvements at John M. Bethea State Forest, the upper most access point to the river - No update for March
- 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 March
- National Park Service – Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance program (NPS-RTCA)- Presentation scheduled for December 2 Board of Commissioners meeting - No update for March
 - Includes two public feedback sessions
 - Review of 2, 4, 7, and 11-mile kayak trails within Baker County on river from Moniac to Boy Scout Camp
 - Shoals Park - Considering the idea of a recreation development 7-mile kayak trail - Meeting in January - Funding available for kayak/canoe trail - No update for March

Nassau -

- On Island
 - Boutique Hotel - No update for March
 - 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 March
 - Beach re-nourishment - No update for March

- Atlantic Seafood Property - Lessee vacated - building most likely to be demolished - No update for March
 - Inland Fernandina Beach - Concern about stormwater management. New areas are flooding from lighter rain events - No update for March
 - Waterfront Park - No movement on construction. Work began in the spring, but stopped during the summer - No update for March
 - New Fishing Pier - Possible seawall and parking construction - in front of Alachua - No update for March
 - Mainland
 - Townhouse Development - No update for March
 - New Race Track development west of I-95, near the Florida Welcome Center - approximately 600 acres - No update for March
- Camden -
- Blue Bridge - Mediation scheduled in February - No update for March
 - 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 - Anticipated to open around February/early 2026 - Golf Course will be complete before residential development - No update for March
 - Temple Creek - Boardwalk complete - Interpretive Trail is under construction - No update for March
- 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 - No update for March
 - 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 March

Water Quality

- NPDES - No new or renewed permits in Camden County or Charlton County
- Spanish Creek 319 - South Georgia Septic completed the 7th repair for the grant and Southern Septic Pumping completed the 35th pumpout. Flushables wipes seem to be a major issue.
- 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. There is a need to improve communication and education to help property owners understand septic tank maintenance needs and issues - No update for March
- 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 March
 - Nassau County has included a 50' buffer in the Visioning Exercise of the upcoming Comprehensive Plan update
 - Georgia does not have Nitrogen and Phosphorus (N/P) regulations; No update for March
 - Educational flyer for landscapers - Will redistribute to local hardware stores in Camden and Charlton Counties in February - No update for March
- FL TMDL Planning - No update for March

- Georgia EPD Comprehensive Nutrient Permitting - No update for March
- Folkston WasteWater Treatment Plant - No update for March- 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 March

Water Quantity

- Four County Stormwater
 - Baker County - Vulnerability study still in progress - Working with NEFL Regional Council - deadline extended to March 2026
 - Fara Ilami will make presentation at upcoming meeting (April/May)
 - Nassau County - Following 2023 Vulnerability Assessment County awarded funding for an Adaptation Action Plan - working with City of Fernandina Beach using the same consultant to prevent duplication of services - No update for March
 - Town of Hilliard - working on Vulnerability Study - No update for March
 - Camden County - County has begun work on stormwater grant, but waiting on progress update - No update for March
 - 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 March, but work in-progress by Georgia Department of Natural Resources Coastal Resources Division (CRD) and St. Marys Riverkeeper may help with Vulnerability Assessment
- City Stormwater rehab -
 - Folkston Stormwater improvements - No update for March
 - Macclenny - Nearing completion of Phase II and anticipate applying for Phase III - No update for March
- Georgia Water Councils - Coastal Water Council met in December - No update for March

Regulatory/Comp Plans

- Nassau County No Wake Zone - Currently on hold - No update for March
- Baker County Comprehensive Plan - Consultant still working on the plan - Public Engagement Charrette scheduled for March 9
- Nassau County Comprehensive Plan - Currently in progress - community visioning sessions have taken place throughout 2025 - No update for March
- Resiliency Plans - The Committee submitted comments on the Section 309 Assessment and 2026–2030 Strategy. The Coastal Resources Division (CRD) acknowledged receipt of the letter and reported that they are coordinating with Dewberry regarding Base Level Engineering (BLE) maps, as well as with FEMA concerning their mapping efforts. CRD also indicated they will remain in contact with the St. Marys Riverkeeper (SMRK) and the Northeast Florida Regional Council (NFRC) regarding their respective resiliency plans - No update for March

Administrative

- 2024 Annual Report
 - Presentation to Nassau County pending
- 2025 Annual Report - Presentations in February/March to County Commissions
 - Baker County - February 17, 2026
 - Camden County - February 17, 2026
 - Charlton County - Scheduled for March 5, 2026
 - Nassau County - February 23, 2026

County Projects

- Discussion of possible new project for 2026 - No update for March
 - 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

New Business

- Discussion regarding the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Savannah District seeking a Section 401 Water Quality Certification for the issuance of Regional General Permit (RGP) 101 - authorizing discharges of dredged or fill material into waters of the U.S, including wetlands, and/or work or structures in navigable waters of the U.S. for necessary repair and protection measures associated with an *emergency* in the State of Georgia

Partner Reports

- St. Marys Riverkeeper (SMRK) - No update for March
- St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD)
 - All of northeast Florida is currently under a Phase II Severe Water Shortage - A Phase II Severe Water Shortage has been declared due to ongoing dry conditions within Alachua, Baker, Bradford, Clay, Duval, Flagler, Marion, Nassau, Putnam and St. Johns Counties. Below-average rainfall, declining groundwater levels, and reduced river flows are contributing to water resource stress
 - Under a Phase II water shortage:
 - Landscape irrigation is limited to one day a week
 - Wasteful and unnecessary water use is prohibited
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 - Residents, businesses, and property managers are encouraged to proactively plan for extended dry conditions and the potential for additional restrictions

Committee Member Reports

- No reports for March

Public Comments

None

Adjournment

Meeting Adjourned at 7:16 p.m.

Next Meeting April 6, 2026 Callahan Fire Department