

# Meeting Future Water Resource Challenges in the Southeast

## A Proposed Regional Approach

WEDA, Eastern Chapter Meeting  
Charleston, SC  
October 9, 2008

## Water Resource Challenges in the Southeast – A Regional Approach

### The Need – A Regional Vision

#### Examples of Common Challenges in Southeast

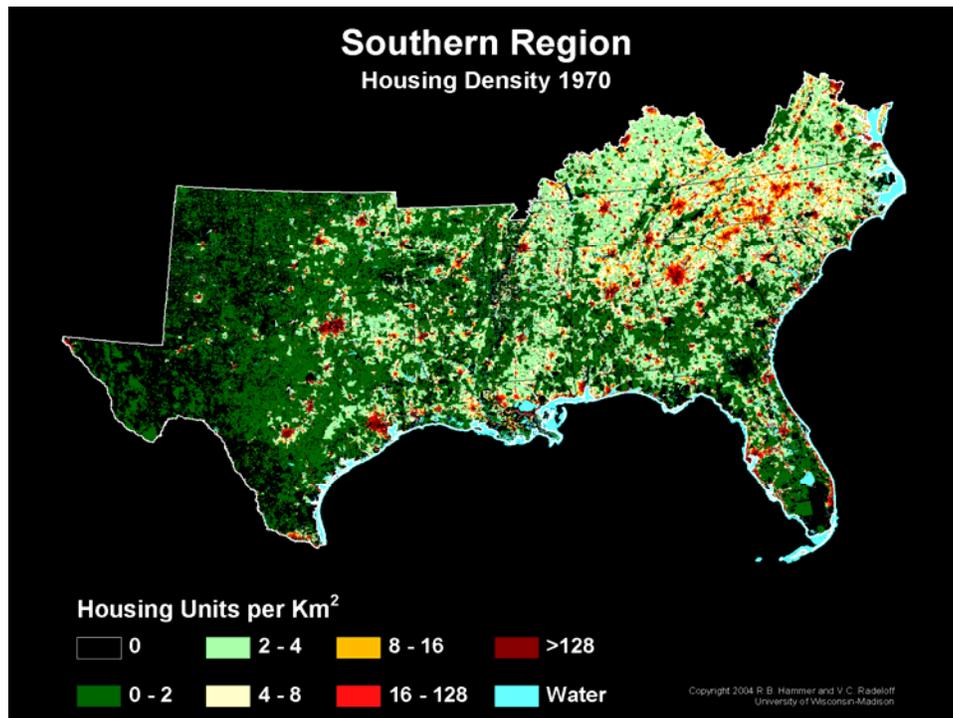
- Water availability for multiple uses
- Water conservation protocols and technology
- Aging water resource infrastructure
- Ports and navigation demands
- Coastal water resource management issues
- Aquatic ecosystem protection and restoration

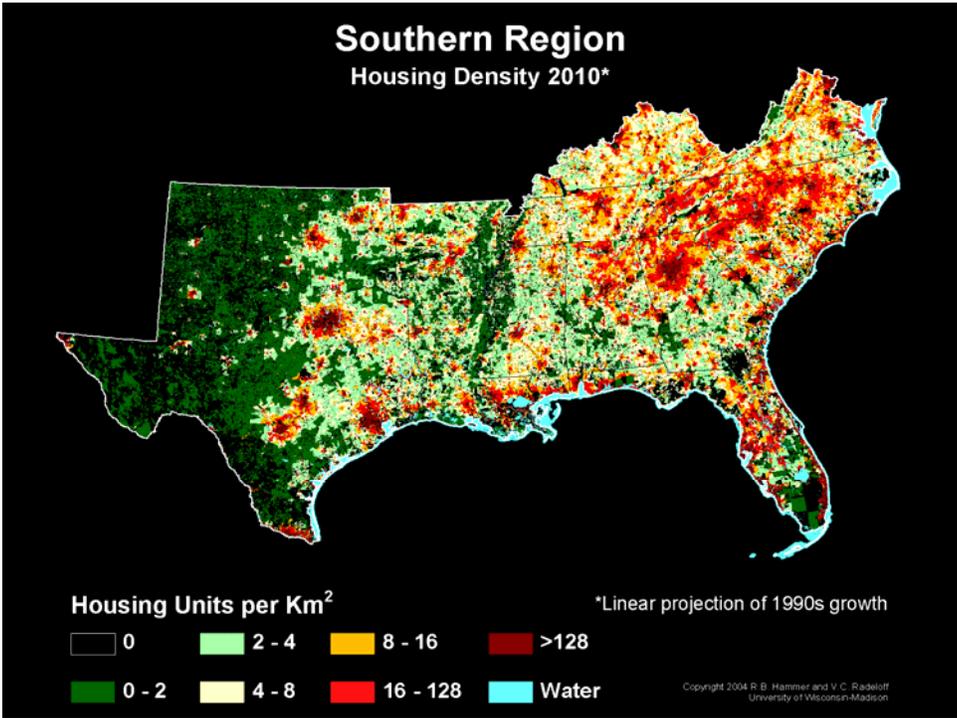
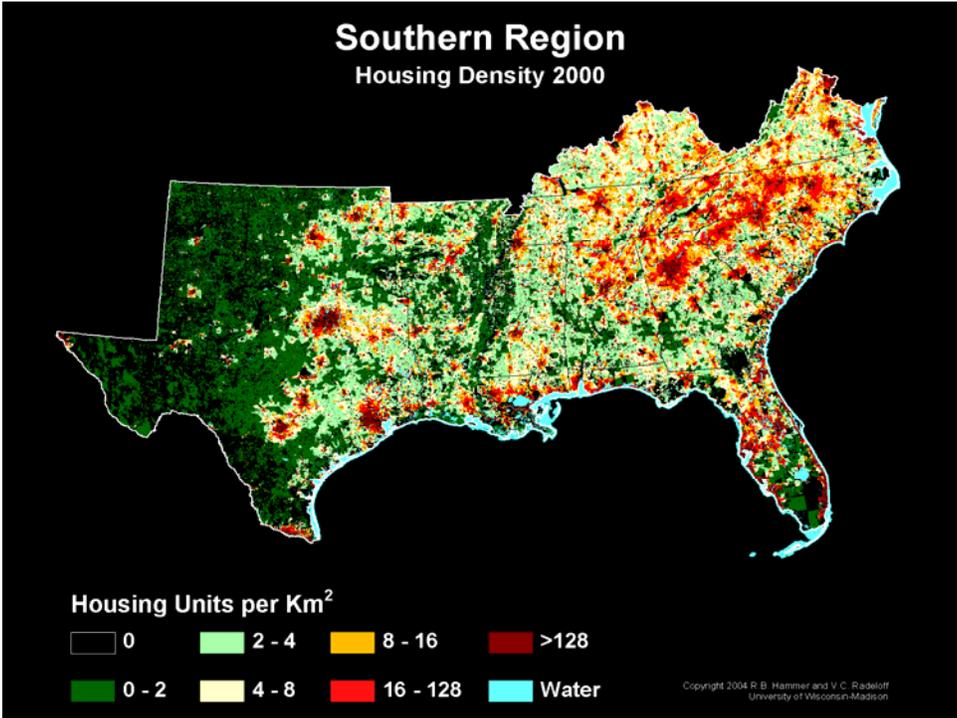
# Water Resource Challenges in the Southeast – A Regional Approach

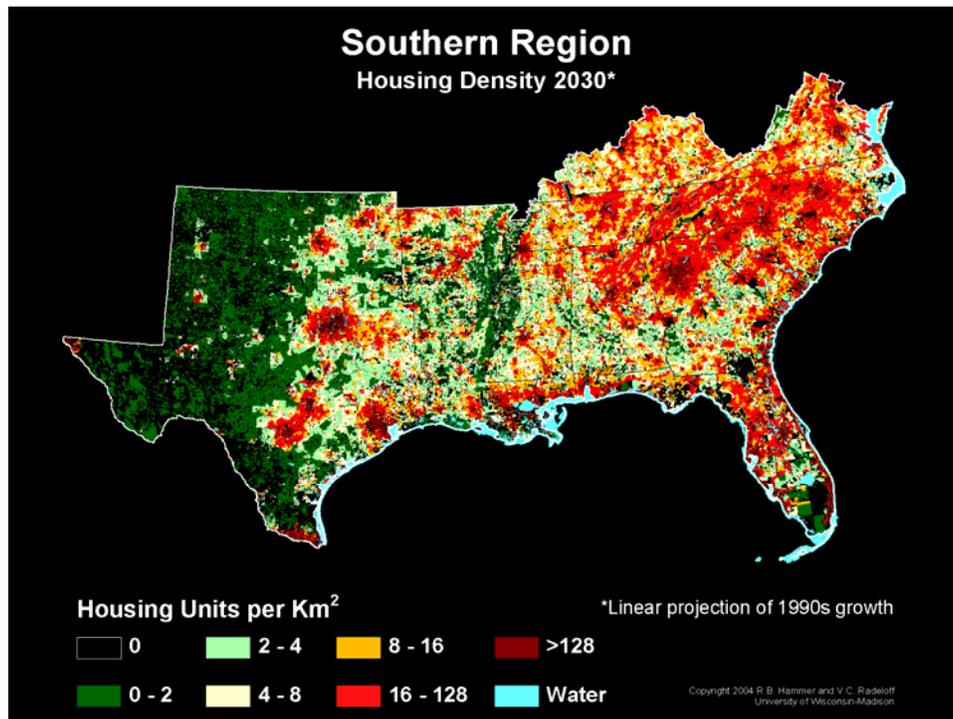
## The Need – A Regional Vision

### Potential “Game-Changers”

- Implications of explosive regional growth
- Implications of climate change
- “Energy independence” initiatives







## Water Resource Challenges in the Southeast – A Regional Approach

### The Concept

Establish a Southeast Regional Water Resource Alliance

#### Possible Objectives

- Promote multi-state dialogue on water resource issues
- Identify regional strategies/priorities for water resource investments and management
- Provide regional advocacy on water resource issues
- Promote innovative multi-state water partnerships
- Develop regional water resource action agenda

## Water Resource Challenges in the Southeast – A Regional Approach

### A Proposed Approach

#### Establish a Southeast Regional Water Resource Alliance

- State-led
- Federally-supported/assisted
- Collaborative/consensus-based
- Action-oriented

## Water Resource Challenges in the Southeast – A Regional Approach

### The Approach (con't)

#### Similar Efforts (Examples, not Models)

- Western States Water Council (sponsored by the Western Governors Association)  
[www.westgov.org/wswc](http://www.westgov.org/wswc)
- Great Lakes Water Management Initiative (sponsored by Council of Great Lakes Governors)  
[www.cqlg.org/projects/water/index.asp](http://www.cqlg.org/projects/water/index.asp)

## Water Resource Challenges in the Southeast – A Regional Approach

### The Approach (con't)

#### Build Upon Similar Collaborative Efforts in the Southeast

- Gulf of Mexico Alliance (FL, AL, MS, LA, TX)
- Southeast Regional Partnership for Planning and Sustainability (SERPPAS) (NC, SC, GA, FL, AL)
- Southeast Aquatic Resource Partnership (SARP) (14 Southern States)
- South Atlantic Alliance (Pending) (NC, SC, GA, FL)

## Water Resource Challenges in the Southeast – A Regional Approach

### A Strategy for Moving Forward

#### Actions Being Pursued Along Separate but Interdependent “Tracks”

- States (presently MS, AL, GA, FL, SC, NC, VA, TN)
- Southern Governors’ Association
- Federal Partners
- Tribes
- Stakeholder Interests

## Water Resource Challenges in the Southeast – A Regional Approach

### Initial Feedback from States on the Concept

- Identify “value-added” from proposed alliance
- Identify specific multi-state collaboration opportunities
- Clarify relationship to existing “regional” initiatives
- Recognize legal sensitivities/sovereignty concerns
- Define appropriate geographic scope for “region”
- Define a manageable range of critical issues

## Water Resource Challenges in the Southeast – A Regional Approach

### “Value Added” Example – WRDA 2007 (Sec 5009)

#### SEC. 5009. SOUTHEASTERN WATER RESOURCE ASSESSEMENT.

- (a) In General.—The Secretary shall conduct, at Federal expense, an assessment of the water resources needs of the river basins and watersheds of the southeastern United States.
- (b) Cooperative Agreements.—In carrying out the assessment, the Secretary may enter into cooperative agreements with State and local agencies, non-Federal and nonprofit entities, and regional researchers.
- (c) Authorization of Appropriations.—There is authorized to be appropriated \$7,000,000 to carry out this section.

## Water Resource Challenges in the Southeast – A Regional Approach

### Next Steps

- Host regional workshop with states (invitation to Governors on May 9, 2008)
- Continue workshops, as needed, to shape regional alliance and develop an outreach strategy
- Develop a “charter” or “partnership agreement” (for Governors) to establish a regional water alliance
- Move forward to implement a state-led, federally-supported alliance with strong stakeholder participation

## Water Resource Challenges in the Southeast – A Regional Approach

### Building Momentum

- Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway Association
- Southern Municipal Conference (Apr 2008)
- United South and Eastern Tribes (May 2008)
- Conference of Southern County Associations (May 2008)
- Tennessee Water Partnership Meeting (Jun 2008)
- Georgia Environmental Conference (Aug 2008)
- WEDA Meeting (Oct 2008)
- South Carolina Water Resource Conference (Oct 2008)

## Water Resource Challenges in the Southeast – A Regional Approach

The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results. ~ Albert Einstein

Change has a considerable psychological impact on the human mind. To the fearful, it is threatening because it means that things may get worse. To the hopeful, it is encouraging because things may get better. *To the confident, it is inspiring because the challenge exists to make things better.* ~ King Whitney, Jr.

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Questions or Comments?

Dennis W. Barnett  
US Army Corps of Engineers  
South Atlantic Division  
(404) 562-5225 (office)  
dennis.w.barnett@usace.army.mil