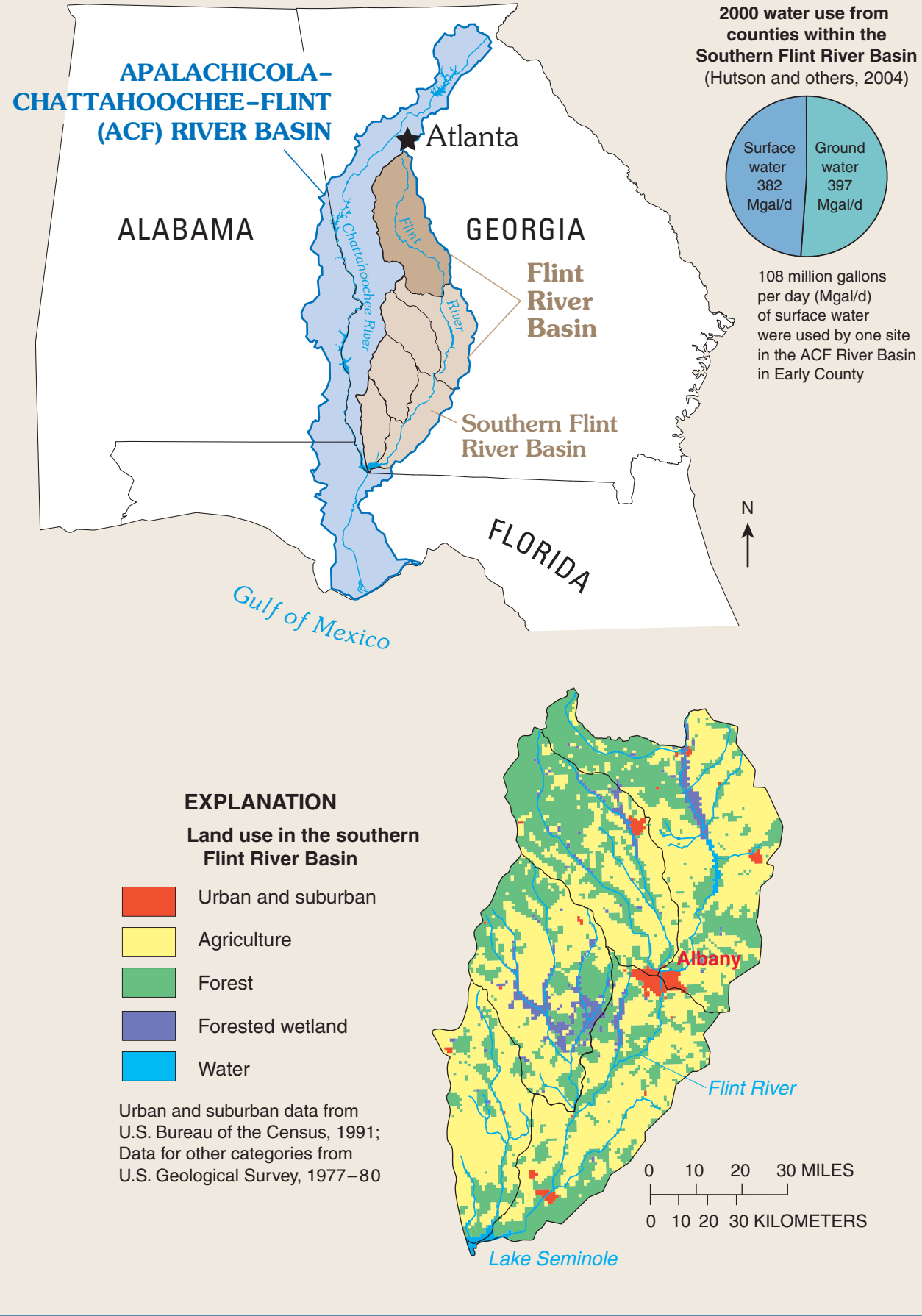


# Water—Essential Resource of the Southern Flint River Basin, Georgia

## Introduction

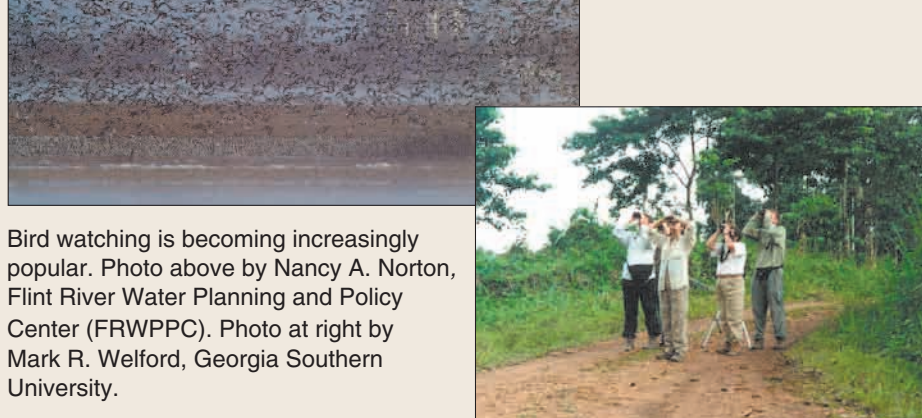
Abundant water resources of the Flint River Basin have played a major role in the history and development of southwestern Georgia. The Flint River—along with its tributaries, wetlands, and swamps—and the productive aquifers of the river basin are essential components of the area's diverse ecosystems. These resources also are necessary for sustained agricultural, industrial, and municipal activities. Increasing, and in some cases conflicting, demand for water makes careful monitoring and wise planning and management of southwestern Georgia's water resources critical to the ecological and economic future of the area. This poster presents the major issues associated with increasing competition for water resources in the southern Flint River Basin.



## Economic Activity

Georgia ranks among the top five states in production of peanuts, pecans, cotton, peaches, rye, and tomatoes (Georgia Department of Agriculture, 2003). Irrigated agriculture provides much of the employment and income of the southern Flint River Basin as well as the tax base that supports education, health care, and other local community services. Abundant water resources in the subbasins have been a factor in industry location decisions.

Hunting and fishing are important to the economy of the area. Reservoirs—such as Lakes Blackshear, Chehaw, and Seminole—are widely used by residents and visitors. Participation in nonconsumptive activities—such as canoeing, bird watching, outdoor photography, and hiking—is increasing.

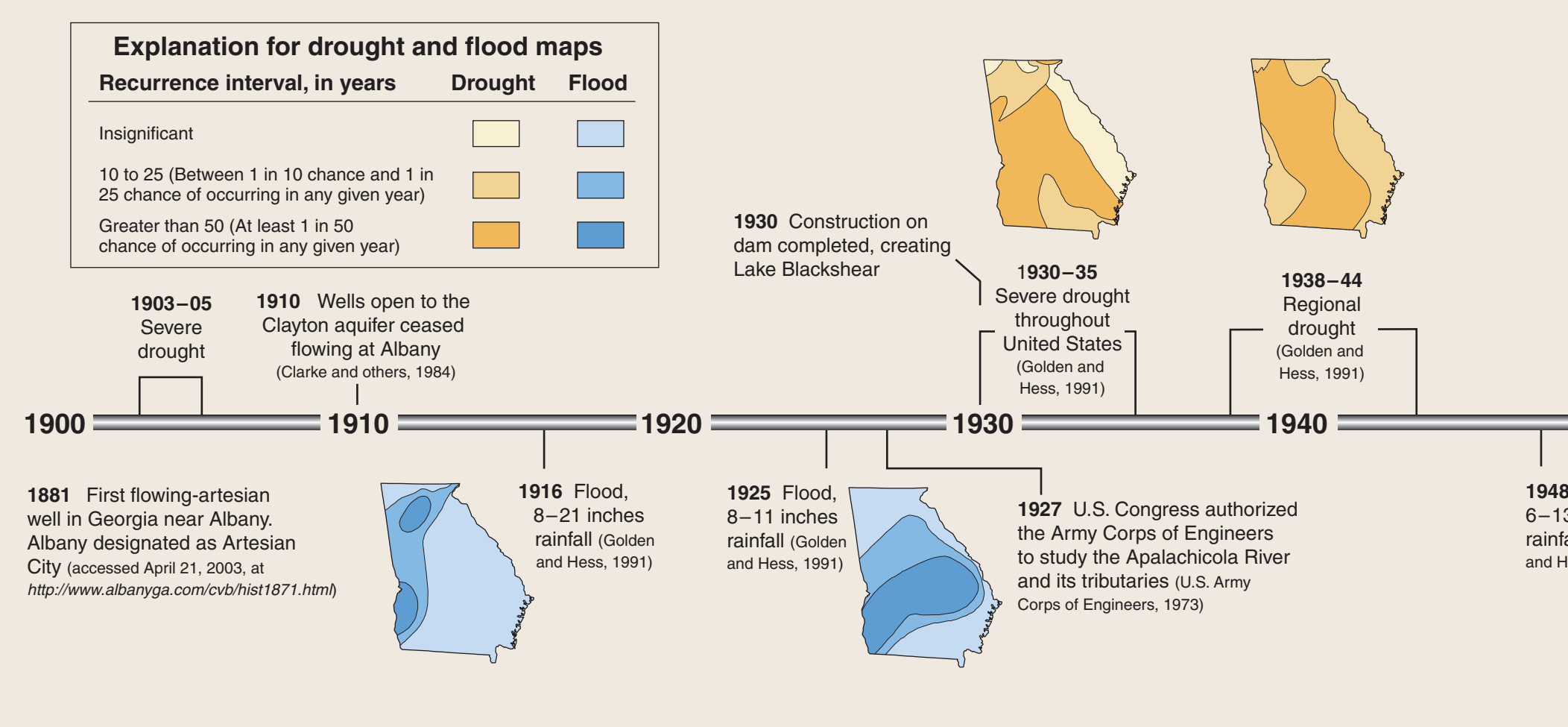


## Hydrogeology of the Southern Flint River Basin

PERMEABILITY	THICKNESS	SERIES	AQUIFER OR CONFINING UNIT	LITHOLOGY	REMARKS
Cretaceous	Outcrop	Holocene	Surface aquifer/upper unconsolidated unit	Sand and clay	Not a primary source of water, but has been used for domestic use
		Pliocene	Upper water-bearing zone	Unconsolidated sand and clay	Major source of water for irrigation and domestic use
		Lower	Lower water-bearing zone	Sandy limestone	Major source of water for irrigation and domestic use
		Upper	Upper water-bearing zone	Sandy limestone	Major source of water for irrigation and domestic use
Cretaceous	Middle	10-100	Labron confining unit	Claystone	Major source of water for irrigation and domestic use
		10-100	Labron confining unit	Claystone	Major source of water for irrigation and domestic use
		10-100	Labron confining unit	Claystone	Major source of water for irrigation and domestic use
		10-100	Labron confining unit	Claystone	Major source of water for irrigation and domestic use
Cretaceous	Lower	0-270	Clatsone aquifer	Claystone	Major source of water for irrigation and domestic use
		0-270	Clatsone aquifer	Claystone	Major source of water for irrigation and domestic use
		0-270	Clatsone aquifer	Claystone	Major source of water for irrigation and domestic use
		0-270	Clatsone aquifer	Claystone	Major source of water for irrigation and domestic use
Pleistocene	Middle	0-280	Waco confining unit	Sandstone	In some areas, sand and limestone layers in the Waco Formation, the upper part of the Waco Formation, and the upper part of the Waco Formation are used for domestic use
		0-280	Waco confining unit	Sandstone	In some areas, sand and limestone layers in the Waco Formation, the upper part of the Waco Formation, and the upper part of the Waco Formation are used for domestic use
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		0-280	Waco confining unit	Sandstone	In some areas, sand and limestone layers in the Waco Formation, the upper part of the Waco Formation, and the upper part of the Waco Formation are used for domestic use
Pleistocene	Upper	0-285	Clatsone aquifer	Limestone	Major source of water for irrigation and domestic use
		0-285	Clatsone aquifer	Limestone	Major source of water for irrigation and domestic use
		0-285	Clatsone aquifer	Limestone	Major source of water for irrigation and domestic use
		0-285	Clatsone aquifer	Limestone	Major source of water for irrigation and domestic use
Pleistocene	Lower	0-280	Providence aquifer	Sand	Major source of water for irrigation and domestic use
		0-280	Providence aquifer	Sand	Major source of water for irrigation and domestic use
		0-280	Providence aquifer	Sand	Major source of water for irrigation and domestic use
		0-280	Providence aquifer	Sand	Major source of water for irrigation and domestic use
Pleistocene	Upper	0-300	Providence-Highly confining unit	Shale	Major source of water for irrigation and domestic use
		0-300	Providence-Highly confining unit	Shale	Major source of water for irrigation and domestic use
		0-300	Providence-Highly confining unit	Shale	Major source of water for irrigation and domestic use
		0-300	Providence-Highly confining unit	Shale	Major source of water for irrigation and domestic use
Pleistocene	Lower	0-150	Cummins aquifer	Claystone	Major source of water for irrigation and domestic use
		0-150	Cummins aquifer	Claystone	Major source of water for irrigation and domestic use
		0-150	Cummins aquifer	Claystone	Major source of water for irrigation and domestic use
		0-150	Cummins aquifer	Claystone	Major source of water for irrigation and domestic use
Pleistocene	Upper	0-100	Bullfinch aquifer	Claystone	Major source of water for irrigation and domestic use
		0-100	Bullfinch aquifer	Claystone	Major source of water for irrigation and domestic use
		0-100	Bullfinch aquifer	Claystone	Major source of water for irrigation and domestic use
		0-100	Bullfinch aquifer	Claystone	Major source of water for irrigation and domestic use
Pleistocene	Lower	0-100	Euler and Toccoa formations	Sand and clay	Major source of water for irrigation and domestic use
		0-100	Euler and Toccoa formations	Sand and clay	Major source of water for irrigation and domestic use
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Ground water is the principal source of water for irrigation, industry, and domestic uses in the southern Flint River Basin. Aquifers consist of layers of sand or limestone that are separated by confining units of low permeability. Discharge of water from the aquifers to wetlands, streams, and springs is vital to maintain wildlife and plant species.

## Timeline of Scientific Studies, Water Management, and Major Events Affecting Water Resources



1881 First flow-through well in Georgia near Albany, Albany designated as Artesian City (accessed April 21, 2004, at <http://www.albanyga.com/albany/artesian.html>)

1916 Flood, 8-21 inches rainfall (Golden and Hoss, 1991)

1925 Flood, 6-11 inches rainfall (Golden and Hoss, 1991)

1927 U.S. Congress authorized the Army Corps of Engineers to study the Apalachicola River and its tributaries (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 1978)

1930 Construction on dam completed, creating Lake Blackshear

1930-35 Severe drought throughout United States (Golden and Hoss, 1991)

1938-44 Regional drought (Golden and Hoss, 1991)

1950-57 Severe regional drought (Golden and Hoss, 1991)

1968-71 Drought, variable severity (Golden and Hoss, 1991)

1970s Rapid expansion of irrigation

1972 Georgia General Assembly passed Ground-Water Use Act requiring permitting of all non-agricultural uses withdrawing 100,000 gallons per day or more

1985 USGS began cooperative study with U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

1988 Permit required by GAEPD for agricultural irrigation

1993 USGS addressed Ground-Water Supply Element

1998 Regional drought (Golden and Hoss, 1991)

1999 Alabama uses U.S. Army Corps of Engineers over plan to increase surface water allocation to serve Atlanta

1999 Federal lawsuit

2000 Flint River Drought Protection Act was enacted by GAEPD to ensure that Flint River flows are adequate to support fish and wildlife during times of severe drought

2001 Georgia General Assembly created Joint Comprehensive Water Plan Study Committee (SR142) (accessed August 10, 2004, at <http://www.water.usgs.gov/ga/water/2001/08/20010827.html>)

2002 State of Georgia purchases a portion of Swamp of Toa for wildlife management area

2004 USGS Bill 257 enacted, creating Comprehensive Statewide Water Management Planning Act (accessed August 10, 2004, at <http://www.water.usgs.gov/ga/water/2004/08/20040810.html>)

For more information, please write to: District Chief, U.S. Geological Survey, Peachtree Business Center, 200 Peachtree Road, Suite 300, Atlanta, GA 30306-2824

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To request a copy call 770-903-9100 or access at <http://www.water.usgs.gov/ga/water/2004/08/20040810.html>

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