

St. Marys River Management Committee Reports

October 7, 2025

Attendees:

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

Nassau - Paul Lore

Camden - Dara Pickren-Davis

Charlton - Chip Campbell (GA Co-Chair), Merrill Varn

Other - Claire Feazel (SMRMC Admin), Cori Hermle (SJRWMD, Virtual)

- The meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m. A quorum was not present; reports were received but no business was conducted

Old Business/Reports

Land Use (including public access)

Baker -

- Boat Ramp - Delay due to FEMA reimbursement and the Florida Forest Service \$380,000 grant
- Shoals Park - Considering the idea of a recreation development 7-mile kayak trail
- Development Projects - Project was not annexed into the City of Macclenny, but may become a project in unincorporated Baker County
 - Barber Point Development
 - Isaiah Development
 - Mid Pointe Development
- Maple Set Recreation Area- Improvements at John M. Bethea State Forest, the upper most access point to the river. No update in October
- Reynolds Bridge - connection between northeast Baker County, Florida and southwest Charlton County, Georgia is currently closed. Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) is in the beginning stages of work towards reconstruction of the bridge. Charlton County Administrator Glenn Hull shared that Charlton County has been asked for a construction easement. Projected to begin work in 2027
- River Trail Conservation Assistance Program - Assistance from National Park Service - Presentation scheduled for December 2 Board of Commissioners meeting
 - 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

Nassau -

- On Island
 - Brett's Waterway Cafe and Intercoastal - Business closed
 - Boutique Hotel - No update in October
 - Bioethanol plant - Concern with land use plan - \$6.6 million lawsuit filed against City of Fernandina Beach - City has until November to respond
 - Beach re-nourishment - No update in October
 - Atlantic Seafood Property - Lessee vacated - building most likely to be demolished
 - Inland Fernandina Beach - Concern about stormwater management. New areas are flooding from lighter rain events
 - Waterfront Park - No movement on construction. Work began in the spring, but stopped during the summer

- New Fishing Pier - Possible seawall and parking construction - in front of Alachua
 - Mainland
 - Townhouse Development - No update in October
- Camden -
- Blue Bridge - No update in October
 - 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
 - Temple Creek - Boardwalk and Trail are under construction; no update in October
 - Sheffield Island Development - A development has been proposed for the Sheffield Island area in Camden County. The developers are asking for the area to be annexed into the City of Kingsland. Both the city and county have issued statements about the proposed development. City of Kingsland Planning Commission tabled action - No update in October
- Charlton -
- Charlton Camp Pinckney County Park Boat Ramp - Waiting on grant funding to proceed - No update for October
 - 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 October

Water Quality

- NPDES - No new or renewed permits in Camden County or Charlton County
- Spanish Creek 319 - No report for October
- 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 October
- 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 October
 - Georgia does not have Nitrogen and Phosphorus (N/P) regulations; No update for October
 - Tim Hiers, of White Oak Conservation, is still working on Best Management Practices (BMP) for golf courses; No update for October
 - Educational flyer for landscapers - No update for October
 - Shared with Ace Hardware for distribution in Charlton County
 - Shared with Ace Hardware and Hometown Feed & Seed for distribution in Camden County
- FL TMDL Planning - No update in October
- Georgia EPD Comprehensive Nutrient Permitting - No update in October
- Folkston Wastewater Treatment Plant - No update in October - 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.

Water Quantity

- Four County Stormwater
 - Baker County - Vulnerability study still in progress - County waiting on report
 - Nassau County - Applied for a grant to assist with resiliency planning/BLE Maps. The Vulnerability Study done by the Balmoral group will be sent to the Board of Commissioners in March; No update for October
 - Camden County - Resiliency Operations Center open and operating; No update for October
 - 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 October, 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 October
 - Macclenny - No update for October
 - Updates needed for Hilliard, Kingsland, and St. Marys
- Georgia Water Councils - Meetings took place in September - there is a possible change in the number of actual members of the councils

Regulatory/Comp Plans

- Nassau County No Wake Zone - Applications are almost complete
- Baker County Comprehensive Plan - Consultant still working on the plan
- Fishing Tournament/ Want Waste Regulations FL - Lower participation noted this season, but want to continue to review with the upcoming Crappie fishing season - No update for October
- 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.

Administrative

- 2024 Annual Report
 - Presented to Baker County - February 18, 2025
 - Presented to Camden County - February 18, 2025
 - Presented to Charlton County - February 20, 2025
 - Presentation to Nassau County pending

County Projects

- Boating Safety signs at Boat Ramps
 - Signs have been installed at Traders Hill and Camp Pinckney. All Florida agencies have approved the sign design, and the printed signs are ready for distribution. Delivery to Baker County and to the Florida Forest Service is scheduled for this week. Contact with Nassau County is still pending. Camden County has the sign

New Business

- No new business for October

Partner Reports

- St. Marys Riverkeeper (SMRK) - No update in October
- St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD) -
 - Water Quality Analysis - Now available
 - Feasibility Study - Working on a master list of potential projects. Projects will be ranked to pursue funding

Committee Member Reports

- No reports for October

Public Comments

None

Adjournment

Meeting Adjourned at 8:12 p.m.

Next Meeting November 3, 2025 Callahan Fire Department