



Georgia's TMDL TAG Program

David Radcliffe¹, Shana Udvardy²,
and Laurie Fowler¹

¹River Basin Center, University of Georgia

²The Georgia Conservancy

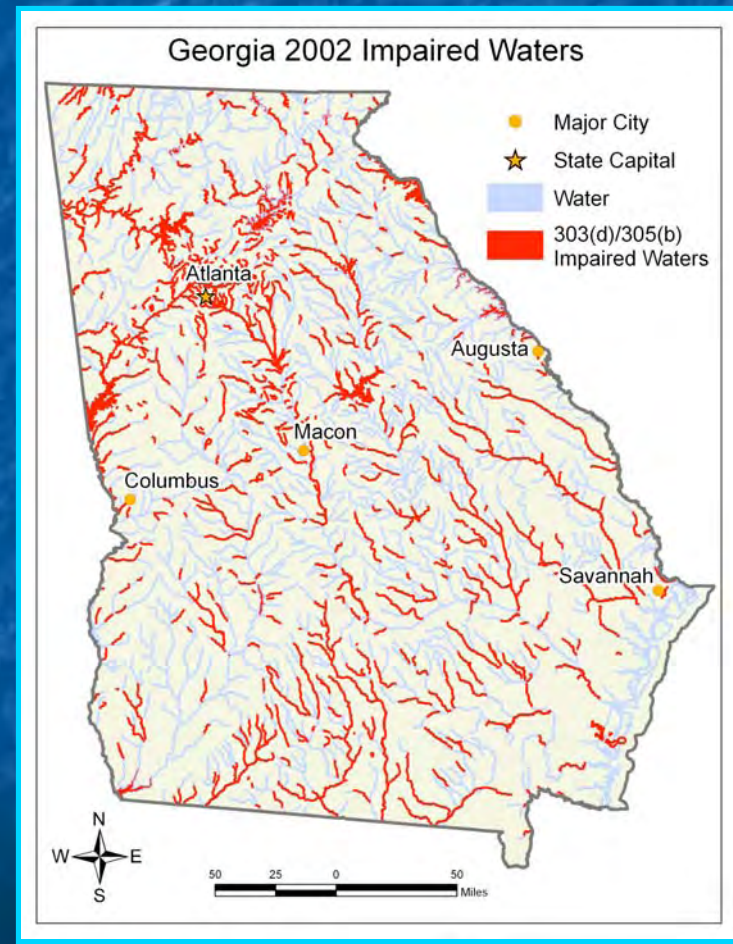
Outline

- Background for TMDLs in Georgia
- History of Technical Advisory Group (TAG)
- Lesson's learned



TMDL Background

- Georgia one of first states to be sued for TMDL implementation (1996)
- Lawsuit led to consent decree
- TMDLs to be developed on 5-year rotating basin schedule
- First TMDLs released in January, 2000



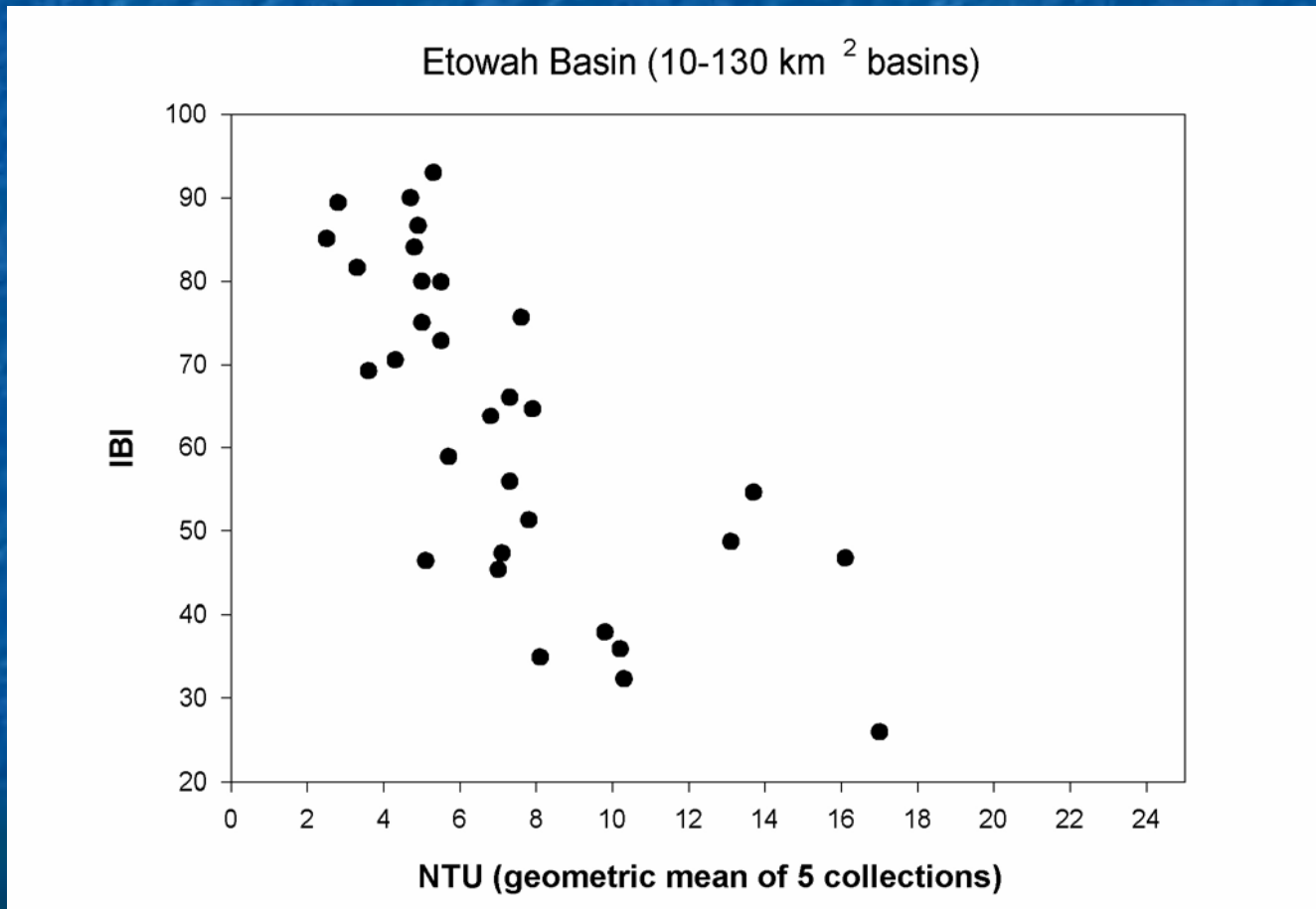
TMDL Background

- TMDL forum organized by River Basin Center and The Georgia Conservancy summer 2000
- Dissatisfaction with science behind first sediment TMDLs
- Forum called for establishment of a Technical Advisory Group (TAG) to look at sediment TMDLs

Sediment TAG

- Sediment TAG consisted of scientists from universities, federal, and state agencies and staff from environmental NGOs
- Met on monthly basis for about 1.5 years
- At each meeting heard presentations from invited experts on a particular topic
- In February 2002 released white paper: "A Protocol for Establishing Sediment TMDLs"

Highlights of Sediment TAG



Bacteria & Implementation TAG

- Second TMDL forum in March 2002
- Led to formation of Bacteria and Implementation TAG
- Met monthly from October 2002 to February 2005
- In April 2006, released second white paper: "Scientific Basis for Bacterial TMDLs in Georgia"

Highlights of Bacteria/Implementation TAG

- Follow EPA's recommendation to change standards from fecal coliforms to:
 - E. coli for fresh waters
 - Fecal enterococci for marine waters
- Increase funding, technical assistance, and outreach to local authorities for implementation

TAG Follow-Up

- TMDL implementation survey of stakeholders in spring 2007
- TMDL workshop at Georgia Water Resources Conference in March 2007
- Recommendations to Governor's Environmental Advisory Committee

Lessons Learned

- Getting a scientific consensus is hard work
 - Whatever it takes, it's worth it to reach a consensus
- Important to have state environmental agency at the table
- Move meetings around the state

