

THE DEVELOPMENT OF PERFORMANCE METRICS FOR THE ACF WATERSHED

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An important, yet often under-emphasized, aspect of watershed management is the development of performance metrics for government agencies and water dependent stakeholders to distinguish between unacceptable and acceptable results in order to rank a series of management options in an objective manner. Watershed management models can be used to evaluate flow and reservoir elevations under varying future consumption, management and climate scenarios, but it is through the development of quantifiable and measurable performance metrics that the output from a watershed model can be translated into ecological and engineering contexts where decisions can be made based on public values and science. Our experience suggests that considerable time and money are put into the development of river basin modelling tools while the development of performance metrics to interpret the results of such models is often undervalued.

In this presentation we will focus on:

1. on the minimum criteria which should be considered in defining performance metrics for a large watershed such as the Apalachicola-Chattahoochee-Flint (ACF) drainage basin,
2. the metrics which have been developed historically for various actions associated with the management of the ACF basin including development of the ACF Compact, those developed by the ACF Stakeholders, those used by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in developing the recently adopted Water Control Manual for the basin and those used by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in preparing a Biological Opinion for the Manual with a focus on their consistency with the minimum criteria,
3. A recent project working with the Riparian County Stakeholder Coalition to develop performance metrics of the watershed.

PRESENTER BIO: Dr. Leitman currently works for the Apalachicola Bay Systems Initiative and Ken Jones PE is a consulting engineer currently working with the Riparian County Stakeholder Coalition. Both have worked on ACF basin issues for over 30 years.