

The Northeast Georgia Regional Commission (NEGRC) has completed its review of the following Development of Regional Impact (DRI). This report contains the NEGRC’s assessment of how the proposed project relates to the policies, programs, and projects articulated in the Regional Plan and Regional Resource Plan. Also included is an assessment of likely interjurisdictional impacts resulting from the proposed development, as well as all comments received from identified affected parties and others during the fifteen-day comment period.

The materials presented in this report are purely advisory and under no circumstances should be considered as binding or infringing upon the host jurisdiction’s right to determine for itself the appropriateness of development within its boundaries.

Transmittal of this DRI report officially completes the DRI process. The submitting local government may proceed with whatever final official actions it deems appropriate regarding the proposed project, but it is encouraged to take the materials presented in the DRI report into consideration when rendering its decision.

---

<b>Project I.D.:</b>	DRI #4224
<b>Name of Project:</b>	Carey Station Urban Water Reuse Facility Expansion
<b>Name of Host Jurisdiction:</b>	Greene County

---

### Background

DRI review was initiated following the developer’s request for a permit to expand the existing Carey Station Urban Water Reuse Facility from 0.5 MGD to 1.0 MGD. Potentially affected parties were asked to submit comments on the proposal during the 15-day period of 7/18/2024 – 8/2/2024.

### Proposed Development

Piedmont Water Company is proposing an expansion of the Carey Station Urban Water Reuse Facility with 261,360 square feet of multiple structures, building expansion, a flow equalization pond, and a reject pond. Currently, the 20-acre site is primarily wooded with one main structure and two existing treatment ponds. The proposed development would occupy the same property off Carey Station Road in Greene County. The parcel number is 054000010B. The project would be completed in one phase with an estimated completion date in December 2025.

### Compatibility with Existing Plans

The site is identified as “West Greene Community” on the County’s Future Land Use Map (dated 06/2023). The West Greene Community character area is described in the Greene County Comprehensive Plan as “a major area of high-quality residential development as well as limited commercial development along major corridors. Commercial uses should serve local community needs.” The proposed development does not meet the criterion of compatibility with this character area. However, the facility is considered a supportive use that enables the critical infrastructure necessary to support the residential and planned-unit development that meets the guidelines of the West Greene Community. The parcel is determined to be an isolated exception and is expected to remain zoned as HI (Heavy Industrial District).

The site is identified as “Developing” on the Northeast Georgia Regional Plan’s Regional Land Use Map (dated 6/15/2023). The Regional Plan recommends development that:

- Enhances economic mobility and competitiveness
- Elevates public health and equity
- Supports and adds value to existing communities
- Creates housing that is diverse, adequate, equitable, and affordable
- Includes transportation choices and is well-connected with existing and planned transportation options, and
- Protects natural and historic resources.

The following table outlines the proposal’s alignment with these recommendations:

<b>REGIONAL PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<b>PROPOSED PROJECT’S COMPATIBILITY WITH RECOMMENDATION</b>
<b>Enhances economic mobility and competitiveness</b>	Increasing the county’s wastewater treatment capacity would enable future growth in the area, enhancing the economic competitiveness of Greene County.
<b>Elevates public health and equity</b>	The proposed development could elevate public health by increasing the amount of homes and businesses that have access to sanitary sewer in the area. The developer should consider the use of odor control systems during the treatment process to reduce any negative impacts to the health and quality of life for surrounding communities in the West Greene Community character area.
<b>Supports and adds value to existing communities</b>	The proposed development adds value to the community by investing in existing infrastructure and planning for future water treatment needs in a developing area.
<b>Creates housing that is diverse, adequate, equitable, and affordable</b>	Not applicable to this project type.
<b>Includes transportation choices and is well-connected with existing and planned transportation options</b>	Not applicable to this project type. The development is not estimated to generate any additional traffic volume, so there is no need for transportation improvements.
<b>Protects natural and historic resources</b>	Lake Oconee is a Regionally Important Resource (RIR) identified within one mile of this site and the project is on land labeled as “Conservation” in the Regional Plan. It is unclear how much of the site will remain wooded; the developer should maintain the maximum amount of vegetation on site as feasible and/or ensure that elevated stormwater retention measures are used as to avoid negative runoff effects to nearby water resources such as Richland Creek and Lake Oconee. No known historic resources will be affected by the project.

### **Potential Interjurisdictional Impacts**

#### Natural Resources

The applicant states that the project is unlikely to affect any of the environmental quality factors identified on the DRI Additional Form, including water supply watersheds, groundwater recharge areas, wetlands, protected mountain and river corridors, floodplains, historic resources, and other

environmentally sensitive resources.

The chart below summarizes the number of acres within the site area as well as within a one-mile buffer around the site that contains 1) wetlands, 2) conservation land, 3) regionally important resources, and 4) threatened regionally important resources. Please refer to the footnotes for definitions for each of these terms.

**Wetland, Conservation, and Regionally Important Resources**

	<b>Area Type</b>	<b>Area (Acres)</b>	<b>Percent of Area</b>
<b>SITE AREA</b> <b>20.0</b>	Wetland Acres <sup>1</sup>	0	0.0%
	“Conservation Land” <sup>2</sup>	7.0	35.1%
	Regionally Important Resource Land <sup>3</sup>	0	0.0%
	Threatened Regionally Important Resource Land <sup>4</sup>	7.0	35.1%
<b>1 MILE</b> <b>BUFFER</b> <b>AROUND</b> <b>SITE</b> <b>1790.6</b>	Wetland Acres	68.5	3.8%
	“Conservation Land”	747.1	41.7%
	Regionally Important Resource Land	324.9	18.1%
	Threatened Regionally Important Resource Land	747.1	41.7%

As stated, Lake Oconee is a Regionally Important Resource (RIR) identified within one mile of this site and there are 7 acres of Threatened RIR Land <sup>5</sup>within one mile of the site. The Threatened RIR acreage is part of the Northeast Georgia Green Infrastructure Network as identified in the Northeast Georgia Resource Management Plan for Regionally Important Resources (dated 8/7/2018). The Northeast Georgia Green Infrastructure Network is intended to serve as a strategically planned and managed network of wilderness, parks, greenways, conservation easements, and working lands with conservation value that benefits wildlife and people, supports native species, maintains natural ecological processes, sustains air and water resources, links urban settings to rural ones, and contributes to the health and quality of life for the communities and citizens sharing this network. The proposal does not include uses that would contribute to this Network, however, the proposal has a relatively small scope and minimizes its footprint by adding capacity to existing facilities. The property is surrounded by a dense forest canopy that will not be directly affected by the project activities. The developer should consider the use of odor control systems during the treatment process to reduce any negative impacts to the health and quality of life for surrounding communities in the West Greene Community character area.

<sup>1</sup> Wetland acres are derived from the National Wetland Inventory (NWI)

<sup>2</sup> “Conservation” land is derived from the Northeast Georgia Regional Plan’s Conservation and Development Map (6/15/2023).

<sup>3</sup> Regionally Important Resources were identified as a part of the Northeast Georgia Resource Management Plan for Regionally Important Resources (2/15/2018).

<sup>4</sup> This area represents the intersection between Conservation areas (identified on the Conservation and Development Map, 6/15/2023), adopted Regionally Important Resources (RIR), and “Developed” and “Developing” Regional Land Use areas (identified on the Regional Land Use Map,6/15/2023).

### Transportation

The local government expects no additional traffic volume from the proposed development, and no transportation improvements would be needed to serve this project.

### Water Supply and Wastewater

The project would be served by the Piedmont Water Company water and sewer systems, and the project itself would not generate any additional sewer demand. No water or sewer line extensions are anticipated.

### Stormwater Management

An estimated 2% of the site would be covered in impervious surfaces, and no retention ponds are shown to manage stormwater runoff. Refer to the site plan for further information.

The proposal should be designed to minimize disruption to the existing streams, associated wetlands, and floodplains to avoid future erosion, flooding, and degraded water quality onsite and downstream from the site. Low impact design measures, like bioswales, rain gardens, and other green infrastructure should be incorporated into the project design. At minimum, the project should be in accordance with the latest edition of the Georgia Stormwater Management Manual (Blue Book) and meet all relevant EPD requirements.

### Solid Waste

The applicant estimates the project would generate no additional solid waste and that sufficient landfill capacity exists. However, it is expected that with an increased treatment capacity, an increase in biosolids would be generated as a byproduct. According to annual tonnage reports from the Georgia Environmental Protection Division, almost all municipal solid waste (MSW) generated in Greene County is disposed of in a landfill in Twiggs County. The applicant states that no hazardous waste would be generated.

### Lifecycle Costs and Revenue

The applicant estimates that the project would be worth \$11,000,000, approximately \$550,000 per acre, at build-out in 2025. Annual local taxes do not apply to this project. The facility and associated infrastructure will be owned by a private entity. Therefore, it is unlikely Greene County would incur a burden of the infrastructure's lifecycle costs.

### **Comments from Affected Parties**

*Greg Boike, AICP, Director of Planning and Public Administration, Middle Georgia Regional Commission*

MGRC concurs with the determination that Lake Oconee is a Regionally Important Resource shared between our two regions. We would suggest that the developer follow recommendations from the Northeast Georgia Resource Management Plan to mitigate adverse impacts to Lake Oconee.

*Alan Hood, Airport Safety Data Program Manager*

The proposed construction of 261,360 square feet of wastewater treatment facility space on a 20-acre tract zoned HI (Heavy Industrial District) is more than 8 miles from the Greene County Regional Airport (CPP). It is located outside any FAA approach or departure surfaces, and airport compatible land use areas, and does not appear to impact any airport.

If any construction equipment or construction exceeds 200' AGL, an FAA Form 7460-1 must be submitted to the Federal Aviation Administration according to the FAA's Notice Criteria Tool found here (<https://oeaaa.faa.gov/oeaaa/external/gisTools/gisAction.jsp?action=showNoNoticeRequiredToolForm>). Those

submissions for any associated cranes may be done online at <https://oeaaa.faa.gov>. The FAA must be in receipt of the notifications, no later than 120 days prior to construction. The FAA will evaluate the potential impacts of the project on protected airspace associated with the airports and advise the proponent if any action is necessary.