

# **Suwannee-Satilla Drainage Basin and its impact on Valdosta:**

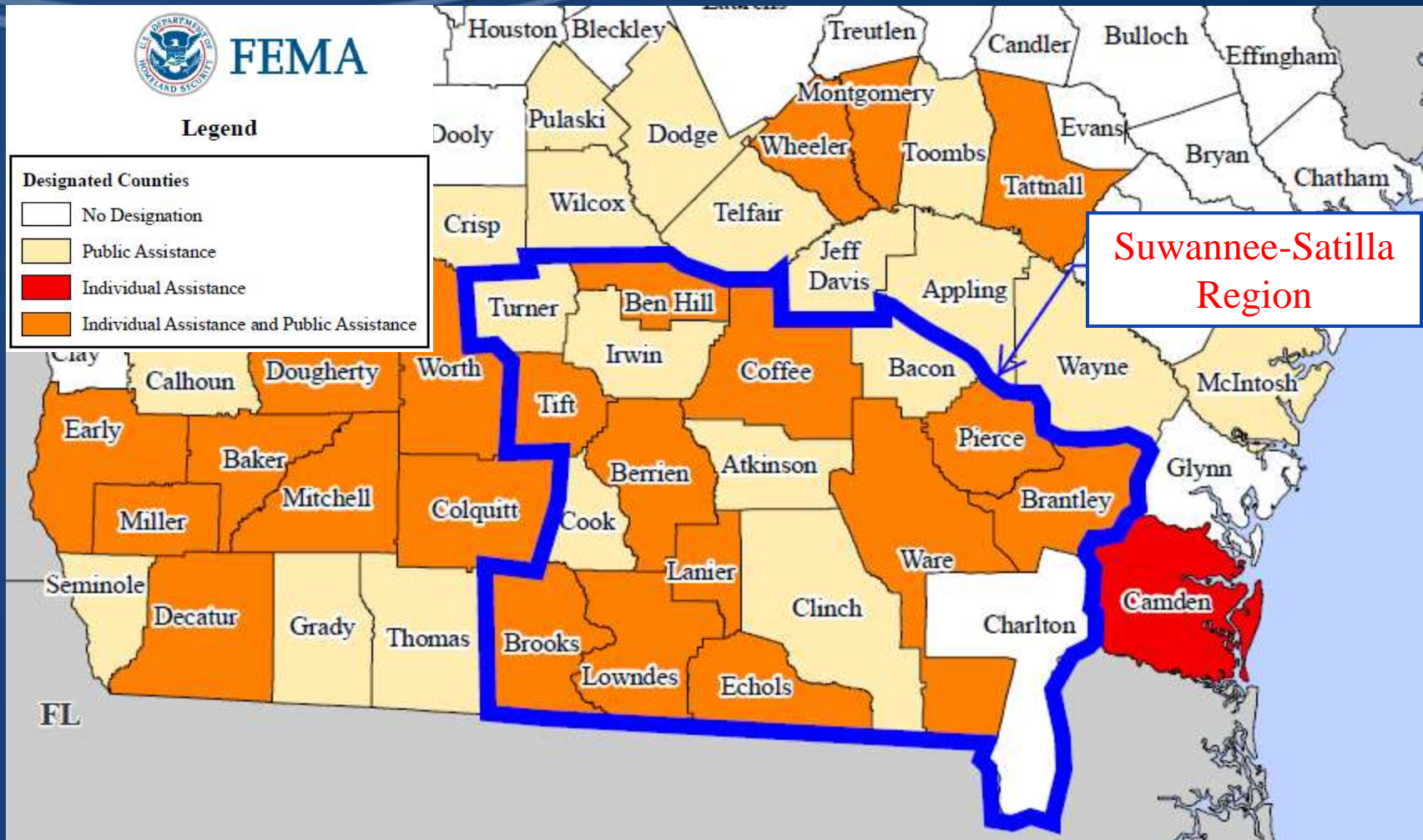
## **Flood Control Issues/Opportunities and Requested Assistance**

Presented to Governor Nathan Deal and staff

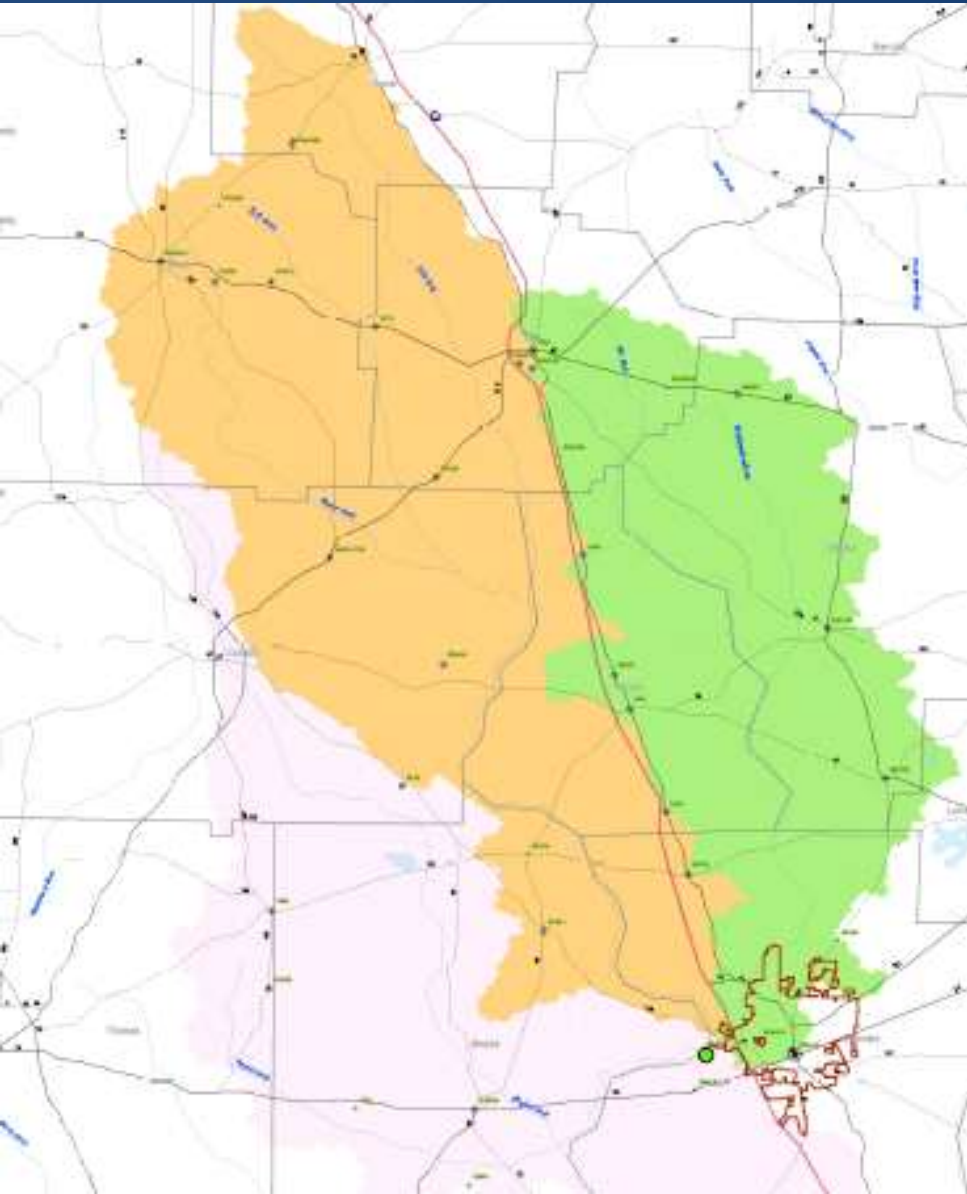
Valdosta, GA

September 16, 2011

# In April 2009 a total of 46 Georgia Counties declared Disaster Emergency

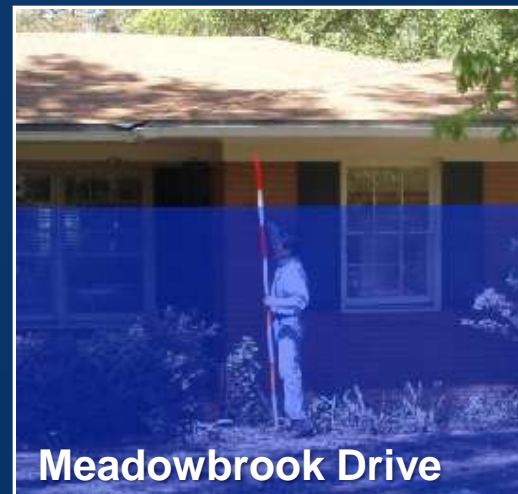


# Lowndes County and the City of Valdosta were deeply impacted by the flood



- The Withlacoochee and Little River basins encompass about 1,450 square miles
- Valdosta's drainage area to the river is only 1%
- Very limited benefits will be achieved without regional coordination with other communities.
- Coordination with the FEMA, USACE, and EPD is necessary to involve upstream communities

# Lowndes County/Valdosta recorded more than 150 homes and 20 businesses severely flooded



# The Withlacoochee WWTP was severely flooded

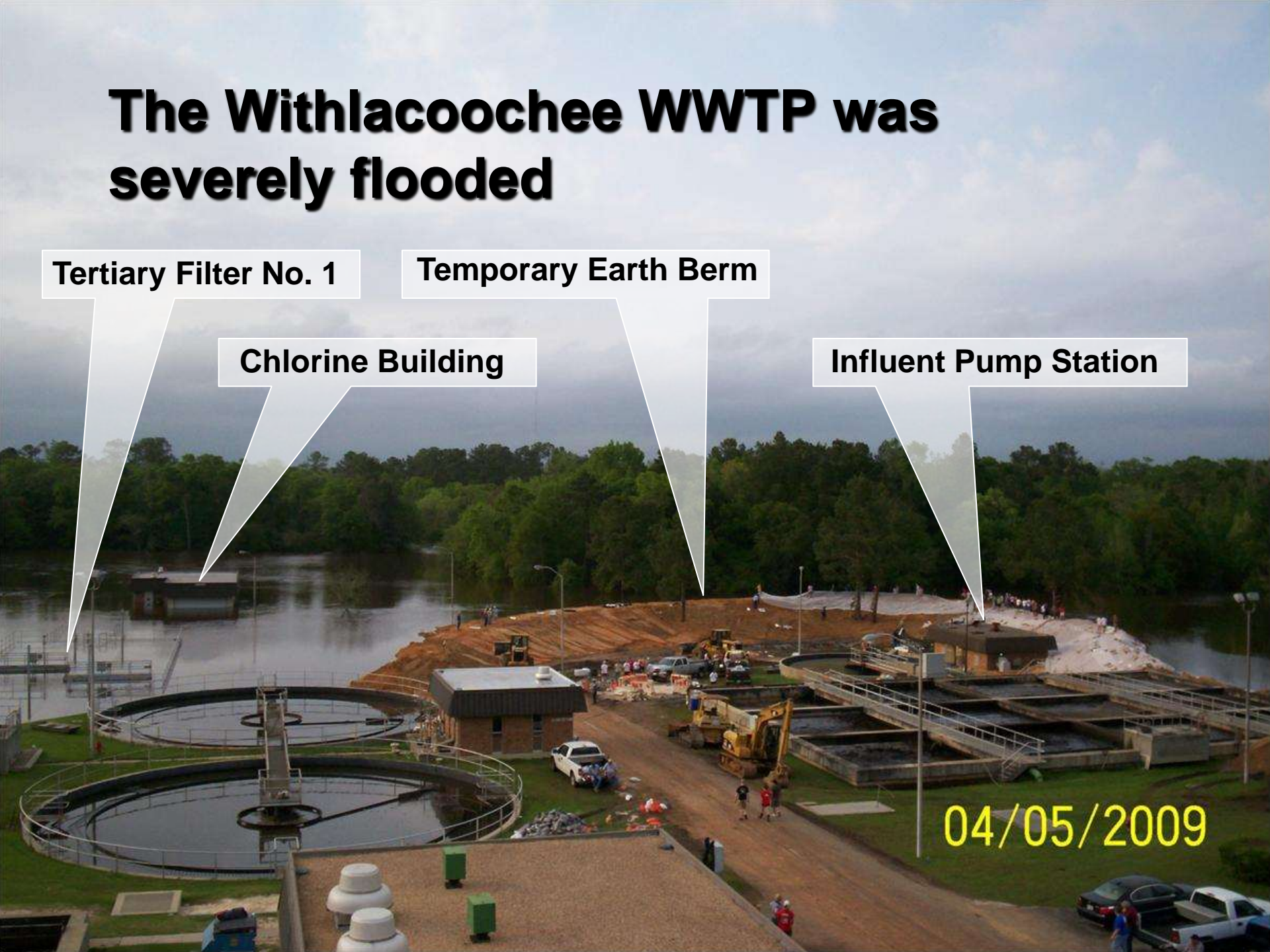
Tertiary Filter No. 1

Temporary Earth Berm

Chlorine Building

Influent Pump Station

04/05/2009



**FEMA 100-Year Flood Plain**

**Revised 100-Year Flood  
Plain**

**The current FEMA flood maps are based on an outdated analysis: Flood levels exceeded the 100 year FEMA estimates.**

# Status of Valdosta's flood claim

- The city is unable to make repairs to its plant due to its location in the flood plain.
- The city was initially denied relocation funds by FEMA, but with Congressional support, exercised its right and appealed that denial.
- FEMA staff wrote the appeal and determined that relocation is “feasible”, “cost-effective” and within FEMA policies and guidelines to approve.
- FEMA had 60 days to respond to the appeal, however it has been over 150 days and neither the city, nor GEMA, the city's legal advocate, can get an answer.
- In anticipation of approval, the city has purchased 75 acres adjacent to the existing plant, outside of the 500 year flood plain, for \$1 million dollars.

# Potential Factors contributing to recent floods

- **Upstream communities in our area have implemented different runoff control measures, without regional coordination.**
- **Some communities lack proper regulations as well as expertise and resources to address their needs.**
- **Some of the existing dams and levees can release significant volumes of water and require coordination and advance notice to downstream communities.**
- **A city by city or county by county approach is inefficient, more costly and not as effective as a regional approach.**



# **Immediate Response Needed in the Suwannee-Satilla watershed**

- 1. Storage areas should be identified to control storm water flows, while providing a much needed water supply reservoir network.**
- 2. Recharge areas combined with stream buffers should be considered to reduce the stream flow and recharge the aquifers.**
- 3. State and Federal funding is essential to the development of these solutions that are beyond the legal, financial and institutional capacity of any jurisdiction in the watershed.**
- 4. The Water Supply Act offers a unique opportunity to address water supply for agricultural needs and low flow conditions and to address storm water issues.**