

Table 3. Summary of Surface and Groundwater Allocation and Permitting in Alabama, Georgia, and Florida.

	<i>Alabama</i>	<i>Georgia</i>	<i>Florida</i>	
State Agencies that manage water resources	Alabama Water Resources Commission and Alabama Department of Environmental Management	Environmental Protection Division	Florida Department of Environmental Protection and Five Water Management Districts	
Water appropriation system	Riparian Rights Modified by Beneficial Use	Riparian Rights Modified by Beneficial Use	Hybrid and/or	
Climate/annual precipitation	Humid/48 - 67 inches	Humid 40 – 73 inches	Humid 39 – 52 inches	
Quantity of surface water (mi ²) ¹	1,149 mi ² , 2.16% of total 53,178 mi ²	1,296 mi ² , 1.85% of total 69,899 mi ²	5,607 mi ² , 2.09% of total 268,697 mi ²	293 mi ² , 0.25% of total 121,590 mi ²
Who owns surface and/or ground water?	Public	Public	Public	
Do riparian landowners need a permit to divert surface water?	Certificate of use if more than 100,000 gpd. Permit required in critical stress area.	Permit if more than 100,000 gpd	Yes, except for domestic use	
Amount of surface water that may be diverted by riparian landowners	Only limited in critical stress area	Up to 100,000 gpd	Varies by district	
Who receives water during a water shortage?	Domestic users	Domestic users followed by Agriculture. Priority of industry not affected.	Priorities set by water management districts	
Numbers of years of non-use to lose permit. Duration of permit	None. Certificate of use valid for 5 to 10 years (renewable)	Two years for permit holders. No expiration for Agriculture after first use. 10 to 50 years.	Two years. Up to 50 years	
Meter required (surface or groundwater)	No	Only for Agriculture	Varies by water management district	

¹ U.S. Census Bureau, Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2011; Table 355 Land and Water Area of States and Other Entities: 2008.