EXAMINING INTEREST GROUP CONFLICT IN RIVER BASIN INTERSTATE
COMPACTS IN THE SOUTHEASTERN
UNITED STATES.

By
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A Dissertation
Submitted to the Faculty of
Mississippi State University
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
in Public Policy and Administration
in the Department of Political Science and Public Administration

Mississippi State, Mississippi

May 2006
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Understanding the influence of interest groups in the public policy process is vital to comprehending how public policy is created and implemented. This dissertation analyzes the influence of interest groups on the states that were involved with the negotiations of two river basin interstate compacts in the Southeastern United States. The compacts originated when the downstream states of Alabama and Florida became concerned about the amount of water the metropolitan area of Atlanta was withdrawing from the Chattahoochee River. This study considers which interest groups were most influential in formulating each state’s position during the negotiation process.

While literature exists in the study of river basin interstate compacts in the western states, a gap in the literature concerning water policy in the Southeastern United States is filled by this study. This dissertation considers the Western compacts and
explores the similarities and differences between the compacts negotiated in the Southeast within the context of the public policy process.

Federalism is explored not only with the states but with agencies from the federal government and their role in the compact negotiation process. The relationship between the federal agencies and the states sets the stage in which the policy process is conducted.

The data were collected using a mixed methods approach of in-depth interviews and a survey. The interview subjects included individuals intimately involved with the negotiation process. The survey respondents were individuals who possessed at least a passing awareness of the compacts and how they would affect their jobs, organizations, or constituents. Final analysis concludes that several interest groups were able to wield enough power to influence not only their state, but also the entire negotiation process.

The influence exerted by some of the interest groups prevented the compacts from existing beyond the negotiation period. As a result, the compacts expired and the states have resorted to the federal courts in search of a ruling on allocating water. The lack of formal federal involvement as well as involvement of a neutral party in the negotiation process are also vital to explaining why the compacts expired.
DEDICATION

I have many fond childhood memories involving Alabama’s streams, rivers and lakes. As an adult, I have grown to appreciate their beauty and ecological importance as well as their significance to the livelihood of many people. This dissertation is dedicated to those who enjoy the rivers and lakes and hope that the water will be available for the enjoyment and use of children and adults for many future generations.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, I would like to thank my parents for their moral and financial support of my decision to return to college and become a fulltime doctoral student. Their support made this project, as well as my degree, possible.

My deep appreciation is extended to the individuals who took time from their busy schedules and agreed to talk with me about their insights into the compacts. Their comments greatly assisted in my understanding of the scope and importance of the issues surrounding the negotiations. Without their input, the dissertation would not have been possible. I am also indebted to those who took the time to thoughtfully complete and return the questionnaire. Their responses became a valuable part of my research. Although anonymity has been given to all questionnaire respondents and interview subjects, I have been granted permission by Steve Lietman to thank him publicly for his assistance in my research. His willingness to review material and discuss this mater at great length was instrumental in putting together a part of this project that was vital to its overall picture.

I would like to thank Dan McCool of the University of Utah for his willingness to review my prospectus and give comments. Because his work served as the model used to explain the interaction of the interest groups in this study, his input provided a uniquely valuable critique of the research. I greatly appreciate the work of my committee
members, Dave Breaux, Hannah Britton, and Ed Clynch, for their willingness to assist me with this project. A special thank you goes to Doug Goodman, who served as chair of my dissertation, for his insightful comments, criticism, and conscientious, timely responses to my work, as well as his friendship during the dissertation process.

I would like to acknowledge Mfanya Tryman, who was an original member of my committee. Dr. Tryman’s untimely death brought great sadness to me as well as other students and his colleagues. His thoughts, advice and friendship are missed. I gratefully acknowledge the Political Science and Public Administration Department of Mississippi State University for their generous support of my studies with an assistantship that supported my education for four and a half years.

I would like to extend a word of thanks to Tony Montgomery, a friend since my undergraduate days, who continually encouraged me to pursue a Ph.D. at a time when I believed two degrees were enough formal education for any human being. Finally, I am deeply grateful to Dr. William Andrews, a former chair of the Social Sciences Department at Columbia State Community College, who hired me as an adjunct instructor in August, 1997 to teach a course in American Government. If it had not been for that act, I would not have had the experience of teaching at the college level. That experience, which I was privileged to enjoy for three and a half years, became the catalyst in my decision to make a career change and pursue a doctoral degree in hopes of teaching at a university. Without that experience, I would not have wanted to become a professor at a university and consequently would not have entered into a doctoral program.
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Although about seventy percent of the earth’s surface is covered with water, only about three percent is freshwater, most of which is stored as frozen glaciers and ice caps (Hull, 2000). Since the beginning of civilization, access to fresh water has been vital to supporting a population. Fresh water is necessary for basic human needs and can be utilized for transportation and commerce. Consequently, many cities have been developed along the world’s major rivers. For centuries, the demand for fresh water to sustain life has not exceeded the supply, with the exceptions of the most arid areas of the world. Even so, with the increase in population and technological advances allowing water to be transported to arid regions, development increased in areas without major rivers.

During the 20th Century, many rivers were dammed to create a dependable supply of fresh water for communities. Typically, the community was located in the same river basin as the dam. In addition to damming rivers to obtain an ample supply of human drinking water, the dams were created to control flooding, generate electricity, and for agricultural irrigation to support the nearby population. The artificial reservoirs created by the dams also generated numerous recreational opportunities for nearby citizens.
The landscape of the southeastern portion of the United States provides ample access to freshwater rivers and an abundant source of ground water. Unlike the arid western states, states in the southeast have grown accustomed to retrieving as much water from rivers as they have desired without concern for the amount of water flowing downstream. Since the settlement of the western states, disagreements over access to the western rivers and water basins have occurred. Many of the western states have utilized interstate compacts to reach an agreement over who has legal access to a basin’s water. An interstate compact is generally preferred over a court battle decided by the U. S. Supreme Court.

Over the past fifty years, many western and southern states have experienced a rapid growth in population (U. S. Census 2000). Much of the growth in the Southeast has been fueled by Florida, Texas and metropolitan areas in states such as North Carolina and Georgia. With the exploding growth of southeastern cities such as Atlanta came increasing demands for freshwater. For decades, the Chattahoochee River provided an adequate freshwater supply for metropolitan Atlanta. By the 1990s, the growth of metropolitan Atlanta created a strain on the water level of Chattahoochee, especially during drought years (Stephenson, 2000). The metropolitan area’s rapid growth not only increased the amount of water being used, it also created an increase in the amount of pollution being placed into the river.
Table 1.1  Atlanta Metropolitan Statistical Area Population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Source: U. S. Census

As a response to the increase in water usage, Atlanta area water associations began looking for other sources of freshwater. In 1990, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers allowed water associations in metropolitan Atlanta to increase their intake of water from rivers in the Alabama-Coosa-Tallapoosa (ACT) River basin as well as explore the possibility of building a dam that would create a reservoir on the Tallapoosa River (Baker, 2003). Because of concerns about the proposed dam restricting the water flow of the Tallapoosa River, the state of Alabama filed a lawsuit against the Corps of Engineers (COE) in hopes of blocking the building of the reservoir.

Many water associations in the southern portion of metropolitan Atlanta began looking to other rivers such as the Flint, which is part of the Apalachicola-Chattahoochee-Flint (ACF) river basin, to retrieve fresh water. The retrieval of water from the ACF affected the flow of water into Florida as well as the southern portion of Georgia where the water is used to sustain development and to preserve and enhance agricultural commerce.

By 1997, the states of Alabama, Georgia, and Florida agreed in principle to two interstate compacts, one for each river basin. In 1998, Congress approved the ACF basin
interstate compact with Public Law 105-104 while the ACT basin interstate compact was approved by Public Law 105-105. Although the states agreed to the compacts, they did not agree on all details within the compacts. The states continued to argue over the average daily flows and the minimum flows of water during periods of drought as well as water characteristics and quality.

After years of negotiation and deadline extensions, talks for the ACF agreement ceased and the compact expired on July 31, 2003. The states of Florida and Alabama began preparing briefs to file a lawsuit against the state of Georgia and the Corps of Engineers to prevent the state of Georgia from increasing their withdrawals from the Chattahoochee River in Atlanta. The ACT basin agreement between Alabama and Georgia expired July 31, 2004.

Because the political and legal disputes of river basin interstate compacts are different between the ACF and the ACT, this study will consider the influences of various interests on the negotiating process that led to the creation and ultimately the demise of the two interstate compacts. Also, each state’s policy subsystem is different; consequently, each has different uses for the river water and outcome expectations for the two river basins.

This study seeks to explain what perpetuated the continual conflict over the specifics of the compacts, what desired outcomes each state wanted, which actions were influencing each state, and why differences in desired outcomes remain between the states. Vital to understanding this study is an explanation of the role interest groups played in creating the compacts as well as how they influenced each state during the
negotiation process. The conflict of interest groups is explained utilizing the subsystems theory because it considers the complicated nature of the conflict that exists among interest groups, government agencies and political institutions. All three groups played important roles in each state’s water policy subsystem.

**Why this Study is Important**

This study is the first in-depth study of the river basin interstate compacts from a policy subsystems perspective. While the literature concerning the study of western river basin compacts, such as the Colorado River, and agreements with Indian nations concerning river water allocation is plentiful (Davis 1995, 2000, McCool 1987, 1998, 2002); the literature on eastern river basin compacts is weak. The Susquehanna River Basin Compact (SRBC) is the only other river basin compact in existence east of the Mississippi River that is primarily concerned with water allocation. The SRBC created a commission to manage water allocation within the basin and to make the political decisions that come with managing a public resource. Throughout the discussion of the ACF and ACT, the creation of a region wide commission was not seriously considered. The absence of a commission is meaningful because the states in the ACF and ACT basins were completely responsible for setting the rules as well as the enforcement mechanism for those rules. Therein, the level of responsibility of the states distinguishes this study from the existing literature because it illustrates intergovernmental relations as well as relationships between states and federal agencies with respect to their role in policy making.
Explanations of why the compacts failed as well as recommendations for improving the success of interstate compacts are included in this dissertation. This allows states to improve their relationships with other states and federal agencies and better understand how interest groups operate within different states.

The next chapter is a review of the current literature of interstate compacts, water law, and interest groups. This chapter includes a discussion of the Colorado River compact, the Upper Colorado River compact as well as a discussion of river basin compacts in the eastern portion of the United States such as the Delaware River, the Potomac River, and the Susquehanna River. Landmark legal decisions such as the Winters Doctrine are also discussed as well as their impact on western water policy and water policy with Indian nations. A discussion of the historical development of the different uses of the river water in the ACF and ACT basins is included in the literature review. Also included is an explanation of the events leading up to the origination of the compacts, a discussion of why people join interest groups, and a discussion of the characteristics of how interest groups develop strength in a public policy area. Additionally, the influence of interest groups within subsystems of government is discussed.

The third chapter discusses the methods used to determine which interest groups influenced the states as well as the level of strength of their influence. Chapter three also describes how each qualitative and quantitative method was used to analyze the effects interest groups had on each state during the negotiation process. Justification of the use of each instrument of measurement and how it was used in the research is also discussed.
Chapter four discusses the interview data and analyzes its content to determine which interest groups, organizations, and individuals were influential in each state as well as to analyze the subsystem as a whole. The interviews marked the beginning of the data gathering process. Also, the interviews are used to determine if one state was more influential than another state during the negotiation process. The interviews show which individuals, acting on the behalf of the different interest groups, exuded influence during the negotiation process.

The fourth chapter discusses the route each interest group took to influence a state as well as the negotiation process. The decision making process each interest group used to determine if it should align itself with other groups in hopes of improving its chances of accomplishing its goals is also considered. Finally, descriptions of the most influential interest groups in the process as well as the influence level of each state is discussed explain why each interest group was able to influence a state as well as the negotiation process.

Chapter five addresses the results of the survey. The survey was used to determine the thoughts of individuals who were likely to possess knowledge of the compacts’ negotiations or of the public policy outcomes each state or interest group desired from those negotiations. Chapter five also provides statistical analysis of the perceptions of the many different individuals who are familiar with the compacts. This analysis provides a unique perspective since many of the survey subjects were not as familiar with the compact negotiations as those who were interviewed. In sum, this
chapter illustrates the differences between what the elites in the process knew and how the masses perceived the process.

Chapter six further tests this study’s hypotheses with regression and factor analysis where appropriate. The tests determine the perceptions of how each interest group believed the compact would affect a particular aspect of the river water. Finally, after the statistical analysis tests are run and discussed, each of the hypotheses will be revisited in the chapter.

The concluding chapter revisits McCool’s model. Chapter seven discusses which quadrant, in McCool’s model, each state’s subsystem is located in and summarizes the interaction of each interest group within each state as well as the region-wide subsystem. Recommendations are given to assist in the improvement of the interstate compact negotiation process.
CHAPTER II
LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter discusses the origin and evolution of water law in the United States and explores the differences in water law between the eastern and western portions of the country. It will also cover the role interstate compacts have played in developing water policy between states. Interstate compacts in the West as well as the East will be discussed. The different uses of the river water as well as who is using that water is also covered. This discussion develops an understanding what interest groups are likely to be involved during the negotiations. The role interest groups play in influencing government institutions and government agencies will also be discussed because that role is crucial in understanding how these compacts originated, developed and ultimately dissolved.

Water Law Differences Between the East and the West

There are several studies considering water policy in the Western states (Davis, 1995, 2000, McCool 1987, 1995, 2002, Shurts, 2004). The literature studying water policy in the Southeast is lacking. Water rights law is fundamentally different between Western states and Southeastern states. The primary difference is that in the arid Western states, water policy views ground water as a common good (Shurts, 2004). The states west of the 100th Meridian generally assign water rights by an Appropriative Rights
system that gives preference of water rights to those who are considered to have the first
access to the water. Regarding the access to water, water rights are best described as

Water Rights under prior appropriation are described by Stehpenson, (2004, p.89)
as having three conditions:

1) an intent to divert water for a beneficial use
2) an actual diversion of water
3) application of the water to the beneficial use intended

In addition to these three requirements, many Western states require the appropriator to
acquire a permit from a court or a regulatory agency before being allowed to withdraw
the water (Stephenson, 2004). Water laws in the eastern portion of the nation allow for a
reasonable use of the water by whoever owns land adjacent to the water (Shurts, 2004).

This prior appropriation or first-in-time, first-in-right grew from a practice of the
settlers who were miners in the West. The settlers treated water in the same way they
treated any resource they took from the ground (Shurts, 2004). The system can be
summarized by saying that whoever was using the resource first has first right to it as
long as they are using it. In other words, if a settler is mining for gold, that area is of the
province of the settler as long as he is looking for gold. This applied to water in the sense
that settlers could take as much water as they desired from the source and continue to do
so as long as they were using the water. During times of drought, a settler first-in-time
could still lay claim to the amount of water he had been using while those with a later
claim to the water had to do without (Shurts, 2004). The local courts adopted this system
and based subsequent rulings on this principle of water use. The federal government deferred to the local courts and agreed to support the system since there was no federal law addressing water rights (Shurts, 2004).

Water laws in the Southeast are considered to be regulated by Riparian Rights (Ruhl, 2003). This system considers land adjacent to water to be available for reasonable use to whoever owns the land (Dellapenna, 2002, Ruhl, 2003, Shurts, 2004). While there have been modifications made to this by states, most of these modifications involve slight variations with defining reasonable use and the specifying the methods by which the river water can be extracted (Ruhl, 2003).

The Southern states’ water laws originate from Common law which gives ownership of water to whoever owns the land in which the water rests (Dellapenna, 2002). If you own the land in which a river flows over, law allows the owner a reasonable use of the water. Withdrawals for reasonable use are currently interpreted to mean that an owner of land adjacent to the river, or a person withdrawing water from the river can use up to 100,000 gallons a day without creating harm to the downstream users of the water (Dellapenna, 2002).

The Constitution gives the United States Supreme Court original jurisdiction with respect to water allocation among states. The 1907 case in which Kansas and Colorado argued over allocation of the Arkansas River struck down Colorado’s argument that it had sovereign use of the water within its territory. (Kansas v. Colorado, 206 U. S. 16, 1907). Ruhl (2003) suggests since that ruling, some guidelines have evolved over water and other natural resources use by a state. They are:
1. A state may not save natural resources for exclusive use of its citizens.

2. States do no have a presumptive priority over any other state with respect to use of water, even if that water is completely within its boundaries.

3. All states have an affirmative duty to make a reasonable effort to conserve water usage.

Typically, the geographic dividing line with respect to which principle water law is based is the 100th Meridian. In states west of the 100th Meridian, the legal guide of “prior appropriation” governs water law (Dellapenna, 2002, Ruhl, 2003).

In states east of the Mississippi River, “riparian rights” dominate water law (Dellapenna, 2002). This has the effect of water being considered a public resource with private access (Dellapenna, 2002). Since it a public resource, the river and the quality of water in the river are considered a part of the rights of owners downstream. Because of this common ownership, owners of the property where the water sits are generally free to do as they wish with the water so long as the downstream users rights are not harmed (Dellapenna, 2002, Stephenson, 2000). Using legal terminology, water in the states east of the Mississippi River is considered common property or sometimes private property. In the states west of the Mississippi River, water is considered public property (Dellapenna, 2002, Stephenson, 2000).

As riparian rights evolved with changing demands on water and the technological advances that allow uses of the water that were unimaginable when the water laws were
originally written, a “reasonable use” standard has applied to water usage. The reasonable use standard attempts to ensure an equitable right to use of the water without infringing upon someone else’s right to use the water in a reasonable manner (Dellapenna, 2002, Stephenson, 2000).

The process by which courts may define reasonable use and injury to the use of the water is open for debate. In particular, how do you define injury to an ecosystem in economic terms? How does this economic analysis compare when you are considering the need for drinking water versus the desire to maintain an ecosystem and adhere to the Clean Water Act as well as the Endangered Species Act? These are all legal issues that have not come before the Supreme Court under the umbrella of interstate water allocation (Ruhl, 2003).

A current trend in water rights law for Eastern states is to use a hybrid of the two systems. The main difference between the past and the current model is that states are now requiring a permit process similar to that in Western states in order to withdraw water (Stephenson, 2000). However, the rules by which users of water are required to follow are still based on riparian law (Stephenson, 2000). Further complicating matters with the ACF, Georgia and Alabama’s law is still based upon riparian law while Florida uses a hybrid model (Stephenson, 2000).

**Indian Water Rights**

There are a number of Indian Nations located within the Western river basins. This creates additional parties that must be considered when negotiating water rights. There is only one Indian nation, the Poarch Creek Indians, in the two river basins of this
study. Since the Poarch Creek Tribe does not own land that supports flowing water, it
does not have rights to the river’s water that would put the Indian Nation on equal legal
footing with the states. The land owned by the Poarch Creek Tribe, which is located in
the ACT basin near the Coosa River, supports only a gaming hall and no permanent
residents. Because of this lack of need and concern over water rights, the Poarch Creek
Indian Nation’s water rights will not be explored at great length during in-depth
interviews and other data collection. The only Indian Nation in southeastern United
States that has a water usage agreement is the Seminole Indian Nation. There is an
informal agreement between the Seminole Indian Nation and the State of Florida over the
use and quality of water available to the Seminoles.

Historically, Indian Tribes in the western states have been given water rights that
complement their sovereign status (McCool 1987, 2002, Shurts, 2004). There are
numerous water usage agreements between states, tribes, and the federal government
(Bureau of Indian Affairs, http://library.doi.gov/internet/native.html). The agreements
are governed in principle by the Winters Doctrine.

**Winters Doctrine**

The Winters Doctrine is the primary governing device for Indian water rights
since 1908 (McCool, 1987, Shurts, 2004). It has become so synonymous with Indian
water rights that it is often referred to as the Indian Reserved Rights Doctrine (Shurts,
2004). The Winters Doctrine established supremacy of Indian reserved water rights over
that of states.
The Winters case itself originated in 1905 when settlers upriver of the Fort Belknap Indian Reservation began to withdraw water during a severe drought from the Milk River to irrigate crops (Shurts, 2004). The settlers, citing Montana law, believed this was their right, even if the water withdrawals were so great that downstream users of the river would find the river empty. The United States government sued the water withdrawing settlers in federal court. The federal court cited previous court decisions and ruled that the Indians held reserved water rights with the Milk River that would be sufficient to support the population in the Reservation. In particular, this was interpreted to mean that the Indian Tribe could use the river water to irrigate crops in the land that was ceded to them by the federal government (Shurts, 2004). This case, known as Winters –v- United States, was supported on appeal by the Supreme Court in 1908.

One key element of this decision was that the amount of water that could be interpreted as reserved for the Indian Tribe was not merely what was currently being irrigated or otherwise used by the Tribe. This was contradictory to the legal principle of most Western states’ that gave priority of use to whoever was first using the water (Shurts, 2004). In sum, the settlers upstream of the reservation could not have a private property right claim to the water that might be needed to satisfy a purpose of the reservation. Because this ruling is so different from the water law of many Western states, the Winters Doctrine has often been viewed and treated by government agencies as an anomaly (Shurts, 2004).

The contradiction focuses on three portions of the prior appropriations doctrine. According to Shurts (2004, p.6) they are:
1. Privatization of water by means of individual vested property rights

2. A first-in-time, first-in-right priority allocation, which meant that people who came late to a watercourse for water had to yield to those who had come previously, who drew first in times of shortage.

3. Measurement solely in terms of a diversion of a specified amount for a beneficial, productive, present use.

Shurts further acknowledges that as development progressed in the West, the prior appropriation system was elevated from a mere preference in law to a divine right.

As a result of this conflict with prevailing state law, there was great resistance to the *Winters* decision (Shurts, 2004). Shurts contends that Indian reserved water rights stemming from the *Winters* decision immediately disappeared until 1963 when the Supreme Court reaffirmed them in *Arizona –v- California*.

The legal origins of the *Winters* decision derived from previous court cases in which an implied reservation of water was given to Indian Tribes when they were given land concessions (Shurts, 2004). The U. S. Attorney who represented the Indians in the *Winters* case argued that the water rights were expressly given with the land. It is not clear if the Indians living in the Fort Belknap Indian Reservation in northern Montana knew or understood the difference between expressed or implied reserve rights for the water (Shurts, 2004). This set the stage for erosion of the Indian water rights despite the favorable ruling from the *Winters Decision*. 
The reasoning for this is a simple case and point in the federalism of American government. The states and non-Indian interests were not pleased with the Winters ruling. Therefore, they sought to prevent its enforcement. By influencing the different federal government agencies such as the Department of the Interior and the Department of Justice, the water rights given to Indians with Winters were not realized (Shurts, 2004). Combine the hostility of the Winters decision among the states with the politically weak Bureau of Indian Affairs and an anti-Winters Reclamation Service (it later became known as the Bureau of Reclamation), and the Winters Doctrine was worth little (Shurts, 2004).

McCool (1987, 2002) also doubts that the Indian water rights derived from the Winters Doctrine are actually superior to that of the states. Because states are typically governed by the prior appropriation (McCool, 1987), conflict continues to occur because there are jurisdictional differences between the two doctrines. Water rights conflicts concerning Indian nations are to be settled in federal courts while state courts settle conflicts within a state (McCool, 1987). McCool (1987) goes so far as to say that currently, the Winters Doctrine continues to suffer from erosion by legislative acts due to the strong influence of non-Indian water rights advocates within the iron triangle of United States water policy.

The primary venue for erosion of the Winters Doctrine is the settlements between the federal government and the Indian tribes over water rights (McCool, 1987, 2002). A typical settlement involves monetary compensation from the federal government to the Indian tribes. In return, the Indian tribe waives future claims to water. This freezes the access of water with the Indian tribe (McCool, 1987, 2002). The future claims of water
are made by states surrounding the Indian Reservations. This amounts to federal spending so states can solve water access problems. This practice has been criticized by some members of Congress as ‘pork barrel’ spending (McCool, 1987).

Another way Indian Tribes lose autonomy over their water is an increase in administrative control by state governments over water that is reserved for Indian tribes. McCool (1987, 2002) believes this administrative control is given to the states by the federal government. The process by which the states achieve this control is through the iron triangle of water policy. In sum, the states are able to influence the federal bureaucracy and the federal legislators to give administrative oversight of Indian water rights to the states. This administrative control harms the Indian tribes the most by limiting their ability to sell their water rights in an open market (McCool, 1987, 2002). Typically, the settlements restrict who can buy the water rights from the Indian tribe. The restrictions follow a pattern in which non-Indians who can bid for the water have a geographically close location (McCool, 1987, 2002). Therefore, the agreements typically prohibit parties from long distances from transferring water. In practice, a group near the Indian reservation will buy the water at a low cost, turnaround and sell the water at a higher price to a buyer located a great distance away (McCool, 1987).

**Discussion of Interstate Compacts**

The Framers of the Constitution recognized a need to create a way for agreements between two or more states to exist without having to get the federal government unduly involved. (Zimmerman, 1976, Florestano, 1993). However, interstate compacts typically have to acquire Congressional and presidential approval to become legally binding.
Article I Section 10 of the United States Constitution provides in part that “no state shall, without the consent of Congress, enter into any agreement or compact with another state.”

Once signed by the president, the compacts have the legal standing of a Congressional Act (Zimmerman, 1976). There is however, legal precedent that allows for compacts to be valid without approval from Congress. *Virginia v. Tennessee*, 148.U.S. 503 (1893) allowed an agreement between the two states to stand without Congressional approval. Interstate compacts had been permissible under the Articles of Confederation. The compacts enacted under the Articles of Confederation were also recognized upon the adaptation of the Constitution.

Historically, interstate compacts have typically resolved border disputes between states (Barton, 1967, Dimock, 1973, Zimmerman 1976, 1996). As time progressed, compacts were also used to establish boundary disputes that occurred when a river, which was considered the boundary between two states, shifted its course. Generally, the law has considered the deepest portion of the river to be the precise boundary line when a river is considered to divide state boundaries (Welch, 1973).

The variety of compacts varied over time. After the initial use of compacts to settle boundary disputes faded, many states entered into compacts that addressed legal issues of extradition and served mainly to enhance interstate cooperation among law enforcement with respect to fugitive apprehension as well as creating regional planning boards (Barton, 1967, Dimock, 1973, Zimmerman, 1976, 1996).
What makes interstate compacts desirable is their ability to create an agreement for a specific situation in hopes of avoiding a costly battle in federal courts (Baker, 2003). However, effectiveness of compacts has continually been in question (Dimock, 1973). The compacts concerning allocation of resources are often contested in court using the Eleventh Amendment. The Eleventh Amendment prohibits a state from acting on behalf of a citizen within its borders in a suit against another state. Usually when a state believes someone is in violation of the compact for using too much of a resource, the offended state sues the other state on the premise that the other state is protecting its citizens from the legal authority of another state (Dimock, 1973).

Many of the compacts concerning allocation of water in river basins involve Western States (Barton, 1967, Zimmerman, 1976, 1996). The ACT and ACF represent the first compacts concerning river basin water allocation in states from the Southeast (Dellapenna, 2002).

Since discussions of creating the two compacts began, several of the state’s governors have stated their preference of an interstate compact as compared to a lawsuit before the Supreme Court (Ruhl, 2003, *Birmingham News*, December 29, 2000). The governors cited a desire to avoid a costly legal battle in the Supreme Court as well as a perception that a compact will result in a solution in which each state has at least some amount of autonomy (Baker, 2003, Ruhl, 2003, Stephenson, 2000, *Birmingham News* December 29, 2000, *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, July 26, 2004). However, each state has spent millions in attorney and water expert fees with the result being that the states

Interstate compacts governing the allocation of water are rare in states east of the 100th Meridian. The Susquehanna River Basin Interstate Compact involving rivers in the states of Maryland, Pennsylvania and New York, was the first compact involving a river basin east of the Mississippi River, which primarily addressed water allocation to be signed into law (Hull, 2000). The ACT and the ACF compacts represent the second and third eastern compacts involving water allocation to be approved by Congress.

There are several non-legal reasons why making river basin interstate compacts are different in the South as compared to the West. First and foremost, since the West was first settled, access to scarce water has been a perennial concern of states as well as Native American Nations. The arid region and its lack of abundant rivers and underground aquifers mean a higher premium is placed on river water than in the South. The South, comparatively speaking, is flush with rivers and underground aquifers. In all likelihood, due to the volume of river water, if growing Metropolitan Atlanta were located on the Tennessee River and not the Chattahoochee River, or if there were underground aquifers comparable in volume to those found in many sections of the Southeast, the ACT and ACF compacts would not have been created (Wise, 2002, New York Times, May 17, 2002).

Finally, a great amount of federal legislation has passed in which new interstate compacts must consider before the compact can become law. Since the each of these river basin compacts were signed, the Endangered Species Act (ESA), the Clean Water
Act (CWA), as well as other federal acts and laws have been passed which have the effect of requiring more than water allocation to be considered during compact negotiations.

The Susquehanna River Basin Interstate Compact

In 1971, the three states within the Susquehanna River Basin, Pennsylvania, New York and Maryland, agreed to the Susquehanna River Basin Interstate Compact. This compact created the Susquehanna River Basin Commission (SRBC). While flood control was the major reason for initiating the compact’s discussions, the SRBC concerns itself with pollution monitoring and other concerns that would affect the ecological and economic health of the river (Stranahan, 2003). Members of the SRBC are chosen from each of the three states that contribute water into the basin. Since the birth of the compact the commission became the primary intermediary with federal government agencies such as the Corps of Engineers with projects such as levee improvement and dredging the river to prevent future floods (Stranahan, 2003).

Although a small portion of the state of Maryland is in the basin, the water provided from the Susquehanna is crucial in providing the Chesapeake Bay with fresh water as it is the largest source of fresh water for the Chesapeake Bay, about ninety percent of the Bay’s fresh water comes from the Susquehanna River (Stranahan, 2003). This is a similar relationship with respect to the Apalachicola Bay in Florida depending on Georgia’s Chattahoochee and Flint Rivers for fresh water. This infusion of fresh water from the Susquehanna River into the Chesapeake Bay makes the Bay North America’s largest estuary.
The origins of the Susquehanna River Basin Compact can be traced to 1949. Congressman Daniel J. Flood, whose district included the Pennsylvania portion of the Susquehanna River Basin, proposed the creation of a Susquehanna Valley Authority. The model for the organizational structure of the new federal agency was similar to that of the Tennessee Valley Authority. As a member of the U. S. House Appropriations Committee, Flood had the ability to infuse a great deal of federal money towards his project. Flood’s primary goal was to prevent flooding and keep the fertile soil from being washed downstream into Delaware (Stranahan, 2003).

While Flood’s proposal never came to fruition, the federal government did place more attention on watershed management issues (Stranahan, 2003). By 1951, a presidentially appointed Water Resources Policy Committee made a recommendation that all of the nation’s major river basins be overseen by federal commissions. The role of these commissions was to be advisory, but many state officials were concerned of the possible increase in federal authority at their expense (Stranahan, 2003). However, it became clear to the state officials that if the federal government was going to fund projects such as levee improvement and dredging, the states were going to have to concede some authority and decision-making to the federal government.

Congressman Flood became a proponent of the creation of a Susquehanna River Basin Commission. Within a few years, negotiations between Maryland, New York, and Pennsylvania began. During the negotiations of the compact, there was a great deal of wariness between the three states (Stranahan, 2003). Congressman Flood was not immune to the interstate turf wars. At one point, Flood was quoted at a congressional
luncheon saying, “Anybody who’s ever done business with Maryland knows you’ve got to hold on to your watch.” (Stranahan, 2003, p. 286). As was true with Florida and the Apalachicola Bay, Maryland’s primary concern was a guaranteed volume flow of water into the Chesapeake Bay. Initially, the wording of the Compact did not guarantee Maryland a certain water flow volume. However, when the Commission began the restoration of the Shad fish, a guaranteed volume of water flow for the Chesapeake Bay came into being and was managed and enforced by the commission (Stranahan, 2003).

After the final wording of the compact became public and ready for approval of the three state’s governors, Pennsylvanians began to question its wisdom. Since about 75 percent of the river basin is in the state of Pennsylvania, the citizens of Pennsylvania began to want more than an equal share in the decision making (Stranahan, 2003). In Pennsylvania, farming organizations became the most vocal opposition of the compacts (Stranahan, 2003). However, the governors of Pennsylvania, New York and Maryland agreed that this was the best venue to manage the river as a resource. In 1967, the governors of New York and Maryland signed the compact. Despite objections from agricultural interests and rural communities, that thought the commission might require them to create sewage systems for their small communities, the state of Pennsylvania signed the compact legislation on July 17, 1968 (Stranahan, 2003). President Richard M. Nixion signed the compact December 24, 1970.

This concept of federal commissions governing each major river basin was not new. It was first proposed in 1878 by John Powell, who was an explorer and developer in the American West. Powell also recommended that state boundaries in the American
West be drawn according to river basins and other natural barriers and not degrees of longitude and latitude as became the practice (Stranahan, 2003).

The primary difference between the Susquehanna River Basin Compact and the ACT and ACF compacts is that the there is not a perceived threat to the scarcity of water volume. The Susquehanna River Basin Commission does have the authority to control water allocation during times of drought, but this was considered to be a rare occurrence (Shannahan, 2003). The commission primarily wants to control water allocation to prevent flooding, which is believed to be the primary concern of water allocation decision making. Because of this, the assignment of dam sites became an important decision for the commission.

There are two other river basin compacts in the East that will now be discussed, the Potomac River Compact and the Delaware River Compact. Both compacts address issues other than water allocation.

The Potomac River Compact

The Potomac River Compact between Maryland and Virginia was enacted into law in 1785. Signed two years before the adoption of the Constitution, this compact provided the ground work for Article I of the Constitution which became known as the “compact clause” (Florestano, 1993). The compact confirmed the ownership of the river with Maryland and did not address rights to the river’s surface water. For decades, Virginia and Maryland have argued about the procedure as well as the rights of Virginia to use the river’s surface water. With Supreme Court decisions in 1958 and 2003, the Court has established the right of Virginia to withdraw enough water to meet the needs of its
population while confirming Maryland’s ownership as well as their rights to use the water without Virginia’s consent (Florestano, 1993).

**The Delaware River Compact**

The Delaware River Basin Compact involves the states of Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware (Zimmerman, 1996). This compact, signed in 1961, addresses river pollution as well as flood management, wildlife management and water allocation as it related to preventing the freshwater river from salinization at the river’s delta.

**The Colorado River and Upper Colorado River Compacts**

There have been several interstate compacts formed among western states with a goal of managing the river basins. The more notable of these include the Colorado River Basin compact, the Upper Colorado River Basin compact and the Columbia River Basin compact. These compacts govern two of the largest rivers in the Mountain West area of the United States. The compacts concerning the Colorado River Basin primarily govern the allocation of surface water while the Columbia River Basin compact governs access to the river’s natural resources. The negotiation process and issues surrounding the formulation as well as current issues of the compacts will be discussed in hopes of developing a better understanding the history of river basin compact negotiations.

In the early years of the 20th Century, development in the western states began to take a toll on the availability of surface water. The city of Los Angeles had been doubling and tripling in size in the final two decades of the 19th Century (Wilkinson, 1992). Advances in irrigation technology allowed more water to be sent to areas far from
the river and at increasingly large volumes. These same advances also allowed for water to be transferred between basins and often were sent hundreds of miles away to support growing cities in California such as Los Angeles and San Diego. This diversion of water began to concern the less populous western states. It was from this concern that in 1921, the negotiation process of the Colorado River Compact began (Wilkinson, 1992). The compact was signed into law by Congress in 1922.

The Colorado River Compact did not provide for a formula or a mechanism to allocate water to any specific state. However, it guaranteed a supply of surface water to states in the lower basin of the Colorado River and allowed the upper basin states to have the remaining amount of the river’s water (Wilkinson, 1992). The upper basin states believed this compact would provide at least some amount of certainty of water access as well as protection against a rapidly growing California. Each of the upper basin states, Wyoming, Utah, Colorado, and New Mexico were growing at a much slower rate than California. New Mexico is considered an upper basin state because the San Juan River feeds into the Colorado River is located within the borders of New Mexico (Wilkinson, 1992). The goal of the compact was to equally divide the surface water of the Colorado River Basin among the lower and upper basin states. The lower basin states were California, Nevada and Arizona (Wilkinson, 1992).

Shortly after the compacts were approved, it became obvious the upper basin states’ guaranteed share of the river was based upon water flow data that was based upon higher than normal rainfall and not historical averages (Wilkinson, 1992). The compact required upper basin states to relinquish a constant and defined volume of water to lower
basin states. This had the effect of each upper basin state not knowing how much water it would be able to access.

After the upper basin states realized the Colorado River compact had not given them the predictability in access to water that they had hoped, in 1948 they began negotiations of the Upper Colorado River Basin Compact. Because most of the river was feed by the melting of snow in the Rocky Mountain Range in Colorado, over half of the water allocation was given to Colorado. Utah, Wyoming, and New Mexico received 23, 14, and 11.25 percent, respectively, of the water (Wilkinson, 1992). The compact was ratified by Congress in 1949.

**The Columbia River Compact**

The primary purpose of the Columbia River Compact was to regulate access to a natural resource of the river, fish gathering. Gathering fish in the Columbia River basin was a commercially profitable industry in the 19th Century and the early decades of the 20th Century (Wilkinson, 1992). The compact became an agreement among Oregon and Washington. The terms of the compacts are enforced by each state’s Fish and Wildlife Commissions (Wilkinson, 1992).

During the 1950s and 1960s, there was an attempt among Oregon, Washington, Montana, Idaho, with Nevada, Utah, and Wyoming being minor participants, to regulate water allocations, but the state legislatures of Oregon and Washington failed to ratify the compact (Wilkinson, 1992). The real conflict wasn’t as much over the allocation of water as it was the struggle between public and private hydroelectric power generators (Wilkinson, 1992). The states of Oregon and Washington wanted the dams built by the
COE to adhere to state laws that regulated dam and reservoir construction. Ultimately, lawsuits stemming from this conflict supported the rights of the COE to not follow state law in building dams or reservoirs (Wilkinson, 1992).

Another issue of contention among the states was a provision to allow trading of upper-basin water storage for hydropower. In exchange for the upper-basin states allowing the construction of larger reservoirs, they would be allowed a certain share of the hydroelectric power the reservoir dams produced in addition to a guarantee that much of their future water allocation demands would prevail over the lower-basin states’ demands (Wilkinson, 1992).

**Lessons Learned From Western Interstate Compacts**

Historically, interstate compacts have been used to allow states to settle disputes. Often the disputes involve boundary lines. The literature involving Western states in their disputes over water allocation, suggests that states are likely to reach agreement when the natural resource is scarce and a third party, usually the federal government, is involved in the process as a mediator.

With the other compacts concerning river basins, each state displayed some amount of distrust with other states. Despite these differences, interstate compacts have been negotiated and passed into law. This begs the question of why couldn’t Alabama, Florida, and Georgia work through their differences and reach an agreement. Each state is different in its primary use of the water. Therefore, each state has different goals of the compacts. Each state also has a different interpretation of how much water is needed to
meet its needs. Because the resource is viewed so differently, it is more difficult to reach an agreement with Alabama, Florida, and Georgia than the western states.

The literature suggests that there is a conflict between upper and lower basin states in the Western and Eastern river compacts. There is no evidence of intrastate conflict in the study of Western or Eastern river compacts. It is expected that this will be different in the South. Because the entity that wants to greatly increase its water withdrawals, the metropolitan area of Atlanta, is located upstream, the downstream users in Georgia are concerned the available river water will decrease in quantity and quality.

**History of the Modifications in the River Water Flow in Alabama, Coosa, and Tallapoosa (ACT) Rivers**

Shortly after the turn of the 20th Century, the federal government gave money to a new corporation, Alabama Power, to build Dams along the Tallapoosa River. William Patrick Lay, the person who founded Alabama Power, purchased land along the river near some locks that were made by settlers to improve the travel of steamboats. The dams were used to control seasonal flooding and provide electricity to most of the state of Alabama.

One of the early conflicts centered on a 1907 Alabama statute that gave the right to condemn the water rights of other entities through eminent domain to power companies when the power companies wanted more water than what other companies wanted (Jackson, 1995). The case ultimately went to the U. S. Supreme Court. Alabama Power Company received a favorable ruling. With the power of eminent domain, Alabama Power began to build dams along the two rivers.
The Tallapoosa was more shallow and narrow than the Coosa and needed man-made development in order to utilize the river for commercial opportunities that were developing in the 20th Century. The cargo boats became larger and needed deeper water to travel along the river. Because the Tallapoosa, with its numerous falls, is more challenging than the Coosa for navigation, it has received more artificial alterations, such as dams.

The dams began to be associated with progress by the locals in the region. The vicious and frequent, although not predictable, floods that occurred along the rivers motivated the residents as well as local governmental officials to look into options that would control the continued flooding of the rivers (Jackson, 1995). From 1886 until 1929, the city of Montgomery experienced fifty-nine floods. Almost half of them were labeled severe (Jackson, 1995). The dams altered the severity of the rivers’ flow and were able to control the volume of water enough to prevent severe flooding of the Alabama River.

The dams also provided plentiful, reliable, and inexpensive electricity to areas that had not been able to get electricity. With the start of World War II, the federal government decided it needed to build more military bases. With inexpensive electricity that was available from the dams, the ACT river basin became a logical place to put new military bases. Maxwell Air Base was built in Montgomery and Craig Air Base was located in Selma.
Soon, industry followed. The inexpensive electricity lured several paper mills to the area. As pine trees began to replace cotton as the primary crop in Alabama; the proliferation of paper mills began to dot the rivers’ sides (Jackson, 1995).

With the inauguration of Eisenhower as president, a new push originated from within the federal government for private industry to develop the nation’s waterways. Alabama Power Company had a plan waiting that involved almost complete development of the Coosa River. Alabama congressional delegates to Washington were supportive of the plan. Congressman Albert Rains from Gadsden, Alabama applauded the efforts saying, “the area will be more inviting to industries needing substantial supplies of water.” (Jackson, 1995, p. 213). In order to ensure that the inexpensive electricity that would lure industry to Alabama stayed in Alabama, Representative Rains tacked a rider to a bill supporting the project which had the effect of, in Rains words, “(electricity) never be piped away for use elsewhere.” (Jackson, 1995, p.213,). Between the mid-1950s and the mid-1960s Alabama Power had built five dams on the Coosa River.

**History of the Modifications in the River Water Flow of the Apalachicola, Chattahoochee, and Flint (ACF) Rivers**

This river basin begins in north Georgia and flows south towards Florida and emptying in the Apalachicola Bay. The Chattahoochee River begins in the northern most portion of this river basin. Lake Lanier, a man made reservoir, lies north of Atlanta and has been the primary fresh water reservoir for Atlanta’s metropolitan area. The Corps of Engineers manages all reservoirs and dams along the Chattahoochee River as well as the other rivers within the basin.
The states of Georgia and Alabama have similar needs from the water in this basin. Both states are primarily concerned with water allocation. However, the state of Florida is primarily concerned about the amount as well as the flow for fresh water in the Apalachicola Bay, which is home to ninety percent of Florida’s oyster harvesting industry (Ruhl, 2003, Stephenson, 2000, *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, August 22, 2002).

The states of Alabama and Florida are homogeneous in their stand on the issues central to the conflict. The state of Georgia is not. (*Columbus Ledger-Enquirer*, February 4, 2004). Downstream users of the Chattahoochee River such as the city of Columbus believe Georgia’s negotiators are acting on behalf of the interests of metropolitan Atlanta and not Columbus (*Columbus Ledger-Enquirer*, February 4, 2004).

The tension between states over the water allocation in the ACF basin can be traced back to the 1980s (Ruhl, 2003, Stephenson, 2000). Due to a series of droughts in the 1980s along with the continued increase in Atlanta’s metropolitan area population, downstream states became concerned about the availability of fresh water (Ruhl, 2003, Stephenson, 2000). This need for more water prompted several municipalities near the city of Atlanta to ask the Corps of Engineers for a new reservoir to be located in west Georgia along the Tallapoosa River (Ruhl, 2003). This soon prompted a lawsuit against the Corps from the state of Alabama (Stephenson, 2000, *Birmingham News*, January 17, 2002). With the future of the reservoir in doubt, municipalities began to increase their demand upon the water in the ACF basin. This soon prompted negotiations of the ACF as well as an ACT compact. In 2000, the state of Georgia sued the Corps to force it to
increase the amount of water given to Georgia municipalities, especially those using Lake Lanier as a water source (Ruhl, 2003).

A landmark in cooperation occurred in 1997 when all three states agreed to an interstate compact that involved allocation of water in the ACF basin which soon lead to the development of the ACT basin interstate compact. However, Florida was continually in disagreement with Georgia over the definition of natural flow of the Chattahoochee River (Ruhl, 2003). This was primarily due to Florida’s desire to have a strong freshwater flow into the Apalachicola Bay that supports the state’s oyster industry.

**Influence of Interest Groups**

Thomas Dye (2001) defines interest groups as “organizations that seek to influence government policy-to obtain special benefits, subsidies, privileges, and protections-for their sponsors.” (p. 6). In this study interest groups take on many different forms. Interest groups of the more traditional kind such as electric power companies, agricultural groups, and economic development groups play important roles in the compact negotiations. Other groups such as property owners, environmental, and government agencies will become interest groups throughout the negotiation process. Each type of organization previously listed has a particular set of concerns and goals. Therefore these organizations will become interest groups in hopes of influencing the outcomes of the compacts so that their interests are protected.

David Truman (1950) believes there are two conditions for becoming an interest group. The first requirement is that there must be shared attitudes. The goals, beliefs, and interests of a group must be similar in order to work together to achieve desired
public policy outcomes. The second is that there must be a claim upon others. The group
must want something that someone else has that they do not. This thing can be tangible
or not. As it applies to the compact negotiations, this thing is river water.

Olson (1965) discussed the reasons why individuals join interests groups. In
particular, Olson (1965) discusses what kinds of inducements are successful in recruiting
and maintaining members. Olson (1965) uses a rational choice model to explain how
much individuals will be willing to contribute toward the supply of a desired collective
good. The model focuses on the marginal costs and benefits of the good. This likely
explains why the membership of the river and lake keeper groups increased during
drought years. When the river and lake water decreased in volume, their property was
not worth as much. Boat docks that once were assessable were no longer functional.
Other recreational activities such as swimming and fishing were not available during the
drought years. In extreme cases, reports of fish kills and other algae flourished when the
lakes and rivers decreased in water volume. These conditions brought increased attention
to the possibility that their home and property values would decrease if the water levels
were lowered. It is believed that during drought years, the membership in interest groups
along the rivers as well as in other organizations increased.

Olson (1965) believes there are two different types of incentives that interest
groups can give public and private goods. Olson (1965) considers private goods to have
two characteristics: competition for consumption and excludability. Competition for
consumption is a characteristic because of it prevents two or more entities from using the
good simultaneously without a decrease in the benefit or value derived from the
consumption of that good. Public goods are considered to have nonrivalrous consumption and the number of users of that good does not affect anyone else’s use of that good (Olson, 1965).

With respect to the compacts, the river water is a private good. This is true for the quantity of the water as well as the quality of the water. Therefore the negotiations were actually over two private goods: water quality and water quantity. With the allocation of the water, this was obvious. This is not so clear with water quality. There was no direct discussion of water quality issues. However, Alabama lake and river protection groups believed water quality was directly affected by the quantity. This is because the higher the volume of water, the quicker and more thoroughly the water can dissolve harmful bacteria, chemicals and other pollution that the downriver users of the water would have to filter. It is not clear that the Alabama Power company was concerned about water quality as much as it was quantity. This explains why lake and river protection groups were not content to let Alabama Power be the sole voice for their state. Their concerns were more than water quantity. In Olson’s words, water quality was a private good that the lake and river protection groups believed was going to be harmed if they didn’t get involved.

The Florida users of the water as well as non-Atlanta area water consumers were concerned about quality of the water. The head waters of the Chattahoochee River are near the Atlanta area, the pollution associated with its approximately four million people flows into downstream Florida. Because of this, Florida was concerned that none of the proposals from the state of Georgia addressed the issue of water quality. Access to water,
and the quantity available to the state of Florida at the start of the Apalachicola River was
the only issue Georgia wanted to discuss.

Robert Salisbury (1987) believed that as issues became more complex that the
number of interest groups would increase. In sum, Salisbury (1987) believes that as a
society becomes more complex, the groups and interest groups reflect that complexity.
Ainsworth (2002) offers evidence that as environmental have become more complex,
specialization has occurred in the iron triangles concerning environmental policy.
Ainsworth (2002) believes the increase in the number and specialization of interest
groups is a reflection of the increase in the diversity of our nation’s economy.

This is true with each of the states involved in the compact negotiations. Florida
has a narrow use for the water. That state is primarily concerned with protecting the
natural flow of the water so that the shrimp and oysters can exist in a way that is
profitable for the harvesters. The Atlanta area in Georgia is primarily concerned with
accessing water to continue its economic development while the downstream area is
concerned with using the water to irrigate crops or develop their economies, which often
compete with the Atlanta area for economic development. Alabama uses the water to
support water levels in lakes to ensure an adequate supply of water to operate the dams
that created the reservoirs as well as having enough water for recreational purposes. In
this sense, the more specialized the interest group, the more specific their expectations.
The level of difference in expectations among each state’s interest groups will affect the
ability of a state to influence the compact negotiation process with the more unified states
having more influence.
Salisbury (1987) believes there is an exchange theory at work that explains why individuals join groups. As the complexity of the policy issue increases, so do the conditions in which a person receives benefit. Also, the threats to the benefits can become more complex and consequently, more difficult to identify and protect an individual’s interests. Salisbury’s (1987) discussion on how the complexity of issues indicates that interest groups will appear to assist the individuals in protecting their interests from this new and complex threat.

This plays out in the negotiation process with the different users of the water not being able to understand or readily observe the affect of the different proposed outcomes of the compacts. This explains why different interest groups appeared along the different rivers in Alabama that were focused on explaining to their members the threats to their wealth and livelihoods. This can also be true in explaining the involvement of the interest groups in Florida. The groups who were most involved in the negotiations were individuals with great technical expertise who understood the different implications of how changes in the river water volume would affect the Apalachicola Bay’s ecosystem. In sum, new threats brought about new interest groups.

Salisbury’s (1987) work gives a possible explanation of why the negotiations of these two compacts may have failed to produce permanent compacts. When the Colorado River Basin, and the Upper Colorado River Basin compacts were approved, there was little environmental regulation. The ACT and ACF were negotiated after the passage of the Clean Water Act and the Endangered Species Act. To further complicate matters, the river basins use the water for more reasons than the western users of the
Colorado River. This diversity of use and increase in the number of laws and regulations governing the water, as well as a greater number of species inhabiting the rivers and lakes, indicates that the number of interest groups involved in the compacts’ negotiation processes will be larger than those involved with previous compacts.

In studying the influence of interest groups, this study examines how interest groups form coalitions to increase their influence. Hojnacki (1997) examines the decision making process that interest groups make when they evaluate the benefits of joining a coalition or going it alone. The primary benefit in not joining the coalition is that the group does not have to compromise on aspects of their primary purpose or goal or take up positions that may not assist in achieving in their mission (Hojnacki, 1997). The benefit for joining a coalition is to improve the chances that at least a portion of the group’s message will be heard because the group is a part of a larger group that has a greater influence. By joining a coalition, a group can share information and possibly costs with other members of the coalition (Hojnacki, 1997).

Hojnacki (1997) believes that the narrower a group’s interest in a particular issue, the less likely that group will be to join a coalition of other interest groups. This is due to the perception that the ‘costs’ involved with joining a larger group outweigh the benefits received from group membership. In short, it would be better to go it alone and support the issue than to take on other issues and risk not accomplishing the goal.

In the study of interest groups in each river basin, there was great incentive for the lake home owner and river keeper interest groups in Alabama to join together. With both groups, their goals were to maintain the rivers’ current water quantity and quality. With
the narrow focus of each river and lake interest group located along the Coosa and Tallapoosa Rivers, it is expected that each group will likely join together to form an alliance. This may explain the formation of the Alabama Rivers Alliance as well their role in the compacts’ negotiations.

Honjinacki’s (1997) theory may also assist in explaining the level of cohesion among different groups in each state as well as why different formal and informal coalitions were formed during the negotiation process. Honjinacki (1997) believes that interest groups tend to create ‘issue niches’ which each interest group seeks to influence. This assists in developing an identity for the interest group and building support for the organization’s mission (Hojnacki, 1997). If the interest group is weak in terms of its ability to influence a broad issue, then this becomes a practical strategy. With this study of interest groups in each river basin, the smaller interest groups develop an ‘issue niche’ and focus only on their portion of the river, or their particular use of the water. During the negotiation process, the smaller interest groups contend with larger interest groups and decide to form coalitions to combat the larger interest groups over broad issues such as river water quality and quantity.

Frequently, organizations that develop this ‘issue niche’ strategy will take on geographical or purposive distinctions (Hojnacki, 1997). This is found to be a characteristic among many of the smaller interest groups in this study. The interest groups tend to focus on a geographic portion of a river or the economic climate of a particular area. Hojnacki (1997) suggests the smaller groups will join a coalition due to
the broad scope of the compacts while the larger groups such as power companies will likely go it alone.

With many of the smaller interest groups in this study, there are a few elite members of each group which will be interviewed. Each person interviewed will be someone who is familiar with the compact negotiations. Within each of the interest groups, the individual members who are involved and aware of the negotiations will be interviewed. Each of these individuals has a shared set of characteristics. Pollock (1982) explains the agents of mobilization, which in this study translates to attending public meetings of the negotiations as well as seeking community support for their mission and communicating with other interest groups that have similar goals. In sum, these are the individuals who are defining the goals and niches of their interest group.

Dahl (1961) believes there are few who govern and many who follow. In this study of interest groups, Dahl’s (1961) work explains why there are only a few members of each interest group involved as well as there being only a few interest groups that are able to govern a particular public policy issue. The study of interest group influence on the negotiation process of the compacts is actually a study of how different groups of elites interact. The individuals who are involved with each of the interest groups have an above average amount of wealth or education. In some cases, both are present.

Ainsworth (2003) believes the direction interest groups take in a public policy issue is influenced primarily by the leaders, or elites in the organization. This supports the commonly held belief that individuals with resources become active in the political
process and tend to be more influential within the interest group’s organization (Dye, 2001, Kingdon, 1995).

This is believed to be true in the study of interest groups in Alabama and Georgia. In Alabama, the individuals from the different river and lake protection groups who attended the public meetings were more affluent and often had large amounts of personal wealth that could be affected by the outcomes of the compacts. In example, the individuals from the different river protection groups owned homes on the lakefront, marinas, or sold lakefront real estate. If the water levels were reduced by the increase in withdrawals from the Atlanta area, the lake levels would lower and the lakefront property would lose value. In addition, the reduced water flow would also increase the possibility of increased algae and other concerns that would promote certain communicable diseases. Clearly, these individuals had a great amount of financial incentive to become active in a project that could affect their income and wealth. This principle is also clear with the corporations such as Alabama Power, river navigation groups, oyster gatherers and the economic development interests in the Atlanta area.

Pollock’s (1982) study considers the effect of education and income as agents of mobilization within groups. Pollock (1982) contends that the individuals in an organization who possesses more income and education are more likely to participate in the group’s activities. This is important to the study of interest group influence in the river basins because the groups with more individuals who possess higher incomes and educational levels are more likely to influence the outcome of the compact negotiations.
Pollock (1982) also believes that the groups with more members of higher socioeconomic status will have more participation in their activities than other groups.

While the elites of the different interest groups are involved with the compact negotiations, their success depends, in part, upon the elites motivating the individuals who make up the groups’ membership (Truman, 1950). While Truman (1950) acknowledges that it is virtually impossible for the leaders of their interest groups to solve all of the problems, the problems the leaders choose to tackle are vital to the support the leaders receive from the members.

Throughout the compact process, the availability of the resource fluctuated because of the drought seasons the area experienced in the late 1990s. It would be interesting to study if the focus of the leaders were able to use this situation to focus the attention of the members on the issue and increase support for their work as well as increase the membership in their organization.

Because this study considers interest group influence with states, considering the characteristics of strong and weak interest groups would be appropriate. Froman (1966) asks the question, “Do political systems that vary in the strength of their interest groups also vary in a systematic way with regard to certain structural and output variables within their respective political systems?” (p.953). Froman (1966) believes that political systems with strong interest groups will become strong political systems. Froman (1966) tests this by examining the characteristics of each state’s constitution.

Froman (1966) addresses how problematic it can be to define and measure influence of an interest group. To measure interest group influence with quantitative
measures such as money given to legislative campaigns would not be telling the entire story because there are other ways to influence government.

In measuring the influence of interest groups in the two basins, there are several quantitative methods that could be used but have serious flaws. Using meeting attendance or statements to the media could be measured as well as number of members in each interest group. The problem with using those measures is that some of the discussions between interest groups and each state’s negotiator or state elected official took place outside of the public meetings (interview with a state negotiator). The primary reason Froman believed that it is difficult to conduct research that could be quantitatively analyzed was that influence can take on so many different forms. In particular it is difficult to measure strength of influence with numbers such as numbers of members or how many groups took part in a coalition. In Froman’s (1966) study, influence was measured by outcomes. In the study the outcomes are clear, but the role the interest groups play in determining the outcomes is not as clear. Froman’s (1966) study did not attempt to determine which interest groups influenced each state’s constitution, only that there were strong interest groups in states with certain characteristics in their constitution.

In Froman’s (1966) study, the length of state constitutions was used as the measurement of the strength of an interest group. In this study, qualitative measurements are used to determine which interest groups were more influential. The judgments that are used by people familiar with the compact negotiations as well as individuals who were influenced by the interest groups will be used as a measurement of the amount of influence each interest group had with the negotiation process.
Froman (1966) concluded by offering several characteristics of states where a few interest groups dominate the policy process. States that are more rural, have a legislature that is dominated by one-party, relatively poor, and more agrarian. With the state of Alabama, Forman’s (1966) discussion explains that the state is ripe for domination from a particular interest group. Alabama, a state with moderate population and few major urban centers, is heavily dependent on agriculture as its main industry. Timber is a major industry for the state. With Alabama, it is believed that Alabama Power will be the dominant interest group. Georgia, a rural state outside of the Metropolitan Atlanta area is dominated by agricultural interests except for the city of Atlanta which is dominated by many interest groups with the same goal, fighting off any threat to the Atlanta area’s growth. The portion of Florida that is in the Apalachicola River Basin is rural with timber and oyster gathering as the primary sources of industry. Froman’s (1966) study indicates that one interest group, in this case an agricultural group, would be able to influence the subsystem of that area of Florida.

An important aspect of explaining influence during the negotiations is considering the role of the government agencies. The Corps of Engineers, U.S. Fish and Wildlife, the Environmental Protection Agency, as well as numerous state agencies were stakeholders and participated in the negotiation process. Boyer (1960) examines how government agencies make policy. Boyer (1960) contends that each agency develops unique characteristics that influence how agencies make decisions. This difference in decision making indicates it is difficult for oversight organizations such as a state’s legislative branch of government or Congress to control the process (Boyer, 1960). This difference
between each of the groups is present in the negotiations. Several government agencies with different missions and goals were involved in the negotiations.

Boyer (1960) also explains that private interest groups provide influence on the government agencies. These private agencies are typically very familiar with the government organization’s process and are able to influence the organization’s policies in a variety of ways (Boyer, 1960). This influence is typically conducted through providing information or feedback concerning existing regulations and proposed regulations. On occasion, this influence may be so strong the interest group will take on the role of the government agency. When the compact negotiation process began, the state of Alabama did not believe it had a government agency qualified to represent itself in the negotiations. Consequently, it looked toward an interest group, Alabama Power, for assistance. The state’s first negotiator was a former Alabama Power employee. This employee provided the technical knowledge that was needed to present Alabama’s needs. These needs were the same as what Alabama Power would need to keep its business operating at a level that it was accustomed to operating. In sum, the state of Alabama was representing an Alabama interest group during the negotiations with the other states.

Within the state of Georgia, the interest groups concerned with protecting the ability of the metropolitan area of Atlanta to grow, provided a great deal of information and influence with the state of Georgia’s negotiation team. The organizations that were concerned about continuing Atlanta’s growth provided information to Georgia’s negotiation team regarding how much water was needed to support its growing population and to continue to attract other industries to move into the Atlanta area.
Florida’s negotiation team was influenced by environmental organizations and oyster gatherers who provided information to the team concerning their desires as to how much water would be needed to maintain their biologically diverse bay as well as keep an environment that would prevent a decrease in the population of oysters.

Kingdon (1995) indicates that interest groups can influence government and public policy agendas in different venues. Kingdon (1995) believes most interest group activity is focused upon blocking legislation rather than promoting a new agenda. In particular, interest groups are involved primarily with maintaining the status quo and enjoying the benefits of a particular aspect of public policy. Any change in this policy will alter the environment in which they operate and therefore likely harm the benefits they are accustomed to under the current policy (Kingdon, 1995). This will likely hold true for the compact negotiations. Most of the interest groups involved in the process are primarily concerned with preventing interest groups around the Atlanta area from creating a compact that allows for a change in the water level that the interest group is accustomed to enjoying. Alabama Power in particular, would stand to loose a great deal of its ability to produce electricity if the water flow of the Coosa and Tallapoosa Rivers were reduced. The value of lakefront property would be reduced and the amount of oysters that could be accessed by gatherers would decrease dramatically. Because of this, it is expected that many interest groups are likely to follow the type of agenda blocking that Kingdon (1995) mentions.

Kingdon (1995) also indicates that the more complex the agenda, the less likely an interest group will be responsible for its creation. In particular, Kingdon (1995)
believes the more complex public policy issues that rise to the top of a government’s agenda are a result of several factors. Other factors such as a triggering event can ignite the issue and place it at the forefront of policymakers’ agenda. In addition, Kingdon (1995) contends that interest groups can often lose control of the agenda for that particular issue once it rises to the top of policymakers’ agenda.

It is likely this scenario plays out within the state of Alabama. The original focus of the state during the negotiations was Alabama Power’s desire for a predictable amount of river water flow. Once interest groups along the rivers in the ACT Basin became involved, the state’s focus began to shift towards water quality concerns. More specifically, the state began to consider how water quantity and water quality were related. This modification of Alabama’s agenda can be attributed to the infusion of additional interest groups with broader than, but not contradictory to, the desires of Alabama Power.

Resources are, of course, vital in the success of achieving a goal or having a favorable alternative at the top of the agenda (Kingdon, 1995). It is expected that this will be true in explaining the reasons why some interest groups emerge as most dominant in the subsystem and others are not able to have their alternatives heard.

Group cohesion is also an important advantage having an interest group’s agenda heard by decision makers. Kingdon (1995) believes the one of the toughest challenges interest groups face is being able to convince policy makers that the leaders of the interest groups speak for the members. In turn, divisiveness and dissention will harm the groups’
case with the policy makers as well as other interest groups that are considering forming a coalition.

It is expected that Georgia is the least cohesive among the three states because the state is primarily represented by interest groups in the Atlanta area and are not concerned about what kinds of outcomes the other areas of the state desire from the compacts. Because the goals of the interest groups surrounding the metropolitan area of Atlanta are perceived to be harmful to interest groups located downriver from the Atlanta area, there is a great likelihood that a lack of cohesion exists in the state of Georgia. When considering that the states of Alabama and Florida are likely to have strong cohesion among its interest groups, this will likely mean that the state of Georgia will act as the weakest in the regional subsystem.

Hrebenar (1997) believes that the balance of power among interest groups can shift depending on changing current events in public policy. While Hrebenar (1997) echoes many of the same characteristics of powerful interest groups as Kingdon (1995), Froman (1966), and Hojnacki, (1997) he also indicates that forces outside of the control of any interest group can change the importance of the public agenda and focus the public as well as the policymakers attention on different aspects of a particular public policy.

Hrebenar’s (1997) discussion illustrates a couple of examples of how the compacts negotiated over the ACT and the ACF differ from western compacts is the increase in attention to endangered species and water quality. The western compacts were negotiated and approved during a time in which there was no Endangered Species Act or Clean Water Act. These two acts made the negotiation process more complicated
than the ones in the west, which focused almost exclusively on water access. Due to the complicated nature of creating two compacts that would ensure compliance with environmental regulations as time progressed was a daunting challenge and one more reason why the compacts were not approved. This challenge was amplified because the federal government was not formally involved in the negotiation process despite the fact that government agencies such as U. S. Fish and Wildlife would be able to provide expertise on these complicated biological and legal concerns.

In measuring the strength of interest groups, Derthick (1974) believes this is another way to measure power. Martha Derthick (1974) measures power by a ratio of the group’s achievements to its goals. A group’s power is maximized when the achievements and goals are equal. The challenge with testing this is determining a group’s goals. Often times, the goals change with the conditions in which the group operates. Other times, the goals may not be clear to those outside of the interest group. Again, the complicated nature of public policy issues ensures that it is difficult to measure the power of an interest group.

Another challenge in measuring interest group influence is Robert Dahl’s (1961) definition of interest group power, which is, ‘A’ has power over ‘B’ to the extent that he can get ‘B’ to do something that ‘B’ would not otherwise do. However, Derthick (1974) and others criticize this definition because it assumes that every time ‘B’ is doing something only because of the influence of ‘A’. In other words, ‘B’ might want to do what ‘A’ also wants and will do it regardless of the power of ‘A’.
Along the same lines of Dahl’s (1961) theory, this brings up a challenge in measuring the influence of the interest groups in this research. In the state of Alabama, Alabama power wants to maintain the water flow of the Coosa and Tallapoosa Rivers. The lake and river groups are also trying to protect the water flow along the same two rivers. It is difficult to determine which group has more influence given Dahl’s (1961) theory. However, where Dahl’s (1961) theory is applicable, distinguishing what ‘A’ and ‘B’ wants is not difficult. It appears clear that any of the interest groups in the Atlanta area would not behaving the same if there was not opposition to the amount of water they are withdrawing from the river.

Hrebenar (1997) believes at the state level of government, iron triangles are appropriate in describing how public policy is made. In particular, distributive policymaking is a particularly ripe environment for iron triangles (Hrebenar, 1997). Hrebenar (1997) goes further to indicate that the Corps of Engineers has been a favorite target of interest groups because of its distribution of public works projects.

During the course of the negotiations, Alabama and Florida have accused the state of Georgia of conducting secret negotiations with the COE. The negotiations concerned how much water the COE would withdraw for use in power production for its hydroelectric dams along the Chattahoochee River. In 2005, Republican President George Bush nominated a new head of the southeastern regional office of the COE (Associated Press, April 15, 2005). Alabama’s two Republican Senators and all seven of its Representatives informed the Republican president they did not approve of his appointment because each believed he would favor Georgia in the redistribution of river
water. (Associated Press, April 15, 2005). After the nominee sent a letter to both of Alabama’s U. S. Senators indicating he would not change any of the standing restrictions of withdrawing water from the Chattahoochee River, the two Alabama Senators removed their objection to his appointment (Associated Press, April 25, 2005).

**Subsystem Theory**

Subsystem theory allows us to consider more than just the institutions involved in the decision-making process. It shows how interest groups, including states, motivate the political institutions to form the compacts (McCool, 1998). The subsystem theory will also help explain why different views on the two compacts occur not only between states, but within states. It will also help explain why some groups had more influence over the negotiation process than others and where that influence was most effective in formulating the desires of each state during the negotiation process of each state.

Many studies of policymaking have used iron triangles to explain the relationship between government and interest groups. Scholars contend that the iron triangle does not explain enough of the dynamic to have applicability. Other models have attempted to explain subsystems that are in flux as well as subsystems that include Helco’s (1978) issue networks. In short, the literature on subsystems is continually considering models that can explain the fluid nature of policy subsystems.

Many models focus on the framework of conflict in policymaking (McCool, 1995, 1998). A hierarchy of conflict over government resources is the framework used in McCool’s model. This model considers as a part of its x-axis, the strength of the political capital of each interest group. The amount of conflict over government resources is also
considered in determining the position of the interest group along the x-axis of the model.
The effects of water access in a river basin have to acknowledge zero-sum outcomes.
This model will explain the role that competing interest groups play in the influencing
each state’s desired outcomes of the interstate compacts.

**Why McCool’s Model?**

McCool’s model considers conflict and competition for government resources.
The model ranks this conflict into four quadrants. The quadrants range from autonomous
to pluralized while considering the availability of resources.

McCool discusses the four quadrants in the model:

1. The top left quadrant of the model represents a low competition and low preoccupation
of zero-sum outcomes. This is referred to as an autonomous subsystem. In this context,
a subsystem is able to operate with nearly complete control in a zero-sum environment.
Characteristically, there are many losers and few, often only one, winner. Subsystems in
this quadrant have a severe imbalance of power and influence. Most, if not all, of the
policy influence lies within one group or set of actors.
2. The lower left quadrant represents subsystems that are low in their competitive nature while operating in a high zero-sum environment. McCool refers to this group as Dominant/Dissident. Here, one group is dominant but other groups are able to influence some policy by achieving a critical mass.

3. The upper right quadrant is one that is highly competitive but does not sustain the pressures of a high zero-sum environment. This is referred to as a pluralized subsystem. McCool (1998) characterizes the pluralized system as one in which the different sides of an issue are similar in strength of influence over the policy process. The only method to achieve a policy outcome is through ‘turf balkanization’ (McCool, 1998, p.564). ‘Turf balkanization’ is when a subsystem possess such a high amount of influence over an issue and that influence is focused on protecting the interests of one particular interest.
group, that interest groups outside of the subsystem have little influence over the
decision.

4. The lower right quadrant indicates subsystems that are highly competitive and in a
highly zero-sum environment. McCool refers to these subsystems as conflictual.
Subsystems in this quadrant are similar in strength of influence and have the ability to
directly influence policy decisions. However, the limited availability of resources creates
a zero-sum environment. This environment creates a situation in which the only gains
are at the expense of other policy interests (McCool, 1998).

This model is used to measure conflict within each subsystem over river water
access because it allows, with the ‘zero sum’ scale, for different levels of competitiveness
among the interest groups. It also considers the competition of limited resources in this
example that resource is river water.

It is also likely that the model will be able to illustrate how the levels of conflict
within the subsystem will change as availability of the resource changes during years of
abnormal drought. When a drought occurs, the subsystem is likely to move from the
third to the fourth quadrant as access to river water becomes scarce. Also as the
competition for the resource intensifies, the issue moves to the forefront of the policy
agenda. As Kingdon illustrates, the policy streams come together to put water access at
the top of the policy agenda.
Lessons Learned from the Literature Review

The literature suggests three primary characteristics that measure an interest group’s strength: access to resources, simplicity of the issue, and uniformity within the interest group on the issue. The hypotheses are derived from these principles.

Access to political and social resources ensures that the interest group or coalition of interest groups will be able to get the attention of policy makers and have their policy issue placed at the top of the agenda or have their concerns addressed by the policy makers. If the issue is simple, the interest group will more easily be able to explain its message so that the policy makers can understand what the interest group desires from them. Finally, if the interest group is uniform with its goals and desired policy outcomes then the interest group or coalition of interest groups will be able to get their message to the policy makers clearer. By doing this, the policy makers, or the public, can be certain what policy outcome is desired by the interest group.

How this Research adds to the Literature

This dissertation will add to the literature in four areas. The first area will be the discussion of interstate negotiations. The second will be in better understanding how interest groups influence states and federal agencies. The third will be the discussion of how business and government interact in formulating public policy. The fourth and final area this dissertation will add to the literature will be the testing of McCool’s (1998) model to further explain the public policy process.

The next chapter will discuss the methods that will be used to determine which interest groups are influencing the states as well as their level of strength of the influence.
The chapter will also describe how each qualitative and quantitative method was used to learn of the effects of the interest groups in addition to justifying the use of each instrument of measurement and how it was used in the research.
CHAPTER III  
RESEARCH METHODS

This chapter explains the different methods used in determining which interest groups and organizations were influential in the negotiations as well as what outcomes each group desired. The methods used to gather data as well as justification of the data collection will be discussed in this chapter. This will prelude the analysis and discussion of the findings of the data.

Several questions will be addressed in this research. The focus of the questions is learning which actors and interest groups dominated the negotiation of the water compacts. In order to decide which actors and interest groups were dominant, in-depth interviews and a survey was sent to subjects who are familiar with the negotiation process.

Research Questions

1) If interest groups influence state negotiators, how great is that influence and how do the groups influence the process?
2) Which interest groups are the most dominant in the negotiation process?
3) What types of the interest groups are the most influential?
4) Which groups are most influential within each state?
5) Does the quantity of water availability cause a policy subsystem to shift quadrants along the x-axis?

**Dependent Variable**

The influence of interest groups on the states as well as on the negotiation process will be the dependent variable. The dependent variables will be measured from results of the survey and the in-depth interviews. Influence will be measured by asking the respondents who they believe are the most influential actors in the process.

Other areas that will be considered as dependent variables include: is allocation the most important negotiation concern or are there other concerns more important in the outcome of the compacts? Does the respondent care more about water composition, such as oxygenation levels, than allocation? Does the respondent consider agriculture uses more important than industrial development uses? What is the respondent’s main concern with respect to the use of the water?

**Independent Variables**

Independent variables will include, which river basin the respondent is located, which state the respondent is located, if in Georgia which portion of the state (metropolitan Atlanta or downstream). The current job title of the respondent as well as time at current position will be considered. What is the primary use of water in the water district (agriculture, industrial, or residential), what is the population setting of the water district (urban, small town, or rural)? Each of these independent variables along with
other demographic characteristics can be used in the regression analysis to measure impact on the dependent variable.

**Statistical Analysis**

The in-depth interviews were analyzed using contextual analysis. A search for themes and common phrases were noted as well. The questionnaire data will be analyzed with appropriate statistical analysis to see if any relationship exists between interest groups and the outcomes of the compacts as well as the perceived strength of the input from the different interest groups. The statistical methods such as comparisons of means, factor analysis, and regression will be used to measure strength of interest groups, levels of influence, in each state’s subsystem as well as the subsystem as a whole. The statistical software, SPSS Version 13, was used to compute the statistical analysis.

**Hypotheses**

H1: States in a river basin with diverse uses of the river are less likely to be homogeneous in the interstate compact negotiations than a state with uniform uses for the river water in the river basin.

H1a: The greater the number of coalitions of involved interest groups in a state, the less influential the state will be in the interstate compact negotiations.

H1b: Georgia is more likely to be less unified in its negotiating position than Alabama or Florida because of the conflict between the different interest groups within that state.
H1c: Georgia is more likely to be less influential than Alabama or Florida during the negotiation process because the state is more diverse in its uses of the river water than Alabama and Florida.

With diverse uses of the water, it is more likely that there will be differing opinions within a state for its desired outcomes. The different uses for the river water will create competing interests within the state, which will cause the state to appear not unified in its position. With the diversity of uses of the water it is likely that there will be several different interest groups that will be working against each other rather than together. This lack of unity within a state will cause a decrease in that state’s strength. In states that have more uniform uses of the water, the likelihood of forming an alliance along Hojnacki’s (1997) ‘issue niche’.

Kingdon (1995) also supports this principle of cohesion among interest groups. The more cohesive a state, the more likely it will be in influencing the negotiations because it speaks with one voice. Georgia appears to be the least cohesive because of the different uses (agricultural, economic development, navigation, and electrical power generation) of the river water throughout the two basins.

Because the upstream users in the Chattahoochee and Flint River Basins use water to support economic development while the downstream users require water for agricultural maintenance, there will be different goals for the compacts that are reflective of the different uses of the river water. With the Coosa River Basin, there are downstream users that believe any increase in withdrawal from the Atlanta area will
decrease the River’s water quality and force the price of cleaning the water to increase. The downstream users of the Coosa believe this increase in costs of using the natural resource will discourage economic development while the Atlanta area is able to continue its development. Therefore, the upstream interests along the Coosa River want increases in the amount of water they withdraw while the downstream interests do not necessarily desire more water but guarantees of water quality.

The downstream users of the Chattahoochee and Flint Rivers do not desire more water flow, but a guarantee of the volume of water flow, or to preserve what they consider the natural flow of the water. It is believed that since there are clear differences in the uses of the water between the interest groups in the upstream and downstream areas within Georgia’s borders of the Chattahoochee and Flint River Basins, there will be a great amount of variation in what position the state of Georgia should take in the negotiation process. As previously stated, Kingdon’s (1995) discussion on cohesion supports this hypothesis.

Because of the difference among Georgia’s interest groups in desired outcomes of the compacts, it is believed that the conflict among the different interest groups will cause Georgia to not have a clear set of desired outcomes for the compacts. Without clear goals, the state of Georgia will be weaker than the other two states. As previously mentioned, Kingdon’s (1995) discussion of cohesion, as well as an increase in the likelihood of a lack of focus on a particular ‘issue niche’ (Hojnacki, 1997) supports this hypothesis.
The greater the number of coalitions among interest groups, the more difficult it will be any coalition of interest groups to achieve a critical mass. If there is no one strong interest group representing the state, then the state will no be as unified in their negotiations and they will not be as strong as a state that is unified in its desired outcomes of the negotiations. As Froman (1966) suggests, a state with a strong, dominant interest group has a strong political system. This in turn means the state will act decisively with one voice during the negotiations.

Florida does not appear to have a dominant interest group that uses the river water. Because there is not a clear choice as a primary user of the water, there will be many interest groups who are involved in the negotiations with no single group dominating the process. As Froman (1996) suggests, a state with a strong, dominant interest group has a strong political system. Because Florida is a coalition of many different interest groups with no single individual interest group or coalition of groups being dominant during the negotiations, that state may not be as strong as the other states which have dominant interest groups. However, the interest groups in Florida seem to have a high level of cohesion. They are almost exclusively concerned with protecting the natural flow of the river’s water. Therefore, the state is likely to be stronger than Georgia in the negotiation process.

Kingdon’s (1995) discussion on cohesiveness also supports these hypotheses. In sum, Kingdon (1995) believes if there are more coalitions, there are more goals and agenda issues that are competing for policy makers’ attention. If there are many different groups trying to influence the state’s desired outcomes, there less likely the state will
speak with one voice. This lack of cohesion will cause the state to not be able to clearly and effectively protect its goals, which will allow other states to have an advantage in the negotiation process. With a narrow focus, the state will be able to use its resources to focus on achieving its goal.

H2: The greater the amount of resources available to an interest group, the greater the influence of the interest group.

H2a: Interest groups with environmental concerns are less likely to influence the formulation of the interstate compacts than business interests.

H2b: Lake and river protection groups are more likely to be more influential within Alabama’s subsystem than environmental groups because of greater access to resources.

H2c: Interest groups representing the concerns of the metropolitan area of Atlanta are more likely to influence the state of Georgia’s agenda than interest groups outside of the Atlanta area.

H2d: No single interest group in Florida will be able to dominate that state’s subsystem because no interest group has enough resources to dominate the subsystem.
H2e: Alabama Power will be the most influential interest group in the state of Alabama because of the large amount of political resources they possess.

H2f: The electrical power companies and other stakeholders are more likely to influence Alabama’s desired outcomes while state and local government agencies are more likely to influence Georgia’s desired outcomes of the compact negotiations because they possess more resources to influence the policy makers.

Considering the state of Alabama chose negotiators who had significant professional connections with the Alabama Power Company, the power company is likely to be most influential interest group in Alabama. State and local governments in Alabama appear to have little concern over the outcome of the compacts and content of allowing an electrical power company represent their interests.

Georgia, which is likely to be concerned with protecting economic development concerns will likely be working closely with governments in the Atlanta area as well as the different chamber of commerce organizations. The local governments, which are concerned about promoting their population growth and economic development, will be interested in having more access to river water. These groups, with their vast political resources, and similarity of goals, will likely dominate the state of Georgia’s desired outcomes of the compacts.

Froman’s (1966) discussions of interest group strength indicate that Alabama Power’s dominance in formulating the state’s negotiation position is likely since
Alabama Power is a powerful interest group and has a pattern of dominating policy decision making. The economic development interests in the Atlanta area also have a history of being able to exert a great amount of influence over public policy issues in Georgia. The reasons for this can likely be explained by the fact these two groups have access to many economic and political resources as well as great levels of cohesion in their desired outcomes of the compacts. Kingdon’s (1995) theories on political resources and cohesion again support this hypothesis.

Given the population size and the amount of political resources that are available to the metropolitan area of Atlanta, they dwarf the size of the portion of the state that is in the lower basin areas of the Flint, Coosa and Chattahoochee Rivers. This advantage in population and resources will allow the interest groups in Atlanta to have their concerns heard, even at the expense of the other areas of the state. Kingdon’s (1995) discussion of the importance of access to resources as being an important part of increasing the likelihood of having the group’s agenda heard by policy makers directly supports this hypothesis.

Alabama Power needs a steady flow of water along the Coosa and Tallapoosa Rivers to operate dams that produce electricity, which is sold to other areas outside of the basin. This electrical power company, which is owned by a holding company that also owns Georgia Power, has a large amount of political resources and influence in the Alabama state legislature (interview with Alabama state legislator).

It is believed that this high amount of influence will carry over into dominating the state of Alabama’s desired outcomes in the negotiations. Again, Kingdon’s (1995)
discussion about the importance of possessing resources supports this hypothesis. Also, Hojnacki’s (1997) discussion of an interest group’s ‘issue niche’ indicates that with the combination of a large amount of resources and a narrow focus on the issue, the likelihood of Alabama Power dominating not only the state of Alabama’s negotiation position but the negotiation process as a whole is strong.

Considering the importance of having decision-making members with higher socioeconomic status as well as organizational resources, the interest groups with the environmental concerns are likely to have less of both than interests with business interests. The literature supports this hypothesis. Because the environmental groups are believed to not have as many resources available to them as business interests, they would then not be able to influence the compacts as much as the business interests.

Dye (2001) and Kingdon (1995) conclude that resource attainment is paramount to getting policy makers interested in your wants and being able to place your issue at the top of an agenda as well as being able to favorably control the outcomes of the agenda. This will be tested with the in-depth interviews as well as the survey. Interview subjects and survey respondents will be asked their perceptions as to which group was more influential.

The literature supports this hypothesis. The lake and river protection groups likely possess more financial and political resources than the environmental groups. Jackson (1990) illustrated how lake home owners were able to force change in the operations of a paper mill when the lake home owners felt threatened by the output of the paper mill. This ability to influence other interests and in effect, force a policy change is
evidence that the lake home owners have the ability influence policy outcomes more than purely environmental groups. It is likely that environmental groups will choose to join forces with the lake and river protection groups in hopes of accomplishing at least a portion of their goal. Again, Dye (2001) and Kingdon’s (1995) views support this hypothesis.

Also, the cohesion is likely to be higher among the lake and river protection groups. Because the groups have the same economic interests and the reduction of water allocation will affect each of them nearly the same, the likelihood of strong cohesion is great. The affect of cohesion on an interest group’s chances of success is supported by Kingdon (1995) in the literature.

In summary, the more specialized the interest group, the more specific their expectations. The challenge interest groups experience is being able to find others that have similar interests and forming coalitions while continuing to maintain their goals.

H3: During drought years the policy subsystem for the region will move from the third quadrant toward the fourth quadrant.

The competition for scarce resources will resemble McCool’s (1998) zero sum outcome and move the subsystem into the fourth quadrant. The scarcity of the resource, lower water levels in rivers during drought years, will motivate interest groups that were not concerned with the availability of the resource to become involved in the subsystem to ensure their access to the resource is not restricted. Also, because the availability of
the resource is lessened, the resource will become more valuable. This will increase the intensity of the competition for the resource, thus moving the subsystem from the third quadrant to the fourth.

**Discussion of Data Gathering**

Interviews were used because of their versatile nature towards conducting research (Rubin, 2005). These interviews allow the researcher the flexibility to ask not only a few questions that were conceived before the interview, but to follow the subject’s thoughts on the issue in question and possibly give the interviewer different viewpoints with which to view the subject matter (Rubin, 2005). This kind of interviewing should be approached with open-ended questions and the interviewer must be prepared to follow the subject with questions that originate from the responses of the interview subject.

Since there were no more than five commissioners at any one time for the three states and the federal government, a survey would not be practical. The number of subjects interviewed totaled sixteen. Of the individuals interviewed eight resided in Alabama, six in Georgia, and two from Florida. One federal commissioner was interviewed as well as a contractor hired by the federal government to assist the federal commissioners. One state negotiator was interviewed as well as one member of a state’s negotiation team. One Alabama state legislator was interviewed. Six people who represented interests involving Alabama’s rivers and lakes were interviewed. One person who represented Florida’s Apalachicola River and Bay’s interests was interviewed. One person employed with the City of Atlanta’s environmental protection was interviewed. One person involved with protecting water quality as well as the water levels of Atlanta’s
primary reservoir along the Chattahoochee River, Lake Lanier, was interviewed. One county level government employee responsible for environmental monitoring outside of the metropolitan area of Atlanta in the Georgia portion of the ACT Basin was interviewed. Two people representing the Coosa River’s interests downstream from the metropolitan area of Atlanta in Georgia was interviewed.

There were several methods used in determining who possessed the characteristics of people who would be knowledgeable about the compact negotiation process. Websites of river and lake water protection advocacy groups located within the two basins were reviewed. Editorial and opinion articles as well as non-editorial news articles in area newspapers were reviewed to find names of individuals who possess knowledge of the compact negotiations. The identity of the state and federal commissioners is a matter of public record.

In recruiting the subjects, they were contacted by email or by phone. They were informed of the purpose of the research and the nature of the questions they would be asked. If the interview was granted, most of the interviews were recorded and all subjects were assigned pseudo names. Some subjects did not want the interview recorded and their wish was granted. The interviews with fourteen of the subjects were conducted in the subject’s home or place of work. The remaining two were conducted by phone. Recorded interviews were then transcribed. The transcripts were analyzed to discern important themes and decide which interest groups were influencing each state during their negotiations.
Snowballing was used to determine who was involved with the process but didn’t make many, if any, public statements which would normally appear in a newspaper or a public document. Because transcripts of the meetings were not created, it was necessary to contact individuals who attended the meetings to determine what was discussed at the meetings. Rubin (2005) defines snowballing as asking interview subjects to recommend others who are also knowledgeable on the matter under study. This technique proved to be valuable in selecting the sample. Many of the individuals who attended the meetings began to develop relationships with other attendees. Because of this kind of relationship, snowballing proved to be the most useful tool in determining the qualifications of who should be interviewed.

Also, this technique assisted in deciding who would be more likely to consent to an interview as well as providing information as to the subjects’ relevant professional background. By understanding the subject’s background, a more representative sample of respondents was chosen. This resulted in a more accurate and detailed description of the compact process. The subjects came from each of the three states involved in the negotiations as well as a variety of professional backgrounds.

Some individuals representing river groups as well as economic interests in the metropolitan area of Atlanta declined to be interviewed for this research. Some of these individuals suggested that a better person to contact would be an area attorney who practices environmental law. Clearly, there was a lack of comfort in discussing this topic with the individuals contacted who resided or represented interests in the Atlanta area. Two possible explanations of this are explored. One is that the interview subjects were
concerned about making comments on a topic that was the subject matter of current and possible litigation. With some of the subjects, it is possible that they are not interested in discussing a topic that may threaten their sources of funding by taking a position that is not in agreement with the thoughts of their larger donors. The possibility of co-optation is analyzed further in chapter four.

Each interviewee provided a different viewpoint of the negotiations as well as differing levels of involvement. Some had been with the process since the creation of the compacts and others had only been casual observers to the negotiations. Interviewees from the ACT basin were better represented in the research because the qualified research subjects in the Atlanta declined to be interviewed.

The state legislator represented an area outside of the two basins. He was chosen because of his familiarity with the negotiations and his knowledge of water issues in his district as well as the state he resided. He also represented an area in an adjacent basin that includes a large man-made lake along a river, which is vital to the local economy he represents.

After several interviews were conducted, the data were analyzed for themes that continually occur in all or most of the subjects’ stories. The analysis was useful in determining which interest groups were most dominant in each state as well as the entire subsystem throughout the negotiations. This data also assisted in telling a portion of the story that was not discussed in newspapers or other media outlets.

This data also provided a basis for the written survey. If there were certain statements or comments continually appearing during the interviews, they were included
in the questionnaire. Also, themes that became evident during the interview process were tested in the surveys to see if they were true with the broader audience.

The interviews were conducted during the months of February, March, and April of 2005. Two of the interviews were conducted over the telephone while the remaining interviews were completed in-person. The interviews were conducted within the interview subject’s residence or place of work.

**Limitations of the Study**

The compacts dissolved without an agreement on water allocation. Because of this, the policies and procedural outcomes of the compact negotiations have not had an opportunity to become completely implemented. The dissertation will focus on the negotiation process. Because the compacts no longer exist, it may be unclear what outcomes and current policies originated from the compacts. The current and anticipated legal battles between the states and the Corps of Engineers also are influencing current policies concerning water use in each of the states.

Interviewing subjects who may be concerned about pending litigation may be a limitation of the data gathering. Acquiring enough addresses of individuals or interest groups who were involved or are familiar with the compacts and their negotiations is another concern. Both concerns may hinder getting a representative sample of the variety of interest groups as well as each state and region within a state. This is of particular concern with Georgia since the state had greatly differing views on the desirable outcomes of the compacts that were dependent upon the geographic location within each basin.
The Survey

In order to reach more people, information was also gathered from the interviews to construct a questionnaire. Each person was chosen based upon having an expectation of having knowledge of the compacts or water issues in either basin. The subjects were separated into three broadly defined groups to gauge response rates.

The first group was referred to as the environmental group. Members of this group were active in an interest group whose primary concern was environmental protection. They included river and lake keeper organizations, lake home owners associations as well as nature protection groups. Groups whose area of interest included any part of either basin were included. Members of this group were chosen because knowledge or concern over the compacts would likely affect their primary interest. This group would likely include members who had attended the meetings or had gathered information on the negotiations from news reports. Some members of this group were directly involved with the negotiations such as the lake owners associations or river watch groups. Some were only vaguely knowledgeable of the compacts. Examples of these kinds of subjects within the group included outdoor groups such as canoe and hiking clubs.

Water authority or water management associations were included in the environmental group. These subjects were employed by a municipality, county, regional water authority or state government as a water resources manager.

The next group was labeled chamber. This group in the survey included chambers of commerce and county commissions that were located in either of the basins.
These subjects who were sent a survey consisted of people who chaired a county commission or served as president of a chamber of commerce. This group was chosen to obtain their thoughts on the perception of how the compacts would impact their local economy was important in determining the concerns of a particular area as well as the salience of the issue with pro-development organizations. These subjects would likely have an interest in the compacts because the interview subjects indicated that the outcome of the compacts would greatly influence the economic conditions throughout the two basins for many years to come. Chambers of commerce and county commissions are two organizations that would be concerned with economic development and would likely have an understanding of how the compacts would affect the economic climate in their area.

The final group was legislators. This group was chosen for a couple of reasons. First, each state legislature has to approve of any interstate compact before the state can legally enter it. Also, as local legislators they would likely be familiar with water access related issues and the salience of those issues would likely be high among their constituents.

The survey was sent to subjects in four waves. The first wave included a recruitment letter explaining the research project. The second mailing included the survey and a letter explaining the purpose for the survey. Each survey was coded to track which respondents replied to the survey. The third mailing was a post card that was sent to the subjects who had not yet returned the survey asking them to complete and return
the survey. The fourth and final mailing was to subjects who had not yet returned a survey and their surveys were not coded for tracking purposes.

Four hundred and twelve recruitment letters were mailed. Some subjects indicated they were not familiar with the compacts and withdrew from the research while other letters were returned due to incorrect addresses. Three hundred and fifty-one possible respondents remained. Of the 351, 105 were returned for a response rate of 29.9 percent.

One hundred and twenty-seven were sent to respondents who could be labeled as having an environmental interest. Of this group 99 were not returned due to an incorrect mailing address or subject withdrawal. Of those remaining, 28 had returned the completed survey before the fourth mailing.

Sixty-four subjects were in the group with commerce or development concerns. Of those 64, 47 did not withdraw from the survey or were withdrawn due to an incorrect mailing address. Of those 47, 15 completed the survey before the fourth mailing.

With the legislators, 221 were sent a recruitment letter. Two hundred and five had valid addresses and did not withdraw from the survey. Of the 205, 25 were completed and returned before the fourth mailing. Thirty-three completed surveys were returned after the fourth mailing.

The list of addresses to which a survey could be sent to appropriate subjects was compiled from several sources. In compiling the list for the subjects in the environmental group, my first source was a directory of grassroots watershed groups provided by the
Alabama Rivers Alliance. This directory had mailing addresses and contact names for groups concerned with the health of rivers in Alabama as well as adjacent areas.

An Internet search was done to find groups who were located along each of the rivers in the two basins. Groups that provided addresses on their website were included. Some of the groups were contacted by telephone or email to learn of other groups who should be sent a questionnaire. An Internet search for addresses of water associations and water authority groups located within each basin as well as government agencies that were involved in the negotiation process. Internet searches were conducted to obtain the address of each county commission and chamber of commerce that was located in the two basins. The same method was also done to search for the water authority employees and directors.

The list of state legislators who represent areas in each of the basins was available on the state website of the three states. United States Senators of each state as well as Representatives whose district is at least partially located in either basin were also sent a survey. Their contact information was available through website searches.

Some subjects withdrew because of possible or pending litigation. These subjects indicated they did not feel it was appropriate to participate in the survey since the nature of the survey concerned itself with material that was also being debated in the lawsuits. No completed surveys were received from federal legislators. Offices of some Congressmen cited a policy of not participating in surveys.
The Questionnaire

The questionnaire was used to get the impressions of those who were intimately familiar with the negotiations, but also the interest groups and elected officials who did not attend many, if any, of the meetings and acquired knowledge of the compacts through secondary sources such as the print media. The complete questionnaire is attached in appendix B. All recruitment letters are attached in appendix C.

The first question determines the self reported knowledge of the compacts. It is likely that some subjects will have a great amount of knowledge of the compacts and others will have no knowledge of them. The next two questions determine which basin and state the subject resides or conducts his professional duties. This information will assist in determining if location determines the perspective of the respondent.

Question four lists thirteen different interest categories and asks the subject to rate their level of influence during the negotiation process. The groups were chosen based upon responses from the subjects who were interviewed. If an organization was to be listed, an interview subject had to mention the organization and indicate its level of influence. If more than one subject mentioned the group, or a particularly well informed subject mentioned the group, the group was listed. The reverse of this is also true. Some groups that were not believed to be influential were listed. This was done to learn if any differences in perception of influence existed between the most knowledgeable subjects and those who may not be knowledgeable.
The information learned from this question will assist in deciding which groups were more influential in the process. This information will be used to test the hypothesis and deciding which quadrant of the model each subsystem is located.

The fifth question asked respondents to assess the level of influence each of the three states had over the process. This was done to assist in understanding if the different groups were strong not only in their state’s subsystem but also the regional subsystem. The question will also assist in determining if one or more interest groups’ strength assists in making the state stronger in the negotiations. The sixth question asks which individual or group was the most influential.

The seventh question asks the subject to rank each state’s uniformity during the negotiation process. In other words, did the state vary in what it wanted as outputs from the compacts?

The eighth and ninth questions ask the respondent to indicate whether a basin-wide commission should manage the water recourses. Question eight asks if the commission should manage the water allocation formulas and the ninth question asks if a commission should enforce allocation agreements.

The tenth question asks a series of questions about the perceived outcomes of the compacts in their final form as well as what goals the compacts should have met. The questions from this section were formulated from the literature on river basin compacts as well as the interviews conducted earlier in the data gathering. Each question addresses an issue that is believed to be of concern to most of the interest groups involved in influencing each state.
The eleventh and twelfth questions consider the amount of population in the respondent’s area. This is used to determine if there are any urban versus rural contrasts in perception of the compacts.

The thirteenth, through fifteenth questions ask the respondent’s job title, length at that position as well as how the respondent was placed in the current job. This is done to determine not only the level of involvement of the individual with the compacts, but with other issues surrounding the compacts such as environmental, economic, or other water policy issues in general. Question thirteen is used to determine how long the person has been involved with such issues.

The last four questions are demographic questions. They are used to determine the level of education and life experiences of the respondent. This information may be useful for future studies concerning citizen participation which are not directly related to the research in this dissertation. The questionnaire (see Appendix A) was coded and data were entered into SPSS, which was used to run the statistical analysis.

Because the interviews and the survey involved human subjects, the following items were submitted to Mississippi State University’s Institutional Review Board for approval: design methodologies, copies of recruitment letters, the questionnaire, sample interview questions, informed consent forms, and interview protocols. The in-depth interview research was approved February 14, 2005 and the questionnaire was approved April 21, 2005.

The mailings began in May of 2005. They consisted of a recruitment letter followed by the actual survey. A recruitment letter was sent to determine subject interest
and incorrect mailing addresses. The actual questionnaire was sent approximately one week after the recruitment letter. The questionnaire was included in a business reply envelope with a recruitment letter. Approximately two weeks later a postcard reminding the subjects of the survey was mailed to those who did not submit a survey or had not asked to be removed from the research. After approximately two weeks later, the questionnaires were mailed out to those remaining in the research. This was the final mailing. One hundred and five surveys were returned for a final response rate of 29.91%.

The next chapter will discuss the interview data and analyze its content to determine which interest groups, organizations, and individuals were influential in each state as well as the subsystem as a whole. Also, the interviews will be used to determine if one state was more influential than another state during the negotiation process. The interviews will also show which individuals, acting on the behalf of the different interest groups, exuded influence during the negotiation process.

This chapter will also discuss the route each interest group chose to take in how it influenced the state as well as the negotiation process. The decision making process each interest group made to determine if it should align itself with other groups in hopes of improving its chances of accomplishing its goals, will also be considered. Finally, descriptions of the most influential interest groups in the process as well as each the influence level of each state will be discussed in hopes of putting into context why each interest group was able to influence a state as well as the negotiation process.
CHAPTER IV
INTERVIEW ANALYSIS

This chapter will analyze the data gathered from the in-depth interviews. This data provides a unique insight into the negotiations. The data will allow analysis to be conducted that will determine which interest groups were influential during the negotiations and what outcomes they desired. The analysis of the data will provide insight into which organizations were involved with the negotiations formally and informally. This chapter will also discuss how the different organizations and interest groups sought to achieve their goals and desired outcomes of the compacts.

The metropolitan area surrounding Atlanta has been rapidly growing at a rapid pace. This growth has primarily occurred in rural areas with few zoning ordinances. With the growth, a strain on the ability of municipalities to maintain an infrastructure that adequately supplies water to its new residences and industries was created. Many of the long time residents of the Atlanta area are accustomed to being able to use water in ways that are reflective of the perceived abundance of this natural resource in the southeastern United States. The residents who have migrated to Atlanta have also noticed the abundance of rain and use water in ways that are indicative of a plentiful resource.
Immediately following the Second World War, at the urging of Atlanta mayor Hartsfield, a reservoir along the Chattahoochee River was created. The Corps of Engineers (COE) built a dam and created the Lake Lanier Reservoir. According to the dam’s license, the purpose of the lake was to serve as a source of inexpensive power and drinking water for the growing metropolitan area of Atlanta. As the Atlanta area grew, concern about the ability of Lake Lanier to provide drinking water for the many citizens and industries prompted several different water analysis studies to be completed during the 1970s. These studies indicated there would be a need for an additional water source in the near future. This prompted government agencies to ask the Corps of Engineers to build another reservoir that could service the growing thirst of the Atlanta area.

By the late 1980s, the Corps of Engineers announced plans to construct a dam, about fifty miles southwest of Atlanta along the Tallapoosa River. This initiated a lawsuit filed by the state of Alabama against the COE in 1990. The reservoir, which would be located entirely within the state of Georgia, would be upstream from the reservoirs built by Alabama Power that are located within the boarders of Alabama. The compact negotiations began in this setting. The state of Alabama decided to suspend its lawsuit and began to discuss usage of the Chattahoochee River with the states of Georgia and Florida outside of the court system. By 1997, the states of Alabama, Georgia, and Florida asked Congress to create the ACT and ACF River Basin compacts.

The compacts provided for one chief negotiator and one alternate negotiator from each state and the federal government. Each state was given one commissioner and one alternate commissioner. Although the compacts were distinct and separate, the same
commissioners represented the federal government and each state in both compact negotiations and voted on both compacts with the exception of Florida not having a representative on the ACT compact since none of the ACT’s basin was in Florida’s boundaries. Formally, each state’s chief commissioner was its governor. However, each state’s alternate commissioner was the person who represented the state at the meetings and voted. By all accounts of each person interviewed, each governor’s role was more ceremonial than substantive.

From the outset, the federal government was regulated to a back seat type of role. While each state’s commissioner had one vote and veto power over the compacts, the federal commissioner did not have a vote. According to one state commissioner, “their role was to observe and ensure that federal laws were not being violated.” To fully understand why there was such lack of federal involvement, you have to consider the historical background of the states involved. Each state negotiator had a slightly different explanation for why there was so little federal involvement. However, the common reason given by each of the commissioners was a lack of trust of the federal government in general and the COE in particular.

With the state of Alabama, the lack of trust of the COE stems from the fact that Alabama resented the COE for wanting to construct a dam on the Georgia side of the Tallapoosa River without any prior consultation or consent. “Before the compact was created, Alabama felt the COE was running things,” said one person familiar with the process of creating the compacts. By not giving the federal government a vote in the compact negotiations, this appeased Alabama. In a state whose motto is, ‘We Dare
Defend Our Rights’ many politicians attempt to create political capital and behave as a demagogue to emphasize this point. A state commissioner concurred that Georgia had some suspicion of the role of the federal government stemming from the concern that the EPA might have reservations over the quantity of a river’s water flow once the river left the state.

With Florida, it felt it could protect its interests as long as it had veto power. With its goals of having an agreement that does not alter the natural flow of the Apalachicola River, Florida believed it could protect its interests as long as it possessed veto power. With the compacts designed so that each state would be treated as equals and no federal involvement that would override a state, Florida believed it could protect its interests (interview with a member of the state’s negotiation team). In short, each state feared the federal government would override their veto power and side with a different state. This mistrust kept the federal government from becoming an active partner in the negotiations. It also prevented the possibility of an objective fourth party from having meaningful influence. A member of Florida’s negotiation team echoed the final point when asked why the compacts ultimately failed.

While the compacts were born in suspicion of the federal government, the respondents of the survey strongly supported, by almost a 2 to 1 margin, the idea of having a regional commission to manage and enforce water allocation. Since the survey was sent out one year after the expiration of the ACT and two years after the ACF dissolved, it is likely this conclusion is a result of a lesson learned from the failure to reach an agreement.
Alabama and Florida believed their suspicions of the federal government were justified once the federal commissioner was named. This person was a former Georgia congressman and ultimately served two years as president of the Georgia Chamber of Commerce during his tenure as the federal commissioner. As one river stakeholder reflected, “Lindsey (federal commissioner) was a good guy, very bright. But no matter how hard he tried, there was always the appearance of a conflict of interest.”

Once the negotiations began, Georgia hit the ground running. “They came ready to play”, remarked one Alabama lake stakeholder. Georgia had the data and the desire to get down to business. As one state commissioner explained, “Georgia knew what it needed. Georgia had done the studies and knew how much water it needed to meet future demand.” The other states were not prepared for the negotiations.

Of the three states, Alabama was the least prepared. It not only did not know how much water it needed, but it also did not have a mechanism for determining its needs. “Alabama was not ready for this in three ways: politically, technically and legally”, commented one commissioner. Alabama didn’t have an agency in its department of environmental management that addressed water concerns and didn’t have an agency with any experience in interstate negotiations on environmental issues. Because of this, they looked outside of government for help. They turned to Alabama Power for expertise. Alabama Power operates each dam along the Coosa and Tallapoosa Rivers and was considered by each commissioner and many stakeholders to be a powerful force with great political clout within Alabama’s state government. Indeed, the first commissioner for Alabama with the compacts was an attorney who represented Alabama Power in
many civil matters. In 1999, when a Democrat replaced a Republican governor, a former Alabama Power hydrologist replaced the state’s negotiator. Some stakeholders believed this was outsourcing government authority as well as technical expertise.

Legally speaking, Alabama had no state-wide water policy. The only laws addressing water withdrawals required notice for withdrawing more than 100,000 gallons a day. Only a notice of intent to withdraw the water had to be filed. The claim to the water could not be denied. As one person familiar with the negotiations in Georgia commented, “If a state doesn’t have the authority to tell its own people to not take water, how can it say ‘no’ to another state?” This attitude fueled the belief that Alabama was not prepared for the negotiations and was being unreasonable in asking Georgia to do more than Alabama was willing to do in terms of limiting its uses of water.

While Georgia was well prepared to enter the negotiations, the information it had came from Atlanta area needs assessments. From the outset, Georgia’s position became synonymous with what Metropolitan Atlanta wanted. “Atlanta fully backs Georgia’s position. Our position is their position”, remarked one stakeholder from the Atlanta area. Others down river had a different view. One stakeholder down river from metropolitan Atlanta echoed Atlanta’s influence, “They (Georgia’s negotiation team) would take a position and tell us to trust them. They wanted us to believe they had our best interests involved. Actually, Alabama’s interests were closer to ours.” This created a political rift that became public. Municipalities in Georgia down stream from Atlanta such as Columbus and Rome would publicly express their dismay about the direction their state was taking. At one point, the city of Columbus expressed a desire to join Alabama and
Florida in a lawsuit against the COE for allowing Lake Lanier to maintain a water level during drought periods regardless of the water flow down river (Columbus Ledger-Enquirer, February 4, 2004).

“This was really a negotiation among four states: Alabama, Florida, Atlanta, and the rest of Georgia”, remarked one Florida stakeholder. Sometimes information given to non-Atlanta stakeholders about the compacts was in scarce supply. One member of Florida’s team commented, “People from Georgia would come to the public meetings down here and wonder why they had to go to Florida to find out what is going on.” This increased the perception if not the reality of mistrust within Georgia of their state’s negotiators. Indeed, there were many issues to be worked out within the state of Georgia. At the time, Georgia did not have a state water policy. After the compacts expired, the state legislature began the process of formulating one.

Georgia has a history of economic development similar to its western neighbor, Alabama, but currently enjoys a better economic climate. Both developed as rural states. Agriculture has played an important role in the economies of both states. In the 1950 U.S. Census Alabama’s largest city, Birmingham, and Georgia’s largest city, Atlanta, were approximately the same size. In the U. S. Census of 2000, Atlanta residents outnumber Birmingham residents 440,000 to 260,000, a difference of only about 180,000 within their city limits. The real difference is the metropolitan areas for the two cities. The 2000 Census reports that the Birmingham metropolitan area has about one million residents with the Atlanta metropolitan area having almost four million. But what separates the two states, and the two cities, is recent history.
After the Second World War, the city of Atlanta began rapid growth. During the Civil Rights Movement it was Atlanta that had the slogan, “A city too busy to hate”. Birmingham had televised images of police dogs attacking civil rights marchers and firemen hosing protestors in the streets. To a certain degree, the contrast in images translated into a contrast in economic development. While the metropolitan area of Birmingham experienced slow growth and today contains around one million people with three Fortune 500 companies. The metropolitan area of Atlanta approaches four million residents, is home to over a dozen Fortune 500 companies such as Coca Cola, United Postal Service, Equifax, Home Depot, and Southern Company. It is a hub for a major airline, served as host to the 1996 Summer Olympics and a Super Bowl. It is the home of a major league franchise in professional baseball, hockey, basketball, and football, a college football conference championship, as well as the playoff games associated with their professional sports teams. It also has a large convention center in the downtown area. Several stakeholder in each state indicated, “There is no natural boundary for Atlanta’s growth, no ocean, no mountain, no desert, no other big city to bump into, just cheap land. The only thing that can restrict Atlanta’s growth is lack of water.”

With this rapid growth has come an increase in political clout that has upset the balance of power in not only the state of Georgia but the Southeast. Some stakeholders have alluded to the fact that there are some regional jealousies of Atlanta’s prosperity. “Atlanta has been growing for years, now it is our turn to grow” echoed one lake stakeholder from Alabama. If Atlanta’s growth was limited due to a lack of water, then businesses and industries would be inclined to look elsewhere to locate.
For decades there have been political divisions in Georgia that have pitted the Atlanta Metropolitan area against the more rural parts of the state and cities like Savannah which are several hundred miles apart. As one person close to the negotiations put it, “It is politically fashionable in some Georgia circles to bash Atlanta.” This could not be truer in Georgia’s intrastate battle over water.

The belief that the thirst for water of the Atlanta area will ultimately cause rivers in the area to run dry, is a fear of many downstream cities (Columbus Ledger-Enquirer, February 4, 2004). This fear is also great with government officials in the city of Savannah. They have openly expressed concerns of a pipeline being placed in the Savannah River and sending the water to the metropolitan area of Atlanta. Some municipal officials believe this is pure paranoia. “I would have to agree with the folks in Atlanta that there won’t be a pipe running from Atlanta to the South Carolina border”, echoed one municipal environmental planner downriver from Atlanta. This same environmental planner indicated that the volume of water in the Coosa River which flows through the city where he works, which is approximately one hundred miles from downtown Atlanta, is twice the volume of the Chattahoochee at the point where the city of Atlanta withdraws water. In sum, this planner believes there is enough water nearby for the basic needs of Atlanta area. But that does not stop the paranoia of other downstream municipalities from being concerned about the Atlanta area wanting water from adjacent river basins.

While areas in the western portions of the United States transfer water from larger areas, it is not without costs. Given the volume of water available to Atlanta in the
adjacent basin of the ACT, financing a water transfer from an adjacent river basin in which the main river is several hundred miles away would likely be cost prohibitive. Nevertheless, there is distrust if not a feeling of helplessness with water users downstream from Atlanta.

To some, the thought of transferring water from the Savannah River to Atlanta may seem to be an unduly high level of paranoia over the seemingly endless thirst of the Atlanta area. However, Georgia and South Carolina have begun negotiations over allocating the Savannah River’s water (Atlanta Journal Constitution, June 21, 2005). Although the Savannah River Basin is not adjacent to the Chattahoochee River Basin, it is close to the Flint River Basin.

Agricultural interests along the Flint River have grown accustomed to taking as much water as needed for summer crop irrigation. According to one state negotiator, “The agricultural users take out five times as much water in a year than does the entire Atlanta area. And that water is consumed (by the crop)…it does not go back into the basin like the treated water from Atlanta.”

Although Georgia’s water withdrawals are from two different rivers, the two rivers merge at the Georgia-Florida state line to form the Apalachicola River. For the negotiators and stakeholders in Florida, they see both groups as one entity taking water from their river. A member of the Florida negotiation team echoed, “We tried to get a commitment for a guaranteed level of flow at the state line. That is a concession Georgia would not give us. They wanted to have exceptions for times of extreme drought.”
Georgia’s unwillingness to guarantee a minimum flow illustrates the conflict among Georgia water users. According to one Georgia stakeholder, “I said all along that we need to address intrastate water policy before we can negotiate interstate water policy.” This lack of cohesiveness within Georgia was not evident to stakeholders and commissioners of other states. When asked which state was the most unified in its position, every person interviewed replied, “Georgia.” The survey data also confirmed this with 48.8% of respondents ranking Georgia as the most unified of the three states.

There are several reasons for Georgia’s appearance of a unified stand. An obvious reason would be consistency with the commissioner. The two Democratic governors and one Republican governor appointed the same commissioner. Several, who were interviewed, saw this as an advantage. The reason most often given by stakeholders as to why Georgia was so unified was that the interests of Atlanta dominated Georgia almost exclusively. Atlanta’s primary interest was to take more water from the Chattahoochee River and allow the reservoir at Lake Lanier to hold as much water as it needs to meet Atlanta’s needs. Almost all of those interviewed outside the state of Georgia saw this as the state’s sole desire throughout the negotiations. To better understand the region-wide subsystem, each state’s subsystem will now be discussed.

**Georgia**

Georgia came into the negotiations better prepared and more unified than the other states. Their primary interest was in protecting the growth of the metropolitan area of Atlanta. In short, Georgia wanted to be able to make withdrawals from the Chattahoochee and interbasin transfers from the Etowah and Coosa to the Chattahoochee
that would meet the expected water demands of the metropolitan area of Atlanta.

Georgia came to the initial meetings with specific amounts of desired water withdrawals. Georgia’s position never wavered. Each person interviewed believed Georgia was the most unified in its position throughout the negotiation process.

Business and pro-development groups in the Atlanta area were considered the most dominant types of interest groups within Georgia. When the agricultural interest groups of lower Georgia wanted some guarantees about how much water they would be able to access from the Flint River, they were urged by Atlanta business interests to not worry about access until after the agreement had been completed (interview with a Georgia stakeholder).

The state of Georgia had plans to create a statewide water policy after the compacts were complete. That would be the time the different interest groups in Georgia would negotiate Georgia’s water allocation. These conflicts lead to lawsuits. The Southeastern Power Users sued the Corps of Engineers for compensation because of the decrease in the amount of electricity provided to them by dams located near Atlanta (State of Georgia –v- The United States Army Corps of Engineers). The decrease in the volume of water flowing through the dam would decrease the amount of electricity available to the power customers. The electricity provided by the COE would have been less expensive than the electricity the co-ops had to purchase from Southern Company. Much of this electricity provided by Southern Company originated in dams or coal plants along the Coosa or Tallapoosa Rivers.
In Georgia, the lawsuits surrounding water allocation have created a tenuous situation. The different interest groups inside the metropolitan area of Atlanta are not interested in discussing the failed compacts. Stakeholders, including river protection groups, located near Atlanta were hesitant to discuss this topic. This contrasted greatly with river protection interest groups in the other states as well down stream users of the water in Georgia which were excited to tell their side of the story.

At first glance, one may expect a co-optation of the environmental groups. There is some evidence of this. After a contextual analysis of the IRS Form 990 of each river protection group in the two basins, the river protection groups in the Atlanta area had more assets, were better funded, had more full-time professional staff, and a better paid executive director (Table 4.1) than river protection groups outside of the Atlanta area. Some of the groups funding projects of the environmental groups in the Atlanta area were entities concerned about promoting the growth of the Atlanta area.

While each charity is not legally obligated to release the identity of individuals who donate more than two percent of the group’s annual revenue, groups do have to acknowledge the gifts. According to the self-reported IRS Form 990, the Atlanta area environmental group received as much as two-thirds of their funding from these large donors. Most other organizations in the basin but outside of the Atlanta area, receive about ten percent of their revenue from large donors. The remaining revenue comes from fund raisers and annual membership dues which are typically under fifty dollars.

It is, however, possible that the concern over making a statement about pending lawsuits over the amount of water discharged from Lake Lanier is also a likely reason for
the environmental interest groups to avoid public comment. Still, no entity was contacted throughout the course of this research that was named in a lawsuit and no river or lake protection interest groups outside the metropolitan area of Atlanta had this concern.

Table 4.1: Funding of the Non-profits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Assets</th>
<th>Revenue</th>
<th>Executive Director Pay</th>
<th>Grants Received</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inside of the Metropolitan Atlanta area River Keeper</td>
<td>2,113,806</td>
<td>858,334</td>
<td>74,042</td>
<td>1,634,359</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outside of the Metropolitan Atlanta area River Keeper</td>
<td>31,240</td>
<td>53,898</td>
<td>26,000</td>
<td>71,345</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: (Fiscal Year 2003)

Another possible explanation is that the group does not believe that the position the business interests in the Atlanta area have in the compact negotiations is harmful to the portion of the Chattahoochee River with which they are concerned. One of the positions the business interests in the metropolitan area of Atlanta take is to allow for a great deal of water to be stored in Lake Lanier which would ensure a steady flow of water through the Atlanta area portion of the Chattahoochee River. This would put the river keeper group’s wishes with the business interests of the Atlanta area.

It may be that to preserve the upper portion of the Chattahoochee River the lower portions of the river might suffer. However, since the Chattahoochee River interest group of the Atlanta area is concerned primarily with only the portion of the
Chattahoochee River near Atlanta, then it would seem logical for their position to be similar to the business interests.

**Alabama**

Alabama entered the agreements ill prepared. One federal negotiator commented, “Alabama wasn’t prepared politically, scientifically, or legally to enter into the compacts.” Initially, Alabama’s position was to protect the water flows along the Coosa and Tallapoosa Rivers to ensure enough water to operate the dams along those rivers. The state of Alabama didn’t have a government agency that addressed water concerns. There is still no approval process for acquiring an amount of water from a river that exceeds a ‘reasonable use’ of 100,000 gallons per day.

Within a few years of initiating the lawsuit, the state of Alabama created the Office of Water Resources (OWR). Soon after its creation, the head of that agency was appointed by the governor to head Alabama’s negotiation team. The person at the head of OWR was a former Alabama Power hydrologist who had designed the water flow models that the state of Alabama presented as its needs during the negotiation process. Today this person is head of the Alabama Department of Environmental Management.

One of the interview subjects was a state legislator from Alabama. This person provided insight into Alabama’s water policy. The legislator confirmed the lack of awareness in the state government concerning water issues surrounding these two compacts as well as a lack of desire to create a statewide water policy. This lack of awareness of the compacts within Alabama state government is well illustrated by the interviews with the stakeholders in Alabama. Several stakeholders throughout the states
believed their legislators were not only unaware of the compact negotiations, but they did not want to become aware. “This just isn’t on their (the local state legislators) radar screen,” was a common remark from Alabama stakeholders. The few state legislators who were contacted for this research, acknowledged they understood almost no fundamental issues of watershed management and admitted they did not feel knowledgeable about the topic let alone the compacts. The legislator interviewed reinforced this sentiment, “when I talk with other legislators about interbasin transfers (of river water), they begin to get a glazed look in their eyes. I don’t consider myself an expert on water. I am a lawyer, but I don’t practice environmental law.”

Over time, lake preservation organizations along the Coosa and Tallapoosa Rivers began to form. These lake groups were initially comprised of individuals who were retired lakefront property owners. As interest in the compacts progressed, other groups which had an economic interest in the water level of the lake soon joined the groups. Realtors, amateur fishermen, and marina owners were soon allying themselves with environmental groups seeking to preserve the current water flow and lake levels of the Coosa and Tallapoosa Rivers. This infusion of interest groups created not only an increased Alabama presence during the public meetings of the negotiations, but a change in the tone of Alabama’s voice. The scope of the state’s position during the negotiations widened to include guarantees not only of water quantity, but water quality. These groups also modified the focus of Alabama’s argument from talking only about water quantity but how the water quantity influences water quality as well as the ecology of the river or lake.
In 1996, one year before the compacts were enacted, the Alabama Rivers Alliance (ARA) was created. Previously, there was no state-wide group with a primary concern over the health of the state’s lakes and rivers. Most of the river and lake groups in existence in 1996 were primarily concerned with local issues such as litter, waste from farm runoff, and pollution from area industries such as paper mills. ARA became an organization with a small full-time staff that coordinated efforts and communicated information among each of the river protection groups in the Alabama portion of the two basins. This group would often become the voice of the different river and lake groups throughout Alabama. Although some groups questioned the often confrontational tactics of the ARA, the river and lake groups were grateful for the support ARA provided.

The lake protection groups proved to be effective in influencing Alabama’s position during the negotiations. The lake protection stakeholders were wealthier and better educated than most residents in Alabama. They were able to translate this social capital into political capital. For example, one stakeholder along the Coosa River owned several successful businesses and had pictures of him shaking hands with Alabama’s two previous Democratic governors, hanging on the wall of his office.

The ability of lakefront property owner groups to show strong influence in negotiations with other interest groups did not begin with the compact negotiations. In the 1980s, a brown film began to develop in the Lake Lay portion of the Coosa River, downstream from a Kimberly Clark paper mill (Jackson, 1995). Homeowners along the lake believed the paper mill was to blame for the film. The group contacted the Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM) in hopes of convincing ADEM to
force the paper mill to quit emitting the discharge. ADEM responded that the discharge was not violating any pollution laws and the aesthetics of the lake would not warrant ADEM’s involvement.

This did not deter the lake owners from trying to stop the emission. The lake owners sought the involvement of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as well as other environmental groups such as Greenpeace. Volunteers from Greenpeace began to post signs indicating the fish from the lake were not safe to eat. Eventually, with pressure from the EPA, ADEM worked out a schedule with Kimberly-Clark which would reduce discharges that caused, “odd colors” (Jackson, p.236, 1995) although Kimberly-Clark contended that the emissions were not violating any state law, or harming the lake. Shortly after the paper mill began to implement the changes, the film over Lake Lay disappeared.

The lake property owners attended most of the meetings. Of the lake owner subjects who were interviewed, each indicated they or someone from their organization attended each meeting that was held within their state. It was clear in talking with the interview subjects that their involvement began to move the focus of Alabama’s position from quantity of water flow to the quality of the water flowing into Alabama. Prior to their involvement, Alabama’s position was largely influenced by Alabama Power, which was primarily concerned with the quantity of water flowing through the Coosa and Tallapoosa Rivers.

The lake property owners began to solicit advice from biologists at Auburn University. The purpose of their study was to learn how a decrease in water flow of the
Coosa River would effect the fish population in the different lakes along the river. The study concluded that the minimum volume of water flow that Georgia was willing to guarantee (except during times of severe drought, which would then allow Georgia to eliminate the minimum flow requirement) would be so low that the fish in Lake Weiss and other areas in the northern portion of the Coosa River would not be able to survive. This emphasis on how the quantity of the water affects the quality of the water began to influence Alabama’s desired outcomes of the negotiation.

Florida

The negotiation team for Florida started with the position to protect the Apalachicola River and Bay ecosystem (interview with a Florida negotiation team member). The Apalachicola Bay area of Florida is sparsely populated and does not carry a large amount of influence in Florida’s government. Most of the land in the area is owned by a timber company or the state that sets aside the land for state parks. This portion of the Florida Gulf Coast does not have sandy beaches and is not an area that attracts tourists, as do the cities to its west such as Destin and Panama City.

Over several decades prior to the compacts, the state of Florida had been purchasing hundreds of thousands of acres in the Apalachicola River Basin to be set aside as state parks. A member of Florida’s negotiation team indicated that this was done to protect the estuary and monitor and manage growth in the area. The state of Florida worked with the federal government to create a national Estuarine Research Reserve. This same negotiator also indicated that because of the ecological value of this river
basin, the state of Florida viewed it as a state resource and wanted to see its investment protected.

As in the case with Alabama, soon after the negotiation process began, interest groups in the Apalachicola Bay area began to express concern over the outcomes of the proposed compact agreements. The concern in Florida was over water flow levels that were needed to protect the unique mixture of fresh and salt water in the Apalachicola Bay. The bay is home to an oyster harvesting industry that grows most of the state’s oyster harvest and about ten percent of the nation’s oysters.

Georgia’s negotiators would often lay blame of the increase in salinization of the bay with the creation of a water canal from the gulf into the bay. “A while back, (before the approval of the compacts) Florida created a canal on the eastern portion of the bay. They cut through the island that protected the bay from the Gulf of Mexico. They did this so boaters wouldn’t have to go around the island to get to the sea. They didn’t seem to be worried about the bay’s salinity then,” remarked one member of Georgia’s negotiation team.

When asked about the man-made cut in the island, the member of the Florida negotiation team replied, “it was done back in the 1950s when no one fully understood the impact it would have on the bay’s salinity. It was done to assist the local shrimp catchers in getting their boats to the bay quicker.”

Florida’s negotiation team was continually challenging the water flow data which was provided by the state of Georgia. Alabama’s negotiators rarely provided data concerning the Chattahoochee. Occasionally, Alabama would present data concerning
the water flow along the Coosa and Tallapoosa Rivers, but rarely the Chattahoochee. Florida presented models based upon different data and consequently arrived at different conclusions about the effects of water withdrawals along the Chattahoochee and Flint rivers. This lack of trust and ability to have a common data set in which to measure the effects of water withdrawals blunted significant progress towards an agreement.

**The End of the Compacts**

In January of 2003, all three states had Republican governors, a first since Reconstruction. This brought hope that an agreement would soon occur once the three governors got together. In May of 2003, all three governors signed a memorandum of understanding. All the memorandum of understanding said was that each governor would agree to work together to reach an agreement. An agreement was soon met with both compacts. Georgia sent a proposal to Florida, with Alabama’s consent, hoping to get the final signature. By 2003, the Apalachicola River Basin area of Florida gained political clout with the governor. After the redistricting following the release of 2000 U. S. Census data, the Apalachicola River Basin area was a part of district of the Speaker of the Florida House. The Speaker, a fellow Republican, was a long time ally of Florida governor Jeb Bush. Once the stakeholders of the bay area saw Georgia’s proposal, they contacted the Speaker and urged him to discourage the governor from signing the agreement. The governor listened to the Speaker and did not consent to the agreement.

Governor Bush was skeptical from the outset of Georgia’s desired compact outcomes. One of the members of Florida’s negotiation team indicated the state had spent millions of dollars over several decades purchasing land in the Apalachicola Bay.
This land was used to create several state parks. The purpose of the parks was to protect the bay area’s estuary from commercial development and ecological change. This same person also indicated how this spending took on increased importance from members of the state’s government who did not want to see the Apalachicola Bay area erode in the same fashion as the Everglades in the southern portion of the state.

After nearly six years of negotiations and extensions, the states decided to end negotiations and the ACF compact expired in July of that year. Since some of the provisions of the ACT compact were contingent on water access within the ACF Basin, Alabama and Georgia did not want to continue negotiations with the ACT compact. The ACT compact expired in July of 2004.

**Discussion of Findings**

Each state’s subsystem is different. Georgia is dominated by pro-growth of metropolitan Atlanta interests. The influence of environmental groups or any pro-growth groups outside of the metropolitan area of Atlanta is negligible. Alabama is heavily influenced by Alabama Power concern with the volume of water flow being sufficient to keep the power generators along the dam producing enough electricity to keep the company profitable. Environmental and river groups have minimal influence within Alabama’s subsystem, although shipping interest groups tended to be stronger than expected. Florida has many interest groups concerned with the ecology and agriculture industry that make the state’s subsystem uniquely balanced.

The dams and reservoirs along the Coosa and Tallapoosa Rivers, which are located in Alabama, are operated by Alabama Power, which is owned by Southern
Southern Company is a holding company consisting of Alabama Power, Georgia Power, Mississippi Power and Gulf Power. Southern Company provides much of the electricity throughout both river basins. If an entity wants water from a reservoir along the Coosa River, the entity must ask permission from Alabama Power to withdraw the water. Alabama Power also produces more electricity than is demanded from the customers near the dams. Consequently, much of the electricity is sold to users in the metropolitan area of Atlanta.

Due to the diverse nature of the interest groups in the tri-state subsystem as well as the lack of federal involvement in the negotiation process, the ACT and ACF interstate compacts exist no longer. The conflict within the subsystems suggests that the chance of an out-of-court agreement is slim. As it sits today, the United States Supreme Court will soon hear arguments from each state over how much water government agencies such as the COE can allow state and local water authorities in the Atlanta area can withdraw or store in Lake Lanier. Any legal precedent that would aid in predicting the outcome of each lawsuit would be outdated given recent developments in environmental law. Several of the interest groups that once formulated the negotiations of each state are now assisting in formulating the legal briefs of each state.

Design and execution of the compacts’ design flawed the negotiation process. The federal government’s involvement was kept to a minimum. A neutral third party with some decision-making authority would have greatly increased the chances of a compact agreement. The different states could not agree on a common data source, common measurements of impact of a water flow, or an enforcement and punishment
mechanism for the outcomes of a compact. The presence of a neutral third party would have, at minimum, given the states a common starting point.

The compact process illustrated the complexity of water issues in a region of the country where water concerns have historically been few and far between. Each state had different uses for the same water. For Georgia, the use was primarily for economic development. For Alabama, it was for power generation and recreation. With Florida, it was for harvesting aquatic life and protecting the bio-diversity of the basin.

After the interviews were completed, a survey was designed that would be sent to legislators, interest groups and government organizations that played a role in developing the state’s desired outcomes of the compacts. The interviews assisted in deciding which questions would be asked in the questionnaire. The interviews were also helpful in determining who should receive a questionnaire.

The interviews revealed which interest groups were influential in the negotiation process. Each state has a different water policy subsystem and therefore, different interest groups influencing each state with different goals of the compacts. Understanding which interest groups were perceived to be influential by the interview subjects assisted in formulating the fourth question in the questionnaire. This question asks respondents their perceptions of interest group influence. The results of this question better assist in understanding the desired outcomes for each state.

The interview data also provided insight into the results of the different compact proposals. There was no other data source available for learning the outcomes of the different proposals of the compacts. The tenth question of the questionnaire asks
respondents their perceptions of the outcomes of the compacts in their final wording. This assisted in providing an understanding about the different perceptions of the survey subjects. By analyzing the perceptions using independent variables such as state of residence and the nature of their professional affiliation, the desired outcomes as well as perceptions of which interest group influenced the process was determined.

The interview data also revealed which interest groups and which individuals were influential with the process. It provided an understanding of how uniform and influential each state appeared during the negotiation process. With this information, a better understanding was developed of how well each interest group influenced each state.

The next chapter addresses the results of the survey. The survey was used to determine the thoughts of individuals who were likely to possess knowledge of the compacts’ negotiations or the outputs from those negotiations. This chapter will also provide statistical analysis as to the perceptions of the many different individuals who are familiar with the compacts. This analysis provides a look from a different viewpoint since many of the survey subjects were not as familiar with the compact negotiations as those who were interviewed. In sum, this next chapter will illustrate the differences between what the elites in the process knew and how the masses perceived the process.
CHAPTER V
SURVEY ANALYSIS

After conducting the interviews, a survey was sent to individuals who were likely to have some knowledge of the compacts. The population included state legislators in either river basin. Contact information for this group was found on each state’s website. Executive directors or presidents of interest groups concerned primarily with river water issues in either basin were contacted. The primary source of information for these individuals originated from a directory of river basin groups located in the three states and was published by the Alabama Rivers Alliance. Other sources, such as Internet searches, were used to learn of additional groups that might have an interest in the issues surrounding the compact negotiations. The population also included a group of representatives from chambers of commerce and county commissioners. The collection of this list was completed primarily through Internet searches since membership directories are available only to association members.

The purpose of the survey was to learn the opinions of different groups of citizens in each basin who likely had some interest in the compact negotiations as well as water policy issues in the region. The goal was to determine their perceptions of influence
during the negotiation process. With this information, it was determined which groups were influential within each state along with the subsystem as a whole. Also, descriptive statistics were employed to learn characteristics of the respondents, which was important in determining who responded to the survey and who was interested in the compact process. Most of the individuals surveyed responded with at least some familiarity of the compacts and their negotiations.

Initially, 412 recruitment letters were sent. After eliminating the subjects who chose to withdraw from the study and subjects with incorrect mailing addresses, 351 potential respondents remained. Of those remaining, 105 surveys were returned for a response rate of 29.91 percent.

In terms of location, the respondents were evenly split between the two basins. About 41 percent identified themselves as conducting their professional duties within the ACF Basin versus about 40 percent within the ACT. About ten percent were involved with both basins and about nine percent were involved with neither basin.

Similarly, the respondents were evenly split between Alabama and Georgia with very few respondents from Florida. Fifty percent (52) identified themselves as residing in Georgia and 48 percent (50) reside in Alabama. Only three percent (3) reside in Florida.¹ Because of the low response rate from Florida, they are not included in the statistical analysis involving state comparisons.

¹ The percents do not equal 100 due to rounding.
Table 5.1 reports the demographics of survey respondents. The respondents were older than the general population, with 70 percent identifying themselves as over the age of fifty and 91 percent over the age of 40 (Table 5.1).

Table 5.1: Age and Education Levels of the Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20-29</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>High School</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>Some College</td>
<td>13.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>20.9</td>
<td>College Degree</td>
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<tr>
<td>50 and over</td>
<td>70.1</td>
<td>Graduate Degree</td>
<td>43.7</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Note: Percents do not equal 100 due to rounding.

The respondents have completed higher levels of education than the typical resident of their respective state, with about 84 percent of respondents having at least a college degree (Table 5.1). The respondents were predominately male, with 77 percent identifying themselves as such (data not shown).

The high levels of education is not surprising since the individuals who were sent a questionnaire either take on leadership and responsibility roles in their interest group, are elected officials, or have achieved a high level of expertise in a field that is involved with environmental management. Knowledge of the negotiations was not common among most of the general population living in the ACT and ACF River Basins. Therefore, those who were familiar with the negotiations likely possessed a high amount
of education, which was needed to understand some of the more complex aspects of the negotiations.

The respondents were asked if they conducted their professional duties in a Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). This question was included to determine if any rural versus urban differences in policy preferences or perceptions on the strength of interest groups existed. Approximately 69 percent of respondents from Georgia conducted their professional duties in an MSA while roughly 54 percent of Alabamians did, which was found to be statistically significant at the .05 level (Table 5.2).

Table 5.2: Percent of Respondents who are Located in a Metropolitan Statistical Area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Total Responses</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alabama</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>54.17</td>
<td>45.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>69.39</td>
<td>30.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both States</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>61.86</td>
<td>38.14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: No respondents from Florida indicated residence in an MSA.

In order to more closely examine the differences between rural and urban respondents, the questionnaire asked respondents the population of the area in which they resided. A plurality of respondents from the state of Georgia indicated they live in a city with a population over 100,000. A plurality of Alabama residents indicated they live in a rural area or a city with a population smaller than 10,000 (Table 5.3). A statistically significant difference existed at the .01 level in the analysis of the population where each respondent conducts his professional duties (Table 5.3).
Table 5.3: Population of the Area Where Respondents Conduct their Professional Duties.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Alabama</th>
<th>Georgia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Large city <em>(over 100,000)</em></td>
<td>22</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium city <em>(more than 50,000 but less than 100,000)</em></td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small city <em>(more than 10,000 but less than 50,000)</em></td>
<td>24</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural area <em>(less than 10,000 or primarily unincorporated area)</em></td>
<td>42</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Percent for each Category
Note: Percents do not equal 100 due to rounding.

The difference in population was expected since the majority of the Alabama, Coosa and Tallapoosa river basins are undeveloped or populated with small cities. The exceptions are the cities of Mobile and Montgomery; both cities have over 200,000 residents (U.S. Census, 2000). The state of Georgia was expected to have a plurality of its respondents indicate living in a city with over 100,000 people since the largest city in the Georgia portion of both basins is Atlanta with over 400,000 people and suburbs, such as Marietta, having a population over 100,000. Also, some respondents in the metropolitan area of Atlanta likely consider themselves to live in the Atlanta area and would respond to the question as if they lived within the city limits of Atlanta. The difference between Alabama and Georgia also illustrates the differences the two states have in their use of the water. Alabama, being a more rural state, uses the water for recreation and electricity generation. Georgia, being more urban, uses the water to
maintain a large population and to support development in the metropolitan area of Atlanta.

No statistically significant difference was found between Alabama and Georgia concerning the respondents’ gender, age, and education (data not shown). When asked how long the respondents had been at their current position, the responses ranged from three months to 33 years. The most popular responses were three, five and two years (data not shown). This information determined if, and how long, the respondent held their current position during the compact negotiation process.

**Perception of Influence among the Organizations**

To determine which interest groups were perceived to be the most influential, the respondents were asked to rate level of influence from one to five; five representing the most influential and one representing the least amount of influence. The scores were added, averaged, and ranked.

**Electrical Power Companies**

When considering the responses of individuals from both states, electric companies were considered to be the most powerful interest group with a score of 4.07 (Table 5.4). In comparing the responses of Alabama and Georgia residents, respondents from Alabama rated the electric companies higher than those from Georgia; this was found to be statistically significant at the .01 level. This difference indicates that respondents from Alabama believed power companies, like Alabama Power, had more influence over the process than the respondents from Georgia believed they had. This
These survey results support the findings from interviews with the negotiators and stakeholders. The individuals interviewed often mentioned that Alabama Power had a great amount of influence over Alabama’s position during the negotiations. Again, this perception reflects the impact of the professional background of Alabama’s negotiators since both negotiators had significant professional connections with Alabama Power.

When the respondents from each state were analyzed by separating them according to their knowledge of the compacts, no statistically significant difference existed (data not shown). This lack of a difference indicates that the level of influence was evident by the casual observer as well as a dedicated follower of the negotiations.

The questionnaire also asked respondents to list the single most influential group during the negotiation process; results are shown in Table 5.5. Alabama Power was also listed as most influential by four of the survey respondents, with Alabama Power’s parent company, Southern Company, being listed four times as well (Table 5.5). Georgia Power and Gulf Power, which supply power to the Apalachicola Bay area and are subsidiaries of Southern Company, were not listed.

**Federal Agencies**

Two federal agencies, the Corps of Engineers (COE) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), also ranked high in terms of influence over the compacts negotiations (Table 5.4). Three respondents indicated the COE was the most influential organization during the negotiations (Table 5.5). The COE’s perceived strength of...
influence in comparison to their lack of formal participation illustrates their perceived ability to influence the federal government as well as their reputation for establishing control over the water volumes of the Chattahoochee River and Lake Lanier.

No statistically significant difference existed between Alabama and Georgia respondents in the analysis of their perceptions of influence strength of the COE or the EPA. When the data were separated by respondent’s knowledge of the compacts, the respondents in all categories indicated the level of influence of the CEO was strong. The fact that the COE controlled the dams along the Chattahoochee Rivers and had a great deal of influence in setting the water level for Lake Lanier, which supplies water for the metropolitan area of Atlanta, explains this lack of difference. The strong and easily visible influence of the COE over the commodity of Chattahoochee River water was illustrated the near identically high rankings of the COE from both states, 3.81 for Alabama respondents and 3.78 for Georgia respondents, (Table 5.4). The high ranking given the COE is also likely due to the perceived impact the court settlement reached between the COE and the state of Georgia had on the compacts and the perception that each state would likely seek advice from federal agencies to help support their cases.

The EPA, which presented concern over the possible reduction of water flow along the Chattahoochee and Flint Rivers, was also viewed similarly by both states as having strong influence. In summary, both states understood and saw evidence of the role and influence of federal agencies.
River and Lake Keeper Groups

While the perceived strength of river and lake keeper groups was not ranked as highly as power companies and federal government agencies, a statistically significant difference was evident between the Alabama and Georgia respondents’ perceived strength of these groups. This difference between the respondents of the two states was statistically significant at the .01 and .05 levels respectively for each group (Table 5.4).

Because the river and lake keeper groups were more numerous and more involved in Alabama than in Georgia, both groups were more likely to be considered stronger by respondents from Georgia than respondents from Alabama. Also, Alabama Power often had similar interests as the lake and river keeper groups. The blending of the two groups’ interests may have sent the message to observers from Georgia that Alabama Power was supporting these groups, which would also inflate their perceived influence among Georgians. In Georgia, most of the river keeper groups did not get involved in the negotiations. Just the opposite was true in the state of Alabama. As discussed in the analysis of the interview data, Alabama’s river keeper groups attended each meeting and were involved in the negotiations throughout the process. These groups also had the political resources to gain influence within the state of Alabama and often formed a coalition with Alabama Power to protect the rivers’ volume of flow.

The lake and river protection groups were believed to have a higher level of influence from those who identified themselves as being very knowledgeable about the compacts than those with vague knowledge (data not shown). This data is consistent
with the responses from the interviews subjects who were most familiar with the negotiations.

**State Government Agencies**

State government agencies were perceived to be the second most influential group with a score of 3.91 (Table 5.4). A statistically significant difference occurred at the .1 level between Alabama and Georgia respondents; with Georgians viewing the statewide elected officials as more influential than respondents from Alabama viewed them. This reinforces the qualitative data indicating that electrical power companies and other stakeholders primarily influenced the negotiations in Alabama while the state government agencies in Georgia took a more active role in the process. This finding is likely due to the fact that the state agencies in Alabama were viewed as being influenced primarily by Alabama Power while the state agencies in Georgia were viewed as being influenced by broader concerns such as development; however, the specific driving forces of each interest group were not specifically listed in the survey. The perception of the influence of state government agencies was uniform throughout the respondents with respect to their level of knowledge of the compacts (data not shown).

Alabama’s governor was listed three times as most influential while the Georgia Governor’s Office was listed ten times, more than any other group (Table 5.5). This perception of influence stems from the governors choosing each lead negotiator, as well as each governor becoming involved near the end of the compacts, as evidenced by the memorandum of understanding each governor signed.
State government agencies were listed frequently by the subjects as the most influential agencies in the state of Georgia (Table 5.5). Six respondents from the state of Georgia listed the Department of Environmental Protection as most influential and Georgia’s governor’s office was mentioned by eight of the state’s respondents. The fact that the top leadership in the state was so influential in Georgia, along with other government agencies, not only suggests that the state was the most uniform, but also helps explain why Georgia is listed as the most influential of the three states. With a large portion of the state’s government invested in the outcome, it is likely that Georgia put more effort into influencing the negotiations; therefore, the state had a greater amount of influence.

Another likely reason state agencies ranked highly among Georgia’s respondents is because the state’s federal negotiator spent two years as president of the Georgia Chamber of Commerce while serving as the federal negotiator. Some of the participants in the public hearings of the negotiations believed it was not possible for the Federal Commissioner to be completely unbiased; some of the respondents believed that the Georgia Chamber of Commerce held a great amount of influence due to one of their employees being the Federal Commissioner. The perception of this situation probably contributed to the statistically significant difference between the responses gathered from the two states, in which Georgians were more likely to rank the influence of state agencies higher than Alabama respondents.
Local Government

Locally elected officials and local governments, with a score of 2.5, were not considered very influential in the process. Although a statistically significant difference existed at the .05 level between Alabama and Georgia respondents when the perceived levels of influence of city and county governments and locally elected officials were considered. The respondents of the survey from Georgia believed local and county governments were more influential in the negotiations than the respondents from Alabama believed they were (Table 5.4).

When considering the influence of elected officials and local governments, respondents from Georgia viewed the influence of these local groups higher than those from Alabama did. This difference is likely due to the influence of local groups in the Atlanta area such as the Atlanta Regional Council (ARC), which was considered to be influential throughout the process by some of those interviewed. According to one Georgian, who is a local government employee outside of the metropolitan area of Atlanta, the ARC formulated the proposals that the state of Georgia would present to the other states. The ARC works with local governments in the Atlanta area and assists in planning issues. Water planning is considered one of its duties (www.atlantaregional.com).

Additionally, the only local government mentioned as the most influential was the City of Atlanta, which was mentioned by three respondents. The city of Atlanta being perceived as most influential was to be expected; as Atlanta as well as other governments in the Atlanta area are larger and have access to more resources than the many smaller
governments in Alabama’s area of the river basins. This finding is also supported by this finding.

Several of the interview subjects throughout the Coosa and Tallapoosa River Basins indicated their locally elected officials were not knowledgeable about the compacts and expressed little desire to become involved in the negotiations. The survey data also supports the interview data by indicating that Alabama residents believed their locally elected officials were less influential than those in Georgia.

**Other Groups**

While the EPA was ranked fourth among all interest groups, environmental groups (3.28) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife (3.26) were ranked eighth and ninth respectively (Table 5.4). Although Alabama and Georgia had similar views on the U. S. Fish and Wildlife’s influence, a statistically significant difference existed between Alabama and Georgia in their perceptions of environmental groups. Georgians viewed the environmental groups, which were predominantly located in Florida, as more influential than the Alabama respondents viewed them.

This finding assists in explaining how Georgians perceive the state of Florida’s role during the negotiations. The interview subjects from Georgia considered Florida to be the state that ended the negotiations and the primary reason the compacts failed. In fact, it was Florida that rejected Georgia’s proposal after the three governors made an agreement of understanding. Florida’s rejection lead to the expiration of the ACF and subsequently the ACT compacts. The fact that the environmental groups influenced the state of Florida to not sign the agreement, as illustrated in the discussion of the
interviews, and ultimately prevented Georgia from getting the water they desired, helps explain why environmental groups were ranked higher in influence by Georgia respondents than Alabama respondents.

River navigation interests (3.01) and home-builders associations (2.59) ranked near the bottom and received uniform rankings from the two states (Table 5.4). Although they were mentioned by some of the interview subjects as being influential, they did not receive much consideration from the subjects surveyed.

The agricultural interests, located primarily along the Flint River, were rated near the middle with a score of 3.29 (Table 5.4). No statistically significant difference occurred between the two states in the analysis of these interests. The perceived weakness of agricultural interests influence was supported by the interview data as subjects in Alabama, Florida, and Georgia rarely mentioned agricultural interest as influencing Georgia’s negotiation position. With each person interviewed, the agricultural interests were seen as having little influence. In fact, each subject suggested that the state of Georgia was not influenced by agricultural interests, but by economic development interests in the metropolitan area of Atlanta.
Table 5.4: Average Score for Influence with the Compact Negotiations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Average Score</th>
<th>Alabama</th>
<th>Georgia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Electric Power Companies</td>
<td>4.07***</td>
<td>4.36</td>
<td>3.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Government Agencies</td>
<td>3.91*</td>
<td>3.69</td>
<td>4.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COE</td>
<td>3.76</td>
<td>3.81</td>
<td>3.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPA</td>
<td>3.48</td>
<td>3.40</td>
<td>3.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Elected Officials</td>
<td>3.41*</td>
<td>3.24</td>
<td>3.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural</td>
<td>3.29</td>
<td>3.17</td>
<td>3.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental</td>
<td>3.28**</td>
<td>3.07</td>
<td>3.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U. S. Fish and Wildlife</td>
<td>3.26</td>
<td>3.26</td>
<td>3.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lake and River Keepers</td>
<td>3.07***</td>
<td>2.74</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>River Navigation</td>
<td>3.01</td>
<td>2.95</td>
<td>3.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City and County Governments</td>
<td>2.77**</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home Builders</td>
<td>2.59</td>
<td>2.56</td>
<td>2.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Officials</td>
<td>2.50**</td>
<td>2.22</td>
<td>2.72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Statistical Significance between Alabama and Georgia

* = .1  
** = .05  
*** = .01
Table 5.5: Free Responses for Most influential in the Subsystem

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Georgia Governor’s Office</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgia Department of Natural Resources</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State of Georgia</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alabama Power</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Company</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corps of Engineers</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alabama Governor Bob Riley</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Atlanta</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgia’s Chief Negotiator</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alabama’s Chief Negotiator</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alabama Department of Environmental Management</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal Commissioner</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternate Federal Commissioner</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 66
Note: Only multiple responses are listed

While not listed as most influential, the other major power company in the region, Georgia Power, also played a role in influencing water supply during the compact negotiations. The main issue of the State of Georgia –v- COE lawsuit was the water level of Lake Lanier. The Southern Power customers wanted the COE to be able withdraw as much water as needed to produce electricity for their consumption. Any excess demand of electricity was to be made up by Georgia Power. The state of Georgia wanted the COE to increase the minimum level of water held in Lake Lanier, which would ensure that not enough electricity would be produced by Southern Power to meet peak demand during the summer months. One person close to the negotiations commented that Southern Power users had been guaranteed electricity by the COE from the Buford Dam at Lake Lanier. This electricity is provided at a lower cost than that provided by Georgia Power, which supplies electricity to the Atlanta area and most of Georgia.
While no survey data directly addressed the question of Georgia Power’s influence on the negotiations, some observers of the negotiations speculated that Georgia Power was influential in the process. One observer who worked with the federal negotiators commented, “Alabama Power and Georgia Power were at all of the meetings. But they never said anything. You would think that at some point Southern Company (parent holding company of both Alabama Power and Georgia Power) would have gotten them together and said, ‘Okay guys, here is our game plan’ but if they did, it never became public.”

The court settlement was concurrent with the negotiations and some observers, at least one a member of another state’s negotiation team, alleged that the settlement negotiation occurred without the knowledge of the other states and was done to surpass the possible outcomes of the compact negotiations. More than once observers of the negotiations whose interests were within the state of Alabama or Florida accused the state of Georgia of ‘negotiating in bad faith’. The respondents possibly saw this settlement as a way for the COE to influence the outcome of the compacts with an approach outside the negotiations.

Question six of the survey asked respondents to list the most influential group during the compact negotiations. The respondents of both states viewed the state government agencies as having a high level of influence. Georgia’s Department of Natural Resources was listed six times as the most influential group. Alabama’s Department of Environmental Management was listed twice. The lead negotiators of Alabama, Georgia and Florida all worked for a state governmental agency concerned
with environmental management. The chief negotiator for Alabama was listed twice as the most influential, while Georgia’s counterpart was listed three times.

**Perceived Strength of the States**

The survey asked respondents to identify the state they perceived as being most influential in the negotiations; a score of five representing the most influential and a score of one representing the least amount of influence. Georgia, home to the state agencies most often mentioned as being influential, is listed as the most influential state (Table 5.6). The interviews data supports the survey responses. Each subject interviewed indicated Georgia was the most influential of the three states during the negotiation process. Also, five survey respondents mentioned Georgia as the most influential organization (Table 5.5). Florida and Alabama are listed as the second and third most influential states, respectively (Table 5.6).

A statistically significant difference in perception of influence of the states existed between respondents from Alabama and Georgia. The respondents from each state considered the other state to be more powerful than their own which was found to be statistically significant at the .01 level. When asked which state was the most influential, respondents from Alabama indicated Georgia was the strongest while Georgians indicated Florida was the most influential (Table 5.6).

With respect to the perception of Alabama’s level of influence, a statistically significant difference was evident at the .1 level between the respondents from Alabama and Georgia. Georgia respondents believed Alabama was more influential during the
negotiations than Alabama respondents believed their state was (Table 5.6). Alabama and Georgia respondents had nearly identical responses for Florida’s perceived influence.

Table 5.6: Average Score of Perceived Influence of Each State During the Negotiation Process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Average Score</th>
<th>Alabama Respondents</th>
<th>Georgia Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>4.15***</td>
<td>4.51</td>
<td>3.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>3.85</td>
<td>3.83</td>
<td>3.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alabama</td>
<td>3.53*</td>
<td>3.24</td>
<td>3.80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* = statistically significant at the .1 level  
** = statistically significant at the .05 level  
*** = statistically significant at the .01 level

The fact that each state was believed to have at least a moderately strong degree of influence indicates that each state participated in the compact negotiations in a purposeful manner. While each state exuded at least some level of influence during the negotiations, Georgia was clearly the most influential. This conclusion is entirely consistent with the interview data; each person interviewed indicated that the state of Georgia was the most influential of the three states.

**Putting on a Unified Front**

When asked which state was more unified in its position, 40 percent of respondents from both states strongly indicated Georgia was the most influential (Table 5.7). Alabama and Georgia respondents were almost identical in this response. When separating the respondents according to levels of knowledge, the most knowledgeable
overwhelmingly indicated Georgia was the most unified (data not shown). Respondents with vague knowledge also indicated Georgia was most unified while those with some knowledge were divided between most and least.

Georgia respondents also believed agricultural interests were more influential than respondents in Alabama believed they were. This finding is consistent with the fact that agricultural interests in the Flint River Basin were concerned about the amount of water they could withdraw and worked to influence the negotiations to protect their interests. The finding demonstrates that respondents in Georgia noticed the influence of the agricultural interests while those in Alabama did not, which is consistent with the perception of Georgia being the most unified of the three states during the negotiation process. While Georgians acknowledged the voice of the agricultural interests, the pro-economic development interests of Atlanta were powerful enough to repress their voice during the negotiations making it appear as if Georgia was speaking with one voice.

Alabama was ranked last according to uniformity in its goals (Table 5.7). While Florida ranked in the middle, Georgia was placed at the top. Forty percent of the respondents indicated Georgia was the most uniform in their position. Fourteen percent of respondents indicated Florida was the most unified while Alabama received about seventeen percent. Overall, Alabama residents were mostly in agreement that Alabama was at the bottom, and Georgia respondents were more evenly dispersed between top, middle, and bottom in how they perceived the state (data not shown). Those with the most knowledge of the compacts agreed predominately that Alabama was the least unified while the other groups were more dispersed among the three responses. No
statistically significant difference existed between the responses from the two states (data not shown).

The interview data did not yield clear results for the uniformity of Alabama. A large portion of this can be explained in a discussion of the influence of the two most influential interest groups within the state. While Florida’s negotiation team changed little and Georgia’s chief negotiator didn’t change throughout the process, Alabama’s team changed with each governor. The one consistent characteristic of Alabama’s chief negotiators was that they all had a professional connection to Alabama Power. The other interest group representing individuals from Alabama that exuded influence had similar desires as Alabama Power, but had more demands than Alabama Power. A casual observer to the process may not be able to distinguish which group was supporting which policy agenda. As the interview respondents noted, Alabama Power rarely made a public comment at the meetings or after the meetings. To further cloud the picture, with the infusion of the river keeper groups as an active interest groups in the process, the message of what Alabama wanted from the compacts began to change from water quantity to both water quantity and water quality.

The interview respondents often spoke of Florida as having a consistent goal of wanting more water than what Georgia was willing to give, but few other desired outcomes such as water access to spur development, to generate electricity, or to meet agricultural needs. The interview respondents were not clear as to what Alabama’s goals were other than needing sufficient water to operate dams and for recreational uses on reservoirs.
Table 5.7: Uniformity of Desired Outcomes During the Negotiation Process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Average Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>1.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>2.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alabama</td>
<td>2.18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A score closest to ‘1’ signifies the most unified. A score closest to ‘3’ is the least unified.

Differences in Knowledge Levels of the Respondents

The first question of the questionnaire asked respondents to indicate their knowledge of the compact negotiations. The four possible responses included very knowledgeable, somewhat knowledgeable, vague knowledge and no knowledge. Due to low category size, the four responses were combined into two groups for analysis. The first group consisted of respondents who were very or somewhat knowledgeable and the second group was made up of respondents who considered themselves as having either vague or no knowledge. Analysis was conducted to determine if statistically significant differences existed between the respondents who considered themselves knowledgeable versus those who reported vague or no knowledge.

Crosstabs analysis was conducted to see if any differences in perceptions of fairness of the compacts outcomes could be found among the different levels of respondent knowledge. Two knowledge groups were found to be statistically significant in their differences at the .05 level while two were statistically significant different at the .1 level.
The two knowledge groups that were statistically different at the .05 level had differing perceptions of a group having an advantage over the other in terms of influencing the quality and quantity of water as written in the compacts final form. In both cases, those more familiar with the compacts disagreed more with the statements than those who knew less about the compacts’ final wording (data not shown). The other differences were over the perceived influence of environmental groups and the COE (data not shown). Those less familiar with the compact negotiations believed environmental groups had more influence than those who were more familiar with the negotiations. Finally, those less familiar with the compacts believed the COE had less influence than those who identified themselves as more familiar with the negotiation process (data not shown).

**Attitudes about the Compacts**

In order to understand the thoughts of the respondents concerning what the compacts’ outcomes were or should have been, the questionnaire included several questions regarding water management. The questionnaire asked respondents to rank, on a scale of one to five, if they agreed or disagreed with the statement. A ranking of ‘one’ indicated strongly disagree while a ranking of ‘five’ indicated strongly agree. A few questions were found to have statistically significant differences between the respondents from Alabama and Georgia.

The question with the most statistically significant difference asked respondents if the compacts, as written in their final form, would have given no state an advantage in water quality at the expense of another (Table 5.8). Respondents from Alabama were
more likely to disagree with this statement than Georgians (2.24 to 2.92 respectively). This was found to be statistically significant at the .01 level (Table 5.8). Since the compacts allowed Georgia to keep as much water as it needed during times of drought this response was expected.

One question, found to be statistically significant at the .05 level, asked respondents to consider if interest groups with environmental concerns were most influential in the negotiation process (Table 5.8). Respondents from Georgia were also more likely to agree with this statement than were respondents from Alabama (3.24 to 2.59 respectively).

Another question asked if the compacts would limit the economic development for downstream users. With a statistically significant difference at the .05 level (Table 5.8), Georgians were more likely to agree with this statement than the respondents from Alabama (3.48 to 3.0 respectively). The results from this question likely reflect Alabama’s primary concern over water quality as well as their uses of the water for non-economic development reasons. This finding also reflects the concern of some Georgians located downstream of Atlanta who felt their economic development opportunities may have been limited if the final wording of the compacts became law.

One question also asked if the compacts in their final form would not give an advantage to one state, at the expense of another, in terms of water quantity. As expected, Georgians were more likely than Alabama respondents to agree with this statement (2.53 to 2.0 respectively); this was found to be statistically significant at the 0.1 level.
Another question in which Alabama and Georgia had statistically significant differences in their responses asked if the compacts would have limited economic development in the Atlanta area. Respondents from Alabama were more likely to disagree with this statement than respondents from Georgia (2.44 to 3.25).

In summary, these findings indicate that the interest groups in Alabama have a primary concern of water quality. Some believe a reduced quantity of water would affect the quality of water in the state. The fact that Georgian’s saw environmental groups as more influential than respondents from Alabama viewed them indicates Georgian’s saw interest groups with environmental concerns as an obstacle to reaching an agreement, which is supported by the interview data. One interview respondent from the Atlanta area indicated that “If the Florida Panhandle were a part of Alabama, there would have been an agreement.” The primary concern for the state of Florida was the Apalachicola Bay’s ecosystem. These statements support the idea that environmental interest groups were not only viewed as an obstacle preventing an agreement but as an obstacle for growth in the Atlanta area as well.
Table 5.8: Respondents in Each State Who Agreed With the Statement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Overall</th>
<th>Alabama</th>
<th>Georgia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improve Your Water Quality</td>
<td>2.53</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>2.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase Your Water Quantity</td>
<td>2.39</td>
<td>2.24</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Advantage to a State in Quantity</td>
<td>2.23*</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>2.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Advantage to a State in Quality</td>
<td>2.56***</td>
<td>2.24</td>
<td>2.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Influence</td>
<td>2.91**</td>
<td>2.59</td>
<td>3.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing Development Influence</td>
<td>2.95</td>
<td>3.05</td>
<td>2.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Should Have Managed Urban Growth</td>
<td>3.66</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>3.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would Limit Metropolitan Atlanta Development</td>
<td>2.82**</td>
<td>2.44</td>
<td>3.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would Limit Down River Development</td>
<td>3.22**</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>3.48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: A Higher Number Indicates a Likelihood of Agreeing.
* = statistically significant at the .1 level
** = statistically significant at the .05 level
*** = statistically significant at the .01 level

When Florida interview subjects were asked why the compacts failed, their response was, “The compacts were not a failure because we didn’t sign a bad agreement. If we had signed a bad agreement, then they would have been a failure.” Reflected in this statement are the concerns that Florida was unable to take a proactive stand during the negotiations and the state of Georgia presented options for them to consider that did not have sufficient concern for Florida’s desires.
In summary, fairness is the primary concern of most of the Alabama and Florida interest groups that responded to the survey. While respondents from Alabama did not believe as strongly as Georgians that the compacts would have limited Metropolitan Atlanta’s growth, they did believe the potential for an increase in water quantity withdrawals in the Atlanta area would have negatively effected economic development downstream more than the Georgians believed it would (data not shown).

A similar analysis was conducted to learn if any differences existed in the perceptions between respondents who indicated they were from a Metropolitan Statistical Area versus those who were not. In this respect, only the responses from one question were statistically significant (p<.10). The question asked if the compacts would limit economic development in down-river areas. Respondents from a Metropolitan Statistical Area were more likely to agree with this statement than respondents not from a Metropolitan Statistical Area (3.37 and 3.00 respectively). This finding illustrates the different uses of the water by down river users. Down river users do not use the water for economic development in the same manner as up river users; therefore, they may not have the same views on how the rivers effect economic development. The finding doesn’t dispute how the economies of downstream users are dependent upon recreational and shipping uses of the water for their economic development and quality of life. In conclusion, differences in perception exist concerning what aspect of the rivers is valued by the respondents.
Intergovernmental Relations

With almost a two-to-one margin, the respondents wanted a regional commission to decide how the water should be allocated and to create enforcement of the allotment (Table 5.9). This finding is surprising when considering the resistance of the states to allow the federal government participation in the negotiations. A desire for more federal involvement, or at least a region-wide governing organization, has likely occurred due to the failure of the states to reach an agreement. In summary, the desire to better manage the water in the river basins and have a neutral third party as the managing organization is evident.

No statistically significant differences were found between Alabama and Georgia respondents on either question regarding water management and enforcement (data not shown). Some differences were apparent among respondents most familiar with the compacts versus those not as familiar with the compact negotiations. Those most familiar were less likely to support the involvement of a regional commission in allocating the water and were against, by a three to two margin, a region-wide commission enforcing water allocation (data not shown). This finding likely illustrates the lack of trust each state has for the other and acknowledges that the structure of the compacts was faulty from the beginning. The finding also illustrates the hopelessness some respondents in the state of Georgia may feel about having their concerns heard. The uniformity among Alabama and Georgia respondents concerning federal involvement reflects the notion that Georgia interest groups are more likely to view a
decision from a neutral third party or the federal government as more fair and closer to their interests.

Table 5.9: Percent of Respondents who Support a Region-wide Commission

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Allocation Management</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allocation Enforcement</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Percents do not equal 100 due to rounding.

The questionnaire was used to determine which interest groups were influential and what respondents felt were the desired outcomes for the compacts. Gathering this information assisted in determining which quadrant of McCool’s Model each state’s subsystem was located in. The questionnaire was not only able to reach more individuals than the interview data, but was able to reach a broader audience and was subsequently able to tell a different aspect of the story. The survey’s strength is that it determined which interest group was most influential as well as relative influence among the different interest groups. The inclusion of people who were not very familiar with the compacts gave some indication as to the perceived importance of each interest group. Learning which groups and individuals were or were not familiar with the compacts assisted in learning the salience not only of the compact negotiations, but the issues surrounding the compacts and water policy in general.

The next chapter further tests the hypotheses with regression and factor analysis where appropriate. The tests determine the perceptions of how each interest group
believed the compact would affect a particular aspect of the natural resource. After the statistical analysis tests were run, each of the hypotheses were revisited and are discussed in the next chapter.
CHAPTER VI
TESTING THE HYPOTHESES WITH FACTOR AND REGRESSION ANALYSIS

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the specific concerns and goals of the different interest groups. Question four of the survey asked respondents to evaluate the amount of influence demonstrated by several interest groups involved in the compact negotiation process. Some of the interest groups with similar goals for the compacts were combined into three groups for analysis. The three groups are labeled ‘environment’, ‘government’, and ‘economic development’.

The interest groups are also categorized according to the subject matter of their desired outcomes of the compacts. The three groupings include fairness in expected outcomes, promoting economic growth, and improving water quality. Factor analysis is used to determine the membership of each group.

Correlations were utilized to determine what motivated each interest group, state, or goal of the compact. Additionally, regression analysis was used to explore the interactions with several independent variables on the dependent variables index to determine the desired goals and expectations of each index. The purpose of the following
analysis is to determine the goals of each group, and further decide if those goals were reflected in the compacts’ negotiation agenda. The analysis also helps corroborate the interview analysis in determining which interest groups influenced the negotiation process.

**Factor Analysis**

Factor analysis is used to study association among variables (O’Sullivan, 1999). Factor analysis considers these associations and determines if the variables are measuring the same characteristic, concept, or theoretical constructs (O’Sullivan, 1999). The analysis determines how closely these variables are associated with one another and if they can be grouped together in an index. Typically, the first step in factor analysis examines the relationships among the variables (Kim and Mueller, 1978). If a relationship exists between two or more variables, then factor analysis can be used to combine the different variables into an index with fewer variables to explain similar aspects of a dependent variable.

Factor analysis was used to determine the capability of any of the different influences to be grouped together. Several of the interest groups were grouped together based upon similarities in their factor scores. Principle component analysis with a varimax rotation was used to decide the factor loadings. The purpose of varimax orthogonal rotation is to determine the relationship between the measures of each of the variables (Kim and Mueller, 1978).

Factor analysis was used to determine if there are similarities in perceptions of influence with the different survey items. The perception likely existed that the interest
groups with similar goals were perceived as having similar levels of influence on the negotiations. The results of the factor analysis show that interests groups loaded on three factors: environmental, government, and economic development.

The first factor relates to concerns with the environment and includes perceived influence of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife, environmental groups, the Environmental Protection Agency, and lake and river protection groups. The next factor is primarily concerned with local and state-wide governments and includes responses from: city and county agencies, state agencies, and local elected officials. Finally, the third factor measures development issues such as crop irrigation, production of electricity and sustaining an increasingly large population. This factor includes responses from the following groups: the Corps of Engineers, homebuilder associations, river navigation interests, agricultural interests, and electric power generators.

The outcome of the loading is evidence of the logical expectation that government groups had similar desired outcomes of the compacts while the environmental groups and federal government agencies, such as the EPA and Fish and Wildlife, were considered to have similar goals. Other groups such as the Corps of Engineers, electric power generators, and river navigation, which were groups whose goals could be described as economic development, also had similar scores.
Table 6.1: Factor Analysis of Interest Groups with Varimax Rotation (Eigen values)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Loadings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fish and Wildlife</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Groups</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPA</td>
<td>.894</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lake and River groups</td>
<td>.779</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City or county agencies</td>
<td>.714</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State gvt. Agencies</td>
<td>.177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State elected officials</td>
<td>.311</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local elected officials</td>
<td>.167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COE</td>
<td>.556</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home builder</td>
<td>3.275E-02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>River navigation</td>
<td>.395</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural</td>
<td>.321</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electric</td>
<td>-.342</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Eigen values)
Table 6.1 reports the results of the factor analysis. The Eigen values from the factor analysis in Table 6.1 indicate the interest groups can be grouped into three different categories. The first of the groups is considered to be primarily concerned with issues relating to the environment. The second group is concerned with advancing the wishes of state and local government, and the final category of interest groups is concerned with economic development.

Each of the variables on the far left column represents an interest group from question four of the questionnaire. The respondent was asked to rank the influence of the interest group with a scale of one through five. One was coded ‘strongly disagree’ and five was coded ‘strongly agree’.

**Correlations**

Correlations were used to determine the desired compact outcomes of different interest groups. Rather than running a correlation with each interest group, the interest groups were grouped into three indices as determined by the results from the factor analysis. The three groups include interest groups with similar public policy goals and are labeled ‘government’, ‘development’, and ‘environmental’.

The government index includes several variables that determined the perceptions of state and local governments (Table 6.2). With a Pearson’s R of .356, a statistically significant (p<.01) moderate relationship between environmental groups and state and local governments is shown. The relationship between the two groups indicates that government groups believed the desires of environmental groups influenced the compact negotiation process. The relationship is also supported with the correlation of the
variable labeled, ‘influence of environmental groups’. This correlation, with an unstandardized beta of .202 and a t-score 2.826, is statistically significant at the .05 level (Table 6.5). The correlation of this variable also indicates that state and local governments believed the environmental groups were influential in the process.

Additionally, Pearson’s R shows a statistically significant moderate relationship (.420, p< .01) between ‘state and local’ and the variable labeled ‘economic development’ (Table 6.2). This relationship indicates that the state and local government respondents believed that interest groups concerned with economic development were influential in the process.

The analysis of the government index lends support to the hypotheses concerning the domination of interest groups in the Atlanta area, which were concerned with economic development, over the position of the state of Georgia. The correlations suggest that interest groups concerned with economic development influenced each state’s government, especially considering both Alabama and Georgia were influenced greatly by either electric power companies or commerce groups.
### Table 6.2: Pearson’s Correlations of Perceptions of Respondents Part I

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>State and Local Government</th>
<th>Environment</th>
<th>Economic Develop</th>
<th>Improve Quality</th>
<th>Improve Quantity</th>
<th>Advantage Quality</th>
<th>Advantage Quantity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>.356**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Development</td>
<td>.420** .336**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve Quality</td>
<td>.014 .337** .183</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve Quantity</td>
<td>.167 .248* .011 .558**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advantage Quantity</td>
<td>.098 .313** .138 .577** .514**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advantage Quality</td>
<td>.159 .510** .172 .469** .482** .666**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infl. Env.</td>
<td>.246* .623** .080 .320** .420** .406** .685**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infl. House</td>
<td>.119 -.032 .264* .024 .099 .113 .154</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban Mgt.</td>
<td>-.186 .009 .142 -.123 -.090 -.284** -.267*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limit ATL</td>
<td>.007 .396** .110 .295** .136 .413** .544**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limit Down River</td>
<td>.013 .211 .044 -.030 -.015 .057 .285**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 105

* = P < .05
** = P < .01
The correlations also indicate that environmental groups believed the compacts would assist in the improvement of both water quality (Pearson’s R of .337, p<.01) and water quantity (Pearson’s R of .248, p<.05) for the area in which they live or work (Table 6.2).

The analysis supports the hypothesis that environmental groups were not able to control the negotiations. Table 6.2 strongly indicates that the environmental groups were concerned not only about water quantity but water quality. Analysis of the interview data indicates that water quantity, not water quality, was discussed in the negotiation meetings; which indicates environmentalists did not succeed in having their goals on the policy agenda. Because the environmentalists were unable to have their goals heard, they did not influence the negotiations as much as groups concerned with promoting economic development.

Variables dealing with the concerns of one state having an advantage over another in water quality were found to be statistically significant. The variables originated from the questionnaire. The respondents were asked questions soliciting their thoughts on likely outcomes of the compacts in their final form. The respondents were asked to rank their likelihood of agreeing with a statement; a response of ‘1’ indicating ‘strongly disagree’ and a response of ‘5’ indicating a response of strongly agree.

Perceptions of the influence of environmental groups and beliefs that the compacts would limit Atlanta’s growth (Pearson’s R of .320, p<.01) were found significant when compared with the desire to improve water quality (Pearson’s R of .337, p<.01) (Table 6.2). This is also the case with environmental groups wanting to improve
water quantity with a Pearson’s R of .248 which was found to be statistically significant at the .05 level (Table 6.2). Consequently, attitudes about whether or not the compacts would limit the Atlanta area’s growth (Pearson’s R of .458, p<.01) and attitudes that the compacts would limit downriver growth (Pearson’s R of .317, p<.01) were also statistically significant (Table 6.3).

Table 6.3:  Pearson’s Correlations of Perceptions of Respondents Part II

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Influence Environment</th>
<th>Influence Housing</th>
<th>Urban Management</th>
<th>Limit ATL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Influence Housing</td>
<td>-.002</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban Mgt</td>
<td>-.190</td>
<td>.243*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limit ATL</td>
<td>.458**</td>
<td>-.016</td>
<td>.007</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limit Down River</td>
<td>.317**</td>
<td>.296**</td>
<td>.086</td>
<td>.361**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 105  
*   = P < .05  
**  = P < .01

Also, respondents indicating the influence of environmental groups correlated with the desire to improve water quality (Pearson’s R of .320, p > .01). The sign of the correlation with managing urban growth and one state having an advantage over another with water quality and quantity was negative, which indicates that although some individuals valued fairness in the compacts, urban management was not something the compacts should have addressed.

Respondents indicating they wanted the compacts to improve water quantity or quality correlated strongly with the belief that the final wording of the compacts would
give one state an advantage over another in water quantity or quality. Each correlation displayed this with a strong statistical significance (Pearson’s R of .577, p<.01 and .469 respectively, p<.01) (Table 6.3). A strong correlation also existed between respondents who wanted to improve water quality and quantity, and those believing that environmental groups were influential in the negotiation process (Pearson’s R of .320, p<.01 and .420, p<.01, respectively) (Table 6.3).

Respondents with concerns about one state having an advantage over another in water quantity correlated with the perception of the influence level of environmental groups (Pearson’s R of .406, p<.01). Respondents believing that one state would have an advantage over another in water quality correlated with respondents believing that urban management should have been one of the goals of the compacts (Pearson’s R of p<.01) and with those believing that the compacts would limit Atlanta’s growth (p<.01) (Table 6.3).

Strong correlations existed between the influence of environmental groups and limiting Atlanta’s growth (Pearson’s R of .396, p<.01) as well as limiting the downriver growth (Pearson’s R of .317, p<.01) (Table 6.3). Similarly, correlations between the influence of housing groups and value of urban management existed (Pearson’s R of .243, p<.05). Concerns among those who believed the compact would give one group an advantage in water quantity correlated with respondents who believed the compacts would limit growth downstream from Atlanta (Pearson’s R of .285, p<.01), (Table 6.3). Those who believed that urban growth should be managed by the compacts believed that housing development interests were influential. However, those who believed the
housing interests were strong also believed that the Atlanta area would grow at the expense of the downstream areas. Most of the housing interests involved in the negotiations were located in the Atlanta area. Finally, beliefs about whether the compacts would limit growth in Atlanta were correlated with beliefs that they would limit growth downriver from Atlanta (Pearson’s R of .361, p<.01) (Table 6.3).

In review, the analysis supports the idea that economic development in the Atlanta area was an important aspect of the compacts and that economic development groups, such as housing interests, were influential in the process. The analysis also supports the belief that access to the water would benefit either the Atlanta area or downriver areas, but not both. One of the areas would have to loose.

In summary, the analysis in Table 6.2 and Table 6.3 indicates that while improved water quantity and quality were expected outcomes of the compacts, also expected was that one state would have an advantage over another, not only in water quantity and quality but also in economic growth. A likely conclusion of this analysis is that a battle exists between the states not only over water allocation and quality, but over the future of economic development. The hypotheses that economic development groups were driving the negotiation process and that the future of Atlanta was believed to be greatly influenced by the outcomes of the compacts are supported by this analysis. The analysis also shows how economic development interest groups were able to define the negotiations and policy process in terms of economic development and not just environmental issues.
The analysis also indicates the reality that each side believed the compacts was a zero sum situation, which assists in explaining why the compacts failed. Both Alabama and Georgia believed that one state would win and the others would lose. They believed that no agreement could be reached that would improve the access to water and water quality as well as allow for future economic growth. Given this perception, one can easily see why the compacts failed and were likely doomed to fail from the beginning.

**The Goal of each Group**

To review, the individual interest groups were grouped into three indices according to results of the factor analysis. The groups include interest groups that have similar public policy goals and are labeled ‘government’, ‘development’, and ‘environmental’. The purpose of developing these three indices is to create variables at the interval level in order to learn the desired policy outcomes of the three groups by using linear regression analysis. Regression analysis is used to determine if the values of the different interest groups can explain why the different groups had different preferences in outcomes of the compacts.

In ordinary least squares (OLS) regression eight conditions must occur. According to Berry (1993) the following conditions, generally referred to as to as Gauss-Markov assumptions, must be present:

1. All independent variables must be dichotomous and the dependent variable must be unbounded and continuous.

2. All independent variables have a nonzero variance.
3. There is not perfect multicollinearity.
4. The mean value of the error term is zero.
5. Each independent variable is correlated with the error term.
6. There is constant variance of the error term.
7. Error terms for different observations are uncorrelated.
8. The values for the independent variables must be normally distributed.

Once the assumptions are met, the OLS estimators will give an estimate of the parameter of the entire population. Once this parameter is determined, the estimate can then be considered the best linear unbiased estimator.

The dependent variables are indexes created by combining the factors discussed above into three indexes. In the factor analysis it was found that the goals of the interest groups could be loaded into three groups. The first group is concerned with the impact that the compacts would have on the environment and is labeled ‘environment’. Interest groups that are members of this group include: United States Fish and Wildlife, environmental groups, the EPA, and lake and river groups. The environmental group has a minimum of six and a maximum of 29 with a mean of 19.47 and a standard deviation of 4.79. The second category of interest groups includes groups with governing concerns. The group, labeled ‘government’, includes state elected officials, city or county agencies, state government agencies, and local elected officials. The ‘government’ minimum is four and the maximum is 19 with a mean of 12.65 and a standard deviation of 3.74. The third category includes interest groups with economic development concerns and is
labeled ‘development’. The group includes home builders, the COE, river navigation groups, electric power generators, and agricultural development groups. The minimum of the development category is three and the maximum is 20 with a mean of 2.55 and a standard deviation of 10.23.

The variables originated from the questionnaire. The respondents were asked questions concerning their thoughts on the likely outcomes of the compacts in their final form. The respondents were asked to rank their likelihood of agreeing with the statement. A response of ‘1’ indicated ‘strongly disagree’ and a response of ‘5’ indicated a response of strongly agree.

The second group of variables were created by the desired compact outcomes of the respondents and were loaded into three groups, ‘fairness’, ‘quality’, and ‘growth’. The variables were created by combining responses from the questionnaire that measured the respondents’ attitudes about the likely outcomes of the compacts in their final form.

For the category labeled ‘fairness’, the minimum is three and the maximum is 12, with a mean of 7.17 and a standard deviation of 2.43. Questions concerning a respondent’s attitudes about the compact giving one state or a downstream area an advantage over another state or an upstream area on water allocation, development, or quality were included in the ‘fairness’ index. For the ‘quality’ category, the minimum is four and the maximum is 18, with a mean of 11.49 and a standard deviation of 3.18. Included in the category labeled ‘quality’ are questions from the questionnaire concerning a respondent’s attitudes about whether or not the compacts, in their final form, would harm the quality of water in the two river basins. For the category labeled
‘growth’, the minimum is two and the maximum is ten, with a mean of 6.65 and a standard deviation of 1.86. Questions from the questionnaire included in the ‘growth’ category are concerning a respondent’s beliefs concerning how the compacts, in their final form, would affect the opportunity for economic growth for each state as well as upstream and downstream users of the river water in each basin.

The independent variables include interest groups the questionnaire respondents believed were influential (COE, state and local government, power generators), indices of the different interest groups created from the factor analysis, other demographic variables such as the state or population of the area in which the subject lives, and the specific expectations of the compacts, such as one state having an advantage in water quantity or quality. Again, the variables originated from the questionnaire. Respondents were asked questions concerning their thoughts on the likely outcomes of the compacts in their final form and were asked to rank their likelihood of agreeing with the statements.

A questionnaire respondent indicates the perceived strength of influence over the compacts’ outcomes with a ‘one’ indicating the weakest relationship and a ‘five’ indicating the strongest relationship. The independent variables representing values are measured with a ‘one’ indicating a strong disagreement with the value and a ‘five’ indicating a strong agreement with the value. Some of the analysis uses the indices as the independent variable and those variables are measured at the interval level.

The dependent variables are measured on an interval scale. The dependent variables represent the amount of agreeability that the respondent had with the statement. If a respondent chose ‘one’, this indicates a strong disagreement with the value. If a
respondent chose ‘five’, this indicates a strong agreement with the value. Other independent variables are measured at the nominal level as described above. The t-scores and unstandardized Beta are reported.

The groups concerned with *fairness* and *improving water quality* were expected to believe that the compacts would give one state an advantage over another in the water quantity and quality. The same group is also expected to believe the compacts would limit economic growth and development downriver from the Atlanta area.

The group concerned with *economic development* and *economic growth* was expected to indicate that the electrical power companies and government groups in the Atlanta area were the most influential in the negotiations. Also predicted is that they did not believe the compacts would harm economic development downstream from the Atlanta area. The *government* group is expected to be primarily concerned with economic development and to perceive interest groups in the Atlanta area to be more influential than others.

Table 6.4 reports the results for the first three models: Environment, Government, and Development. The first variable concerning the index labeled ‘*environment*’ reports that the perception that the compacts, in their final form, would give one state an advantage in water quality did exist. This variable has an unstandardized beta of .476, a t-score of 2.589, (Table 6.4) and was found to be statistically significant at the .01 level. Every unit of increase in the water quality variable increased the dependent variable by .476 points. In summary, this analysis explains what may seem obvious by showing that
those who believed that environmental groups were influential also believed the environmental groups were concerned primarily with water quality.

The variable labeled ‘government’, which contains each government group, was regressed against several different variables that measured perceived outcomes of the compacts. None were found to be statistically significant at the .05 level (Table 6.4), a likely outcome since the government organizations represented many different areas of the region as well as the different interest groups that influenced each state. Because of this wide range of representation of interests with the different governments, no variable was found to be statistically significant among the desires of the governments.

The third variable, labeled ‘development,’ includes interest groups such as electric power companies, navigation interests, and the COE which are primarily concerned with promoting economic development and commerce. The economic development groups were expected to be concerned with having enough water to support future population growth and industrial development. No support was found for this expectation. This lack of support is likely due to the fact that many different groups expressed concern over the quantity of the water, not just the interest groups concerned with economic development.

The purpose of this analysis was to better understand the motivation of each of the different groups. Understanding their motivation assists in explaining why coalitions formed and why some of the coalitions dominated the subsystem within their state. This analysis also explains the differences in the coalitions’ goals. Because the perception of one state having an advantage in water quality is found to be statistically significant with
the interest groups in the environmental index, this fairness concept explains some of the concerns they had with the compacts.

The three variables derived from the result of the varimax orthogonal rotation (environment, government, and development) were regressed against the perceived outcomes of the compacts. To review, each questionnaire respondent was asked his or her perceptions of the compacts in their final form and was asked to indicate the likelihood of agreeing with specific statements. A ‘1’ indicated a response of ‘strongly disagree’ and a ‘5’ indicated a response of strongly agree. Each of the questions represents each of the dependent variables in Table 6.4.

Table 6.5 displays the expectations of the three groups discussed in Table 6.4, ‘development’, ‘government’, and ‘environmental’. The indices are measured by combining the scores of the individual interest groups that comprise the index. The scores are derived from the questionnaire responses as to the perceived level of influence or how much they agree with a particular goal of the compacts’ outcomes. Again, the responses ranged from ‘strongly disagree’, which was coded as ‘one’, to ‘strongly agree’, which was coded as ‘five’. The independent variables measure a perceived outcome of the compacts as expected by the questionnaire respondent. The three dependent variables indicate the groupings of interest groups that share similar goals and desired expectations of the compacts.
Table 6.4: Perceptions of Respondents Indexed by Goal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Environment</th>
<th>Government</th>
<th>Development</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>U. B.</td>
<td>t-score</td>
<td>U. B.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve Water quality</td>
<td>.165</td>
<td>1.23</td>
<td>-.096</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve Water Quantity</td>
<td>-.026</td>
<td>-.541</td>
<td>.178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Give State Adv. Water Quality</td>
<td>.476</td>
<td>2.589**</td>
<td>.154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Give State Adv. Water Quantity</td>
<td>-.084</td>
<td>-.026</td>
<td>-.038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manage Urban Development</td>
<td>.142</td>
<td>1.268</td>
<td>-.145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limit Atlanta Area Growth</td>
<td>.119</td>
<td>.871</td>
<td>-.063</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limit Downriver Development</td>
<td>-.001</td>
<td>-.012</td>
<td>-.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted R-squared</td>
<td>.224</td>
<td></td>
<td>.104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F statistic</td>
<td>4.060</td>
<td></td>
<td>.957</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statistical Significance</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td></td>
<td>.477</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 105
* = P < .05
** = P < .01
*** = P < .001

In Table 6.5, the independent variables in the far left column are the goals of the compacts. The variables were listed in question ten of the questionnaire and the respondents were asked to indicate if they agreed with each statement. Table 6.5 shows how interest groups that loaded on the ‘environment’ factor believed that interest groups
that loaded in the economic development factor influenced the process (unstandardized beta of .622 and a t-score of 3.725, p<.001).

Environmental groups shared the belief that water quality and quantity would not be improved by the compacts and that one state would have an advantage over another in terms of water quality and quantity. As was anticipated, the government index was not influenced by any of the independent variables. The development index was likely influenced by whether or not economic growth would be limited by the compacts in Atlanta or downriver areas.

*State and local governments* were concerned primarily with economic development (Table 6.5). With an unstandardized beta of .202 and a t-score of 2.826, this relationship was found to be statistically significant at the .01 level. This finding supports the interview analysis which showed that the government organizations most involved and most influential in the negotiation process were located in the Atlanta area. The primary concern of those groups was promoting economic growth. Also the *state of Georgia* was found to be influential in the government index (Table 6.5). With an unstandardized beta of 2.639 and a t-score of 2.835, this relationship was found to be statistically significant at the .01 level. The positive sign on the t-score indicates that government groups were influential in Georgia but not in Alabama, which also supports the analysis of the interview data which found that the state and local governments of Georgia and the Atlanta area were involved in the negotiation process; whereas, the governments in Alabama were not active in the negotiations.
Table 6.5: Concerns of Respondents by Characteristic

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Development</th>
<th>Government</th>
<th>Environmental</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>U. B.</td>
<td>t-score</td>
<td>U. B.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>.305</td>
<td>1.273</td>
<td>-.806</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State and Local Government</td>
<td>.202</td>
<td>2.826*</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge Level</td>
<td>-.074</td>
<td>-.140</td>
<td>.864</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairness</td>
<td>.091</td>
<td>.755</td>
<td>.047</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>.619</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>.073</td>
<td>1.017</td>
<td>.225</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>-.673</td>
<td>-1.200</td>
<td>2.639</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSA</td>
<td>-.061</td>
<td>-.099</td>
<td>-1.313</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water Quality</td>
<td>-.024</td>
<td>-.238</td>
<td>-.130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Growth</td>
<td>.173</td>
<td>.755</td>
<td>-.159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted R-squared</td>
<td>.130</td>
<td>.207</td>
<td>.318</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F statistic</td>
<td>2.075</td>
<td>2.882</td>
<td>4.373</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statistical Significance</td>
<td>.047</td>
<td>.007</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 105
*   = P < .05
**  = P < .01
*** = P < .001
Table 6.6 indicates the respondents’ perceptions about which desires or characteristics influenced the different interest group indices. The independent variables include characteristics about the respondents such as population of area where the person works, state of residence, as well as the desires of what the respondent wanted from the compacts.

In Table 6.6, three new variables were created in order to group the respondents according to their goals for the compacts. The groups were labeled ‘growth’ for those interest groups wanting economic growth, ‘quality’ for the groups concerned primarily about water quality and ‘fairness’ for the respondents who were primarily concerned with the compacts treating each state fairly in its outcome. The three indices used in the previous two tables are also used as independent variables to determine the characteristics of the respondents who were concerned with economic growth, water quality, or fairness.

Each of the interest groups was placed into three categories. Each category represented a goal of the interest group. The three goals of the interest groups are growth, quality, and fairness. As is the case with Tables 6.4 and 6.5, the variables measuring the respondents’ desired outcomes of the compacts were measured on a scale of one through five with one representing ‘strongly disagree’ and five representing ‘strongly agree’. The variables measuring perceptions of influence are measured on a scale of one through five with one representing ‘little influence’ and five representing ‘much influence’. The knowledge level variable is measured as one or two with one representing more knowledge and two representing less knowledge. The population variable is measured on a scale of one through four with one representing the large urban
areas and four representing the more rural areas. The \textit{MSA} variable is represented as the one indicating the respondent lives in an MSA, and two indicating the opposite. A respondent with \textit{residency in Georgia} is indicated with a one and Alabama with a zero.

In Table 6.6, the characteristics of the respondents are regressed against the same three indices. This is done to determine the characteristics of the interest groups that are grouped in the three categories.

The analysis is expected to show that the development group was influenced by interest groups from Georgia and those concerned with economic growth. The index of government interest groups is expected to be influenced by interest groups concerned with economic growth and economic development. A strong likelihood exists that the respondent from Georgia perceived the influence of government as powerful. The index composed of perceptions of influence of environmental interest groups is expected to be influenced by whether or not a respondent believes water quality is important as well as a respondents’ desire to promote economic growth.
Table 6.6: Desired Outcomes of Compacts for Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Growth</th>
<th>Quality</th>
<th>Fairness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>U. B.</td>
<td>t-score</td>
<td>U. B.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>-.649</td>
<td>-1.174</td>
<td>1.737</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>.042</td>
<td>.589</td>
<td>.320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State and Local Government</td>
<td>-.050</td>
<td>-.673</td>
<td>-.073</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development</td>
<td>.168</td>
<td>1.294</td>
<td>-.042</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairness</td>
<td>-.091</td>
<td>-.774</td>
<td>.503</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality</td>
<td>.085</td>
<td>.853</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSA</td>
<td>-.324</td>
<td>-.533</td>
<td>-.825</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge Level</td>
<td>.559</td>
<td>1.091</td>
<td>-.191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>-.083</td>
<td>-.338</td>
<td>.121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>.151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted R-squared</td>
<td>.028</td>
<td></td>
<td>.460</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F statistic</td>
<td>.801</td>
<td></td>
<td>7.159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statistical Significance</td>
<td>.616</td>
<td></td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 105
* = P < .05
** = P < .01
*** = P < .001
In which state the respondent resided influenced whether or not that person was concerned with water quality. The positive sign on the t-score (2.45) indicated that Georgia residents were not as concerned with water quality as Alabama residents. This is statistically significant at the .01 level and had an unstandardized beta of .320 (Table 6.6). This finding is consistent with the interview data which indicated lake and homeowner groups in Alabama were concerned not only with the quantity of available water but the condition in which that water would be received from the upriver Atlanta area. Again, Georgia was concerned primarily with economic growth and water quality is not as strong of a concern.

As expected, interest groups with concerns of water quality also had similar goals as did interest groups in the ‘environmental’ index that had broader environmental concerns. This was found to be statistically significant at the .001 level with an unstandardized beta of .320 and a t-score of 3.725 (Table 6.6). This finding was expected because the interview subjects indicated that environmental groups were not only concerned about the quantity of water but the effect water quantity has on water quality. Nothing in the growth variable was found to be statistically significant. Residence in Georgia, with an unstandardized beta of 1.737 and a t-score of 2.45, was statistically significant (p<.05) in determining whether or not the respondent supported water quality as an outcome of the compacts (Table 6.6). Groups concerned with fairness, with an unstandardized beta of .358 and a t-score of 3.502, (p<.001) also affected beliefs that the compacts should address improving water quality (Table 6.6). Again, as expected
*fairness* and *water quality* were primary concerns with environmental groups and those who valued fairness also valued water quality.

**Independent and Dependent Variables Revisited**

The dependent variable is considered to influence each or several interest groups in the states as well as the negotiation process as a whole. The dependent variables were measured from the results of the survey and the responses given by the subjects of the in-depth interviews. Influence was measured by asking the interview subjects and survey respondents who they believed were the most influential in the process. While this is a subjective measure of a variable, the variable was difficult to define otherwise. Despite the difficulty in defining the variable, the validity of the method of determining the amount of influence is without question. The interview subjects and individuals familiar with the compacts are uniquely qualified to determine which groups influenced the process as well as the strength of their influence.

The independent variable is concerned with the interest groups’ access to political resources and ability to form coalitions to achieve influence. The desired outcomes were considered by the amount of water each state wants to withdraw from the river basins.

With the additional regression analysis, the hypotheses are revisited and considered. The regression analysis provides a way to evaluate each of the sub hypotheses as well as the three primary hypotheses.
Hypotheses Revisited

H1: States in a river basin with diverse uses of the river were less likely to be
homogeneous in the interstate compact negotiations than a state with uniform uses for the
river water in the river basin.

The data do not support this hypothesis. Within the state of Georgia, the desires of
the different interest groups varied widely. Although the state uses the water for
economic development and agricultural development, recreational uses are also important
to several Georgian interest groups. However, the interest groups in the metropolitan
area of Atlanta were so influential that the other interest groups’ concerns were not heard
by the state’s negotiators. Because they were not heard, the state had the appearance of
speaking with one voice and was acknowledged by the interview subjects and the survey
respondents as the most unified of the three states. Each interview respondent and the
survey data indicated Georgia was the most united in its message throughout the course
of the negotiations. Furthermore, Florida had very similar uses and desired outcomes for
the water and was generally considered to be united in its desired outcomes.

River and lake water users in the state of Alabama use the water in many different
ways. The river and lake water is used for the generation of electricity, recreation on
multiple lakes, navigation of barge traffic, as well as economic development. However,
the most dominant users of the water, Alabama Power and river and lake protection
groups, wanted similar outcomes from the compacts. Alabama experienced an evolution
in its desired outcomes during the negotiation process. In summary, the diversity of the
uses of the water could not predict the homogeneity of the state during the negotiations.
H1a: The greater the number of coalitions of involved interest groups in a state, the less influential the state was in the interstate compact negotiations.

No support was found for this hypothesis. While Georgia does have interest groups that use the water in many different ways, interest groups connected with one of the uses had an enormous amount of influence when compared to the other interest groups. Due to the strong influence of the interest groups in the Atlanta area, the state was able to be the most influential of the three. This conclusion was supported by all of the interview subjects as well as the survey respondents.

H1b: Georgia is more likely to have been less unified in its negotiating position than Alabama or Florida because of the conflict between the different interest groups within that state.

No support was found for this hypothesis. While the state of Georgia had several different coalitions including agriculture and downstream river users, Alabama had fewer coalitions. Alabama’s coalitions were lake homeowners and river keeper groups and Alabama Power. The interviews indicated that Alabama had the smallest number of coalitions; however, Alabama was viewed as the least influential of the three states. Georgia, with more coalitions than Alabama, was viewed as was more powerful. The difference between Alabama and Georgia is that one of Georgia’s coalitions was so influential that it dominated that state’s position almost exclusively, which allowed Georgia to appear unified in its voice and dominate the direction of the negotiations.
Florida had few stable coalitions and was considered by survey respondents as the second most influential of the three states.

H1c: Georgia is more likely to have been less influential than Alabama or Florida during the negotiation process because the state is more diverse in its uses of the river water than Alabama and Florida.

No support was found for this hypothesis. Because of the state’s uniformity and the dominance of a few interest groups in the state, Georgia was viewed by the interview subjects as well as the survey respondents as the most influential.

H2: The greater the amount of resources available to an interest group, the greater the influence of the interest group.

The research analysis supports this hypothesis. The survey respondents indicated that the most influential interest groups were Alabama Power and economic development groups from the Atlanta area. Alabama Power and the economic interests of the Atlanta area possess many resources. The influence of these two groups is particularly reflected by Alabama’s negotiators having significant professional connections to Alabama Power and the Federal commissioner serving as the president of Georgia’s Chamber of Commerce.

H2a: Interest groups with environmental concerns were less likely to influence the formulation of the interstate compacts than business interests.
The research analysis supports this hypothesis. The interview subjects indicated that business interests in the Atlanta area dominated the state’s position during the negotiations. In Alabama, Alabama Power Company was the dominant interest group. In both states, the groups concerned about the environmental impact of the possible outcomes of the negotiations were not able to influence the negotiations in a meaningful way. Business interests dominated the position taken by Alabama and Georgia. In the state of Florida, no interest group with business concerns appeared to be active or interested in the negotiations other than the oyster gatherers. The oyster gatherers’ desired outcomes for the compacts were so intermingled with the environmentalists that determining which group held more influence was difficult. In fact, the two groups worked together with the goal of maintaining a ‘natural flow’ of the Apalachicola River.

Additionally, the analysis of the survey data indicated that the business interests were among the most influential of all stakeholders. Environmental groups were ranked near the middle of all stakeholders.

H2b: Lake and river protection groups are more likely to have been more influential within Alabama’s subsystem than environmental groups because of greater access to resources.

The research analysis supports this hypothesis. The survey data proved the lake owner groups to be more influential, which is likely due to the fact that they formed a coalition while the environmental groups chose to stand alone or not participate during the negotiations. Also, the interview data suggested that the lake owner groups had
access to financial and political resources that the environmental groups did not. In addition, the lake owner and river keeper groups had a narrow focus while the environmental groups had a more broad focus. The tunnel vision of the river and lake keeper groups allowed them to focus time, financial, and political resources on a specified goal. However, the environmental groups did not have that luxury.

H2c: Interest groups representing the concerns of the metropolitan area of Atlanta were more likely to influence the state of Georgia’s agenda than interest groups outside of the Atlanta area.

The research analysis supports this hypothesis. Each individual interviewed indicated that the compacts were really a battle between the metropolitan area of Atlanta and everyone else. Interview respondents, including those familiar with Georgia’s negotiation team, indicated that Atlanta exuded a great amount of influence on the state’s negotiators, even though other interest groups existed, such as agricultural and economic development interests in the Columbus, Georgia area, that felt they were not adequately represented by the state of Georgia in the negotiations.

Three of the survey respondents listed the city of Atlanta as the most influential organization. Atlanta was the only municipality mentioned. A statistically significant difference was evident between Georgia survey respondents and Alabama respondents in that Georgia respondents believed city and county governments to be more influential than respondents in Alabama believed they were. This indicates evidence of more
involvement or awareness of the issues surrounding the compacts with local
governments in Georgia than in Alabama.

H2d: No single interest group in Florida was able to dominate the state’s subsystem
because no interest group had enough resources to dominate the subsystem.

The research analysis supports this hypothesis. According to a member of
Florida’s negotiation team, the interest groups in Florida were concerned with protecting
the Apalachicola River and Bay’s ecosystem. The only other interest group, shrimp and
oyster gatherers, was also concerned with protecting the ecosystem of the Apalachicola
River and Bay. Neither group had a great amount of resources. Economic development
interest groups were non-existent in Florida. The key to the effectiveness of Florida was
that no conflict existed among the interest groups; thus, the interest groups were able to
work together to achieve one goal. No evidence was given by the interview subjects
indicating that any one interest group was able to dominate Florida’s position during the
negotiations.

H2e: Alabama Power was the most influential interest group in the state of Alabama
because of the large amount of political resources they possess.

The research analysis supports this hypothesis. Alabama Power was the only
organization listed by the survey respondents as most influential during the negotiations.
Electric Power companies were listed as the most influential of all categories of interest
groups by respondents from Alabama and by survey respondents as a whole. All of the
interview subjects from Alabama indicated Alabama Power was the most influential interest group in the state. Evidence of the strength of their influence is that the two negotiators for the state of Alabama had significant professional ties with Alabama Power Company.

Alabama Power has a great amount of resources in that they operate the dams and control the water volume of the reservoirs along the Coosa and Tallapoosa Rivers. This provides that company with a continuous and reliable source of inexpensive electricity and the ability to sell it throughout the two river basins as well as to other power generation companies.

H2f: The electrical power companies and other stakeholders were more likely to influence Alabama’s desired outcomes while state and local government agencies were more likely to influence Georgia’s desired outcomes of the compact negotiations because they possess more resources to influence the policy makers.

The research analysis supports this hypothesis. The quantitative data strongly suggests that the most influential organizations in the state of Georgia were state agencies and statewide elected officials. State agencies and state elected officials were listed in the top five of the most influential groups with a statistically significant difference indicating that the respondents in Georgia viewed them as more influential than respondents in the state of Alabama. Also, the Georgia Governor’s office, a state government agency, and the generic response of “the state of Georgia” were the three most frequent responses for the most powerful organization during the negotiations.
With a strong statistically significant difference, Alabama residents believed electrical power companies were more influential than Georgia residents believed they were. Alabama Power was ranked highest among Alabama organizations with respect to the amount of influence each organization exuded over the negotiation process.

H3: During drought years the policy subsystem for the region will move from the third quadrant toward the forth quadrant.

The research analysis supports this hypothesis. The interview subjects indicated that state agencies became more interested in the discussions of the meetings during drought years. Also, during the drought of the late 1990s, the frequency of the meetings increased. Members of river keeper groups reported an increase in membership during drought years as awareness of the compact negotiations increased. These conditions moved the region wide policy subsystem into the fourth quadrant because more interest groups got involved in the negotiations as well as some interest groups gained strength due to an increase in membership.

The concluding chapter revisits McCool’s model. The chapter discusses in which quadrant each subsystem is located. The chapter also summarizes the interaction of each interest group within each state as well as the region-wide subsystem. Recommendations are given in hopes of improving the interstate compact negotiation process.
The purpose of this study was to use McCool’s (1998) model to describe the interaction of interest groups in each state involved in the ACT and ACF River Basin Compacts, as well as the entire river system basin. This study employed multiple methods to answer the research questions posed in the beginning. Interviews were conducted with individuals who were familiar with the negotiations, participated in the negotiations, or monitored the negotiations. These subjects provided crucial insight to understanding the negotiation process and were the foundation for future data gathering. After the interview data were analyzed, certain themes emerged which were used to author a mail questionnaire. The survey provided a basis to reach other individuals who had some or a limited knowledge of the compacts. The survey also provided an indication of how salient the issues surrounding the negotiations, as well as the negotiations themselves, were to elected officials, environmental and commerce interest groups, as well as government agencies.

The analysis indicates the states held little trust for one another throughout the negotiation process. Similarly, little trust existed between the states and some of the
federal agencies, in particular Alabama and the Corps of Engineers; this lack of trust contributed to the compacts having little chance of achieving success.

Many of the region’s interest groups motivating each state’s desired policy outcomes had dramatically different goals for water use. Therefore, each state’s desired outputs from the compacts were significantly different. As is the case in any policy issue, the interest groups were not similar in strength. The variance in strength of the interest groups was reflected in each state. As a result of this difference, a climate was created that was conducive to a state taking a more obstructionist than conciliatory strategy. The difference in uses of the river water along with no neutral third party assisting in the negotiation process, lead to the expiration of the compacts. Consequently, no agreement over water allocation was reached among the three states.

The failure to reach an agreement was met with mixed reactions. Interest groups from Florida believed they won because their state had not signed an agreement that would harm their ecosystem. While some interest groups in the Atlanta area were frustrated that no agreement was reached, other groups were not concerned and have since begun negotiations exclusively with the COE over the amount of water stored in Lake Lanier along the Chattahoochee River. Alabamians were also mixed in their reactions in that they are pleased their state did not sign an agreement that would likely drain their reservoirs, but were concerned that they might not be able to stop organizations in Georgia from increasing the amount of water stored or transferred from the ACT basin.
McCool’s Model Revisited

McCool’s model labels the x-axis as ‘zero sum’. In this study, zero sum is believed to be too limiting in describing the interactions within the subsystem.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Low Competitiveness</th>
<th>High</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ZERO SUM</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>III</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autonomous Subsystems</td>
<td>Pluralized Subsystems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>IV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominant/Dissident Subsystems</td>
<td>Conflictual Subsystems</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 7.1:  McCool’s Model (1998)

The dynamic nature of the policy subsystems in each of the three states and the region as a whole is shown by this study. Each state has a different subsystem that influenced the state’s negotiation position. Although each state had veto power in the negotiations, Georgia clearly set the agenda of the negotiations. With the metropolitan area of Atlanta in need of a greater access to water, they were the most prepared for the negotiations. In addition to being the most prepared, their subsystem of government was in place before the negotiations began. Georgia’s subsystem, and subsequently its desired outcomes of the compacts, did not change during the negotiations process. Georgia can best be described as having a subsystem of water policy located in the first quadrant. During times of drought, its subsystem moves to the second quadrant with the business interests continuing to dominate the subsystem while the agricultural and other
development interests downstream from Atlanta become dissident due to the lack of the available resource.

Florida’s subsystem is in the first quadrant and does not change during drought conditions. This lack of change is due to the uniformity of the interest groups in Florida. Each group is interested in preserving the ecosystem and protecting some, if not all, portions of the river’s diverse ecosystem.

Alabama is located in the first quadrant and moves to the forth during drought periods. When there is plenty of the resource, the lake owners, environmentalists, as well as the electric power producers are content and non-competitive. During drought conditions, conflicts arise over the priority of the uses of the water. During periods of scarcity of the resource the dominant interest groups, recreation and electricity generation, disagree over how much water is necessary to maintain water levels in various lakes and how much needs to be released through the dams. Disagreement during periods of drought shifts the subsystem into the forth quadrant, with the electric power generators dominating the use of the water during drought periods because they own the land in which the water is stored as well as have the authority to regulate reservoir levels. Their authority not only gives them influence as an interest group, but a level of authority that similar to that enjoyed by government.

In this study, access to the resource is not a zero sum outcome. Ample water can be transferred from one basin to another. Yet, the perception of a scarcity of the resource is what is motivating each of the interest groups to influence the outcomes of the compact.
The perception of resource scarcity is also based upon the different uses of the water, which is vital to understanding why the compacts failed. What interest groups in Alabama considered a scarcity of the resource, those in Georgia did not. If enough water is in a lake for human consumption of clean water, but not enough water for each lake resident to access the lake with his boat, then a scarcity of the resource was experienced in Alabama that Georgians did not believe existed. While enough water may be available to support economic development in the Atlanta area, enough water may not be available to support the oyster harvesting industry in Florida. These differences were strong between the states and prevented the negotiations from moving forward.

To Georgia, the resource of water is used to support development. For Alabama, the primary uses are recreation and electricity generation. What is considered a scarcity to one interest group may be considered an excess capacity to an interest group in a different state, which explains why Florida was reluctant to sign any of Georgia’s proposals. To Florida, any agreement that might have limited the ‘natural flow’ of the water would have created a scarcity of the resource.

The interest groups behavior was based upon perceptions of the strength and influence other groups exuded. When survey respondents of one state commented on another state’s interest groups, they would often describe the interaction of the interest groups in each subsystem through perceptions of influence. Just as one interviewee from Georgia, who represented an interest located downstream from Atlanta, commented, “The perception of water being taken from the Savannah River to Atlanta seemed to be
unrealistic.” Yet, this perception created action that tried to influence the policy subsystem within the state of Georgia.

The region-wide subsystem shifts from the third to the fourth quadrant depending upon drought seasons. During drought years, the number of interest groups involved as well as the diversity of interest groups would increase because as the shortage of water grew, it began affecting more people in different ways.

**Critique of McCool’s Model**

McCool’s model is better measured qualitatively than quantitatively due to problems with measurement of competition as well as the perception of the x-axis ‘zero sum’ label. Quantifying influence is a challenge to any researcher because influence can be both tangible and intangible.

Because influence is a concept open to interpretation, the survey respondents and interview subjects also had a difficult time quantifying influence. While they could attest to which state was united, spoke often during the meetings, or seemed to drive the negotiations, their thoughts were dependent on their view of what was an important outcome of the compacts. Again, this illustrates the challenge of quantifying influence.

This critique indicates that the label of the x-axis should be changed to reflect the inability to quantify ‘Zero-Sum’ with a government resource. A label such as ‘Perceived Scarcity of Resource’ would improve the model’s ability to generalize.
Differences between Western and Eastern Compacts

Why did the problems that ultimately lead to the failure of an agreement persist with the compact negotiations and allocation issues in the Southeast, yet several compacts in the arid West have been signed? The following four explanations are given:

1) Public lands are more frequent in the West than in the South.

Throughout the West, many of the environmental interest groups advocate removal of dams and the destruction of reservoirs. In the South, the interest groups seeking to protect the rivers were also advocating the protection of the reservoirs. These groups wanted to maintain the artificially created reservoirs and keep their water levels high.

Throughout the interview process, only a few subjects spoke of wanting to protect ecological balances. Most were concerned about having a higher cost of cleaning water, being able to continue their recreational use of the lake, and keep the water levels high enough to protect property values of the land adjacent to the lake.

2) Environmentalism is more extreme in the West than the South.

Because so much of the land in the western states is owned by the federal government and reserved for public use, a culture of public enjoyment of natural resources has developed, which is in stark contrast to the lack of public ownership of land in eastern states. This history has cultivated a culture of environmental activism in the western states unlike that in the South (McCool, 1987, 2002). A story told by one of the
negotiators is an example of this. This negotiator was appointed by the Democratic governor of one of the three states to provide advice on environmental policy. When the governor ran for reelection he told the appointed advisor, “Your job is to make sure I don’t get the endorsement from the environmental people” (interview with compact negotiator).

The lake owner groups were also careful not to be lumped into the ‘extreme environmentalist’ group. While the interview subjects from the lake groups were concerned about safe drinking water and having a healthy ecological balance, they clearly stated that they were also for economic development and protecting the value of lakefront property.

3) Water scarcity in the West creates more awareness among the different policy actors than in the South.

Because of the scarcity of the resource, a greater incentive exists to reach an agreement. If a gross imbalance of water existed among the states, it is likely that the federal government would be inclined to become involved so that citizens could have adequate water for the most basic household needs. Due to the abundance of water in the South, a perception of this level of scarcity was never a concern. Most of the concerns were over maintaining current uses including recreation, future economic development, and power generation. Only interests from Florida expressed ecological concerns associated with a reduction of water. However, no group believed the compacts would limit water enough for household uses of water to be threatened.
4) The lack of a federal government involvement in the Southeast compact negotiations.

Throughout the negotiations, federal agencies had no formal involvement. They played only a minor role in the negotiations. The lack of federal involvement created a vacuum that should have been filled by a neutral third party.

In the negotiations of river basin compacts in the West, the federal government played an active role as well as being a stakeholder because the Bureau of Land Management owns a large amount of land in the western states.

**Similarities between Western and Eastern Compacts**

1) Both areas have rural versus urban concerns.

In the Colorado Compact, Los Angeles was the large city with a growing metropolitan area. In the South, the large city with a growing metropolitan area was Atlanta. The difference in the South is that Atlanta is in the headwaters rather than near the mouth of the river. In both regions of the country, the area outside of the major city is rural. Agricultural interests exist in both regions of the country and continually become less influential as the urban areas grow stronger with economic capital.

2) Both areas have conflicts with the federal government over power generation.

A compact among the states for management of water in the Columbia River Basin was not approved because the states wanted dams built by the Corps of Engineers to follow the same guidelines as dams built by private companies in those states. The conflict between the power generators involved in the ACF and ACT compacts is similar. Both regions have private as well as federal agencies that generate electricity. The
competition and conflict is similar with respect to which group gets water to operate their dams in a way they believe will make them as profitable as possible. Also, states that regulate private dams would also like to regulate federally owned and operated dams, or at least force the federal government to adopt the state’s regulatory rules.

**Why the Compacts Failed**

The negotiation process for the compacts began after the state of Alabama suspended a lawsuit it had filed in federal court against the COE. Without a third party to moderate the compact negotiations, the compacts began with a slim chance of succeeding. All three states had the power to veto the compact. The power to veto gave each state a great amount of leverage over the others in the sense that each state could not be completely ignored. This power also gave each state the feeling that it could keep all of its original goals. In summary, the compacts originated from animosity and mistrust and were without an incentive for compromise.

Another reason the compacts were not successfully implemented was that each of the states had different uses for the river water. Georgia wanted water from the Chattahoochee for urban development and water from the Flint River for agricultural maintenance. Florida wanted a ‘natural flow’ of the Apalachicola River while Alabama wanted enough water to power hydro dams and keep the lake levels high enough to allow recreational opportunities to be preserved. The failure of Georgia and Florida to reach an agreement on defining ‘natural flow’ was a significant obstacle contributing to the collapse of the negotiations. Due to the different uses of the river water, getting each state to understand each other’s wants was a challenge. Each state also had difficulty
finding a common starting point for the negotiations. This difficulty was likely due to Georgia initiating almost all of the proposals while the other two states worked to block each of the proposals.

Considering each state had veto power, very little evidence was found that showed any state offering to settle for less than their original position. Georgia was continually designing proposals that were repeatedly viewed as unacceptable by Florida. Not clear is whether Georgia’s proposals gave concessions to the other states over the length of the negotiations. A member of Florida’s negotiation team believed Georgia’s proposals were simply rewordings of the same proposal with no substantive change.

In the later days of the compacts, Alabama and Georgia appeared to be willing to come to terms on the allocation of water in the ACT basin, but that agreement was contingent on knowing the outcome of the ACF compact. In particular, Alabama was concerned with the possibilities of interbasin transfers of water from the ACT to the ACF. Because Florida vetoed Georgia’s proposal for the ACF, an agreement between Alabama and Georgia over water allocation in the ACT could not be reached.

When the compacts expired, each state began to develop a strategy to advance its goals. Georgia asked and was granted permission from the COE to increase the amount of water area water associations could withdraw from the Chattahoochee River. The state of Florida sued the COE in hopes of preventing an increase in the withdrawals of water from the Chattahoochee River (http://www.ajc.com/metro/content/metro/0905/20water.html, accessed September 20, 2005). Riverkeeper groups in Florida are asking for the state of Florida to also sue the
state of Georgia in hopes of preventing increased withdrawals of water from the
Chattahoochee River (interview with policy director of a riverkeeper organization in the
Apalachicola Bay area). The state of Alabama eventually renewed its original lawsuit
against the COE in hopes of convincing the COE to not allow water associations in the
state of Georgia to increase their water withdrawals from the Chattahoochee River. The
issues of interbasin transfers of water between the ACT and the ACF have not been
addressed in the court system.

Recommendations for Future Compact Negotiations

A neutral third party should have been involved in the compact negotiations. In
this case, the federal government should have played the role of a moderator. Even
though the federal government had representatives present at each of the meetings, they
were not allowed to vote on any proposal. In order for the third party to appear neutral,
the members of this third party should not come from any of the three states. The
interview data suggests that a great deal of mistrust of the federal commissioner
originated from the fact that he was a former congressman from Georgia as well as a
current president of Georgia’s Chamber of Commerce. Because the interests of the
Atlanta area and, ultimately, the state of Georgia were economic development, this
conflict of interests created the appearance of a lack of objectivity.

Other interstate compacts concerning river basins have created commissions that
have the ability to make difficult and often politically sensitive decisions concerning
water allocation. These commissions may also address water management issues within
the basin. Each of these river basin commissions are composed of representatives from
each state involved in the negotiations as well as representatives from the federal government.

The commissions serve to actively manage the river basins. This system ensures input from not only each state, but the federal government. The issue of basin management was missing from the ACT and ACF compact negotiations. In addition to a lack of federal involvement, the COE was not formally represented in the negotiations despite operating the dams and managing the water levels of reservoirs along the Chattahoochee River. The omission of the COE likely created some of the animosity resulting in its the negotiations with the state of Georgia, which were independent from the ACT and ACF negotiations, over water levels in the Chattahoochee River’s Lake Lanier Reservoir.

The survey data supports the desire for a separate commission for management of the two river basins. An overwhelming majority of the respondents wanted a region-wide commission created for the management of the river basins as well as enforcement of regulations designed to implement the management of the basin. The desire for a region-wide commission is contradictory to the original design since the federal government was initially excluded from the compacts, but it likely reflects the reality that despite the efforts of each state, an agreement could not be met amongst themselves. More involvement from the federal government would have likely filled the role of a neutral third party. After the states failed to reach a negotiated agreement, the desire to have more involvement from a party that is not affiliated with any of the states is evidently necessary for a successful agreement.
Along the same lines, more formal involvement from government agencies such as U.S. Fish and Wildlife, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Corps of Engineers would have assisted each state in better understanding the complexity of issues surrounding the compacts, including the Clean Water Act and the Endangered Species Act as well as how the different proposals would impact each of these Acts. If the federal agencies had been allowed to have a formal voice in the negotiations, they might have been able to create a compact that would have been agreeable to each of the three states as well as the federal agencies that were stakeholders in the river basins.

**Limitations of the Study and Considerations for Future Research**

The data collection is weak in two areas. Stakeholders from the Atlanta Metropolitan area are underrepresented in the sample of individuals who were interviewed, which is due to a low response rate from members of the area’s different interest groups. A clear lack of willingness to discuss the compacts was evident when compared to the other regions in both river basins. This limitation was addressed by contacting the state’s primary negotiator, a federal government commissioner, and a contractor for the federal government who assisted in maintaining the records of the negotiations. The federal negotiators assisted in providing Georgia’s desired outcomes as well as Georgia’s role in the region-wide negotiations. The inclusion of their negotiator, who was Georgia’s negotiator through the entire duration of the compacts, greatly assisted in addressing the issue of under representation from the Atlanta area. Fortunately, the number of survey responses from Georgia was high which assisted with the quantitative analysis.
The other weakness was in the survey’s low response rate for the state of Florida. The survey began with Florida having the lowest number of subjects due to the comparatively small geographical area of the Apalachicola River and Bay as well as the area’s low population. This weakness was accentuated due to many of the survey subjects withdrawing from the research because of pending and possible litigation involving Florida and government agencies over the water flow of the Apalachicola River. This weakness was addressed with the data from the interviews. One interview subject, who was involved with the negotiations throughout the entire process, was a member of Florida’s negotiation team. This person was very forthcoming with thoughts and insight not only into Florida’s subsystem but also the negotiations as a whole. This person also provided a unique insight into Florida’s goals and desired outcomes. The other members of the federal government’s representatives also provided insight into Florida’s water policy subsystem as well as their desired outcomes of the compacts. Also, stakeholders in the Apalachicola Basin were quite forthcoming and eager to discuss their thoughts on the compact negotiation process.

Future studies should focus on the interaction of policy subsystems between states and federal agencies. Other issues also exist regarding federalism and the nature of power between federal agencies and state governments. Future data collection should focus on interviewing individuals who are familiar with the compacts with the hope of gaining the perspective of interest groups outside of the Atlanta area and interest groups with environmental concerns within the metropolitan area of Atlanta. The involvement of other interest groups concerned with issues in the state of Georgia that conflict with
those in Atlanta would assist in better understanding Georgia’s policy subsystem. The search for survey subjects who are familiar with the topic has been exhausted. Several of the survey subjects indicated they had little or no knowledge of the compacts. Interviewing more individuals who are familiar with the desired outcomes of interest groups in the Atlanta area would be most helpful with improving the validity of this study.

**Final Thoughts**

McCool’s model of policy subsystems can be improved by acknowledging the perceptions of scarcity of the resource and considering the difference in uses of the resource by the users. These improvements would help to better understand which quadrant a subsystem should be placed in the model. The competitiveness among the different interest groups is difficult to quantify due to the intangible nature of influence and some of the stronger aspects of influence are applied outside the researcher’s view of the subsystem. Recognizing this limitation explains why learning the perceptions of influence has been the best method for learning the competitiveness of each interest group. After all, who better knows the strength of an interest group than the ones competing against it?
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*Columbus Ledger-Enquirer*, 3/21/04, Tug-of-Water.

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http://ssl.csg.org/compactlaws/Introoverview.doc
APPENDIX A

LIST OF INTRODUCTORY INTERVIEW QUESTIONS
When did you first get involved with the compact negotiations?

How long were you a negotiator for ______?

How did you become a negotiator for ______?

Would you explain to me the negotiation process for the two interstate compacts?

Did you attend many of the meetings?

How united do you feel your state is in its goals for the compact?

How much autonomy do you feel you had in the negotiations?

Do you believe one state had a disproportionate amount of leverage in the negotiating process? Why?

Which public or private interest groups that influenced the process more than most? Why?

What is the current state of the two compacts?
APPENDIX B

SOUTHEASTERN WATER COMPACT SURVEY
Q1: How familiar do you consider yourself with the Alabama-Coosa-Tallapoosa (ACT) and/or the Appalachicola-Chattahoochee-Flint (ACF) River Basin Interstate Compacts? (please circle)
   a. Very knowledgeable
   b. Somewhat knowledgeable
   c. Vague knowledge
   d. No familiarity at all

Q2: Which river basin do you conduct your professional duties or which river basin does most of your constituents reside? (please circle)
   A. Alabama-Coosa-Tallapoosa (ACT)
   B. Appalachicola-Chattahoochee-Flint (ACF)
   C. Other: ____________________

Q3: In which state does your professional duties concern? (please circle)
   A. Alabama
   B. Florida
   C. Georgia

If more than one state occupies roughly equal amounts of your concern, please list the states: ________________________________.
Q4: In your professional opinion, how much influence were the following groups able to have with the compact negotiation process? (please circle the number)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Little Influence</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Much Influence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Corps of Engineers</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Protection Agency</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Fish and Wildlife</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home Builders Associations</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Groups</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electric Power Companies</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture Groups</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>River Navigation Groups</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lake/River Protection Groups</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Government Agencies</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City or County Government</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State elected officials</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local elected officials</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q5: In your professional opinion, how much influence did each state have in the process?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Very Little</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>Very Much</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alabama</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q6: Please name the group or individual you believe had the most influence in the negotiation process of the compact in which you conduct your professional duties.

Q7: Please rank the states with respect to the level of uniformity of their position over the course of the negotiations. A ranking of “1” indicates the state’s position was the most unified throughout the negotiation process while a ranking of ‘3’ would indicate the state was the least uniform.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alabama</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q8: Do you believe a basin-wide commission should be created to formulate water allocation levels?

Yes  No  (please circle)

Q9: Do you believe a basin-wide commission should be created to enforce compliance with any water allocation agreements?

Yes  No  (please circle)
Q10: To what extent do you disagree or agree with the following statements:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adoption of the compact(s) as worded in their final form will improve the <em>quality</em> of water in your district.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adoption of the compact(s) as worded in their final form will increase the <em>quantity</em> of water in your district.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In their final form, the compacts were written so that no state would have an advantage over another state in terms of water <em>quantity</em>.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In their final form, the compacts were written so that no state would have an advantage over another state in terms of water <em>quality</em>.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who most influenced negotiations of the compact(s), viewed environmental concerns as important.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who most influenced negotiations of the compact, viewed housing development as important.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managing urban growth should have been one of the goals of the compacts.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As written in the final proposal, the compacts would limit economic development in Metropolitan Atlanta.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As written in the final proposal, the compacts would limit economic development in other portions of the basins.

Q11: Which of the following best describes the area where you conduct your professional duties? If more than one applies, please give an approximate percent composition.

Urban Large City (over 100,000 in population)
Medium city (between 100,000 and 50,000 in population)
Small city (less than 50,000 but over 10,000 in population)
Rural (mostly or all unincorporated area)

Q12: Is your district considered a part of, or include, a Metropolitan Statistical Area?
Yes No (circle one)

Q13: What is your job title? ______________________________

Q14: Is this an elected position? Yes No (please circle)

Q15: How long have you been at this current position? _________

Q16: Please indicate your gender. female male (circle one)
Q17: Which category best describes your age? (please circle)
   a. 20 – 29
   b. 30 – 39
   c. 40 – 49
   d. Over 50

Q18: Which of the following best describes the highest level of your formal educational attainment? (please circle)
   a. high school graduate
   b. some college
   c. bachelors degree
   d. graduate degree (including J.D.)

If you have any information about the compacts that might help me feel free to provide those comments in the space below.

Thank you for taking the time to complete the questionnaire. Your thoughts are important.

Please return the completed questionnaire in the envelope provided or return to:

James Newman
Department of Political Science and Public Administration
PO Box PC
Mississippi State, MS 39762

Or Fax to: 662-325-2716
Dear

I am a graduate student at Mississippi State University conducting a survey as part of my dissertation. The dissertation is considering the influence of interest groups on the negotiation process of the failed Apalachicola-Chattahoochee-Flint (ACF) and Alabama-Coosa-Tallapoosa (ACT) River Basin compacts. Very little research discusses the political process surrounding the negotiations of these compacts. I am gathering information concerning opinions and knowledge of individuals familiar with the compacts as well as water policy throughout the each basin. I have chosen to send you a questionnaire because you are involved with implementing or developing water policy in one or both of the basins. I am requesting your help.

Within the next few days, I will be sending a questionnaire asking you about your thoughts of the compact negotiations. Your responses will be confidential, and you will not be singled out by your responses. Your name will never be attached to the questionnaire or the database used to analyze the results. Because this study focuses only on the negotiation process of the two compacts, your responses to the enclosed questionnaire are important to maintain the integrity of this study. It is my goal for the results from this survey to help both policy makers and scholars to better understand the issues and process of interstate negotiations as well as the issues surrounding water policy in the Southeast.

I will be happy to answer any questions you might have about this project or questionnaire. Feel free to email me at jan54@msstate.edu or call me at 662-325-9282. For information regarding your rights as a research subject, please contact the Office of Regulatory Compliance at Mississippi State University at 662-325-5220.

Thank you very much for your participation in this project.

Sincerely,

James Newman
Doctoral Student
Mississippi State University
Dear

I am a graduate student at Mississippi State University conducting a survey as part of my dissertation. The dissertation is considering the influence of interest groups on the negotiation process of the failed Apalachicola-Chattahoochee-Flint (ACF) and Alabama-Coosa-Tallapoosa (ACT) River Basin compacts. Very little research discusses the political process surrounding the negotiations of these compacts. I am gathering information concerning opinions and knowledge of individuals familiar with the compacts as well as water policy throughout the each basin. I have chosen to send you a questionnaire because you are involved with implementing or developing water policy in one or both of the basins. I am requesting your help.

Enclosed is a questionnaire asking about your thoughts of the compacts and water policy issues. Your responses will be confidential, and you will not be singled out by your responses. *None of the letters will be coded. This will be my final request of information. Your name will never be attached to the questionnaire or the database used to analyze the results.* Because this study focuses only on the negotiation process of the two compacts, your responses to the enclosed questionnaire are important to maintain the integrity of this study. It is my goal for the results from this survey to help both policy makers and scholars to better understand the issues and process of interstate negotiations as well as the issues surrounding water policy in the Southeast.

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Thank you very much for your participation in this project.

Sincerely,

James Newman
Doctoral Student
Mississippi State University
Dear

Recently I mailed you a questionnaire seeking your opinions about your experience with and knowledge of the ACT/ACF compacts. If you have already completed and returned the questionnaire, please accept my sincere thank you. If not, please complete the questionnaire at your earliest convenience. I am especially grateful for your help. I believe that your response will be helpful to both policy-making professionals and scholars. I will be more than happy to share the results of the survey with you so you may assess the views of these compacts throughout the two basins.

If you did not receive a questionnaire, or if it was misplaced, please call me at 662-325-9282 or email me at jan54@msstate.edu, and I will get one in the mail to you today. For information regarding your rights as a research subject, please contact the Office of Regulatory Compliance at Mississippi State University at 662-325-5220.

Sincerely,

James Newman
Doctoral Student
Mississippi State University