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Funding flows to Georgia reservoir, water projects

ATLANTA — Georgia has awarded its first \$ 100 million to build new reservoirs and water supply projects across the state, officials announced this week.

The money is the first to flow through a program launched by Gov. Nathan Deal, The Atlanta Journal-Constitution reported (<http://bit.ly/MRE1bb>). It is part of a four-year plan to spend \$ 300 million on projects expected to help boost Georgia's home-grown water supply.

The governor began the finance program amid an ongoing fight over water with Alabama and Florida.

Eight projects received funding out of 15 submitted for consideration for loans and grants to plan, permit or build reservoirs or wells.

Nearly all of the money awarded in the initial round came in the form of loans to local governments and agencies, which will eventually have to repay the money.

Oconee and Walton counties will get two 40-year loans -- one for \$ 20 million and another for \$12 million -- for the new Hard Labor Creek reservoir.

Paulding County was awarded a 40-year, \$ 29.1 million loan for the new Richland Creek reservoir.

Newton County will get a 40-year, \$ 21 million loan for the new Bear Creek reservoir.

Three Georgia cities also received loans for water projects. **Cornelia** gets a 30-year, \$ 6.8 million loan to improve an existing reservoir. **Hahira** will get a 20-year, \$ 432,000 loan for a new water supply well. And **Vienna** will get a 20-year, \$ 1.1 million loan for its water projects.

Just northeast of Atlanta, the **Lake Lanier Islands Development Authority was awarded \$ 4.4 million** in direct funds to buy and connect a supply well.

The **Southwest Georgia Regional Commission has been awarded \$ 4.6 million in direct funds** for test wells and storage.