



# Welcome to 2024 305(b)/303(d)Public Meeting

## MARCH 12, 2024 (10:00 AM)

- Please note that everyone is entering the meeting with their microphones muted.
- Please **keep your microphone muted** except when you are speaking. This will help us minimize background noise and feedback.
- Please take a moment to **open the Participants List and rename yourself** to show your full name and affiliation, so we have that for our records. You should see a “Rename” option next to your name (or click on “More” to find this option).
- **This meeting is being recorded** to document any questions or comments received during our time together.
- To make a comment or ask a question, please either:
  - Indicate you would like to make a comment using the Chat feature.
  - In the “Reactions” menu, select the “Raise Hand” option. The host will call on you to ask your question or make your comment.



**GEORGIA**  
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION DIVISION

# 2024 Draft 305(b)/303(d) List and Priority Framework

**Susan Salter, Environmental Specialist**  
**Tyler Parsons, TMDL Modeling and Development Unit Manager**

**Public Meeting**  
**March 12, 2024**



## PURPOSE OF MEETING

- Hold an informal discussion on the draft 2024 305(b)/303(d) list and answer questions
- Discuss new Long-Term Vision and Prioritization Framework for the 303(d) program
- Receive comments from the public





# MEETING AGENDA

## Part 1 – 2024 305(b)/303(d) List

- Describe development of the 305(b)/303(d) List of Waters
- Provide summary/highlights of the draft 2024 List
- Provide a timeline for the 2024 List
- Answer questions and receive comments from the public







# MEETING AGENDA

## Part 2 –2022-2032 Long-term Vision for the 303(d) Program and Prioritization Framework





## WHAT ARE 305(b) AND 303(d)

- The 305(b) report and 303(d) list are 2 separate requirements under the Clean Water Act
- Georgia submits an Integrated Report (305(b)/303(d) contained in one document)





## THE 305(b) REPORT

- 305(b) Required by Section 305(b) of the Clean Water Act and by [40 CFR 130.8](#)
- Describes the quality of the waters in the State
- Due to EPA even numbered years





# THE 305(b) REPORT

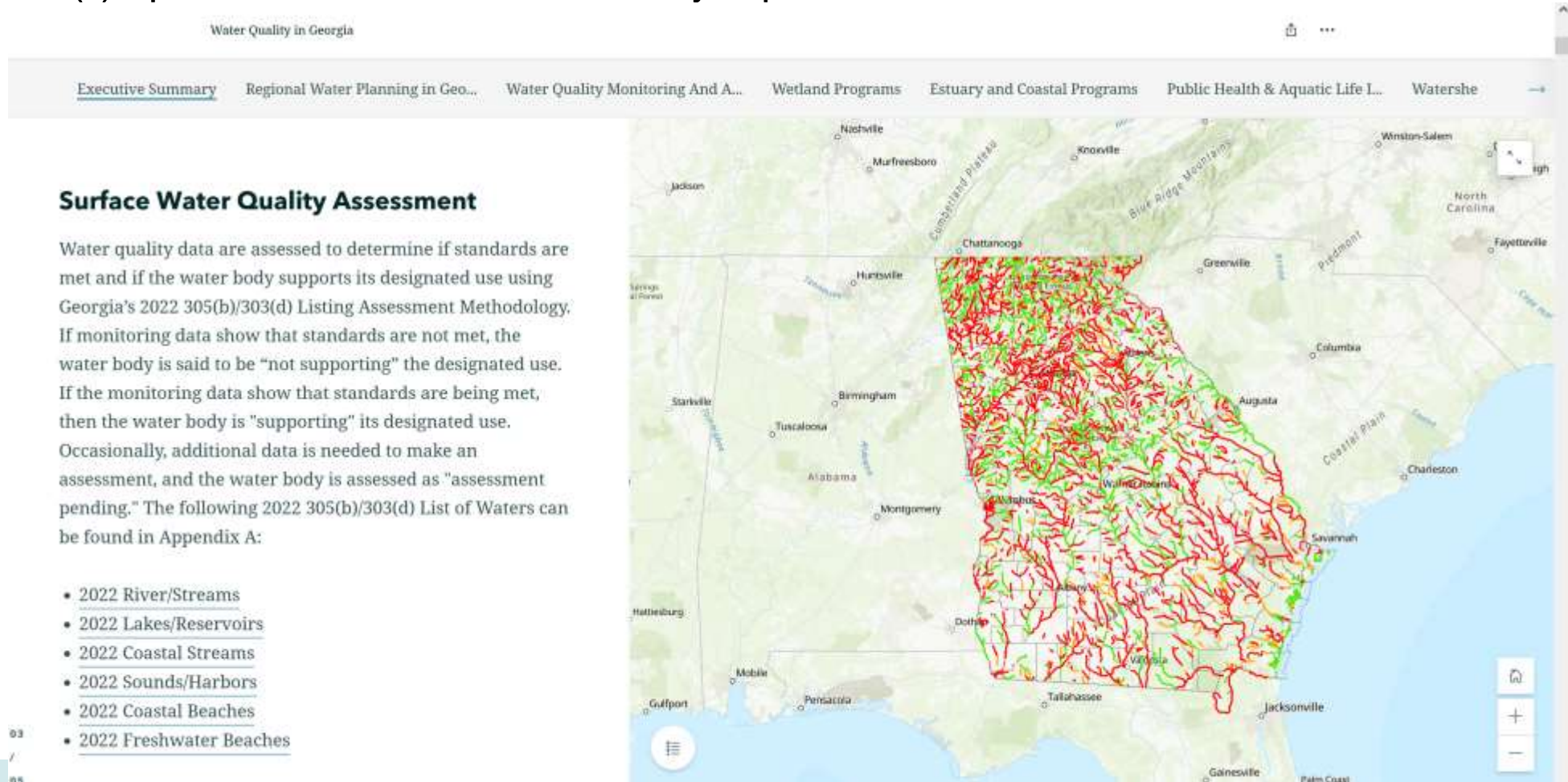
- Includes Chapters on:
  - Regional Water Planning
  - Water Quality Monitoring and Assessment (**focus of today's talk**)
  - Wetland Programs
  - Estuary and Coastal Programs
  - Public Health/Aquatic Life Issues
  - Watershed Protection Programs
  - Groundwater Protection and Water Withdrawal Permitting
  - Major Issues and Challenges
- 305(b)/303(d) list of waters – which is a list of all the assessed waters  
[Supporting, Not Supporting (Impaired), Assessment Pending]





# 305(b) STORY MAP

- The 305(b) report is available as an interactive Story Map.





## THE 303(d) LIST

- 303(d) List is required by Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act and by [40 CFR 130.7](#)
- Composed of waters that are “Not Supporting” their uses (i.e. Impaired) and for which a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) has not been done and needs to be completed
- Subset of “Not Supporting” waters (**Category 5**)
- The list is to be submitted to EPA by April 1st of every even numbered year



# DEVELOPMENT OF THE DRAFT 2024 305(b)/303(d) LIST OF WATERS





# DATA COLLECTION

- Water quality data gathered from various sources







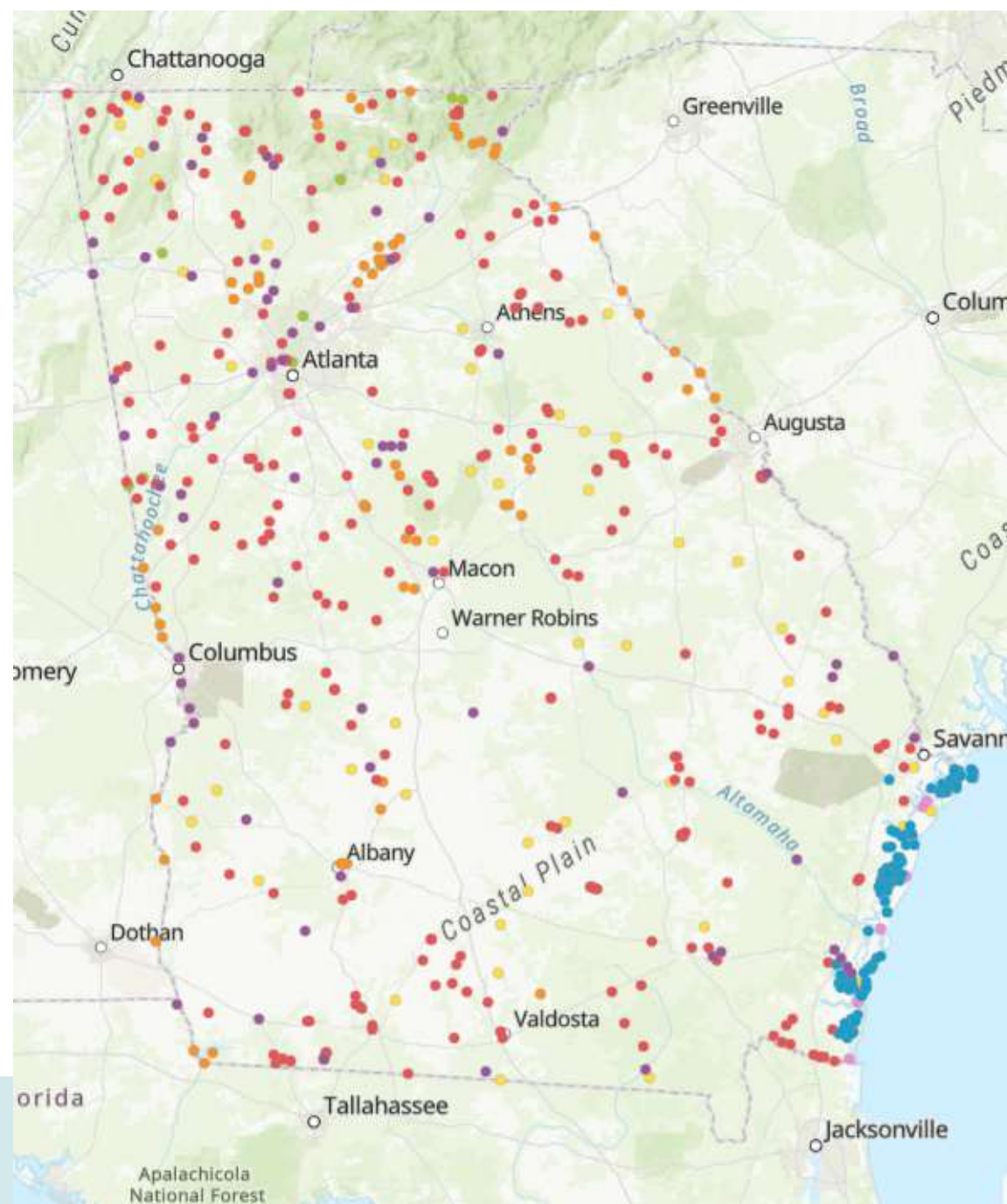
## DATA SOURCES FOR 2024 LIST

- Data were submitted by the following:
  - State Agencies
    - EPD – Environmental Protection Division
    - WRD – Wildlife Resources Division
    - CRD – Coastal Resources Division
    - PRHSD - Parks, Recreation and Historic Sites Division
  - Federal Agencies (USGS – U.S. Geological Survey)
  - Local Governments (Cherokee County, Columbia County, Fayetteville, Gwinnett County)
  - NGOs (Chattahoochee Riverkeeper, Limestone Valley RC & D)





# 2022-2023 SAMPLING LOCATIONS



- Trend Monitoring
- Targeted Sampling
- Probabilistic Monitoring
- Lake Monitoring
- Estuary Monitoring
- Coastal Monitoring
- Biological Monitoring



# DATA COMPARED AGAINST WATER QUALITY CRITERIA

- Water quality standards ([Rules and Regulations 391-3-6-.03](#))
  - Designated Uses (Coastal Fishing; Fishing, Recreation, Drinking Water)
  - Water quality criteria (Numeric and Narrative)

Parameter	Specific Water Quality Criteria Defined in Rules and Regulations of Georgia   391-3-6-.03(6)	Designated Uses						
		Drinking Water	Recreation	Fishing	Wild River	Scenic River	Coastal Fishing	Shellfish Growing Areas
DO	No Change from Natural				X	X		
	Trout Streams - Daily Avg of 6.0 mg/L, <u>Not</u> < 5.0 mg/L	X	X	X				
	Warm Water Species - Daily Avg of 5.0 mg/L, <u>Not</u> < 4.0 mg/L	X	X	X			X	
	Daily Avg of 5.0 mg/L, Not < 4.0 mg/L. If natural DO is less than these values, then 0.1 mg/L deficit from natural condition is allowable.					X		
pH	No change from Natural				X	X		
	6.0-8.5	X	X	X			X	
	6.0-9.0 or 6.0-9.5						X	
Temperature	No change from Natural				X	X		
	Not to exceed 90°F	X	X	X			X	X
	Primary Trout Streams - No increase >0°F	X	X	X				
	Secondary Trout Streams - No increase >2°F	X	X	X				
	Warm Water Streams, Freshwater - No increase >5°F above intake temp	X	X	X			X	
	Warm Water Streams, Estuarine - No increase >1.5°F above intake temp		X	X		X		



# DATA COMPARISON IS DONE USING LISTING ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

- Describes Data Acceptability Requirements (Quality/Quantity)
- Describes how each pollutant is evaluated
  - What data are required to list a water as Impaired “Not Supporting”
  - What data are required to assess a water as “Supporting”



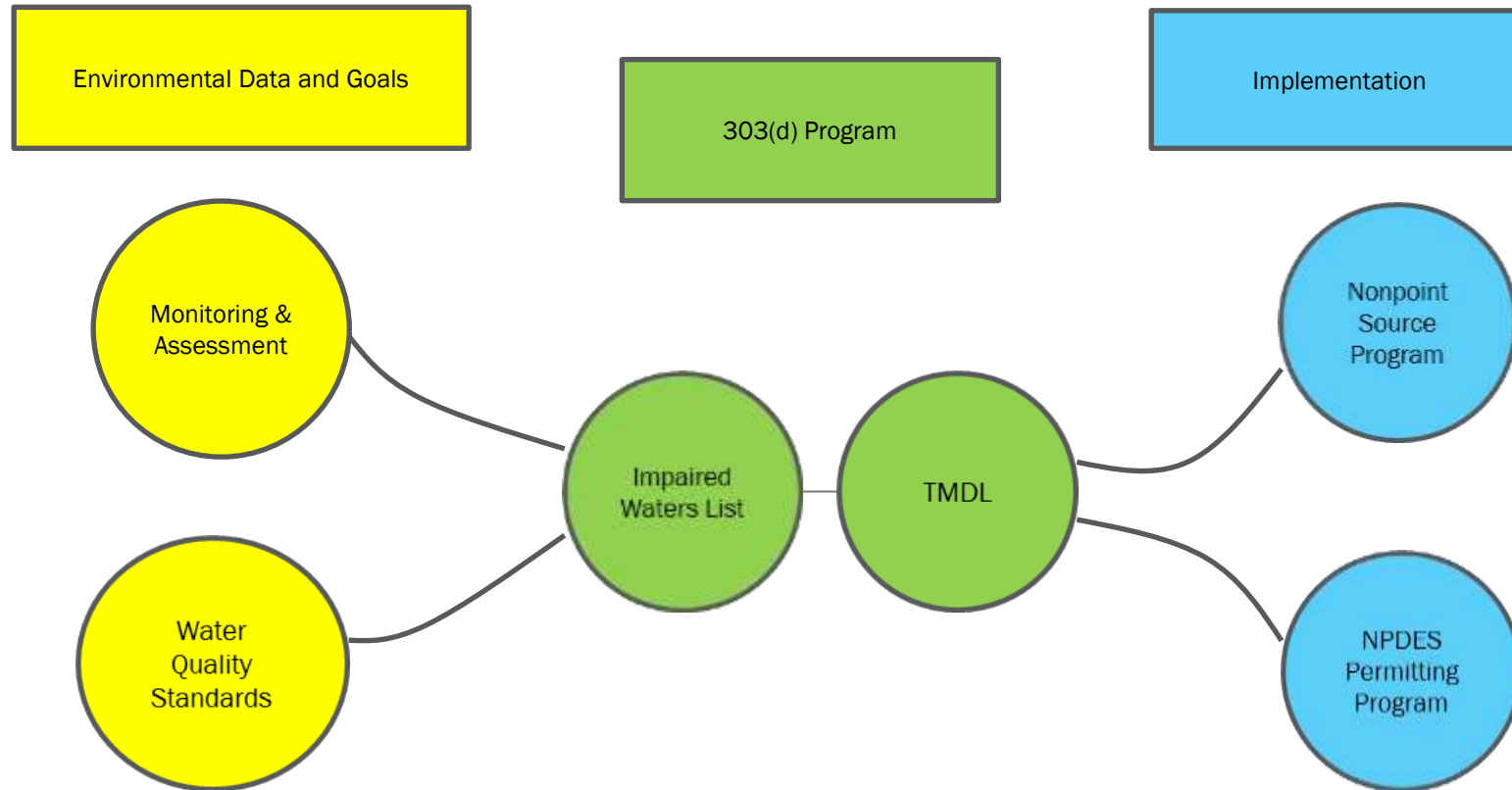


# ASSESSMENT CATEGORY DETAILS

Category		Category Description	Global Attainment Category
Category 1		Data indicate that waters are meeting their designated use(s).	Supporting
Category 2		A waterbody has more than one designated use and data indicate that at least one designated use is being met, but there is insufficient evidence to determine whether all uses are being met.	Assessment Pending
Category 3		There is insufficient data/information to make a determination as to whether or not the designated use(s) is being met.	
Category 4	4a	Data indicate that at least one designated use is not being met, but a TMDL(s) has been completed for the parameter(s) that is causing a waterbody not to meet its use(s).	Not Supporting (Impaired)
	4b	Data indicate that at least one designated use is not being met, but there are actions in place (other than a TMDL) that are predicted to lead to compliance with water quality standards.	
	4c	Data indicate that at least one designated use is not being met, but the impairment is not caused by a pollutant.	
Category 5 – 303d list		Data indicate that at least one designated use is not being met and TMDL(s) need to be completed for one or more pollutants.	



# HOW THE 303(d) PROGRAM FITS







# OVERALL SUMMARY OF THE 2024 LIST OF WATERS

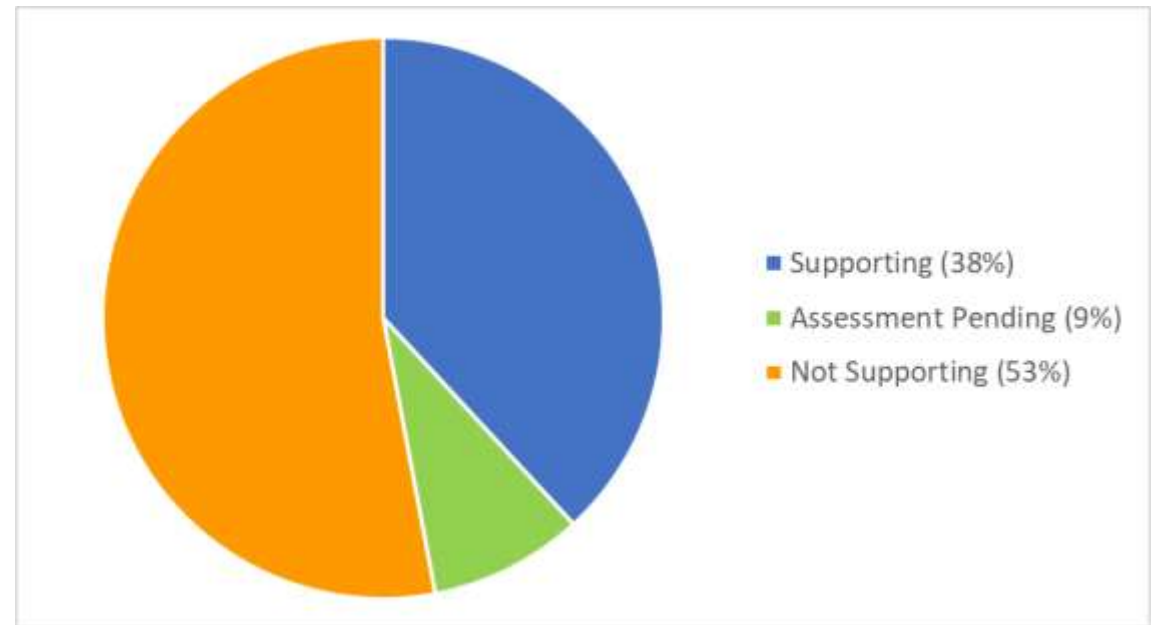




## DRAFT 2024 LIST

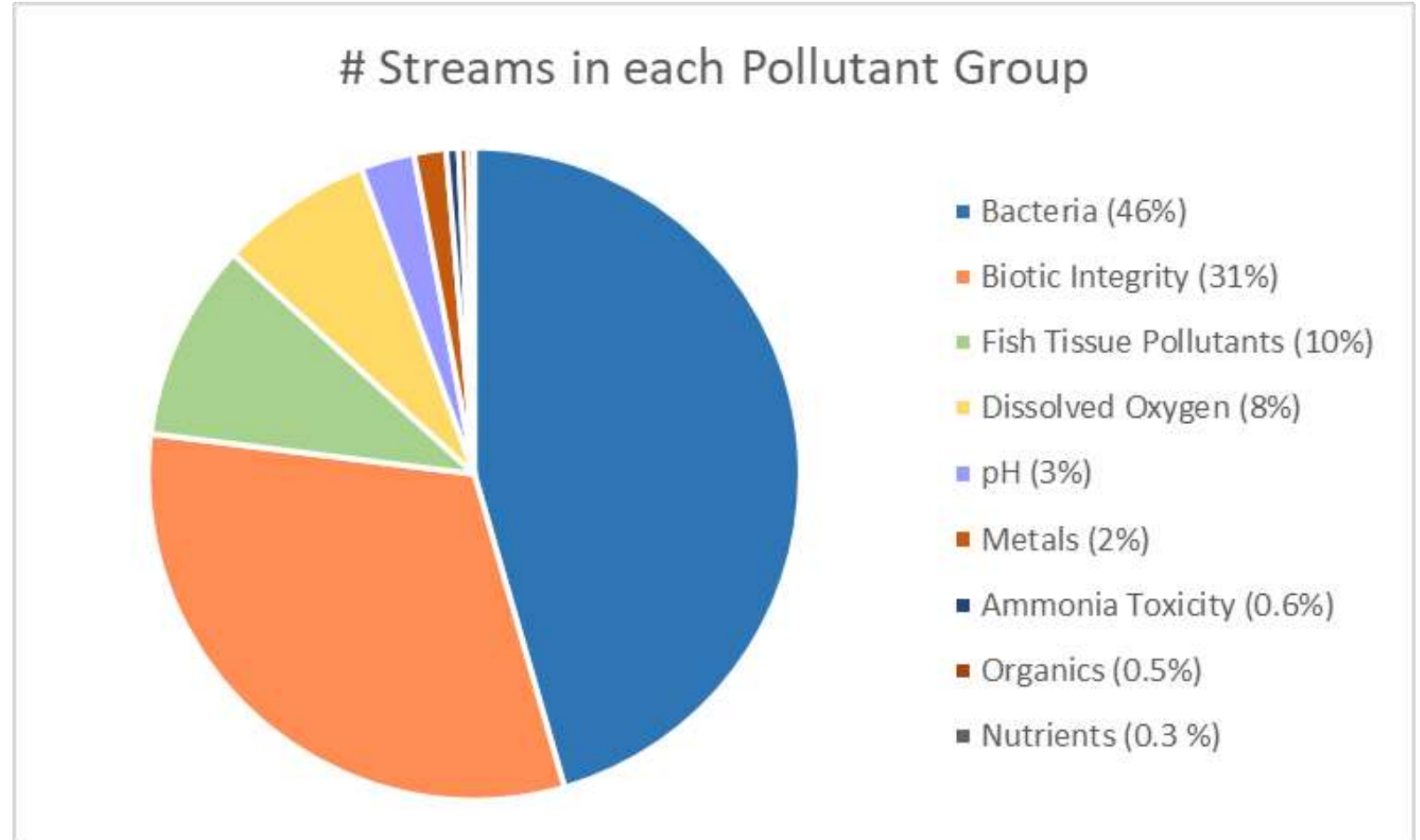
3,092 Waters are on the draft 2024 305(b)/303(d) List

- 1,179 Supporting
- 1,638 Not Supporting
- 275 Assessment Pending





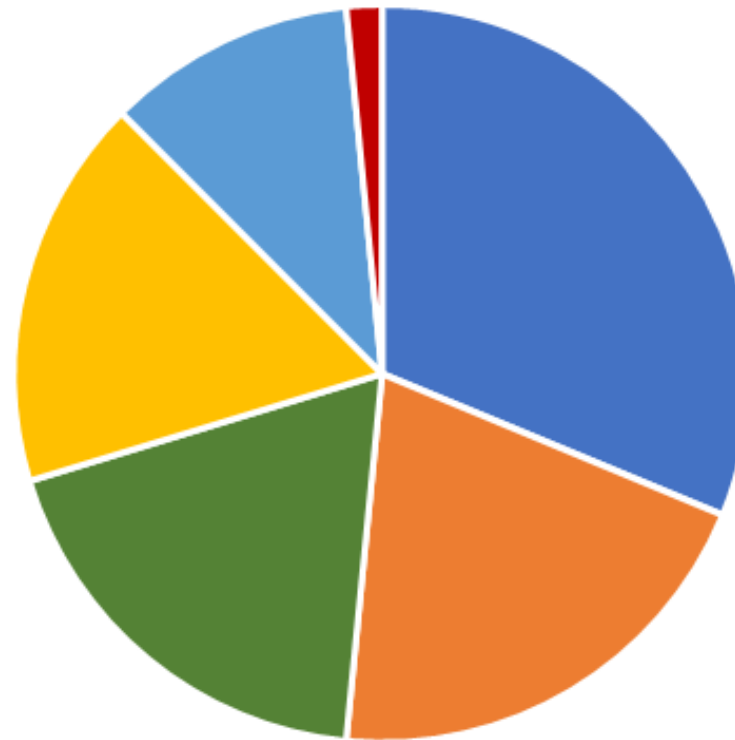
# IMPAIRMENTS FOR NOT SUPPORTING STREAMS





# IMPAIRMENTS FOR NOT SUPPORTING COASTAL STREAMS

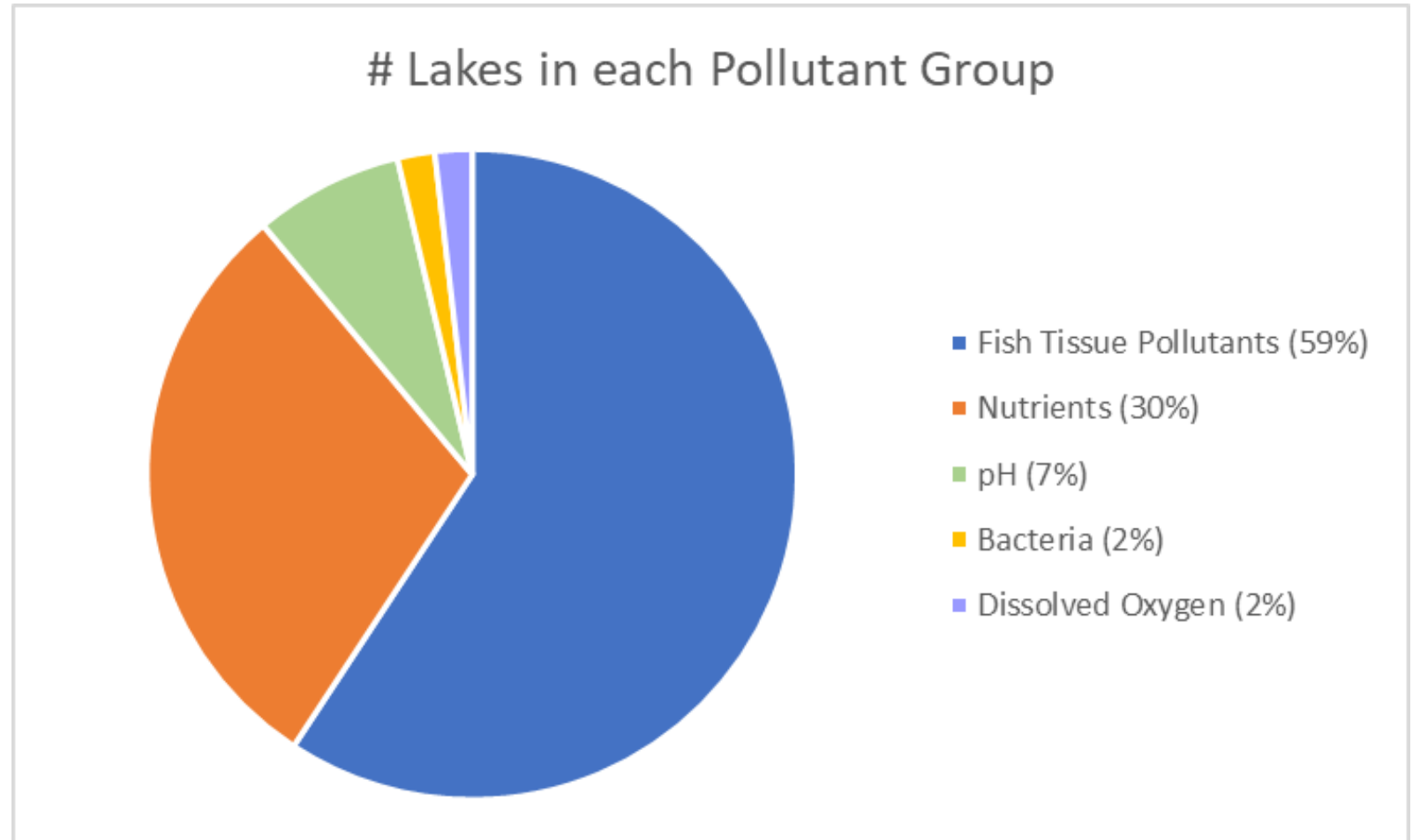
# Coastal Streams in each Pollutant Group



- Fish Tissue Pollutants (31%)
- Bacteria (20%)
- Dissolved Oxygen (19%)
- Shellfish Ban (17%)
- Metals (11%)
- Ammonia Toxicity (2%)



# IMPAIRMENTS FOR NOT SUPPORTING LAKES

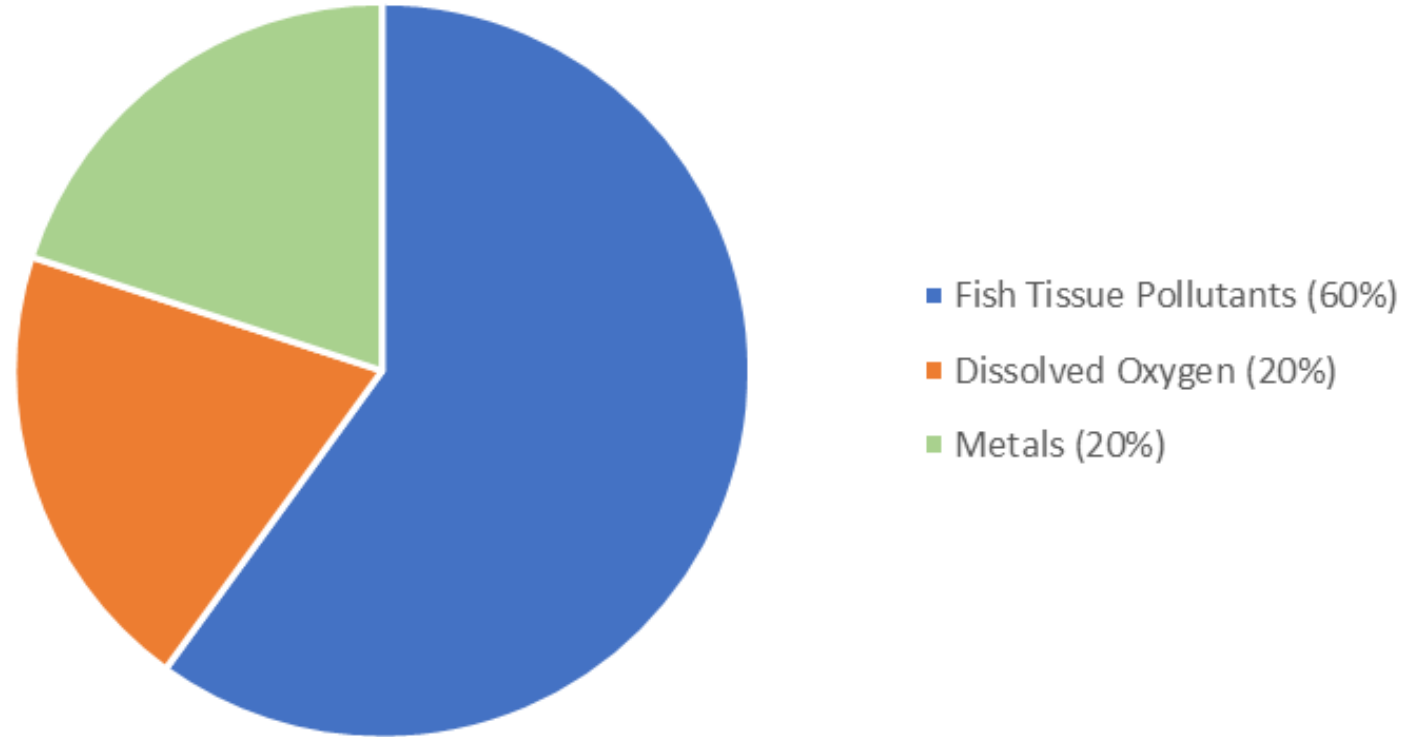






# IMPAIRMENTS FOR NOT SUPPORTING SOUNDS/HARBORS

# Sounds/Harbors in each Pollutant Group





# IMPAIRMENTS FOR NOT SUPPORTING BEACHES (FRESHWATER AND COASTAL)

- 100 percent of Impairments are for Bacteria





## IMPAIRMENTS ADDED AND REMOVED BASED ON NEW DATA

Pollutant	Added (2024)	Removed (2024)
Algae	2	-
Ammonia Toxicity	2	6
Bacteria (E. coli, Enterococci)	80	10
Bio F	5	2
Chlorophyll a	2	-
DO	12	15
FC (Shellfish Criteria)	1	-
Fish Tissue Impairment (not Mercury)	33	4
Fish Tissue Impairment (Mercury)	3	6
Metals (Arsenic, Copper, Lead, or Selenium )	12	2
pH	1	12
Temperature	-	1



# HIGHLIGHTS OF DRAFT 2024 LIST





## CHANGING FROM FECAL COLIFORM TO E. COLI

- The Bacteria Criteria were changed from FC to E. coli or enterococci as part of the 2019 Triennial Review (Approved by EPA in 2022).
- In preparation for this change, TMDLs were completed for all waters in Category 5 for FC on the 2022 list.
- Supplements were developed for all the previous FC TMDLs that had been developed that translated the loadings in the FC TMDL to E coli or enterococci.
- EPD revised FC TMDLs that had been prepared by U.S. EPA (most from 1998 or early 2000's).





# CHANGING FROM FECAL COLIFORM TO E COLI

Waters Listed for FC in 2022 were changed as follows:

- No E coli data available – FC changed to “Bacteria”
- E coli data available (2022-2023) –
  - FC changed to E coli if criteria not met
  - FC delisted if E coli criteria were met
- E coli data available prior to 2022 (when criteria became effective):
  - If E coli criteria not met – changed FC to E coli
  - If E coli criteria was met – changed FC to Bacteria
- EPD will work to collect E coli/enterococci data for waters listed for “Bacteria”





# WATERS WITH A NEW USE OF RECREATION THAT HAVE A BACTERIA IMPAIRMENT

There are cases where a Recreation Use was added as part of 2019 Triennial Review.

- FC TMDLs written prior to the Recreation Use being added do not apply to the new Recreation Use.
- In order for us to show that there is a TMDL in place for the Fishing & Drinking Water uses, but not the Recreation Use:
  - The parameter “Bacteria” is assigned to the “Fishing/Drinking Water Uses” and the TMDL done in the past is assigned (e.g. water in 4a for Bacteria).
  - The parameter “E coli” is assigned to the Recreation Use and it is put in Category 5 showing that we need to revise the previous TMDL to cover the Recreation Use.
  - When the TMDL is revised to cover the Recreation Use, E coli will be listed as the impairment for all Uses.



# CHANGES IN ASSESSMENTS OF LAKES BASED ON CHLOROPHYLL *a*

Lake	Standard Station	Chlorophyll <i>a</i> Std. ug/L	2019 Average	2020 Average	2021 Average	2022 Average	2023 Average	2022 Status	2024 Status
West Point	LaGrange Intake	24	21.4	18.8	19.9	19.6	29.6	Supporting	Category 3
West Point	Upstream Forebay	22	14.3	11.6	15.6	15.9	24.2	Supporting	Category 3
Jackson	2 mi. DS South/Yellow, Midlake	20	17.4	23.4	16.6	18.9	21.7	Category 3	Not supporting
Allatoona	US Dam Forebay	10	9.5	10.2	11.4	9.8	13.0	Category 3	Not supporting



# LAKES – CHLOROPHYLL A

Lake	Standard Station	Chlorophyll a Std. ug/L	2022 Average	2023 Average	2022 Status	2024 Status
Oconee	Oconee Arm at Highway 44	26	16.7	21.0	NA	Supporting
Oconee	Richland Creek Arm	15	12.5	15.0	NA	Supporting
Oconee	Upstream from the Wallace Dam Forebay	18	9.7	12.4	NA	Supporting
Sinclair	Oconee River Arm Midlake	14	15.3	13.5	NA	Category 3
Sinclair	Little River and Murder Creek Arm	14	13.5	13.0	NA	Supporting
Sinclair	Upstream from the Sinclair Dam Forebay	10	10.1	13.4	NA	Category 3



# ENTEROCOCCI ADDED TO BEACHES

Beach	Location
Saint Simons Island	Middle Beach (aka East Beach Old Coast Guard Station)
Saint Simons Island	5 <sup>th</sup> Street Crossover Beach
Saint Simons Island	North Beach at Goulds Inlet
Tybee Island	Polk Street Beach
Tybee Island	Strand Beach at Pier







# E COLI ADDED TO WATERS WITH RECREATION USE

Water Name	Location
Chattooga River	West Fork Chattooga River to Lake Tugaloo
Tobesofkee Creek	GA Hwy 74 to Lake Tobesofkee
Chattahoochee River	Headwaters to Jasus Creek
Chattahoochee River	Jasus Creek to Ga. Hwy. 17 (near Ber Weg Rd), Helen)
Chattahoochee River	Buford Dam to James Creek
Chattahoochee River	Snake Creek to Wahoo Creek
Chattahoochee River	Wahoo Creek to Yellowdirt Creek
Chattahoochee River	Ga Hwy 91 to Lake Seminole
Toccoa River	Headwaters to Big Creek





## E COLI REMOVED FROM WATER WITH RECREATION USE

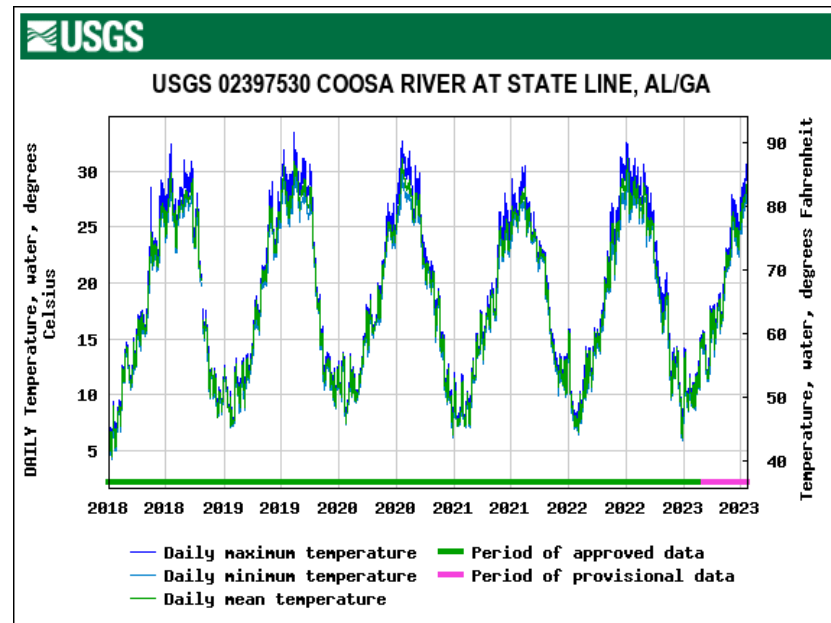
- E coli was removed as an impairment from West Point Lake





# TEMPERATURE REMOVED FROM COOSA RIVER

- Daily max temperature data from the USGS gage at the State line was reviewed for the critical period (May – Oct) from 2018- June 2023
- There were only 7 days (out of 963) that exceeded criteria (<10%)





# CHANGES TO NAMES, LOCATIONS, GIS

- Starting in the 2022 List we began to revise the GIS coverages of streams on the 305(b)/303(d) list using the most recent version of NHD (1:24,0000).
  - In 2022 we updated the GIS coverage of 642 streams.
  - In 2024 we updated the GIS coverage of over 1200 streams.
- We also updated name/locations based names given in NHD where applicable
- We took the opportunity to change location information to be more descriptive where needed
- The GIS was fixed for some waters (may have started above or below where the narrative said, or in a couple of cases the GIS was of the wrong stream).
- An Excel workbook was created to show all of these changes. It also has a list of all the waters that were split on the 2024 list (due to multiple monitoring locations on the stream leading to different assessments or the addition of a new Recreation Use to part of a stream).



## **TIMELINE OF 2024 LIST**

- February 1, 2023 - Public Notice for Submission of Data
- July 3, 2023- Deadline for submission of data
- February 7, 2024 - Draft List placed on Public Notice
- March 12, 2024 – Virtual Public Meeting (Zoom)
- March 14, 2024 - End of Comment period
- April 1, 2024 (goal) - Submit to EPA







# QUESTIONS & COMMENTS

Please submit comments on the 2024 Draft 305(b)/303(d) list in writing by 4:30 pm **March 14, 2024**

Mailing Address

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Email

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# 2022 - 2032 VISION FOR THE CLEAN WATER ACT SECTION 303(D) PROGRAM

Vision Statement:

*The Clean Water Act Section 303(d) program strives to strategically plan and prioritize activities, engage partners, and analyze and utilize data to develop water quality assessments, plans, and implementation approaches to restore and protect the Nation's aquatic resources.*

The 2022 - 2032 Vision for the Clean Water Act Section 303(d) Program (“2022 Vision”) identifies opportunities to manage effectively Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 303(d) program activities to achieve water quality goals for the Nation’s aquatic resources such as streams, rivers, lakes, estuaries, and wetlands. The 2022 Vision document was developed by US EPA, in collaboration with States and Territories and built off successes and lessons learned from the original 303(d) Program Long-Term Vision document released in 2013.

The 2022 Vision document is designed to help States, Territories, and US EPA coordinate and focus efforts to advance the effectiveness of CWA Section 303(d) program implementation. The 2022 Vision lays out a set of goals and focus areas that outline aspirations and highlight opportunities for the National 303(d) Program in which each State and Territory participates.



## 2022 - 2032 VISION GOALS

### Goals:

Outline aspirations and highlight opportunities to implement CWA Section 303(d) program activities.

- Planning and Prioritization
- Restoration
- Protection
- Data and Analysis
- Partnerships



## 2022 - 2032 VISION FOCUS AREAS

### Focus Areas:

Cross-cutting themes of national, regional, and local importance, consistent with national EPA priorities, for States to consider in CWA Section 303(d) program implementation

- Environment Justice
- Climate Change
- Tribal Water Quality and Program Development
- Program Capacity Building



# IMPLEMENTATION OF 303(D) PRIORITIZATION

- States will use the concepts identified in their prioritization frameworks to make a list of plans to be developed on a two-year basis coinciding with the years when states complete and receive approval of their 303(d) list of impaired waters (even numbered years).
- States will submit the priorities to US EPA on October 1st of each even year. The priorities may include TMDLs, restoration and/or protection plans that will be completed or be in development of the next two-year cycle.
- In each two-year priority list, states may identify TMDLs that they intend to have completed and those where they expect to make progress. This will allow us to document work on longer running TMDL development projects that we expect will take more than two years.
- EPD plans to provide a mechanism for public engagement during the preparation of each two-year priority list. Most likely through virtual public meetings and related comment submission periods.
- Prioritization Framework will be re-evaluated periodically to update and incorporate feedback from stakeholders





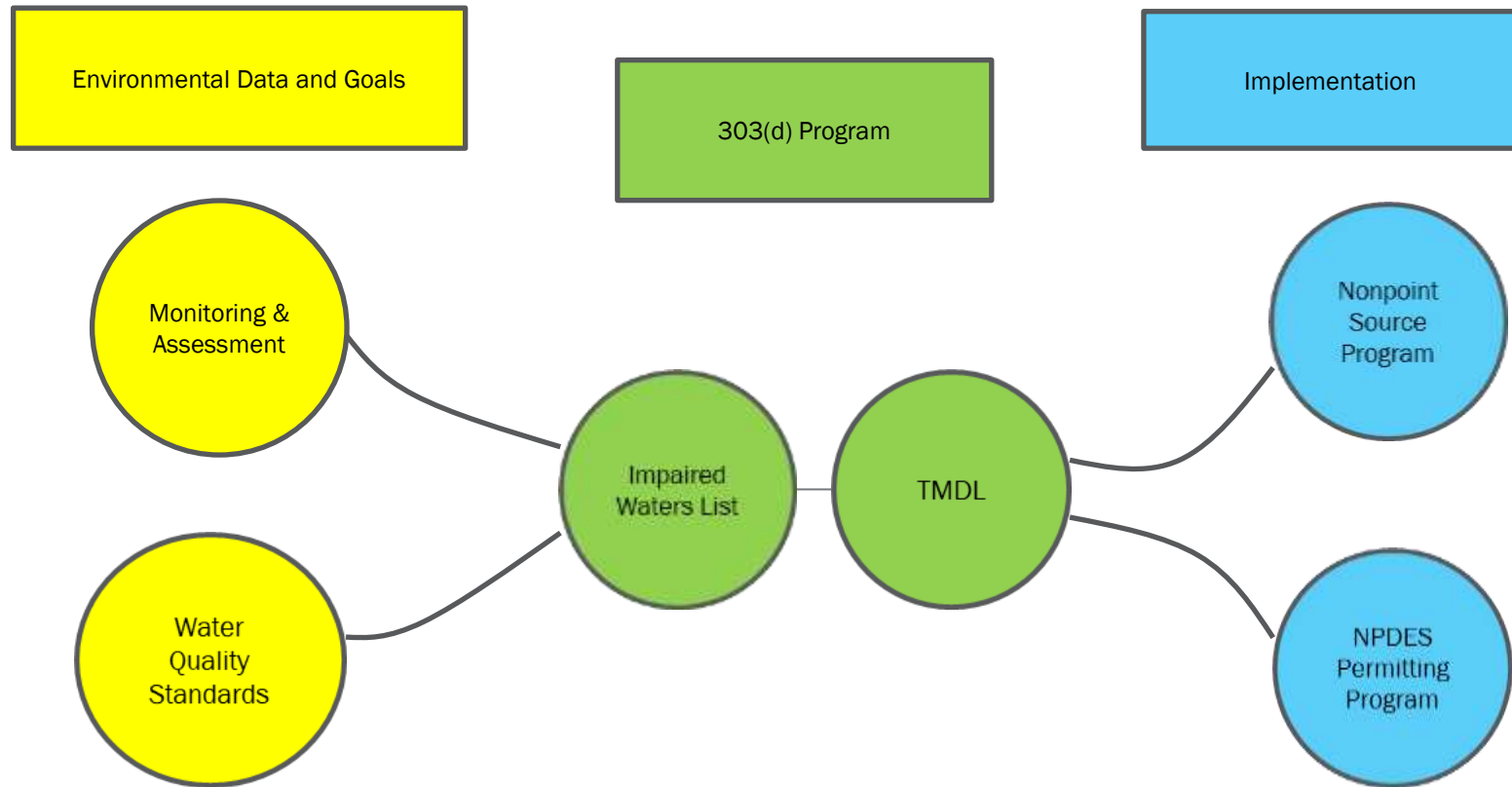
# GEORGIA 303(D) PRIORITIZATION FRAMEWORK

To further the Planning and Prioritization goal in the 2022 Vision, EPD has been developing a draft Prioritization Framework to summarize considerations that will guide our programmatic work in TMDL development through 2032.

The 2022 303(d) List contained nearly 600 individual waterbody + parameter combinations

The Framework provides information on concepts that have proven to be important to since EPD began TMDL development in the late 1990s

The Framework does not specify TMDLs that will be developed, but rather seeks to define the types of TMDL development work that EPD will undertake, with the resources available





# PARAMETER-BASED PRIORITIZATION

- EPD water quality criteria are established for both pollutants (causal parameters) and direct measures of water quality (response parameters) that are meant to protect a waterbody's designated use
  - Examples of Pollutants in Criteria:
    - Cadmium, Copper, Lead, Mercury, etc
  - Examples of measures of water quality in Criteria:
    - Dissolved Oxygen, pH, Chlorophyll A
- EPD plans to use a parameter-based approach to prioritize TMDL development to ensure that holistic impacts of causal pollutants and response parameters can be addressed. This will also mirror historical TMDL development processes to ensure consistency for stakeholders who utilize TMDLs for implementation purposes.
- Parameters planned for Prioritization:
  - “Nutrients”: Chlorophyll A + Total Phosphorus & Total Nitrogen
  - Bacteria, including E. coli and enterococci for waters with the Recreation Designated Use
  - Pollutants impacting fish and aquatic life protection including NH<sub>3</sub> and common metals (Cu, Pb, Zn)



# PRIORITIZATION PLANNING AND RESOURCE CONSIDERATIONS

In order to identify the specific TMDLs that will be developed during each two-year priority period, the following will need to be considered:

- Magnitude and extent of water quality criteria violation(s)
- Model complexity and data requirements needed to develop the TMDL
- Interstate issues and protection of downstream water quality and designated uses
- Revisions to WQS and Federal Recommendations for WQS
- Identified sources of impairment such as point sources, nonpoint sources, regulated stormwater, etc, and the distribution thereof
- Stakeholder interest and commitment to restoration implementation



# PARAMETER PRIORITIES + CONSIDERATIONS

Attainment of Designated Uses and associated Water Quality Criteria and fulfillment and protection of the CWA

Goals of fishable, swimmable waters will always be the ultimate endpoints of water protection programs within GA EPD.

Before developing the 2-year priority list each even numbered year, EPD will assess those waterbodies that are in Category 5 and identify those with the parameters we have set as priorities

Chlorophyll + Nutrients

Bacteria Impairments, especially for waters with Recreation Designated Use

Pollutants impacting fish and aquatic life

These parameter + waterbody combinations will represent a subset of selections that could be prioritized for TMDL development. These parameter + waterbody combinations will then be evaluated through the planning and resource considerations provided above. Where synergies are found and/or work has already been completed towards TMDL development, those parameter + waterbody combinations will be prioritized for further work the in the near-term and also longer-term planning, where needed.



# QUESTIONS & COMMENTS

Questions or Thoughts?

[Tyler.Parsons@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Tyler.Parsons@dnr.ga.gov)

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Priorities in the subject line)

