

## **Highlights of the 2020 305(b)/303(d) List**

### **Summary of Waters**

2,777 waters are included in the 2020 List of Waters

- 1,153 Supporting
  - 5,686 miles streams and coastal streams
  - 192,211 acres lakes
  - 30 miles coastal beaches
  - 2 miles of freshwater beaches
  - 52 square miles sounds/harbors
- 1,373 Not Supporting
  - 9,153 miles streams and coastal streams
  - 159,858 acres lakes
  - 5 miles of coastal beaches
  - 0.16 miles freshwater beaches
  - 11 square miles sounds/harbors
- 251 Assessment Pending
  - 1,378 miles streams and coastal streams
  - 39,576 acres lakes
  - 0.09 miles freshwater beaches
  - 26 square miles sounds/harbors

New data was received and assessed for 634 waters (including waters that have been assessed in the past and waters assessed and added to the list for the first time in 2020)

132 new waters were added to the 2020 List of Waters

- 49 Supporting
- 55 Not Supporting
- 28 Assessment Pending

### **Pollutants Removed based on New Data**

FC removed from 9 waters

Enterococci removed 1 water

DO removed from 7 waters

pH removed from 6 waters

Bio F removed from 3 waters

Lead removed from 1 water

Tetrachloroethylene removed from 1 water

Fish Tissue (PCBs) removed from 2 waters

### **Pollutants Added Based on New Data**

FC added to 56 waters

Bio F added to 40 waters

Chlorophyll *a* added to 8 waters

DO added to 9 waters

pH added to 2 waters

Metals (Cadmium, Copper, Lead or Zinc) added to 5 waters

Selenium or Arsenic added to 2 waters

Enterococci added to 1 water

E. coli added to 7 waters

Ammonia Toxicity was added to 15 waters

### **Parameters Added to Category 3 (more data/information needed to make an assessment)**

DO placed in Category 3 for 25 waters

Bacteria (E. coli or FC) placed in Category 3 for 7 waters

pH placed in Category 3 for 48 waters

Chlorophyll *a* placed in Category 3 for 2 waters

### **Changes to Assessment of Lakes for Chlorophyll *a***

- Walter F. George
  - Mid-Lake section moved from Category 3 (Assessment Pending) to Category 5 (Not Supporting) for chlorophyll *a*
  - Dam Pool section moved from Category 1 (Supporting) to Category 3 (Assessment Pending) for chlorophyll *a*
- Lake Lanier
  - 2 sections (Flowery Branch & Bolling Bridge) moved from Category 1 (Supporting) to Category 4a (Not Supporting) for chlorophyll *a*
  - 2 sections (Browns Bridge and Lanier Bridge) moved from Category 3 (Assessment Pending) to Category 4a (Not Supporting) for chlorophyll *a*
- Lake Allatoona
  - 3 sections (Allatoona Creek, Mid-Lake, Little River) moved from Category 3 (Assessment Pending) to Category 4a (Not Supporting) for chlorophyll *a*
- Carters Lake
  - 1 section (Coosawattee River) moved from Category 1 (Supporting) to Category 3 (Assessment Pending).

### **Changes Made to the Assessment of Public Beaches (Freshwater and Marine)**

- Enterococci was added to Saint Simons Island – South Beach at Lighthouse
- Enterococci was removed from Tybee Island - Polk Street Beach
- E. coli was added to Georgia Veterans State Park Beach

- E. coli was placed in Category 3 for Rocky Mountain Public Fishing Area (State Park) Beach

### **Ammonia Toxicity Added as a Cause of Impairment**

In 2013 U.S. EPA published National Recommended Ambient Water Quality Criteria for the Protection of Aquatic Life Criteria from Effects of Ammonia in Freshwater. EPD addresses ammonia toxicity through our 2017 NPDES Permitting Strategy for Ammonia Toxicity along with Georgia's narrative criteria "All waters shall be free from toxic, corrosive, acidic, and caustic substances discharged from municipalities, industries, or other sources, such as nonpoint sources, in amounts, concentrations, or combinations which are harmful to humans, animals, or aquatic life". As part of this permitting strategy, EPD has been collecting ammonia data upstream and downstream of NPDES facilities to determine if permitted discharges are causing waters to exceed the U.S. EPA's chronic ammonia criteria. Ammonia data collected downstream of dischargers along with other ammonia data collected across the State have been assessed and 15 waters are being added to the 2020 list as being impaired for Ammonia Toxicity. NPDES dischargers are responsible for most of these impairments. If a permitted discharge is found to be the source of impairment, the NPDES permit will be reissued with ammonia limits protective of water quality along with a compliance schedule to meet the limits. TMDLs will be developed for waters where the impairment is not the result of a permitted discharge.

### **Updates made to Bio F listings based on Recalibration of Metrics**

Georgia's Wildlife Resources Division (WRD) monitors the health of Georgia's wadeable streams by surveying fish communities. The abundance and diversity of fish species in a stream reflects the overall health of the stream and its fish and wildlife habitat. The primary technique being used to determine the quality of fish communities is called the Index of Biotic Integrity (IBI). This index uses the numbers and types of fish species present in a stream to produce a stream score or rating for comparison across streams within a particular ecoregion or to the same stream over time. The IBI score is calculated using different metrics for each ecoregion. The IBI scores are broken into ranges and each range assigned a narrative rank of "Very Poor", "Poor", "Fair", "Good" or "Excellent". Sites that score "Poor" or "Very Poor" as listed as impaired for Bio F.

From time to time, the IBI scoring system is recalibrated. The most recent recalibration was done in 2019. As part of the recalibration, WRD includes all the IBI data collected to date. Inclusion of more data allows for the determination of more accurate cut off scores (e.g. what scores should apply to sites that are poor vs sites that are good). Any updates to species information (such as what is considered to be a native or invasive species) are also included. In the 2019 recalibration, WRD also found that the trendline it had been using to correlate the number of fish in a stream with drainage basin area for the stream was biased toward sites with large drainage basins. They adjusted the trendline to reduce this bias. WRD rescored the data from all 1,403 sampling events that they have completed to date. This recalibration effort resulted in the assessment changing for about 8% of sites:

- 43 streams that had been assessed as “Supporting” for Bio F are now listed as “Not Supporting” for Bio F
- 67 sites that were listed as “Not Supporting” for Bio F in the past are now listed as “Supporting”

### **Temperature in the Coosa River**

Coosa River (GAR031501050209) – (Beach Creek to Stateline) –This portion of the Coosa River has been listed as impaired for temperature since 2008. The temperature violations have been caused by cooling water discharges from Georgia Power – Plant Hammond. The NPDES permit for Georgia Power – Plant Hammond was modified in the Spring of 2019. This permit modification contains conditions to ensure that water quality criteria (including temperature) are met. Temperature is being moved from Category 5 to Category 4b. Waters are placed in Category 4b when 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. In this case the action is the NPDES permit. Plant Hammond is also being decommissioned and stopped discharging cooling water in July 2019. Temperature will likely be removed as an impairment on the 2022 list.

### **Changes Made to Cause/Pollutant Names**

A number of Cause/Pollutant Names have been updated so they may be more easily understood. The table below shows the name being used currently versus what it was called in the past. The majority of the changes were made to causes related to pollutants in fish tissue.

| <b>Current Cause Name</b>                          | <b>Historical Cause Name</b>               |
|----------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| Fish Tissue (Toxaphene like chlorinated camphenes) | FCG (toxaphene like chlorinated camphenes) |
| Fish Tissue (Arsenic)                              | FCG(As)                                    |
| Fish Tissue (Chlordane)                            | FCG(Chlordane)                             |
| Fish Tissue (DDE/DDD)                              | FCG(DDE/DDD)                               |
| Fish Tissue (Dieldrin)                             | FCG(Dieldrin)                              |
| Fish Tissue (Mercury)                              | TWR                                        |
| Fish Tissue (PCBs)                                 | FCG(PCBs)                                  |
| Shellfishing Ban                                   | SB                                         |
| Tetrachloroethylene                                | PCE                                        |
| Trichloroethylene                                  | TCE                                        |
| Trichloroethane                                    | TCA                                        |

### **Corrections Made to Designated Uses**

A designated use of “Recreation” was added to the following water bodies. The “Recreation” use had been left off by mistake on previous lists.

- Saint Simons Island - 5th Street Crossover Beach (GAR030702030222)
- Jekyll Island - St. Andrews Beach (GAR030702030415)
- Blythe Island Sandbar Beach (GAR030702030216)
- Saint Simons Island - South Beach at Lighthouse (GAR030702030223)

### **Corrections made to River Basins**

- Cumberland Sound - (GAR030702030505): The sound was mistakenly assigned to the St. Marys River Basin in the past. It is in the Satilla River Basin.
- Wassaw Sound - (GAR030602040624): The sound was mistakenly assigned to the Savannah River Basin in the past. It is in the Ogeechee River Basin.