

## Georgia's List of Priority Waters

In December 2013, U.S. EPA released a new framework for managing the Clean Water Act 303(d) program responsibilities, entitled “*A Long-Term Vision for Assessment, Restoration, and Protection under the Clean Water Act Section 303(d) Program*”. The Vision was designed to help coordinate and focus EPA and State efforts to advance the effectiveness of the Clean Water Act Section 303(d) Program direction in the coming decade. To accomplish this, the Vision focuses on six elements including 1) Prioritization, 2) Assessment, 3) Protection, 4) Alternatives, 5) Engagement and 6) Integration.

To address the first element of the Vision (Prioritization), States were to develop a list of priority waters for protection, direct to implementation, TMDL development and/or TMDL alternative development. Georgia's priorities reflect where the State plans to spend a lot of its resources in the upcoming years. They were selected using the U.S. EPA approved 2012 305b/303d list of waters as the baseline and our [priority framework](#). As mentioned above, waters on the priority list will be addressed using a variety of approaches. Direct to implementation will be done when the cause is known and can be addressed through NPDES permits. TMDL and TMDL alternatives will be developed for waters listed as impaired on Georgia's 305(b)/303(d) list of waters. Protection plans, on the other hand, will be written for waters that are not assessed as “impaired” in an effort to keep the water from becoming impaired. Georgia's list of priority waters are given in the table below. The table lists the parameters of concern that EPD plans to address along with the approach the State plans to use.

The waters in the priority list can basically be organized into six groups for the purposes of discussion.

1) Lake Lanier – Lake Lanier is composed of 5 segments. Only one of these segments, (Lanier Lake -Browns Bridge Road (SR 369)) is on the 2012 303d list for chlorophyll *a*. Georgia is putting this segment on our priority list for chlorophyll *a*. However, the TMDL will be written for the entire lake, so the other four segments of the lake are being added to the priority list. In this TMDL Georgia will be addressing nutrients, which are a National priority.



2) Carters Lake – Carters Lake is composed of two segments. Both are on the 2012 303d list for “chlorophyll *a* and total phosphorus”. Georgia is putting both segments of

the lake on the priority list for each parameter and plans to develop a TMDL to address them. This TMDL will be addressing nutrients, which are a National priority.

3) Savannah Harbor – This segment is impaired for DO. Georgia EPD has been working with South Carolina DHEC and the Savannah River/Harbor Discharger Group to restore this water and is pursuing a TMDL alternative plan (5R).



4) Coosa River – A segment of the Coosa River is on the 2012 303d list for Temperature. The cause of the temperature violation is known and will be addressed through direct implementation. A wasteload allocation for heat loads is being developed and will be implemented through an NPDES permit.



5) Georgia has 4 coastal beaches on the 2012 303d list for enterococci. Georgia chose to put these beaches on the priority list to address human health concerns. TMDLs will be written to address these impairments.

6) Ochlockonee River Basin - Georgia is placing the Upper and Lower Ochlockonee Watersheds on our priority list due to chlorophyll and DO impairments in a downstream lake located in Florida. A TMDL is being developed for this Lake. In accordance with the Clean Water Act, waters in Georgia may not cause and contribute to water quality violations in Florida. Georgia will develop a protection plan to help ensure that Georgia's waters meet the necessary nutrient reductions at the State line. The protection plan will address nutrients which are a National priority.

While the waters on the list are considered our priorities under the new Vision, EPD plans to continue to develop TMDLs using the rotating basin approach as we have been doing in the past. Therefore, Georgia will be developing more TMDLs by 2022 than what is accounted for in our "priority" list.

**Table of Priority Waters**

<b>Group</b>	<b>Water ID</b>	<b>Name/Location</b>	<b>Parameter of Concern</b>	<b>Approach to Address Parameter of Concern</b>
Lake Lanier	GAR031300010819	Lanier Lake (Browns Bridge Road (SR 369))	Chlorophyll a	TMDL
	GAR031300010705	Lanier Lake (Bolling Bridge)	Chlorophyll a	Protection via TMDL
	GAR031300010818	Lanier Lake (Lanier Bridge Road (SR53))	Chlorophyll a	Protection via TMDL
	GAR031300010820	Lanier Lake (Flowery Branch)	Chlorophyll a	Protection via TMDL
	GAR031300010821	Lanier Lake (Dam Pool)	Chlorophyll a	Protection via TMDL
Carters Lake	GAR031501020406	Carters Lake (US Woodring Branch/Midlake)	Chlorophyll a & Phosphorus	TMDL
	GAR031501020408	Carters Lake (Coosawattee River Embayment)	Chlorophyll a & Phosphorus	TMDL
Savannah Harbor	GAR030601090318	Savannah Harbor (SR 25 (old US Hwy 17) to Elba Island Cut)	Dissolved Oxygen	TMDL Alternative (5R)
Coosa River	GAR031501050209	Coosa River (Beach Creek to Stateline)	Temperature	Direct to Implementation
Beaches	GAR030602040306	Kings Ferry County Park Beach (US Hwy 17 Kingsferry Bridge on Ogeechee River - Entire Beach)	Enterococci	TMDL
	GAR030701060506	Reimolds Pasture Beach (Eastern Shore of Buttermilk Sound)	Enterococci	TMDL
	GAR030702030230	Jekyll Island Clam Creek Beach (Clam Creek to Old North Picnic Area)	Enterococci	TMDL
	GAR030702030415	Jekyll Island – St. Andrews Beach (Macy Lane to St. Andrews Picnic Area)	Enterococci	TMDL
Ochlockonee Watershed	HUC 03120002	Upper Ochlockonee Watershed	Phosphorus, Nitrogen	Protection Plan
	HUC 03120002	Lower Ochlockonee Watershed	Phosphorus, Nitrogen	Protection Plan