

Total Maximum Daily Load
Evaluation
for
Sumac Creek
in the
Coosa River Basin
for
Fecal Coliform

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The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Region 4
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Submitted by:
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The State of Georgia assesses its water bodies for compliance with water quality standards criteria established for their designated uses as required by the Federal Clean Water Act (CWA). Assessed water bodies are placed into one of three categories, supporting designated use, not supporting designated use, or assessment pending, depending on water quality assessment results. These water bodies are found on Georgia's 305(b) list as required by that section of the CWA that defines the assessment process, and are published in *Water Quality in Georgia* (GA EPD, 2010 – 2011). This document is available on the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) website.

Some of the 305(b) not supporting water bodies are also assigned to Georgia's 303(d) list, also named after that section of the CWA. Water bodies on the 303(d) list are required to have a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) evaluation for the water quality constituent(s) in violation of the water quality standard. The TMDL in this document is based on the 2012 303(d) listing, which is available on the EPD website. The TMDL process establishes the allowable pollutant loadings or other quantifiable parameters for a water body based on the relationship between pollutant sources and instream water quality conditions. This allows water quality-based controls to be developed to reduce pollution and restore and maintain water quality.

Every water in the State has one or more designated uses, and each designated use has water quality criteria established to protect it. The State of Georgia has placed one stream segment in the Coosa River Basin on the 303(d) list of impaired waters because they were assessed as "not supporting" their designated use of "Fishing" due to violation of the fecal coliform water quality criteria. The water quality criteria for fecal coliform bacteria for a water with a designated use of fishing are as follows: For the months of May through October, when water contact recreation activities are expected to occur, fecal coliform counts are not to exceed a geometric mean of 200 per 100 ml based on at least four samples collected from a given sampling site over a 30-day period at intervals not less than 24 hours. For the months of November through April, fecal coliform counts are not to exceed a geometric mean of 1,000 per 100 ml based on at least four samples collected from a given sampling site over a 30-day period at intervals not less than 24 hours and not to exceed a maximum of 4,000 per 100 ml for any sample. A water is assessed as "not supporting" its use if more than 10% of the geometric means exceeded the water quality criteria cited above. If no geometric means are available, a water is assessed as "not supporting" its use if more than 10 percent of individual samples exceed the fecal coliform criteria.

An important part of the TMDL analysis is the identification of potential source categories. Sources are broadly classified as either point or nonpoint sources. A point source is defined as a discernable, confined, and discrete conveyance from which pollutants are or may be discharged to surface waters. Nonpoint sources are diffuse, and generally, but not always, involve accumulated fecal coliform bacteria that wash off land surfaces as a result of storm events.

The process of developing fecal coliform bacteria TMDLs for the Coosa River Basin listed segment includes the determination of the following:

- The current critical fecal coliform load to the stream under existing conditions;
- The TMDL for similar conditions under which the current critical load was determined; and
- The percent reduction in the current critical fecal coliform load necessary to achieve the TMDL.

The calculation of the fecal coliform load at any point in a stream requires the fecal coliform concentration and stream flow. The Loading Curve Approach was used to determine the current fecal coliform load and TMDL. The fecal coliform loads and required reductions for each of the listed segments are summarized in the table below.

Fecal Coliform Loads and Required Fecal Coliform Load Reductions

Stream Segment	Current Load (counts/ 30 days)	TMDL Components					Percent Reduction
		WLA (counts/ 30 days)	WLASw (counts/ 30 days)	LA (counts/ 30 days)	MOS (counts/ 30 days)	TMDL (counts/ 30 days)	
Sumac Creek	3.2E+12	-	-	1.67E+12	1.86E+11	1.86E+12	42

Management practices that may be used to help reduce fecal coliform source loads include:

- Compliance with NPDES permit limits and requirements;
- Adoption of NRCS Conservation Practices; and
- Application of Best Management Practices (BMPs) appropriate to reduce nonpoint sources.

The amount of fecal coliform bacteria delivered to a stream is difficult to determine. However, the use of these management practices should improve stream water quality, and future monitoring will provide a measurement of TMDL implementation.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The State of Georgia assesses its water bodies for compliance with water quality standards criteria established for their designated uses as required by the Federal Clean Water Act (CWA). Assessed water bodies are placed into one of three categories depending on water quality assessment results, supporting designated use, not supporting designated use, or assessment pending. These water bodies are found on Georgia's 305(b) list as required by that section of the CWA that addresses the assessment process, and are published in *Water Quality in Georgia* (GA EPD, 2010 – 2011). This document is available on the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) website.

A subset of the water bodies that do not meet designated uses, those in Category 5 on the 305(b) list, are assigned to Georgia's 303(d) list, named after that section of the CWA. Water bodies included in the 303(d) list are required to have a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) evaluation for the water quality constituent(s) in violation of the water quality criteria. The TMDL in this document is based on the 2012 303(d) listing, which is available on the EPD website. The TMDL process establishes the allowable loading of pollutants or other quantifiable parameters for a water body based on the relationship between pollution sources and in-stream water quality conditions. This allows water quality based controls to be developed to reduce pollution and restore and maintain water quality.

The list identifies the waterbodies that are not supporting their designated use classifications due to exceedances of water quality standards for fecal coliform bacteria. Fecal coliform bacteria are used as an indicator of the potential presence of pathogens in a stream. Table 1 presents the one stream in the Coosa River Basin included on the 2012 303(d) list for exceedances of the fecal coliform standard criteria.

Table 1. Water Bodies Listed on the 2012 303(d) List for Fecal Coliform Bacteria in the Coosa River Basin

Stream Segment	Location	Reach ID	Segment Length (miles)	Designated Use
Sumac Creek	Coffey Lake to Conasauga River	R031501010203	8	Fishing

1.2 Watershed Description

The Coosa River originates in Tennessee as the Conasauga River and in the north Georgia mountains as the Etowah, Coosawattee, and Chattooga Rivers. The Conasauga River flows south from Tennessee where it converges with the Coosawattee River near Resaca, Georgia, to form the Oostanaula River. The Coosawattee River originates in Ellijay, Georgia, by the merging of the Ellijay and Cartecay Rivers. The Coosawattee flows west from Ellijay, joins with Mountain Creek and then flows into Carter's Lake. From Carter's Lake, the Coosawattee River flows west toward Resaca where it meets the Conasauga to form the Oostanaula River. The Etowah River flows southwest from Lumpkin County to Lake Allatoona. From there it flows west toward Rome, Georgia, where it merges with the Oostanaula River to form the Coosa River. The Coosa River then flows west into Alabama to Lake Weiss. The Chattooga River originates in

Walker County and flows southwest into Alabama to Lake Weiss. The Coosa River flows south from Lake Weiss through a series of lakes and eventually joins the Tallapoosa River to form the Alabama River, which ultimately discharges to the Gulf of Mexico. The Coosa River Basin occupies a total area of about 10,059 square miles, of which 4,579 square miles (46 percent) lie in Georgia. The Coosa River Basin contains parts of the Blue Ridge, Piedmont, and Ridge and Valley physiographic provinces that extend throughout the southeastern United States.

The Coosa River basin includes five United States Geologic Survey (USGS) eight-digit hydrologic units, HUC 03150101 - 03150105. Figure 1 shows the locations of these sub-basins. Figure 2 shows the locations of the listed segment and associated counties in HUC 03150101.

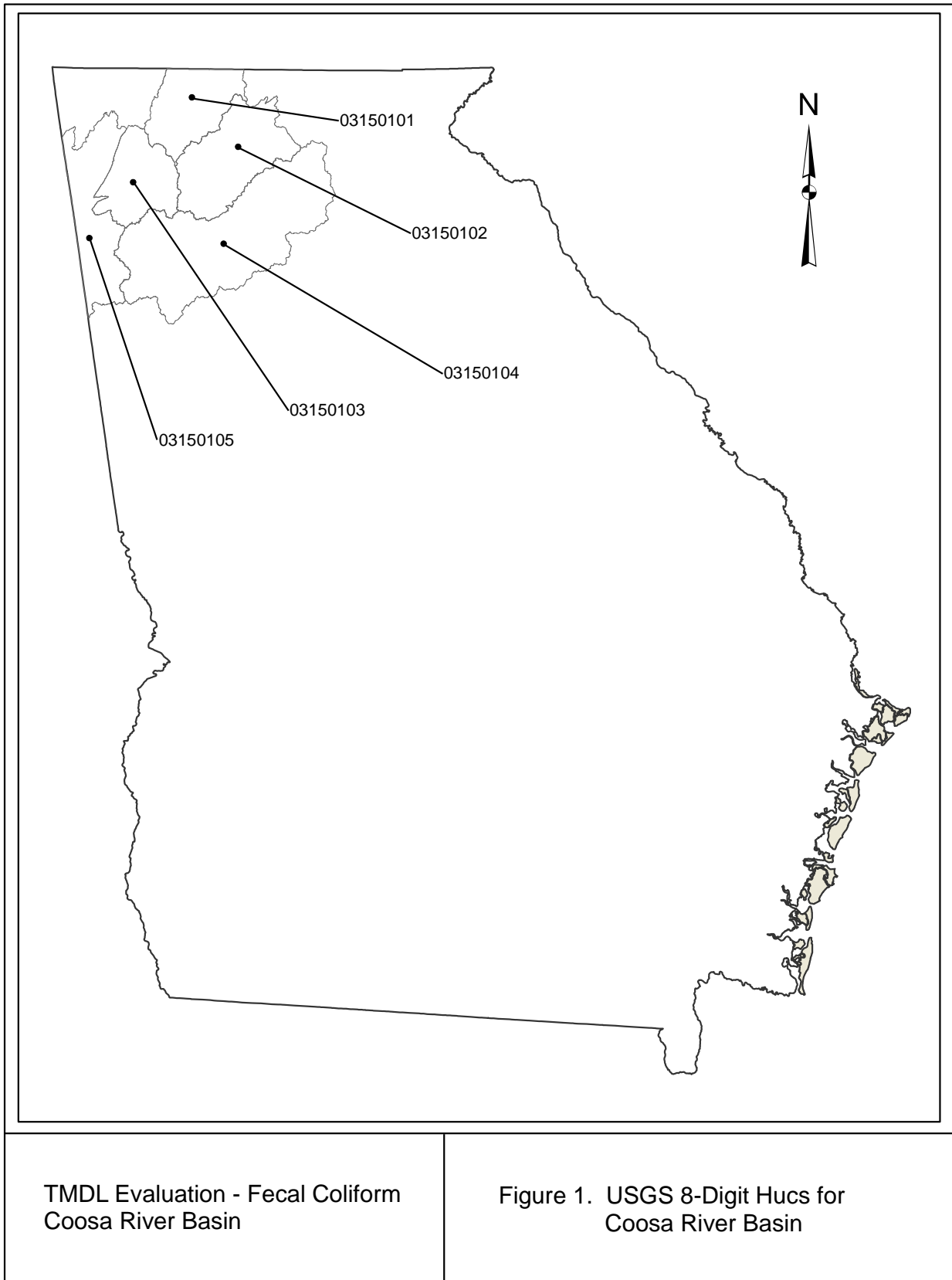
The land use characteristics of the Sumac Creek watershed were determined using data from the Georgia Land Use Trends (GLUT) for Year 2008. This raster land use trend product was developed by the University of Georgia – Natural Resources Spatial Analysis Laboratory (NARSAL) and follows land use trends for years 1974, 1985, 1991, 1998, 2001, 2005 and 2008. The raster data sets were developed from Landsat Thematic Mapper (TM) and Enhanced Thematic Mapper Plus (ETM+). Some of the NARSAL land use types were reclassified, aggregated into similar land use types, and used in the final watershed characterization. Table 2 lists the watershed land use distribution for the Sumac Creek drainage area.

1.3 Water Quality Standard

The water use classification for the listed Sumac Creek segment is Fishing. The criterion violated is listed as fecal coliform. The potential causes listed include urban runoff, nonpoint sources, and municipal facilities. The use classification water quality standards for fecal coliform bacteria, as stated in the *State of Georgia's Rules and Regulations for Water Quality Control*, Chapter 391-3-6-.03(6)(c)(iii) (GA EPD, 2011), are:

(c) Fishing: Propagation of Fish, Shellfish, Game and Other Aquatic Life; secondary contact recreation in and on the water; or for any other use requiring water of a lower quality:

(iii) Bacteria: For the months of May through October, when water contact recreation activities are expected to occur, fecal coliform not to exceed a geometric mean of 200 per 100 ml based on at least four samples collected from a given sampling site over a 30-day period at intervals not less than 24 hours. Should water quality and sanitary studies show fecal coliform levels from non-human sources exceed 200/100 ml (geometric mean) occasionally, then the allowable geometric mean fecal coliform shall not exceed 300 per 100 ml in lakes and reservoirs and 500 per 100 ml in free flowing freshwater streams. For the months of November through April, fecal coliform not to exceed a geometric mean of 1,000 per 100 ml based on at least four samples collected from a given sampling site over a 30-day period at intervals not less than 24 hours and not to exceed a maximum of 4,000 per 100 ml for any sample. The State does not encourage swimming in surface waters since a number of factors which are beyond the control of any State regulatory agency contribute to elevated levels of fecal coliform. For waters designated as approved shellfish harvesting waters by the appropriate State agencies, the requirements will be consistent with those established by the State and Federal agencies responsible for the National Shellfish Sanitation Program. The requirements are found in the National Shellfish Sanitation Program Manual of Operation, Revised 1988, Interstate Shellfish Sanitation Conference, U. S. Department of Health and Human Services (PHS/FDA), and the Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition. Streams designated as generally supporting shellfish are listed in Paragraph 391-3-6-.03(14)



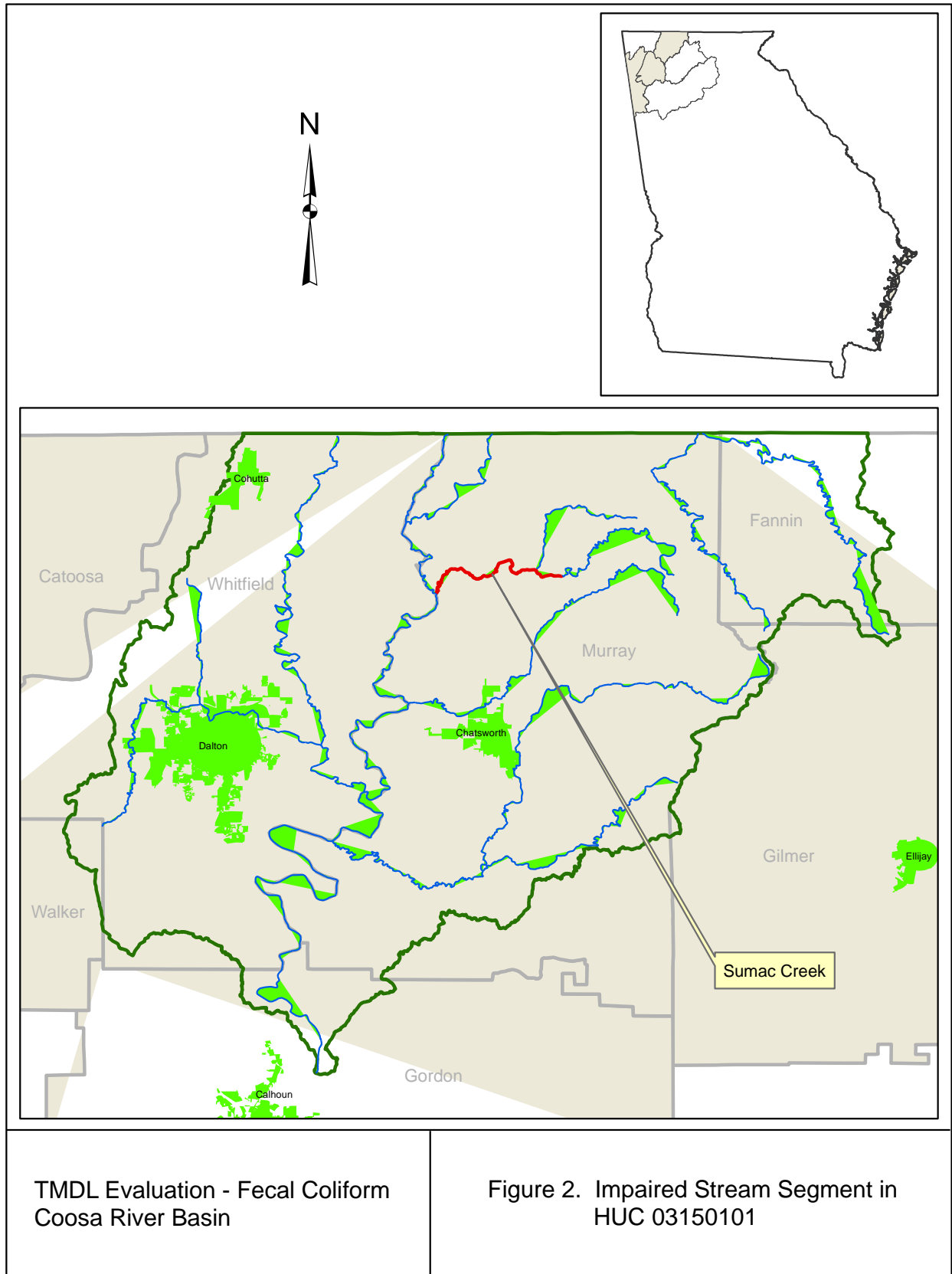


Table 2. Coosa River Basin Land Coverage

Stream/Segment	Land Use Categories – Acres/Percent													Total
	Open Water	Low Intensity Residential	High Intensity Residential	High Intensity Commercial, Industrial, Transportation	Bare Rock, Sand, Clay	Quarries, Strip Mines, Gravel Pits	Transitional	Forest	Row Crops	Pasture, Hay	Other Grasses (Urban, recreational; e.g. parks, lawns)	Woody Wetlands	Emergent Herbaceous Wetlands	
Sumac Creek	40 0.2%	388 1.6%	70 0.3%	20 0.1%	2 0.01%	0 0.0%	122 0.5%	18252 74.5%	463 1.9%	3743 15.3%	1351 5.5%	47 0.2%	12 0.05%	24509 100.0%

2.0 WATER QUALITY ASSESSMENT

Stream segments are placed on the 303(d) list as not supporting their water use classification based on water quality sampling data. A stream is placed on this list if more than 10% of the samples exceed the fecal coliform criteria. Water quality samples collected within a 30-day period that have a geometric mean in excess of 200 counts per 100 milliliters during the period May through October, or in excess of 1000 counts per 100 milliliters during the period November through April, are in violation of the bacteria water quality standard. There is also a single sample maximum criterion (4000 counts per 100 milliliters) for the months of November through April.

Fecal coliform data used for TMDL developed in this document were collected during calendar year 2011 by EPD as part of the trend monitoring program. These data are presented in Appendix A.

3.0 SOURCE ASSESSMENT

An important part of the TMDL analysis is the identification of potential source categories. Sources are broadly classified as either point or nonpoint sources. A point source is defined as a discernable, confined, and discrete conveyance from which pollutants are or may be discharged to surface waters. Nonpoint sources are diffuse, and generally, but not always, involve accumulation of fecal coliform bacteria on land surfaces that wash off as a result of storm events.

3.1 Point Source Assessment

Title IV of the Clean Water Act establishes the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit program. There are two basic kinds of NPDES permits: 1) municipal and industrial wastewater treatment facilities, and 2) regulated stormwater discharges.

3.1.1 Wastewater Treatment Facilities

In general, municipal and industrial wastewater treatment facilities have NPDES permits with effluent limits. These permit limits are either based on federal and state effluent guidelines (technology-based limits) or on water quality standards (water quality-based limits).

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) has developed technology-based guidelines, which establish a minimum standard of pollution control for municipal and industrial discharges without regard for the quality of the receiving waters. These are based on Best Practical Control Technology Currently Available (BPT), Best Conventional Control Technology (BCT), and Best Available Technology Economically Achievable (BAT). The level of control required by each facility depends on the type of discharge and the pollutant.

The USEPA and the states have also developed numeric and narrative water quality standards. Typically, these standards are based on the results of aquatic toxicity tests and/or human health criteria and include a margin of safety. Water quality-based effluent limits are set to protect the receiving stream. These limits are based on water quality standards that have been established for a stream based on its intended use and the prescribed biological and chemical conditions that must be met to sustain that use.

Discharges from municipal and industrial wastewater treatment facilities can contribute fecal coliform to receiving waters. There are no NPDES permitted discharges with a flow greater than 0.1 MGD identified in the Coosa River Basin that could potentially impact streams on the 2012 303(d) list for fecal coliform bacteria.

Combined sewer systems convey a mixture of raw sewage and stormwater in the same conveyance structure to the wastewater treatment plant. These are considered a component of municipal wastewater treatment facilities. When the combined sewage exceeds the capacity of the wastewater treatment plant, the excess is diverted to a combined sewage overflow (CSO) discharge point. There are no permitted CSO outfalls in the Coosa River Basin.

3.1.2 Regulated Stormwater Discharges

Some stormwater runoff is covered under the NPDES Permit Program as a point source. Some industrial facilities included under the program will have limits similar to traditional NPDES-permitted dischargers, whereas others establish controls: “to the maximum extent practicable” (MEP). Currently, regulated stormwater discharges that may contain fecal coliform bacteria consist of those associated with industrial activities and large, medium, and small municipal separate storm sewer systems (MS4s) that serve populations of 50,000 or more.

3.1.2.1 Industrial General Stormwater NPDES Permit

Stormwater discharges associated with industrial activities are currently covered under the 2012 General Storm Water NPDES Permit (GAR050000), also called the Industrial General Permit (IGP). This permit requires visual monitoring of stormwater discharges, site inspections, implementation of Best Management Practices (BMPs), and record keeping. The IGP requires that stormwater discharging into an impaired stream segment or within one linear mile upstream of, and within the same watershed as, any portion of an impaired stream segment identified as “not supporting” its designated use(s), must satisfy the requirements of Appendix C of the 2012 IGP if the pollutant(s) of concern for which the impaired stream segment has been listed may be exposed to stormwater as a result of industrial activity at the site. If a facility is covered under Appendix C of the IGP, then benchmark monitoring for the pollutant(s) of concern is required.

3.1.2.2 MS4 NPDES Permits

Stormwater discharges from MS4s are very diverse in pollutant loadings and frequency of discharge. At present, all cities and counties within the state of Georgia that had a population of greater than 100,000 at the time of the 1990 Census are permitted for their stormwater discharge under Phase I. This includes 58 permittees in Georgia.

Phase I MS4 permits require the prohibition of non-stormwater discharges (i.e., illicit discharges) into the storm sewer systems and controls to reduce the discharge of pollutants to the maximum extent practicable, including the use of management practices, control techniques and systems, as well as design and engineering methods (Federal Register, 1990). A site-specific Stormwater Management Plan (SWMP) outlining appropriate controls is required by and referenced in the permit. There are 5 Phase I MS4s in the Coosa River Basin (Table 3).

Table 3. Phase I Permitted MS4s in the Coosa River Basin

Name	Permit No.	Watershed
Acworth	GAS000101	Coosa
Cobb County	GAS000108	Chattahoochee, Coosa
Fulton County	GAS000117	Chattahoochee, Coosa, Flint, Ocmulgee
Forsyth County	GAS000300	Chattahoochee, Coosa
Kennesaw	GAS000121	Coosa

Source: Nonpoint Source Permitting Program, GA DNR, 2013

Small MS4s serving urbanized areas are required to obtain a stormwater permit under the Phase II stormwater regulations. An urbanized area is defined as an area with a residential population of at least 50,000 people and an overall population density of at least 1,000 people per square mile. There are 19 Phase II MS4s in the Coosa River Basin (Table 4).

Table 4. Phase II Permitted MS4s in the Coosa River Basin

Name	Watershed
Alpharetta	Chattahoochee, Coosa
Bartow County	Coosa
Canton	Coosa
Cherokee County	Coosa
Dallas	Coosa
Dalton	Coosa
Emerson	Coosa
Floyd County	Coosa
Holly Springs	Coosa
Marietta	Chattahoochee, Coosa
Mountain Park	Coosa
Paulding County	Chattahoochee, Coosa, Tallapoosa
Rome	Coosa
Roswell	Chattahoochee, Coosa
Tunnel Hill	Coosa, Tennessee
Varnell	Coosa
Walker County	Coosa, Tennessee
Whitfield County	Coosa, Tennessee
Woodstock	Coosa

Source: Nonpoint Source Permitting Program, GA DNR, 2013

There are no Phase I or Phase II MS4 city or county urbanized areas upstream of the listed segment in the Coosa River Basin.

3.1.3 Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations

Under the Clean Water Act, Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) are defined as point sources of pollution and are therefore subject to NPDES permit regulations. From 1999 through 2001, Georgia adopted rules for permitting swine and non-swine liquid manure animal feeding operations (AFOs). Georgia rules required medium size AFOs with more than 300 animal units (AU) but less than 1000 AU to apply for a non-discharge State land application system (LAS) waste disposal permit. Large operations with more than 1000 AU were required to apply for an NPDES permit (also non-discharge) as a CAFO. The USEPA CAFO regulations were successfully appealed in 2005. They were revised to comply with the court's decision that NPDES permits only be required for actual discharges. Georgia's rules were amended on August 7, 2012 to reflect the USEPA revisions. The revised state rules will continue LAS permitting of medium size liquid manure AFOs and extend LAS permitting to large liquid manure AFOs with more than 1000 AU, unless they elect to obtain an NPDES permit. There are no known swine and non-swine liquid manure CAFOs located upstream of the listed segments in the Coosa River Basin.

In 2002, the USEPA promulgated expanded NPDES permit regulations for CAFOs that added dry manure poultry operations larger than 125,000 broilers or 82,000 layers. In accordance with the Georgia rule amendment discussed above, the general permit covering these facilities has been terminated and they are no longer covered under any permit. Georgia is consistently among the top three states in the U.S. in terms of poultry operations. The majority of poultry farms are dry manure operations where the manure is stored for a time and then land applied. Freshly stored litter can be a nonpoint source of fecal coliform. However, land applied litter that was previously stored for an extended length of time typically exhibits very low fecal coliform levels. Table 5 presents the known dry manure poultry operations located upstream of the listed segments in the Coosa River Basin.

Table 5. Registered Dry Manure Poultry Operations Upstream of 303(d) Listed Segments in the Coosa River Basin

Name	303(d) Listed Stream Segment	County	Number of Animals (thousands)	Permit Status
A & D Poultry	Sumac Creek	Murray	188	NAI
James D. Brindle		Murray	165	P

Source: GA Dept. of Agriculture, 2013

Notes: P = permit pending

NAI = needs additional information for application

3.2 Nonpoint Source Assessment

In general, nonpoint sources cannot be identified as entering a waterbody through a discrete conveyance at a single location. Typical nonpoint sources of fecal coliform bacteria include:

- Wildlife
- Agricultural Livestock
 - Animal grazing
 - Animal access to streams
 - Application of manure to pastureland and cropland
- Urban Development

- Leaking sanitary sewer lines
- Leaking septic systems
- Land Application Systems
- Landfills

In urban areas, a large portion of stormwater runoff may be collected in storm sewer systems and discharged through distinct outlet structures. For large urban areas, these storm sewer discharge points may be regulated as described in Section 3.1.2.

3.2.1 Wildlife

The significance of wildlife as a source of fecal coliform bacteria in streams varies considerably depending on the animal species present in the watershed. Based on information provided by the Wildlife Resources Division (WRD) of GA DNR, the greatest wildlife sources of fecal coliform are the animals that spend a large portion of their time in or around aquatic habitats. Of these, waterfowl, especially ducks and geese, are considered to be the most significant source, because when present, they are typically found in large numbers on the water surface. Other animals regularly found around aquatic environments include racoons, beavers, muskrats, and to a lesser extent, river otters and minks. Recently, rapidly expanding feral swine populations have become a substantial presence in the floodplain areas of the major rivers in Georgia.

White-tailed deer populations are abundant throughout the Coosa River Basin. Fecal coliform bacteria contributions to water bodies from deer are generally considered to be less significant than that of waterfowl, racoons, and beavers. This is because a greater portion of their time is spent in terrestrial habitats. This also holds true for other terrestrial mammals such as squirrels and rabbits, and for terrestrial birds (GA WRD, 2007). However, feces deposited on the land surface can result in the introduction of fecal coliform to streams during runoff events. Between storm events, considerable decomposition of the fecal matter might occur, resulting in a decrease in the associated fecal coliform numbers.

3.2.2 Agricultural Livestock

Agricultural livestock are a potential source of fecal coliform to streams in the Coosa River Basin. The animals grazing on pastureland deposit their feces onto land surfaces, where it can then be transported during storm events to nearby streams. Animal access to pastureland varies monthly, resulting in varying fecal coliform loading rates throughout the year. Beef cattle spend all of their time in pastures, while dairy cattle and hogs are periodically confined. In addition, agricultural livestock will often have direct access to streams that pass through their pastures, and can thus impact water quality in a more direct manner (USDA, 2002).

Table 6 provides the estimated number of beef cattle, dairy cattle, goats, horses, swine, sheep, and chickens reported by county. These data were provided by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

Table 6. Estimated 2011 Agricultural Livestock Populations in the Coosa River Basin

County	Livestock							
	Beef Cattle	Dairy Cattle	Swine	Sheep	Horses	Goats	Chickens Layers	Chickens-Broilers Sold
Bartow	9,700	-	80	100	210	900	40,000	16,731,000
Chattooga	9,300	100	40	15	900	400	90,000	1,100,000
Cherokee	4,400	-	-	-	250	1,000	20,000	11,011,000
Cobb	-	-	-	-	300	-	-	-
Dade	3,500	-	-	100	300	600	140,000	1,123,200
Dawson	2,600	-	-	90	650	175	-	14,784,000
Fannin	1,800	-	-	25	30	300	160,000	6,476,800
Floyd	15,000	38	-	-	275	750	20,000	26,100,000
Forsyth	1,250	-	-	-	-	80	36,000	5,601,750
Fulton	4,200	-	-	38	130	177	-	-
Gilmer	3,300	300	-	20	35	350	460,000	59,136,000
Gordon	13,500	-	960	130	100	1,500	300,000	44,759,000
Haralson	6,000	-	75	30	300	350	-	13,650,000
Lumpkin	2,549	-	-	82	20	158	200,000	10,137,600
Murray	2,549	-	-	82	20	158	200,000	10,137,600
Paulding	2,800	-	-	200	300	600	-	5,434,000
Pickens	2,300	-	50	250	234	400	-	18,900,000
Polk	4,000	95	-	120	600	425	-	6,600,000
Walker	9,000	300	-	300	800	1,000	30,000	24,310,000
Whitfield	9,100	50	-	-	80	150	300,000	13,585,000

Source: NRCS, 2013

3.2.3 Urban Development

Fecal coliform bacteria from urban areas are attributable to multiple sources, including: domestic animals, leaks and overflows from sanitary sewer systems, illicit discharges, leaking septic systems, runoff from improper disposal of waste materials, and leachate from both operational and closed landfills.

Urban runoff can contain high concentrations of fecal coliform from domestic animals and urban wildlife. Fecal coliform bacteria enter streams by direct washoff from the land surface, or the runoff may be diverted to a stormwater collection system and discharged through a discrete outlet structure. For large, medium, and small urban areas (populations greater than 50,000), the stormwater outlets are regulated under MS4 permits (see Section 3.1.2). For smaller urban areas, the stormwater discharge outlets currently remain unregulated.

In addition to urban animal sources of fecal coliform, there may be illicit connections to the storm sewer system. As part of the MS4 permitting program, municipalities are required to conduct dry-weather monitoring to identify and then eliminate these illicit discharges. Fecal coliform bacteria may also enter streams from leaky sewer pipes, or during storm events when inflow and infiltration can cause sewer overflows.

3.2.3.1 Leaking Septic Systems

A portion of the fecal coliform contributions in the Coosa River Basin may be attributed to failure of septic systems and illicit discharges of raw sewage. Table 7 presents the number of septic systems in each county of the Coosa River Basin existing in 2006 and the number existing in 2011, based in part on U.S. Census data, and on the Georgia Department of Human Resources, Division of Public Health data. In addition, an estimate of the number of septic systems installed and repaired during the period from 2007 through 2011 is given. These data show an increase in the number of septic systems in all of the counties. Often, this is a reflection of population increases outpacing the expansion of sewage collection systems.

Table 7. Estimated Number of Septic Systems in the Coosa River Basin

County	Existing Septic Systems (2007) ¹	Existing Septic Systems (2012)	Number of Septic Systems Installed (2008 to 2012)	Number of Septic Systems Repaired (2008 to 2012)
Bartow	22,593	22,960	367	593
Chattooga	7,511	7,687	176	293
Cherokee	38,535	38,984	449	614
Cobb	33,938	34,185	247	1003
Dade	5,725	5,957	232	134
Dawson	9,196	9,416	220	162
Fannin	16,674	17,443	769	111
Floyd	15,984	16,261	277	657
Forsyth	32,429	32,959	530	1176
Fulton	27,750	28,118	368	425
Gilmer	17,062	17,641	579	128
Gordon	16,685	16,992	307	371
Haralson	8,559	8,695	136	91
Lumpkin	11,913	12,358	445	80
Murray	12,813	12,994	181	209
Paulding	38,667	39,258	591	1024
Pickens	12,325	12,571	246	128
Polk	11,253	11,428	175	401
Walker	20,362	20,795	433	581
Whitfield	22,407	22,768	361	457

Source: The Georgia Dept. of Human Resources, Division of Public Health, 2013

Notes: ¹ Adjusted from State Water Plan values

3.2.3.2 Land Application Systems

Some communities and industries use land application systems (LAS) for wastewater disposal. These facilities are required through LAS permits to dispose of their treated wastewater by land application, and to operate as non-discharging systems, that do not contribute wastewater runoff to surface waters. However, sometimes the soil's percolation rate is exceeded by over application of wastewater, and/or heavy precipitation is encountered, resulting in runoff. This runoff could contribute fecal coliform bacteria to nearby surface waters. Runoff of stormwater might also carry surface residual containing fecal coliform bacteria. There are no permitted LAS systems with flows greater than 0.1 MGD identified in the Coosa River Basin that could potentially impact Sumac Creek.

3.2.3.3 Landfills

Leachate from landfills may contain fecal coliform bacteria that could at some point reach surface waters. Sanitary (or municipal) landfills are the most likely to serve as a source of fecal coliform bacteria. These types of landfills receive household wastes, animal manure, offal, hatchery and poultry processing plant wastes, dead animals, and other types of wastes. Older sanitary landfills were not lined and most have been closed. Those that remain active and have not been lined operate as construction/demolition landfills. Currently active sanitary landfills are lined and have leachate collection systems. All landfills, excluding inert landfills, are now required to install environmental monitoring systems for groundwater and methane sampling. There are 109 known landfills in the Coosa River Basin. Of these, 19 are active landfills, 3 are in closure and 87 are inactive or closed. There are no landfills upstream of the Sumac Creek stream segment.

4.0 ANALYTICAL APPROACH

The process of developing fecal coliform TMDL for the Coosa River Basin listed segment includes the determination of the following:

- The current critical fecal coliform load to the stream under existing conditions;
- The TMDL for similar conditions under which the current load was determined; and
- The percent reduction in the current critical fecal coliform load necessary to achieve the TMDL.

The calculation of the fecal coliform load at any point in a stream requires the fecal coliform concentration and stream flow. The Loading Curve Approach was used to determine the current fecal coliform load and the TMDL. For the listed segments, fecal coliform sampling data were sufficient to calculate at least one 30-day geometric mean to compare with the regulatory criteria (see Appendix A).

4.1 Loading Curve Approach

Sufficient water quality data were collected in Sumac Creek to calculate at least one 30-day geometric mean that was above the regulatory standard, therefore the loading curve approach was used. This method involves comparing the current critical load to summer and winter seasonal TMDL curves.

The available field measurements and water quality data used to develop the TMDL for this document did not include stream flow data for Sumac Creek. Therefore, the stream flow was estimated using data from a nearby USGS gaged stream. The nearby stream had relatively similar watershed characteristics, including landuse, slope, and drainage area. The stream flows were estimated by multiplying the gaged flow by the ratio of the listed stream drainage area to the gaged stream drainage area. Table 8 provides the USGS stream gage used to estimate the flows for the listed stream segment.

Table 8. Stream Segments with Estimated Flows and Corresponding USGS Flow Gages

Stream Segment	Location	USGS Station Name	Station No.
Sumac Creek	Coffey Lake to Conasauga River	Holly Creek near Chatsworth, GA	2385800

The current critical loads were determined using fecal coliform data collected within a 30-day period to calculate the geometric means, and multiplying these values by the arithmetic means of the flows measured at the time the water quality samples were collected. Georgia's instream fecal coliform standards are based on a geometric mean of samples collected over a 30-day period, with samples collected at least 24 hours apart. To reflect this in the load calculation, the fecal coliform loads are expressed as 30-day accumulated loads with units of counts per 30 days. This is described by the equation below:

$$L_{\text{critical}} = C_{\text{geomean}} \times Q_{\text{mean}}$$

Where:

- L_{critical} = current critical fecal coliform load
- C_{geomean} = fecal coliform concentration as a 30-day geometric mean
- Q_{mean} = stream flow as an arithmetic mean

The current estimated critical load is dependent on the fecal coliform concentrations and stream flows measured during the sampling events. The number of events sampled is usually 16 per year. Thus, these loads do not represent the full range of flow conditions or loading rates that can occur. Therefore, it must be kept in mind that the current critical loads used only represent the worst-case scenario that occurred during the sampling period.

The maximum fecal coliform load at which the instream fecal coliform criteria will be met can be determined using a variation of the equation above. By setting C equal to the seasonal, instream fecal coliform standard, the load will equal the TMDL. However, the TMDL is dependent on stream flow. Figures in Appendix A graphically illustrate that the TMDL is a continuum for the range of flows (Q) that can occur in the stream over time. There are two TMDL curves shown in these figures. One represents the summer TMDL for the period May through October when the 30-day geometric mean standard is 200 counts/100 mL. The second curve represents the winter TMDL for the period November through April when the 30-day geometric mean standard is 1,000 counts/100 mL. The equations for these two TMDL curves are:

$$\text{TMDL}_{\text{summer}} = 200 \text{ counts (as a 30-day geometric mean)}/100 \text{ mL} \times Q$$

$$\text{TMDL}_{\text{winter}} = 1,000 \text{ counts (as a 30-day geometric mean)}/100 \text{ mL} \times Q$$

The graphs show the relationship between the current critical load (L_{critical}) and the TMDL. The TMDL for a given stream segment is the load for the mean flow corresponding to the current critical load. This is the point where the current load exceeds the TMDL curve by the greatest amount. This critical TMDL can be represented by the following equation:

$$\text{TMDL}_{\text{critical}} = C_{\text{standard}} \times Q_{\text{mean}}$$

Where:

- $\text{TMDL}_{\text{critical}}$ = critical fecal coliform TMDL load
- C_{standard} = seasonal fecal coliform standard (as a 30-day geometric mean)
 - summer - 200 counts/100 mL
 - winter - 1,000 counts/ 100 mL
- Q_{mean} = stream flow as an arithmetic mean

A 30-day geometric mean load that plots above the respective seasonal TMDL curve represents an exceedance of the instream fecal coliform standard. The difference between the current critical load and the TMDL curve represents the load reduction required for the stream segment to meet the appropriate instream fecal coliform standard. There is also a single sample maximum criterion (4,000 counts per 100 milliliters) for the months of November through April. If a single sample exceeds the maximum criterion, and the seasonal geometric mean criteria is also exceeded, then the TMDL is based on the criteria exceedance requiring the largest load reduction. The percent load reduction can be expressed as follows:

$$\text{Percent Load Reduction} = \frac{L_{\text{critical}} - \text{TMDL}_{\text{critical}}}{L_{\text{critical}}} \times 100$$

5.0 TOTAL MAXIMUM DAILY LOADS

A Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) is the amount of a pollutant that can be assimilated by the receiving waterbody without exceeding the applicable water quality standard. In this case it is the seasonal fecal coliform bacteria standard. A TMDL is the sum of the individual waste load allocations (WLAs) for point sources and load allocations (LAs) for nonpoint sources, as well as natural background (40 CFR 130.2) for a given waterbody. The TMDL must also include a margin of safety (MOS), either implicitly or explicitly, that accounts for the uncertainty in the relationship between pollutant loads and the water quality response of the receiving water body. TMDLs can be expressed in terms of either mass per time, toxicity, or other appropriate measures. For fecal coliform bacteria, the TMDLs are expressed as counts per 30 days as a geometric mean.

A TMDL is expressed as follows:

$$\text{TMDL} = \Sigma\text{WLAs} + \Sigma\text{LAs} + \text{MOS}$$

The TMDL calculates the WLAs and LAs with a margin of safety to meet the stream's water quality standards. The allocations are based on estimates that use the best available data and provide the basis to establish or modify existing controls so that water quality standards can be achieved. In developing a TMDL, it is important to consider whether adequate data are available to identify the sources, and to understand the fate and transport of the pollutant to be controlled.

TMDLs may be developed using a phased approach. Under a phased approach, the TMDL includes: 1) WLAs that confirm existing limits and controls or lead to new limits, and 2) LAs that confirm existing controls or include implementing new controls (USEPA, 1991). A phased TMDL requires additional data be collected to determine if load reductions required by the TMDL are leading to the attainment of water quality standards.

The TMDL Implementation Plan establishes a schedule or timetable for the installation and evaluation of point and nonpoint source control measures, data collection, assessment of water quality standard attainment, and if needed, additional modeling. Future monitoring of the listed segment water quality will then be used to evaluate this phase of the TMDL, and if necessary, to reallocate the loads.

The fecal coliform load calculated for Sumac Creek includes the sum of the total loads from all point and nonpoint sources for the segment. The load contributions to the listed segment from unlisted upstream segments are represented in the background loads, unless the unlisted segment contains point sources that had permit violations for fecal coliform. In these cases, the upstream point sources are included in the wasteload allocations for the listed segment. In situations where two or more adjacent segments are listed, the fecal coliform loads to each segment are individually evaluated on a localized watershed basis. Point source loads originating in upstream segments are included in the background loads of the downstream segment. The following sections describe the various fecal coliform TMDL components.

5.1 Waste Load Allocations

5.1.1 Wastewater Treatment Facilities

The waste load allocation is the portion of the receiving water's loading capacity that is allocated to existing or future point sources. WLAs are provided to the point sources with flows greater than 0.1 MGD from municipal and industrial wastewater treatment systems with NPDES effluent limits for fecal coliform bacteria. There are no NPDES facilities in the Coosa River Basin watershed that discharge into or upstream of Sumac Creek. The WLA load would be calculated from the permitted or design flow and permitted fecal coliform concentration. These would be expressed as an accumulated load over a 30-day period, and presented in units of counts per 30 days. If a facility expands its capacity and the permitted flow increases, the wasteload allocation for the facility would increase in proportion to the flow.

5.1.2 Regulated Stormwater Discharges

State and Federal Rules define stormwater discharges covered by NPDES permits as point sources. However, stormwater discharges are from diffuse sources and there are multiple stormwater outfalls. Stormwater sources (point and nonpoint) are different than traditional NPDES permitted sources in four respects: 1) they do not produce a continuous (pollutant loading) discharge; 2) their pollutant loading depends on the intensity, duration, and frequency of rainfall events, over which the permittee has no control; 3) the activities contributing to the pollutant loading may include the various allowable activities of others, and control of these activities is not solely within the discretion of the permittee; and 4) they do not have wastewater treatment plants that control specific pollutants to meet numerical limits.

The intent of stormwater NPDES permits is not to treat the water after collection, but to reduce the exposure of stormwater to pollutants by implementing various controls. It would be infeasible and prohibitively expensive to control pollutant discharges from each stormwater outfall. Therefore, stormwater NPDES permits require the establishment of controls or BMPs to reduce the pollutants entering the environment.

The waste load allocations from stormwater discharges associated with MS4s (WLA_{sw}) are estimated based on the percentage of urban area in each watershed covered by the MS4 stormwater permit. At this time, the portion of each watershed that goes directly to a permitted storm sewer and that which goes through non-permitted point sources, or is sheet flow or agricultural runoff, has not been clearly defined. Thus, it is assumed that approximately 70 percent of stormwater runoff from the regulated urban area is collected by the municipal separate storm sewer systems.

5.1.3 Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations

Wet and dry manure CAFOs are located within the Coosa River Basin (see Section 3.1.3). Wet manure facilities are either included under an LAS General Permit or an NPDES General Permit. A small number of wet manure operations have an individual NPDES permit. Dry manure facilities are not required to obtain permits. Presently no CAFOs discharge wastewater, and therefore, they were not provided a WLA.

5.2 Load Allocations

The load allocation is the portion of the receiving water's loading capacity that is attributed to existing or future nonpoint sources or to natural background sources. Nonpoint sources are identified in 40 CFR 130.6 as follows:

- Residual waste;
- Land disposal;
- Agricultural and silvicultural;
- Mines;
- Construction;
- Saltwater intrusion; and
- Urban stormwater (non-permitted).

The LA is calculated as the remaining portion of the TMDL load available, after allocating the WLA, WLA_{sw}, and the MOS, using the following equation:

$$LA = TMDL - (\sum WLA + \sum WLA_{sw} + MOS)$$

As described above, there are two types of load allocations: loads to the stream independent of precipitation, including sources such as failing septic systems, leachate from landfills, animals in the stream, leaking sewer system collection lines, and background loads; and loads associated with fecal coliform accumulation on land surfaces that is washed off during storm events, including runoff from saturated LAS fields. At this time, it is not possible to partition the various sources of load allocations. Table 9 presents the total load allocation expressed as counts per 30 days for the 303(d) listed streams located in the Coosa River Basin for the current critical condition. In the future, after additional data has been collected, it may be possible to partition the load allocation by source.

5.3 Seasonal Variation

The Georgia fecal coliform criteria are seasonal. One set of criteria applies to the summer season, while a different set applies to the winter season. To account for seasonal variations, the critical loads for each listed segment were determined from sampling data obtained during both summer and winter seasons, when possible. The TMDL and percent reduction given in Table 9 for each listed segment was based on the season in which the critical load occurred. The TMDLs for each season, for any given flow, are presented as equations in Section 5.5.

Analyses of the available fecal coliform data and corresponding flows were performed to determine if the fecal coliform violations occurred during wet weather (high flow) or dry weather (low flow) conditions. The flow data from each sampling site were normalized by dividing the measured flow by the product of the average annual runoff (cfs/sq mile), published in Open-File Report 82-577 (Carter, 1982), and the appropriate drainage area. Plots of the normalized flows (Q/Q_o) versus fecal coliform are shown in Appendix B. The plots do not show a consistent relationship between fecal coliform concentrations and flow. The summer and winter plots show that the fecal coliform violations occur during both high (wet weather) and low (dry weather) flow conditions.

5.4 Margin of Safety

The MOS is a required component of TMDL development. There are two basic methods for incorporating the MOS: 1) implicitly incorporate the MOS using conservative modeling assumptions to develop allocations; or 2) explicitly specify a portion of the TMDL as the MOS and use the remainder for allocations. For this TMDL, an explicit MOS of 10 percent of the TMDL was used. The MOS values are presented in Table 9.

5.5 Total Fecal Coliform Load

The fecal coliform TMDL for the listed stream segment is dependent on the time of year, the stream flow, and the applicable state water quality standard.

The total maximum daily seasonal fecal coliform loads for Georgia are given below:

$$\text{TMDL}_{\text{summer}} = 200 \text{ counts (as a 30-day geometric mean)/100 mL} \times Q$$

$$\text{TMDL}_{\text{winter}} = 1,000 \text{ counts (as a 30-day geometric mean)/100 mL} \times Q$$

$$\text{TMDL}_{\text{winter}} = 4,000 \text{ counts (instantaneous)/100 mL} \times Q$$

For purposes of determining necessary load reductions required to meet the instream water quality criteria, the current critical TMDL was determined. This load is the product of the applicable seasonal fecal coliform standard and the mean flow used to calculate the current critical load. It represents the sum of the allocated loads from point (WLA and WLA_{sw}) and nonpoint (LA) sources located within the immediate drainage area of the listed segment, the NPDES-permitted point discharges with recorded fecal coliform violations from the nearest upstream subwatersheds, and a margin of safety (MOS). The current critical load and corresponding TMDL, WLAs (WLA and WLA_{sw}), LA, MOS, and percent load reduction for the listed Sumac Creek segment are presented in Table 9.

The relationships of the current critical load to the TMDL is shown graphically in Appendix A. The vertical distance between the two values represents the load reduction necessary to achieve the TMDL. As a consequence of the localized nature of the load evaluation, the calculated fecal coliform load reduction pertains to point and nonpoint sources occurring within the immediate drainage area of the listed segment. This current critical value represents a worst-case scenario for the limited set of data. Thus, the load reduction required is a conservative estimate, and should be sufficient to prevent exceedances of the instream fecal coliform standard for a wide range of conditions.

Evaluation of the relationship between instream water quality and the potential sources of pollutant loading is an important component of TMDL development, and is the basis for later implementation of corrective measures and BMPs. For the current TMDL, the association between fecal coliform loads and the potential sources occurring within the subwatersheds of this segment was examined on a qualitative basis.

Table 9. Fecal Coliform Loads and Required Fecal Coliform Load Reductions

Stream Segment	Current Load (counts/ 30 days)	TMDL Components					Percent Reduction
		WLA (counts/ 30 days) ¹	WLASw (counts/ 30 days)	LA (counts/ 30 days)	MOS (counts/ 30 days)	TMDL (counts/ 30 days)	
Sumac Creek	3.2E+12	-	-	1.67E+12	1.86E+11	1.86E+12	42

Notes: ¹ The assigned fecal coliform load from each NPDES permitted facility for WLA was determined as the product of the fecal coliform permit limit and the facility average monthly discharge at the time of the critical load.

6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

The TMDL process consists of an evaluation of the subwatersheds for each 303(d) listed stream segment to identify, as best as possible, the sources of the fecal coliform loads causing the stream to exceed instream standards. The TMDL analysis was performed using the best available data to specify WLAs and LAs that will meet fecal coliform water quality criteria so as to support the use classification specified for each listed segment.

This TMDL represents part of a long-term process to reduce fecal coliform loading to meet water quality standards in the Coosa River Basin. Implementation strategies will be reviewed and the TMDLs will be refined as necessary in the next phase (next five-year cycle). The phased approach will support progress toward water quality standards attainment in the future. In accordance with USEPA TMDL guidance, these TMDLs may be revised based on the results of future monitoring and source characterization data efforts. The following recommendations emphasize further source identification and involve the collection of data to support the current allocations and subsequent source reductions.

6.1 Monitoring

Water quality monitoring is conducted at a number of locations across the State each year. Sampling is conducted statewide by EPD personnel in Atlanta, Brunswick, Cartersville, and Tifton. Additional sites are added as necessary.

The TMDL Implementation Plan will outline an appropriate water quality monitoring program for Sumac Creek. The monitoring program will be developed to help identify the various fecal coliform sources. The monitoring program may be used to verify the 303(d) stream segment listing. This is especially valuable for segments with limited data.

6.2 Fecal Coliform Management Practices

Based on the findings of the source assessment, NPDES point source fecal coliform loads from wastewater treatment facilities usually do not significantly contribute to the impairment of the listed stream segments. This is because most facilities are required to treat to levels corresponding to instream water quality criteria. Sources of fecal coliform in urban areas include wastes that are attributable to domestic animals, leaks and overflows from sanitary sewer systems, illicit discharges of sanitary waste, leaking septic systems, runoff from improper disposal of waste materials, and leachate from both operational and closed landfills. In agricultural areas, potential sources of fecal coliform may include CAFOs, animals grazing in pastures, dry manure storage facilities and lagoons, chicken litter storage areas, and direct access of livestock to streams. Wildlife, especially waterfowl can be a significant source of fecal coliform bacteria.

Management practices are recommended to reduce fecal coliform source loads to the listed 303(d) stream segment, with the result of achieving the instream fecal coliform standard criteria. These recommended management practices include:

- Compliance with NPDES permit limits and requirements;
- Adoption of NRCS Conservation Practices; and
- Application of Best Management Practices (BMPs) appropriate to agricultural or urban land uses, where applicable.

6.2.1 Point Source Approaches

Point sources are defined as discharges of treated wastewater or stormwater into rivers and streams at discrete locations. The NPDES permit program provides a basis for municipal, industrial, and stormwater permits, monitoring and compliance with limitations, and appropriate enforcement actions for violations.

In accordance with EPD rules and regulations, all discharges from point source facilities are required to be in compliance with the conditions of their NPDES permit at all times. In the future, all municipal and industrial wastewater treatment facilities with the potential for fecal coliform in their discharge will be given end-of-pipe limits to meet the applicable water quality standard. An exception is constructed wetland systems, which have a natural level of fecal coliform input from animals attracted to the artificial wetlands. In addition, the permits will include routine monitoring and reporting requirements.

6.2.2 Nonpoint Source Approaches

EPD is responsible for administering and enforcing laws to protect the waters of the State. EPD is the lead agency for implementing the State's Nonpoint Source Management Program. Regulatory responsibilities that have a bearing on nonpoint source pollution include establishing water quality standards and use classifications, assessing and reporting water quality conditions, and regulating land use activities that may affect water quality. Georgia is working with local governments, agricultural and forestry agencies such as the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Georgia Soil and Water Conservation Commission, and the Georgia Forestry Commission, to foster the implementation of BMPs to address nonpoint source pollution. In addition, public education efforts are being targeted to individual stakeholders to provide information regarding the use of BMPs to protect water quality. The following sections describe, in more detail, recommendations to reduce nonpoint source loads of fecal coliform bacteria in Georgia's surface waters.

6.2.2.1 Agricultural Sources

EPD should coordinate with other agencies that are responsible for agricultural activities in the state to address issues concerning fecal coliform loading from agricultural lands. It is recommended that such as livestock populations by subwatershed, animal access to streams, manure storage and application practices be periodically reviewed so that watershed evaluations can be updated to reflect current conditions. It is also recommended that BMPs be utilized to reduce the amount of fecal coliform bacteria transported to surface waters from agricultural sources to the maximum extent practicable.

The following three organizations have primary responsibility for working with farmers to promote soil and water conservation, and to protect water quality:

- University of Georgia (UGA) - Cooperative Extension Service;
- Georgia Soil and Water Conservation Commission (GSWCC); and
- Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

UGA has faculty, County Cooperative Extension Agents, and technical specialists who provide services in several key areas relating to agricultural impacts on water quality.

EPD designated the GSWCC as the lead agency for agricultural Nonpoint Source Management in the State. The GSWCC develops nonpoint source management programs and conducts educational activities to promote conservation and protection of land and water devoted to agricultural uses.

The NRCS works with federal, state, and local governments to provide financial and technical assistance to farmers. The NRCS develops standards and specifications for BMPs that are to be used to improve, protect, and/or maintain our state's natural resources. In addition, every five years, the NRCS conducts the National Resources Inventory (NRI). The NRI is a statistically based sample of land use and natural resource conditions and trends that covers non-federal land in the United States.

The NRCS is also providing technical assistance to the GSWCC and the EPD with the Georgia River Basin Planning Program. Planning activities associated with this program will describe conditions of the agricultural natural resource base once every five years. It is recommended that the GSWCC and the NRCS continue to encourage BMP implementation, education efforts, and river basin surveys with regard to river basin planning.

6.2.2.2 Urban Sources

Both point and nonpoint sources of fecal coliform bacteria can be significant in the Coosa River Basin urban areas. Urban sources of fecal coliform can best be addressed using a strategy that involves public participation and intergovernmental coordination to reduce the discharge of pollutants to the maximum extent practicable. Management practices, control techniques, public education, and other appropriate methods and provisions may be employed. In addition to water quality monitoring programs, discussed in Section 6.1, the following activities and programs conducted by cities, counties, and state agencies are recommended:

- Uphold requirements that all new and replacement sanitary sewage systems be designed to minimize discharges into storm sewer systems;
- Further develop and streamline mechanisms for reporting and correcting illicit connections, breaks, surcharges, and general sanitary sewer system problems;
- Maintain compliance with stormwater NPDES permit requirements; and
- Continue efforts to increase public awareness and education towards the impact of human activities in urban settings on water quality, ranging from the consequences of industrial and municipal discharges to the activities of individuals in residential neighborhoods.

6.3 Reasonable Assurance

Permitted discharges will be regulated through the NPDES permitting process described in this report. An allocation to a point source discharger does not automatically result in a permit limit or a monitoring requirement. Through its NPDES permitting process, EPD will determine whether a new or existing discharger has a reasonable potential of discharging fecal coliform levels equal to or greater than the total allocated load. The results of this reasonable potential analysis will determine the specific type of requirements in an individual facility's NPDES permit. As part of its analysis, EPD will use its USEPA approved 2003 NPDES Reasonable Potential Procedures to determine whether monitoring requirements or effluent limitations are necessary.

Georgia is working with local governments, agricultural and forestry agencies, such as the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Georgia Soil and Water Conservation Commission, and the Georgia Forestry Commission, to foster the implementation of best management practices to address nonpoint sources. In addition, public education efforts will be targeted to individual stakeholders to provide information regarding the use of best management practices to protect water quality.

6.4 Public Participation

A thirty-day public notice is being provided for this TMDL. During this time, the availability of the TMDL will be public noticed, a copy of the TMDL will be provided on request, and the public is invited to provide comments on the TMDL.

7.0 INITIAL TMDL IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

7.1 Initial TMDL Implementation Plan

This plan identifies applicable State-wide programs and activities that may be employed to manage point and nonpoint sources of bacteria loads for one segment in the Coosa River Basin. Local watershed planning and management initiatives will be fostered, supported, or developed through a variety of mechanisms. Implementation may be addressed by Watershed Improvement Projects, assessments for Section 319 (h) grants, the local development of watershed protection plans, or “Targeted Outreach” initiated by EPD. These initiatives will supplement or possibly replace this initial implementation plan.

7.2 Impaired Segments

This initial plan is applicable to the following waterbody that was added to Georgia’s 303(d) list available on the EPD website (www.gaepd.org):

Water Bodies Listed on the 2012 303(d) List for Fecal Coliform Bacteria in the Coosa River Basin

Stream Segment	Location	Reach ID	Segment Length (miles)	Designated Use
Sumac Creek	Coffey Lake to Conasauga River	R031501010203	8	Fishing

Fecal coliform bacteria are used as an indicator of the potential presence of pathogens in a stream. The current water quality standard [*State of Georgia’s Rules and Regulations for Water Quality Control*, Chapter 391-3-6-.03(6)(c)(iii) (GA EPD, 2011)] states that four or more water samples collected within a 30-day period that have a geometric mean for fecal coliform either in excess of 200 Colony Forming Units (CFU) per 100 milliliters from May through October, or in excess of 1000 (CFU) per 100 milliliters from November through April are in violation of the bacteria water quality standard. In addition, a single sample in excess of 4000 (CFU) per 100 milliliters from November through April can also provide a basis for adding a stream segment to the 303(d) listing.

7.3 Potential Sources

An important part of the TMDL analysis is the identification of potential source categories. A source assessment characterizes the known and suspected bacteria sources in the watershed.

Sources are broadly classified as either point or nonpoint sources. A point source is defined as a discernable, confined, and discrete conveyance from which pollutants are or may be discharged to surface waters. Point sources of bacteria include NPDES permittees discharging treated wastewater and stormwater. Nonpoint sources of bacteria are diffuse sources that cannot be identified as entering the water body at a single location. These sources generally involve land use activities that contribute bacteria to streams during a rainfall runoff event.

NPDES point source fecal coliform loads from wastewater treatment facilities usually do not contribute to impairments. This is because these facilities are required to treat to levels corresponding to instream water quality criteria. However, point sources can and do fail, which may contribute to bacteria loads through leaks and overflows from sanitary sewer systems, CAFOs, or leachate from operational landfills.

Nonpoint sources of fecal coliform in urban areas include wastes that are attributable to domestic animals, illicit discharges of sanitary waste, leaking septic systems, runoff from improper disposal of waste materials, and leachate from closed landfills. In non-urban areas, potential sources of fecal coliform may include animals grazing in pastures, dry manure storage facilities and lagoons, chicken litter storage areas, and direct access of livestock to streams. Wildlife, especially waterfowl, can be a significant source of fecal coliform bacteria.

7.4 Management Practices and Activities

EPD is responsible for administering and enforcing laws to protect the waters of the State and is the lead agency for implementing the State's Nonpoint Source Management Program. Georgia is working with local governments, agricultural and forestry agencies such as the Georgia Department of Agriculture, the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), the Georgia Soil and Water Conservation Commission (GSWCC), and the Georgia Forestry Commission (GFC) to foster implementation of BMPs that address nonpoint source pollution. The following management practices are recommended to reduce fecal coliform loads to stream segments:

- Sustained compliance with NPDES permit limits and requirements where applicable;
- Adoption of NRCS Conservation Practices for primarily agricultural lands;
- Application of BMPs appropriate to specific non-urban and urban land uses;
- Further development and streamlining of local jurisdictional mechanisms for identifying, reporting, and correcting illicit connections, breaks, and other sanitary sewer system problems;
- Adoption of local ordinances (i.e. septic tanks, stormwater, etc.) that address local water quality; and
- Ongoing public education efforts on the sources of fecal coliform and common sense approaches to lessen the impact of this contaminant on surface waters.

Public education efforts target individual stakeholders to provide information regarding the use of BMPs to protect water quality. EPD will continue efforts to increase awareness and educate the public about the impact of human activities on water quality.

7.5 Monitoring

EPD encourages local governments and municipalities to develop water quality monitoring programs. These programs can help pinpoint various fecal coliform sources, as well as verify the 303(d) stream segment listings. This will be particularly valuable for those segments where listing was based on limited data. In addition, regularly scheduled sampling will determine if there has been some improvement in the water quality of the listed stream segments. EPD is available to assist in completing a monitoring plan, preparing a Sampling Quality Assurance Plan (SQAP), and/or providing necessary training as needed.

7.6 Future Action

This Initial TMDL Implementation Plan includes a general approach to pollutant source identification as well as management practices to address pollutants. In the future, EPD will continue to determine and assess the appropriate point and non-point source management measures needed to achieve the TMDLs and also to protect and restore water quality in impaired waterbodies.

For point sources, any wasteload allocations for wastewater treatment plant facilities will be implemented in the form of water-quality based effluent limitations in NPDES permits. Any wasteload allocations for regulated stormwater will be implemented in the form of best management practices in the NPDES permits. Contributions of bacteria from regulated communities may also be managed using permit requirements such as watershed assessments, watershed protection plans, and long term monitoring. These measures will be directed through current point source management programs.

EPD will work to support Watershed Improvement Projects (WIPs) that address non-point source pollution. This is a process whereby EPD and/or Regional Commissions or other agencies or local governments, under a contract with EPD, will develop a Watershed Management Plan intended to address water quality at the small watershed level (HUC 10 or smaller). These plans will be developed as resources and willing partners become available. The development of these plans may be funded via several grant sources, including but not limited to, Clean Water Act Section 319(h), Section 604(b), and/or Section 106 grant funds. These plans are intended for implementation upon completion.

A Watershed Management Plan that specifically addresses this segment of Sumac Creek will supersede this Initial TMDL Implementation Plan once EPD accepts the plan. Future Watershed Management Plans intended to address this TMDL and other water quality concerns, written by EPD and for which EPD and/or the EPD Contractor are responsible, will contain at a minimum the US EPA's 9 Elements of Watershed Planning:

- 1) An identification of the sources or groups of similar sources contributing to nonpoint source pollution to be controlled to implement load allocations or achieve water quality standards. Sources should be identified at the subcategory level with estimates of the extent to which they are present in the watershed (e.g., X numbers of cattle feedlots needing upgrading, Y acres of row crops needing improved bacteria control, or Z linear miles of eroded streambank needing remediation);
- 2) An estimate of the load reductions expected for the management measures;
- 3) A description of the NPS management measures that will need to be implemented to achieve the load reductions established in the TMDL or to achieve water quality standards;
- 4) An estimate of the sources of funding needed, and/or authorities that will be relied upon, to implement the plan;
- 5) An information/education component that will be used to enhance public understanding of and participation in implementing the plan;
- 6) A schedule for implementing the management measures that is reasonably expeditious;

- 7) A description of interim, measurable milestones (e.g., amount of load reductions, improvement in biological or habitat parameters) for determining whether management measures or other control actions are being implemented;
- 8) A set of criteria that can be used to determine whether substantial progress is being made towards attaining water quality standards and, if not, the criteria for determining whether the plan needs to be revised; and;
- 9) A monitoring component to evaluate the effectiveness of the implementation efforts, measured against the criteria established under item (8).

The public will be provided an opportunity to participate in the development of Watershed Management Plans that address impaired waters and to comment on them before they are finalized.

EPD will continue to offer technical and financial assistance (when and where available) to complete Watershed Management Plans that address the impaired waterbodies listed in this and other TMDL documents. Assistance may include but will not be limited to:

- Assessments of pollutant sources within watersheds;
- Determinations of appropriate management practices to address impairments;
- Identification of potential stakeholders and other partners;
- Developing a plan for outreach to the general public and other groups;
- Assessing the resources needed to implement the plan upon completion; and
- Other needs determined by the lead organization responsible for plan development.

EPD will also make this same assistance available, if needed, to proactively address water quality concerns. This assistance may be in the way of financial, technical, or other aid and may be requested and provided outside of the TMDL process or schedule.

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Appendix A

30-day Geometric Mean Fecal Coliform Monitoring Data

Water Quality Monitoring Stations

Stream Segment	Location	EPD Monitoring Station No.	Monitoring Station Description
Sumac Creek	Coffey Lake to Conasauga River	1401020501	Sumac Creek at State Road 225 near Sumac, GA

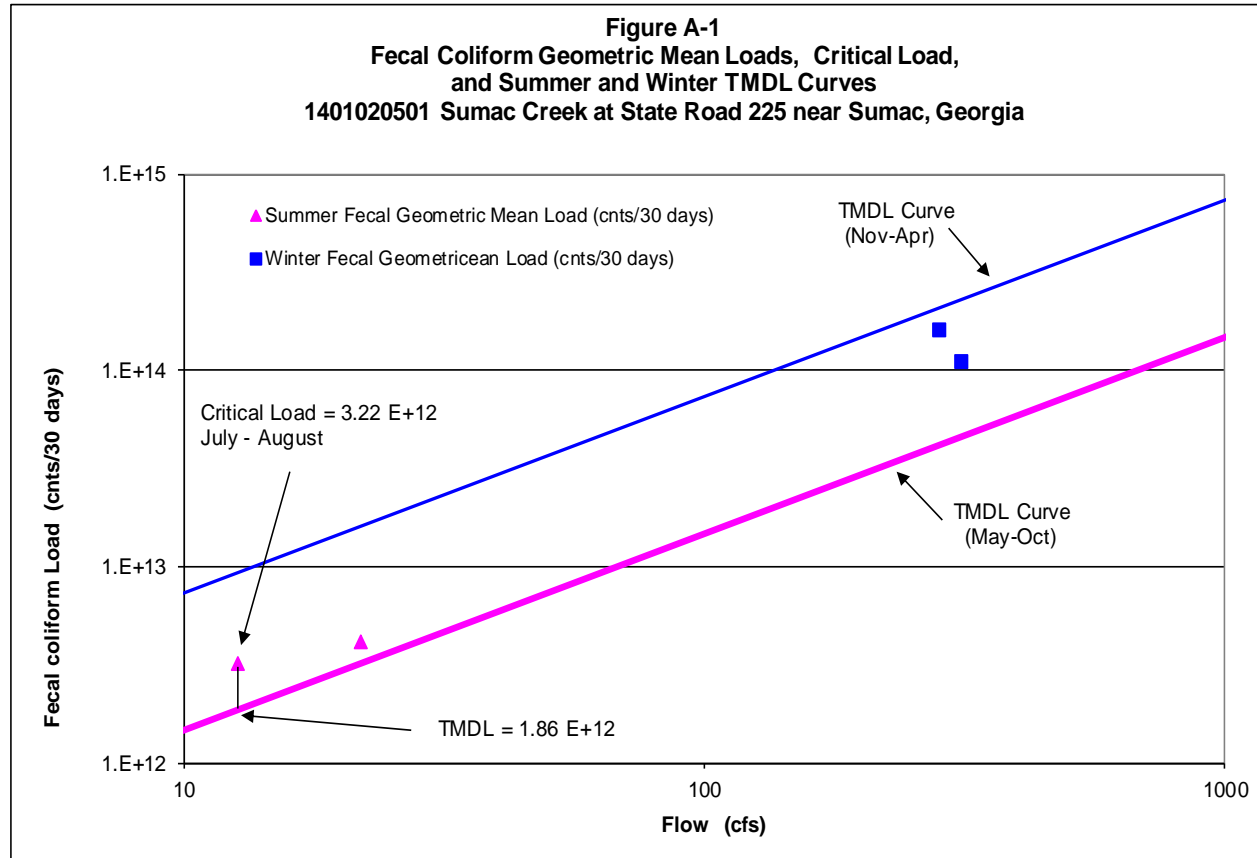


Table A-1. Data for Figure A-1

Date	Observed Fecal Coliform (counts/100 ml)	Estimated Instantaneous Flow On Sample Day (cfs)	Geometric Mean (counts/100 ml)	Mean Flow (cfs)	Geometric Mean Fecal Coliform Loading (counts/30 days)	Geometric Mean TMDL Fecal Coliform Loading (counts/30 days)
Date	Fecal	Q	Geomean	Mean Flow	Current TMDL	TMDL
2/10/2011	140	44.8				
2/22/2011	550	18.5				
2/24/2011	230	16.1				
3/10/2011	3000	1170.3	480.1	312.4	1.10E+14	2.29E+14
4/27/2011	900	65.1				
5/2/2011	230	40.0				
5/18/2011	500	20.9				
5/24/2011	230	13.7				
5/26/2011	170	12.5	259.0	21.8	4.14E+12	3.20E+12
7/26/2011	800	39.4				
8/1/2011	260	5.1				
8/10/2011	300	3.8				
8/16/2011	230	2.4	346.1	12.7	3.22E+12	1.86E+12
11/2/2011	800	6.6				
11/9/2011	230	10.2				
11/16/2011	2400	111.7				
11/29/2011	800	1003.1	771.0	282.9	1.60E+14	2.08E+14

Appendix B

Normalized Flows Versus Fecal Coliform Plots

