



**GEORGIA**  
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION DIVISION

# 2019 Triennial Review

## Opening Hearing

February 26, 2019



# CLEAN WATER ACT

## ■ Objective

- Restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the waters of the United States
- Achieved through water quality standards that define the use of the waterbody and the criteria necessary to protect the use



# WATER QUALITY STANDARDS

## ■ Established to

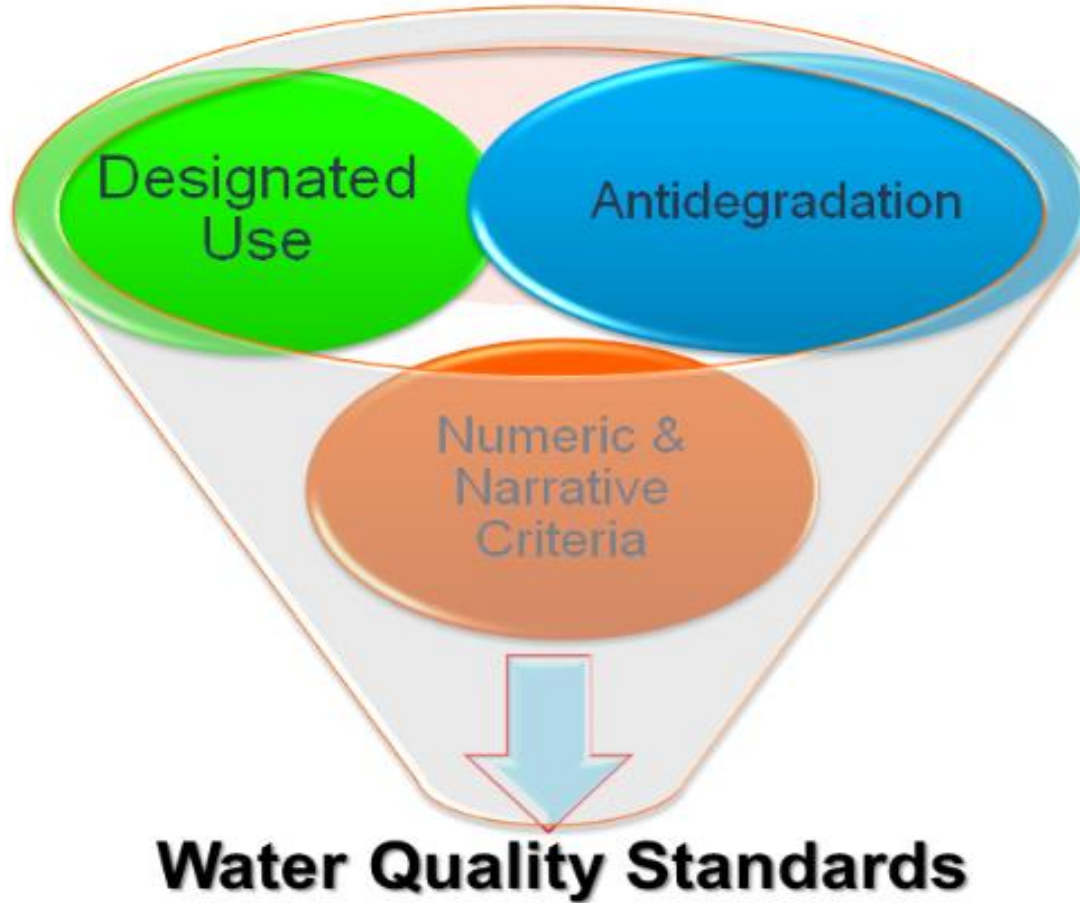
- Protect public health and welfare
- Enhance the quality of the water
- Provide water quality for the protection and propagation of fish, shellfish, and wildlife and for recreation in and on the water

## ■ Need to be

- Scientifically defensible
- Protective of existing aquatic life and designated use
- Compatible with existing guidance



# WATER QUALITY STANDARDS



**Water Quality Standards**



## DESIGNATED USES

- Drinking Water
- Recreation – Primary Contact
- Fishing - Propagation of Fish, Shellfish, Game and Other Aquatic Life and Secondary Recreation
  - Primary Trout
  - Secondary Trout
  - Warmwater
- Coastal Fishing
- Wild River
- Scenic River



## NUMERIC CRITERIA

- Magnitude – How much (4.6 mg/L)
- Duration – How long (4 days)
- Frequency – How often (once every 3 yrs)

For the protection of aquatic life, the 4-day average concentration of dissolved selenium shall not exceed 4.6 mg/L more than once every 3 years, on average.



# NARRATIVE CRITERIA

## ■ Where a numeric criteria can not be established

State waters shall be free from floating debris, oil, scum, and other floating materials attributable to sewage, industrial wastes or other wastes in amounts sufficient to be unsightly or interfere directly or indirectly with any classified use.

## ■ Supplemental to a numeric criteria

No toxics in amounts harmful to humans, aquatic life, or wildlife.



# ANTIDEGRADATION POLICY

## ■ Tier 1 Waters

- Protects and Maintains existing uses – applies to all waters

## ■ Tier 2 Waters

- High quality waters - all Georgia waters
- Antidegradation analysis required

## ■ Tier 3 Waters

- Outstanding National Resource Waters
- Except for temporary changes, water quality cannot be lowered in these waters





## TRIENNIAL REVIEW

- 40 CFR 131.20 requires State review and revise water quality standards from time to time, but at least once every three years
  
- Updates may be needed if there is:
  - Change in water quality conditions
  - Change in water body uses
  - New scientific information



# CURRENT STATUS OF WATER QUALITY STANDARDS

- EPA last approved updates to Georgia Water Quality Standards on August 16, 2016
  - This was for the 2013 Triennial Review package
- The 2016 Triennial Review package was delivered to EPA on December 6, 2018
  - This package is currently waiting for EPA approval in order to be usable for Clean Water Act purposes
- 2019 Triennial Review
  - Now open



## 2019 TRIENNIAL REVIEW – POSSIBLE ITEMS

- Human Health Criteria (2015)
- Revisit EPA's Aquatic Life Ambient Water Quality Final Criterion for Selenium (2016)
- Final Aquatic Life Criteria for Aluminum in Freshwater (2018)



# 2019 TRIENNIAL REVIEW – POSSIBLE ITEMS

## ■ Re-designation of Designated Uses

- Chattahoochee River in Cobb and Fulton Counties change secondary trout from “Chattahoochee River Upstream from 285 West Bridge” to “Chattahoochee River Upstream from Peachtree Creek”
- Chattahoochee River from Peachtree Creek to Cedar Creek – Recreation
- Chattahoochee River in Heard County – Recreation
- Chattahoochee River from Atlanta (Peachtree Creek) to West Point Lake (at confluence with the New River) – Recreation



# 2019 TRIENNIAL REVIEW – POSSIBLE ITEMS

## ■ Re-designation of Designated Uses

- Major Chattahoochee tributaries including Proctor Creek, Peachtree Creek, Tanyard Creek, and Clear Creek in the Atlanta area – Recreation
- Chattahoochee River below North Highland Dam the confluence with Bull Creek – Recreation
- Chattahoochee from the Dam at Lake Harding to Upatoi Creek – Recreation
- Etowah River – Recreation
- Chattooga River – Recreation



## 2019 TRIENNIAL REVIEW – POSSIBLE ITEMS

- Big Creek/Laura S. Walker Lake should be in the Satilla Basin
- Definitions of Wild & Scenic indicates designated use is in section .03(13)...designated use is in (14)
- Spelling and grammatical errors



## 2019 TRIENNIAL REVIEW – POSSIBLE ITEMS

- Draft Estuarine/Marine Copper Aquatic Life Criteria
- Draft Human Health Recreational Ambient Water Quality Criteria and/or Swimming Advisories for Microcystins and Cylindrospermopsin



# DRAFT GUIDANCE FOR CHANGING A DESIGNATED USE

- Clarifies the definition and purpose of designated uses, the level of water quality required for a designated use, and the ways each type of use is protected
- Outlines the qualifications for changing a designated use







# DRAFT GUIDANCE FOR CHANGING A DESIGNATED USE

- Clarifies what should be included in a designated use package
  - Name and length of the waterbody.
  - Location of the reach, shown on a map.
  - Any 305(b)/303(d) impairment(s) &/or TMDL(s).
  - Current users of the waterbody, including but not limited to businesses or industries, parks within the waterbody and watershed, and any “blue trails” on the water for water-craft recreation activities.



# DRAFT GUIDANCE FOR CHANGING A DESIGNATED USE

- Clarifies what should be included in a designated use package
  - Letters of support from:
    - dischargers, domestic &/or industrial, to the reach.
    - municipalities, county Board of Commissioners, other affected governmental bodies, and other stakeholders who live in the watershed.
  - Investments, both completed and pending, for improved use of the waterbody such as boat ramps, parks, trails, or drinking water systems. Include the amount of the investment, as well as who funded the project(s) and for what purpose.



# 2019 TRIENNIAL REVIEW

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# THANK YOU

■ Adjournment

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