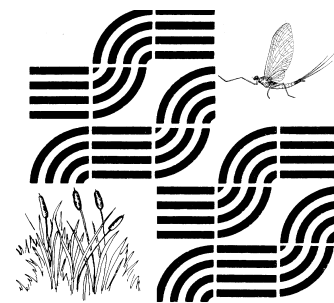


# GEORGIA

## Adopt-A-Stream

Volume 19, Number 3 May/June 2012  
Allison Hughes, Tara Muenz, Editors



Department of Natural Resources  
Environmental Protection Division

## Adopt-A-Stream Data Used in State Monitoring Plan!

Georgia Adopt-A-Stream volunteers have been going strong for almost 20 years now (our 20th birthday is 2013) and in this period of time they have entered over 16,000 monitoring events from 2,400 monitoring sites across the state. These data points are entered into the Georgia Adopt-A-Stream database which is publically accessible to those who are interested in learning more about water quality in Georgia.

We are excited to announce that the Watershed Planning and Monitoring Program's Ambient Monitoring Unit, the regulatory water quality monitor entity of the Environmental Protection Division, is using volunteer collected data to help select water quality monitoring sites in 2012. This is an enormous accomplishment for the State of Georgia and Adopt-A-Stream.

### Does your data meet their criteria?

The Ambient Monitoring Unit has created a set of criteria to determine sites of interest in the Adopt-A-Stream database. For your site to be considered by the State, here are a few things for you to keep in mind as you move forward with your monitoring program.

- The State is looking for sites with long term data sets (2+ years).
- They are looking for sites that show signs of water quality impairment.
- Regular data collection is imperative; at least 10-12 monitoring events per year.
- The data sets should not contain any errors and the duplicate precision rules should be followed.

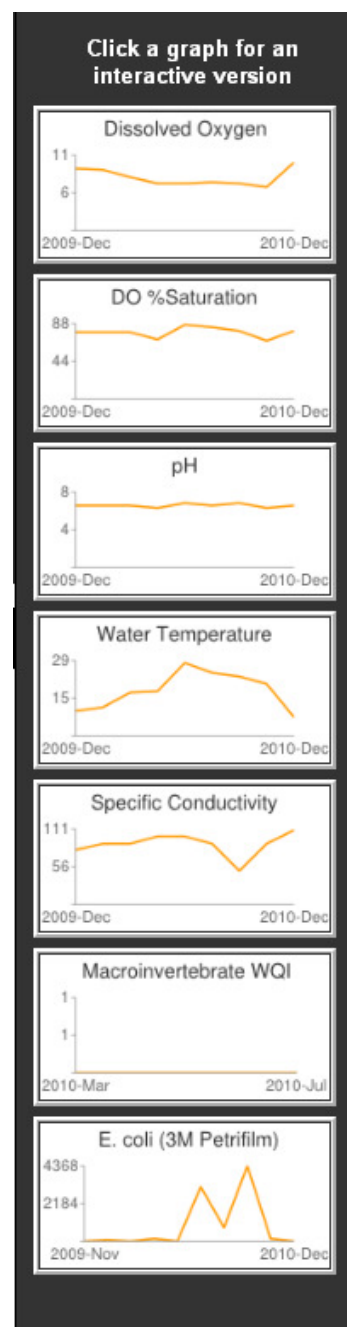
### AAS sites selected for intensive monitoring

Using the criteria list above, five Georgia Adopt-A-Stream sites have been added to the 2012 monitoring schedule for monthly/quarterly monitoring. These sites include the following:

- Blue Creek, Hogansville - Monitored by Blue Creek Monitors
- Flat Creek, Peachtree City - Monitored by McIntosh High School
- Spring Creek, Thomaston - Monitored by Eyes on the Upper Flint
- Elkins Creek, Thomaston - Monitored by Eyes on the Upper Flint
- Potato Creek, Thomaston - Monitored by Eyes on the Upper Flint

### What Does This Mean?

The sites listed above will be sampled at least monthly for standard parameters and 16 times per year for fecal coliform bacteria. The results from this year-long survey will help determine the health of these waterways. We will report these results in our newsletter next spring.



Blue Creek Water Quality Data  
From the AAS database

# Local Uses of Adopt-A-Stream Data

## Ogeechee Riverkeeper Uses Volunteer Data to Educate Citizens

The Ogeechee River begins in Green County and flows to the white sandy beaches of Ossabaw Island. Ogeechee Riverkeeper (ORK) volunteers have been collecting baseline data for over 7 years. They have 23 sampling sites spread throughout the river basin and volunteer collected data has been used to determine water quality in these rivers, creeks and streams. The Adopt-A-Stream program has given ORK the tools needed to make informed decisions about their basin. When poor water quality is determined, they report the information to the their local government who investigates and informs the public of pollution issues in the waters in which they swim, fish and drink. ORK presents their AAS data to local and state representatives as well as civic clubs around the river basin while using it to support reports to their grantors and board of directors. Most recently, they used bacterial and chemical data to detect a failing sewer treatment facility in the watershed and reported it to the local government. The city officials responded to the high bacterial levels reported by volunteers and are currently upgrading the facility. ORK feels that the Adopt-A-Stream program is vital to their organization and plans to continue this program into perpetuity.



Martha Joiner and her granddaughter monitoring pH on Buckhead Creek in the Ogeechee River Basin

## The Atlanta Regional Commission uses AAS Bacterial & Visual Surveys to Assess Water Quality in Proctor Creek

Proctor Creek, a tributary to the Chattahoochee River, is listed as impaired by Georgia EPD due to high bacteria levels. The Atlanta Regional Commission and its partners decided that something needed to be done. They applied for and were awarded a watershed improvement grant from Georgia EPD to study the watershed and determine where the pollution was coming from. Where did they start? The Georgia Adopt-A-Stream program. They held workshops to train area residents in bacterial monitoring and visual survey methods and then set off into the streams to collect data. Using the AAS methods, they located numerous “hot spots” that needed further investigation.



Through their efforts, they identified the following issues:

- ◆ Located and repaired old leaky sewer lines.
- ◆ Located two areas where the combined sewer lines were not connected.
- ◆ Located an illegal oil dump site and identified responsible party.
- ◆ Identified an improperly repaired private sewer crossing.
- ◆ Identified code compliance issues (illegal dumping, excessive trash, etc.), which were either cleaned by the City of Atlanta or property owner.

The next stage of this project includes installing best management practices (BMP's) to reduce non-point source pollution in targeted areas, increasing public involvement in activities such as stream monitoring and clean-up events, and to conducting monitoring after the BMP's have been installed. For more information about this project, visit <http://bit.ly/proctorcreekwip>.

### Workshop Hosts Wanted!!!

We are looking for communities who would like to host an Adopt-A-Stream Watershed Survey and Visual Stream Assessment Workshop. Contact us if you would like more information or if you would like for us to lead a workshop for your community.

404-675-6240 — [aas@gaepd.org](mailto:aas@gaepd.org)

# Emergency Response 101

If you are monitoring on a Saturday afternoon and you spot discolored water, illegal dumping or a sewage spill, who would you call? Do you call the Environmental Protection Division? Your local Health Department? Your local Adopt-A-Stream Coordinator? You may also ask yourself “what information do I provide to them”? When an emergency is occurring, you may be in a panic and not know what to do. This is why we encourage you to create your “Who to Call” list and always have it handy.

This list has been created to help you in an emergency situation. We have developed the first section of the list for you (see below) and it includes two Statewide emergency response numbers and the Adopt-A-Stream office number. To complete the list, we encourage you to do a little research within your local government and determine who to call for a variety of emergencies or water quality impairments. Unfortunately, each local government operates in a different manner, therefore each volunteer’s “Who to Call” list will be unique.

## Statewide Numbers

Emergency Response	1-800-241-4113
EPD Non-Emergency Response	1-800-EPD-5947
Adopt-A-Stream	404-675-6240

## Local Numbers to Include on Your List

Emergency Hotline	Local DNR Ranger
Local Health Department	Local EPD Office
Local Code Enforcement	Local AAS Coordinator

Recently, a few of our volunteers have put our “Who to Call” list to the test and here is what happened. One of our active volunteers has a keen eye for illegal dumping and has promptly reported many cases to the non-emergency response number for the Environmental Protection Division. One recent case was for an auto parts store that had gone out of business and left numerous 55 gallon drums full of chemicals in the parking lot. The site was 300 yards from his adopted stream and he was concerned that the barrels may be turned over and enter the stream. With assistance from EPD and the his local government, the barrels were properly removed from the site, and hence removed the chance of these potentially toxic substances from entering the stream.

Further south in the Flint River Basin, another volunteer reported that a spray head from a land application site was pointed in the wrong direction and spraying onto private property. He called the EPD Emergency Response line to report the problem. An EPD associate responded to the call and visited the site to verify the complaint. A meeting and a site visit were scheduled with EPD, the plant manager and our volunteer. After the meeting the plant repositioned the spray head and it is no longer spraying onto private property.

## Important Facts for Reporting Emergencies

- Report Problems **Immediately!** Don’t wait until Monday!
- Provide your contact information for follow-up.
- Provide detailed, accurate information.
- Take a picture of the site.

We hope that by reading these two stories, you will be the voice of your stream and report water quality issues to the appropriate authorities to improve local water quality and protect your community. If we can be of assistance when you are developing your “Who to Call” list, please don’t hesitate to call us. We have many years of experience working with local governments and may have the answers you are searching for. Thanks for all that you do for your local streams, rivers, lakes and estuaries. Together, we can make a difference!

## Adopt-A-Stream Welcomes our New Groups

Golden Triangle RC&D Council, Southwest Georgia  
Env Eagles, Cobb County  
The Brooks Family, Cobb County  
Crooked Creek Stream, Fulton County  
Henry County Water Watchers, Henry County  
Friendship Forest, DeKalb County  
Girl Scout Troop 2193, Cobb County  
Limestone Valley RC&D Council, Northeast Georgia  
Village North Highlands Subdivision, Cobb County  
Go Outdoors USA, Fannin County  
The Lughart Clan, Whitfield County

## Allison and Tara Receive River Conservationists of the Year Award

The Georgia River Network recognized Allison Hughes and Tara Muenz as the Conservationists of the Year for 2012. This award goes to someone whose work has had a direct impact on the health of their river. Allison and Tara received this award for their efforts to organize Adopt-A-Stream's water quality training and monitoring program on Paddle Georgia for the past six years. They have participated in Paddle Georgia on six different rivers, paddling over 600 miles of Georgia's waterways while collecting more than 500 water quality samples and training 126 volunteers. Their work has helped improve and protect Georgia's waterways.

Please visit our calendar of events at [www.GeorgiaAdoptAStream.org](http://www.GeorgiaAdoptAStream.org)  
for upcoming monitoring workshops and Adopt-A-Stream events.

The Georgia Adopt-A-Stream Newsletter is published six times per year.  
For more information about the Georgia Adopt-A-Stream program or  
to contribute to the newsletter, call or write to:

**Georgia Adopt-A-Stream**  
**Environmental Protection Division**  
**4220 International Parkway, Suite 101**  
**Atlanta, GA 30354**  
**404.675.6240**  
**[www.GeorgiaAdoptAStream.org](http://www.GeorgiaAdoptAStream.org)**

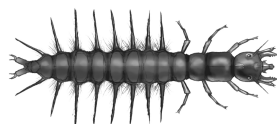
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Dragonfly



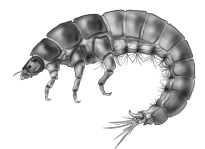
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