



**Georgia Water Coalition names 2014 “Dirty Dozen”
12 of the worst offenses to Georgia’s water**

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Individual contacts for each item listed in the Dirty Dozen report are available online:
<http://www.garivers.org/gawater/dirtydozen2014.html>

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE October 22, 2014 – Today, Georgia’s leading water coalition named its “Dirty Dozen” for 2014, highlighting 12 of the worst offenses to Georgia’s waters. The annual Dirty Dozen shines a spotlight on threats to Georgia’s water resources as well as the polluters and state policies or failures that ultimately harm—or could harm—Georgia property owners, downstream communities, fish and wildlife, hunters and anglers, and boaters and swimmers.

“The Dirty Dozen is not a list of the most polluted water bodies in Georgia, nor are they ranked in any particular order,” said Joe Cook, Advocacy & Communication Coordinator at the Coosa River Basin Initiative. “It’s a list of problems that exemplify the results of inadequate funding for Georgia’s Environmental Protection Division (EPD), a lack of political will to enforce existing environmental protections, and ultimately misguided water planning and spending priorities that flow from the very top of Georgia’s leadership.”

The Coalition’s full report details the history of each site and provides solutions to correct these ongoing problems and eliminate the listed threats. A short list can be found below. The full report—including updates from previous Dirty Dozen reports—is available online:
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“Over the past decade, the health of Georgia’s rivers, wetlands, lakes and streams and the safety of Georgia citizens has been compromised as funding for Georgia’s Environmental Protection Division has not kept pace with population and economic growth,” said Jennette Gayer, Environment Georgia Research and Policy Center Advocate.

The problems highlighted in the report include:

- EPD announced—on Earth Day—that it would no longer enforce laws designed to protect Georgia’s coastal marshlands, and in July, a long-standing protection for well water on the Georgia coast expired because of inaction on the part of the administration and legislature. (Items 2 and 3)
- The Sabal Trail pipeline’s path across southwest Georgia would require boring underground pipelines beneath the Withlacoochee, Flint and Chattahoochee rivers as well as numerous smaller streams, and will course underground above the Floridan aquifer. While the Sabal Trail pipeline’s parent companies would have residents believe their 3-foot-diameter pipe is a benign neighbor, the history of gas pipeline accidents and environmental ills paints a different picture. (Item 9)

- Stormwater from industrial facilities creates ongoing pollution problems in the Chattahoochee River largely because there are only two EPD staffers responsible for inspecting and monitoring more than 2,700 industrial sites. (Item 4)
- State spending to expand Georgia’s water supplies has only aggravated a two-decade-long water war with Alabama and Florida. Since taking office, Gov. Deal has directed \$196.3 million to construct dams and reservoirs—many of questionable need—in an attempt to store and divert water from downstream neighbors. Yet, from 2010 to early 2013, the state spent just \$10.7 million to help communities use their existing water supplies more efficiently. (Item 1)

“The Georgia Water Coalition publishes this annual list as a call to action for our state’s leaders and its citizens to come together to correct pollution problems, eliminate the wasteful use of our tax dollars and restore our streams, rivers, lakes and coastal wetlands,” said Glenn Dowling, Executive Director of Georgia River Network.

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The Georgia Water Coalition is a consortium of 217 conservation and environmental organizations, hunting and fishing groups, businesses, and faith-based organizations that have been working to protect Georgia’s water since 2002. Collectively, these organizations represent more than 300,000 Georgians.

2014 Dirty Dozen

1. Georgia's Water: State Water Policy Threatens Streams, Aggravates Water Wars, Wastes Tax Dollars
2. Georgia’s Coastal & Freshwater Wetlands: EPD Refuses to Enforce Clean Water Laws
3. Floridan Aquifer: State Leaders Drop Well Water Protections to Experiment With Risky Water Injection Schemes
4. Chattahoochee River: Weakened State Agency Allows Industries to Foul River
5. Coosa River: Long Delayed State Clean Up Plan Allows Power Company to Continue Polluting
6. Flint River: Textile Manufacturer’s Pollution, State Water Policy Create Conundrum
7. Savannah River: Pollutants, Nuclear Reactors Suck Water and Life out of Savannah
8. Georgia's Small Streams and Wetlands: National Rule To Protect Georgia’s Streams and Wetland Treasures Under Attack
9. Withlacoochee River & Floridan Aquifer: Gas Pipeline Threatens Southwest Georgia Water, Way of Life
10. Turtle River: Toxic Legacy Poisons Dolphins, Drinking Water
11. Satilla River: Toxic Legacies Threaten Waycross Residents
12. Little Satilla Creek & Penholloway Creek: Titanium Mine Threatens Wetlands, Well Water

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