

# A Resolution

## Requesting the Georgia Environmental Protection Division to Timely Publish Pollution Spill Reports

**WHEREAS**, clean water is a basic right of all Georgia citizens and a basic mission of the Georgia Water Coalition and all its partners; and

**WHEREAS**, pollution spills unknown to the public could represent public health hazards; and

**WHEREAS**, pollution spills unknown to the public cannot trigger further water quality monitoring by entities such as Georgia Water Coalition partners to detect public health hazards and other potential effects; and

**WHEREAS**, there are thousands of National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits for entities in the state of Georgia; and

**WHEREAS**, that is too many permit holders for it to be practical for any private entity to poll all of them for spill reports, even weekly, much less daily, even in a single watershed; and

**WHEREAS**, Georgia NPDES permits require the permit holders to timely inform the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (GA-EPD) of spills at least of certain sizes; and

**WHEREAS**, the GA-EPD has received more than four thousand reports of pollution spills since the beginning of the year 2015; and

**WHEREAS**, many of those spills are below permit thresholds requiring public notification; and

**WHEREAS**, many if not most of those spills have not been reported to the public; and

**WHEREAS**, it is in the public interest for the public to know of point sources of pollution in our waters; and

**WHEREAS**, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) publishes spill reports on its website the same day it receives them, in a spreadsheet, with signup for email alerts, plus an online interactive map of spills for the past thirty days; see

[prodenv.dep.state.fl.us/DepPNP/reports/viewIncidentDetails](http://prodenv.dep.state.fl.us/DepPNP/reports/viewIncidentDetails); and

**WHEREAS**, the Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM) provides online signup for email alerts of spills the same day ADEM receives them; see [adem.alabama.gov](http://adem.alabama.gov); and

**WHEREAS**, the Atlanta office of GA-EPD will return a spreadsheet of spills it has received in response to a Georgia Open Records Act (GORA) request; see <http://wwals.net/?p=45934>; and

**WHEREAS**, publishing that spreadsheet or one like it daily should require little extra work or expense by GA-EPD while providing great value to the public; and

**WHEREAS**, adding an email notification system should be possible and not difficult, for example by slight adaptation of how either Florida or Alabama does it; and

**WHEREAS**, both Florida and Alabama started publishing spill reports the same day they receive them without or before any law was passed requiring such action; and

**WHEREAS**, nonetheless the eventual Florida Statute 403.077 could be of use as a model; see <http://wwals.net/?p=37541>; and

**WHEREAS**, customer satisfaction of GA-EPD's most basic and populous customers, the people of Georgia, would benefit by GA-EPD deciding to publish spill reports the same day it receives them; and

**WHEREAS**, there is great concern downstream in Florida about Georgia spills, especially that Georgia permit holders are not informing the public of all spills; and;

**WHEREAS**, timely spill publication by GA-EPD would also be of great benefit to the people of the neighboring state of Florida;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the undersigned organizations request the Georgia Environmental Protection Division:

1. To publish spill reports the same day it receives them, online, on its website, in a spreadsheet, and;
2. To provide online email signup for receipt of alerts of spills the same day they occur, and;
3. To consider, without delaying 1 and 2 above, adding an online interactive map of recent spills..

**PASSED AND ADOPTED BY THE UNDERSIGNED ORGANIZATIONS**, this \_\_\_\_\_ day of October 2018 or on a date as noted by an individual signature.

John S. Quarterman, Suwannee Riverkeeper,  
WWALS Watershed Coalition, 2018-09-29



S. Gordon Rogers,  
Flint Riverkeeper  
2018-09-29



Dana Skelton,  
Executive Director  
Georgia River Network,  
2018-10-01



Jesse Demonbreun-Chapman,  
Executive Director &  
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2018-10-01



Jennette Gayer, Director,  
Environment Georgia,  
2018-10-01

