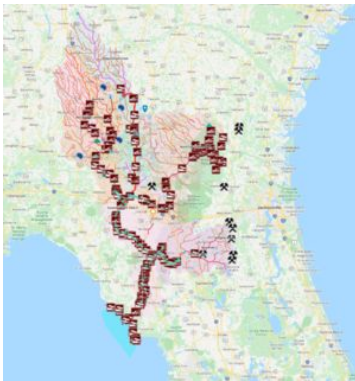
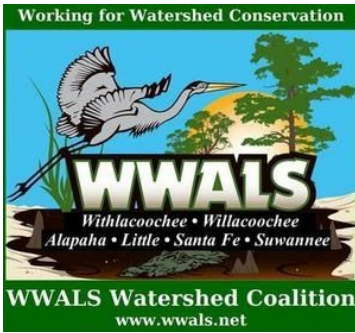


July 27, 2020



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WWALS is an IRS 501(c)(3)  
nonprofit charity est. June 2012

*WWALS Watershed Coalition  
advocates for conservation and  
stewardship of the Withlacoochee,  
Willacoochee, Alapaha, Little, Santa  
Fe, and Suwannee River watersheds  
in south Georgia and north Florida  
through education, awareness,  
environmental monitoring, and  
citizen activities*

*Suwannee RIVERKEEPER® is a  
program and a paid staff position of  
WWALS.*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Georgia Power grants funds to WWALS for Water Quality Testing**

Hahira, GA, July 27, 2020 — Aiding our attempts to clean up the Withlacoochee River, Georgia Power Foundation has provided a substantial grant to WWALS Watershed Coalition, Inc. (“WWALS”). WWALS will buy more water quality testing kits and supplies with the funds, as well as other expenses related to our volunteer water quality testing program.

“Please accept our most sincere thanks for your recognition and support of WWALS Watershed Coalition and our work for clean, fishable, swimmable, boatable water,” said WWALS Executive Director Gretchen Quarterman. “We look forward to a productive water quality testing program this year.”

“We’re honored to get to help,” said Joe Brownlee, Georgia Power Southwest Region Director. “One of our goals is to make sure the people of Georgia know about our great natural resources. And also that they’re safe. And y’all help do that by making awareness around water testing. And you build strong relationships I know now, coordinating with the City of Valdosta, making sure they publish their test results. Everything seems to be working and getting better. We’re on a sharp upward curve of getting better with what we do with water and getting to enjoy it. And my little girl, I’m working for her future, and Georgia Power is. Thank y’all, thank you to the volunteer testers, and the Riverkeeper.”



*Photo: WWALS, of Georgia Power Southwest District Director Joe Brownlee, Suwannee Riverkeeper John S. Quarterman, WWALS Executive Director Gretchen Quarterman, and WWALS Testing Committee Chair Suzy Hall, at Troupville Boat Ramp on the Withlacoochee River, near Valdosta, Georgia.*

“The response of the Georgia Power grant and Mr. Brownlee’s comments are quite touching (to me) due to the recognition of how difficult it is for a volunteer organization to do biological water testing over a huge area. The grant enables regular testing that can pinpoint multi-source pollution, which requires a varied response. It’s quite gratifying that both individuals and large companies realize this is a complex situation,” said WWALS President Tom H. Johnson, Jr.



“We have several testers already trained, waiting for testing kits. Thanks to Georgia Power, we can buy them kits and get them started testing!” said WWALS Testing Committee Chair Suzy Hall. “Plus we can buy enough kits to train new testers with physical distancing even during the virus pandemic.”

“We like to think WWALS water quality testing has already done some good, helping warn people when the waterways are contaminated, helping find contamination sources, and encouraging several governmental organizations in Georgia and Florida to test more,” said Suwannee Riverkeeper John S. Quarterman. “With these funds from Georgia Power we can do much more. Also thanks to Valdosta Mayor Scott James for introducing us to Joe Brownlee.”

“The more testing, the more we can also check to see whether fixes such as fencing cattle away from waterways are actually working to improve the situation,” said WWALS Science Committee Chair Dr. Tom Potter. “Interested governmental, educational, or agricultural organizations please contact us about that.”

**About WWALS:** Founded in June 2012, WWALS Watershed Coalition, Inc. (WWALS) advocates for conservation and stewardship of the Withlacoochee, Willacoochee, Alapaha, Little, Santa Fe, and Suwannee River watersheds in south Georgia and north Florida through education, awareness, environmental monitoring, and citizen activities. John S. Quarterman is the **Suwannee Riverkeeper®**, which is a staff position and a project of WWALS as the member of Waterkeeper® Alliance for the Suwannee River Basin.

**WWALS Water Quality Testing** is summarized here: <http://wwals.net/issues/testing/>  
Here is a video about this grant: [https://youtu.be/zy0N\\_kRhPfl](https://youtu.be/zy0N_kRhPfl)

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