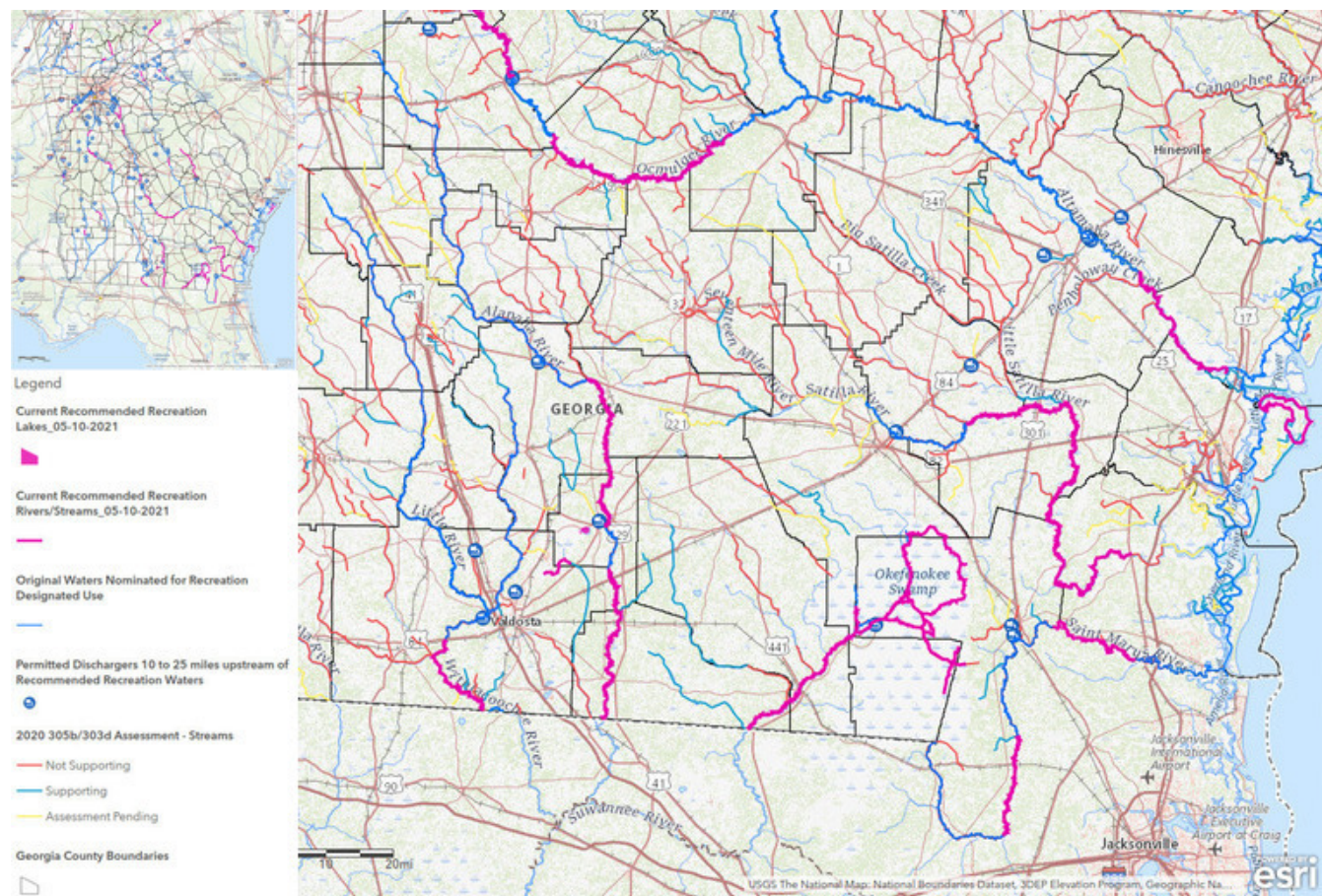


WWALS Watershed Coalition (Suwannee RIVERKEEPER®)

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.

Calling for pictures of swimming, diving, rapids, tubing, water skiing, or surfing, Suwannee River Basin, Georgia

Calling for pictures, personal experience, or other evidence of swimming or diving in lakes and rivers in the Suwannee River Basin, and evidence of investments in recreation.



Candidate Recreational waterways, Georgia, legend, Suwannee River Basin

For a waterway to be redesignated Recreational instead of Fishing, as we requested back in 2019, GA-EPD requires evidence of "Primary Contact Recreation," which it says is "full immersion contact with water where there is significant risk of ingestion that includes, but is not limited to, swimming, diving, white water boating (class 3+), tubing, water skiing, and surfing."

Recreational designation would mean tighter restrictions on contamination limits. That should be good for fish, fishing, people who swim, fish, and boat, and for eco-tourism.

Could everyone who has pictures, news reports, or other solid evidence of such activities in the Suwannee River Basin in Georgia please send them in. That's in the Okefenokee Swamp, Suwannee River, Alapaha River, Banks Lake, Grand Bay, Withlacoochee River, or Little River.

Please use this form:

<https://forms.gle/DipPgU2TP5atc2Rf9>

If you have difficulties with that, please email them to wwalswatershed@gmail.com.

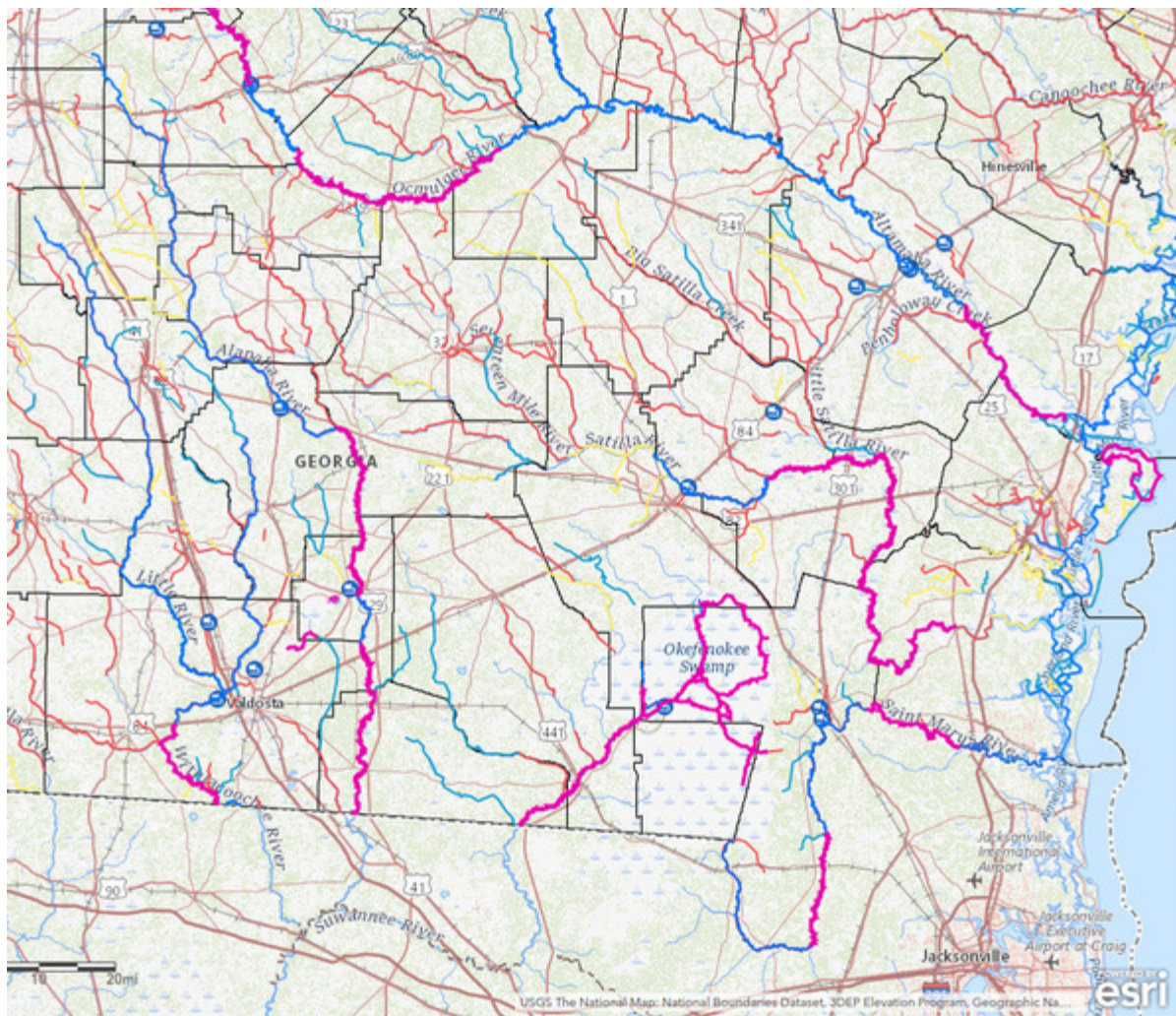
Also, please send any evidence of investments in recreation along any of these waterways, with dollar amounts, if you have them.

No rush. We thought we had until the end of June, but recently GA-EPD truncated the deadline to May 28th. That's Friday of this week. GA-EPD has indicated that the end-of-week deadline may be flexible, but please send what you've got as fast as you can.

They also applied a bunch of criteria, some of which we were previously unaware of, and tossed out many stretches of the rivers. We asked for an appeal process, but they have not provided one. So feel free to send in pictures and other evidence about all stretches, and we'll see what we can do with them.

The good news is that still on the candidate list for Recreational redesignation is all of the Okefenokee Swamp, the Suwannee River in Georgia, Banks Lake, and Grand Bay Creek and Trail within the Grand Bay WMA. Also included is most of the Alapaha River within the Alapaha River Water Trail, but not upstream from the Willacoochee River, and not for ten miles downstream from Lakeland.

But almost all of the Withlacoochee River is eliminated, except for Tiger Creek (at Spook Bridge) to the state line, and all of the Little River is eliminated. Also gone is Lake Irma, because "small size, urban area".



Suwannee River Basin in Georgia

Here is what they sent first about what they eliminated:

During the 2019 Triennial Review comment period, the Environmental Protection Division (EPD) received nominations for designated use changes for 2,662 miles of river. We have analyzed each segment submitted based on the potential impacts to human health from the surrounding areas. Waterbody segments were eliminated from consideration if they were impacted by any of the following conditions:

- Discharge within 10 miles of segment
- Close proximity of an industrial discharge
- Documented PFAS
- Limited riparian buffer
- Close proximity to nonpoint sources, including:
 - Agricultural land, chicken houses, or livestock
 - Biosolids disposal areas
 - Hazardous waste sites
 - Urban areas

- *Landfills*
- *Airports*

The attached word document lists the waterbodies that remain under consideration are shown on a map that can be found at <https://arcg.is/1uDSeH>. The map includes upstream dischargers and 305(b)/303(d) listed streams.

Legend

**Current Recommended Recreation
Lakes_05-10-2021**



**Current Recommended Recreation
Rivers/Streams_05-10-2021**




**Original Waters Nominated for Recreation
Designated Use**



**Permitted Dischargers 10 to 25 miles upstream of
Recommended Recreation Waters**



2020 305b/303d Assessment - Streams

 Not Supporting

 Supporting

 Assessment Pending



Map legend

Our next step will be to evaluate the current use of the 840 river miles that remain to determine if a designated use change is appropriate as part of this triennial review. Nominating organizations are asked to document the location (latitude and longitude) of all recreational activities by season and of investments made for improved use of the nominated waterbody using the attached Excel file. Please note that the fishing and drinking water designated uses are protective of secondary contact recreation year-round where incidental water ingestion may occur and primary contact recreation during the months of May-October when full body immersion and water ingestion is anticipated. A recreation designated use is appropriate for waterbodies that are used for primary contact recreation year-round. Please see the definitions in the attached spreadsheet to determine which types of activities are considered primary contact recreation. Please return the attached completed Excel file by May 28, 2021.

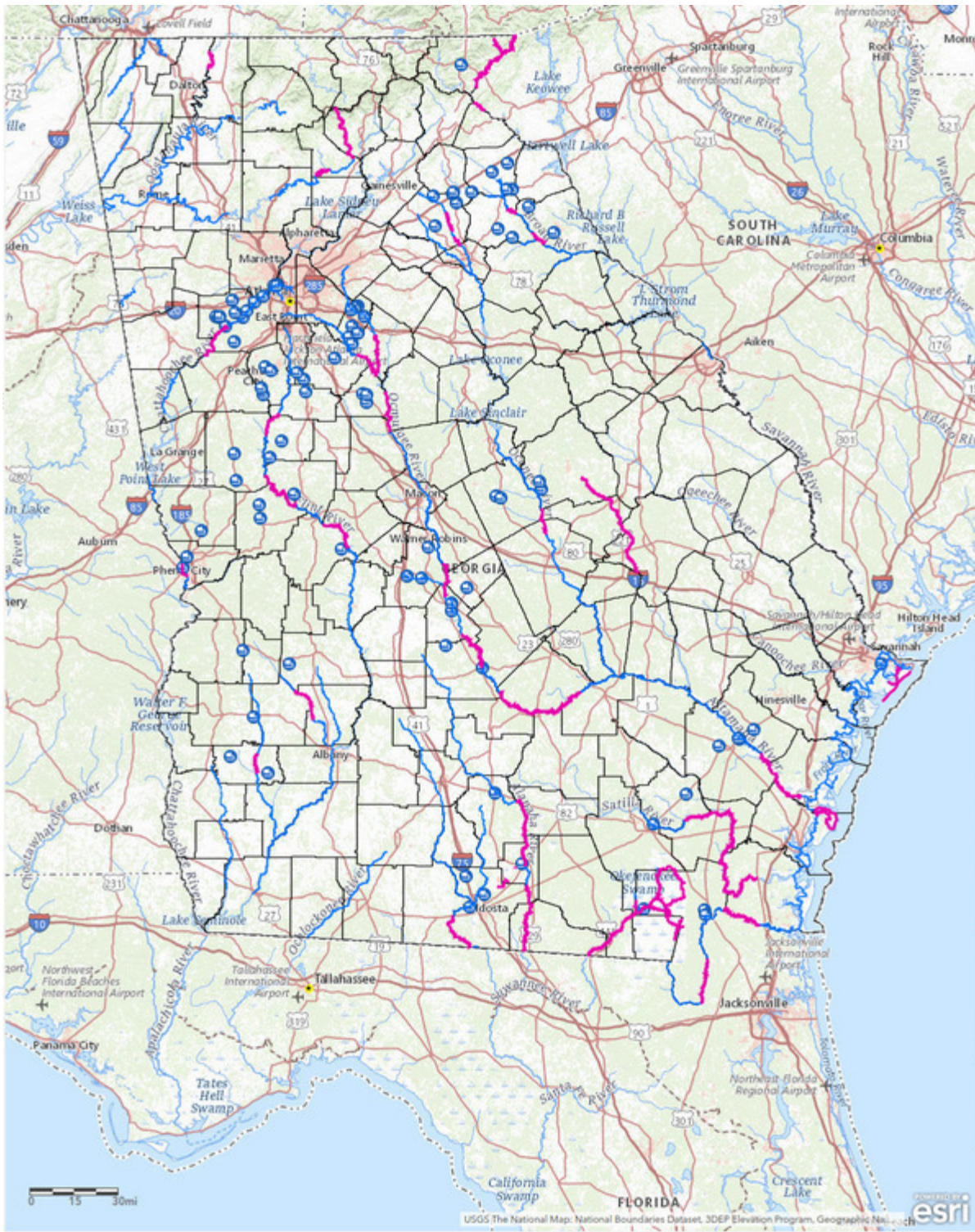
EPD will be evaluating the remaining waterbodies based on the occurrence of year-round primary contact activities and will be sending letters to all dischargers within 25 miles of the recommended stream segments. We will also be notifying all cities and counties adjacent to waterbodies recommended for designated use changes. We will be asking them to participate in the stakeholder process and requesting that they provide feedback concerning the proposed changes by June 30, 2021, completing the nomination packages.

If you have any question, please email Gillian Gilbert-Wason at gillian.wason@dnr.ga.gov. Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter.

These were the attachments:

- <https://wwals.net/pictures/2021-05-12-ga-epd-designated-use-update/Recreation-Location-data-template.xlsx>
- Table-of-Designated-Use-Changes-05-12-2021.docx

One of GA-EPD's recent replies said, "In response to your GORA request, he attached spreadsheet is the complete list of waterbody segments that have been eliminated from consideration for designated use change to recreation for the 2019 Triennial Review period along with the reason(s) for their elimination." [TR19_Recreation_Explanation_of_Eliminated_Segments_5_20_2021.xlsx](#)



Requested and candidate redesignation stretches in Georgia

They also noted, "Sorry for the error. GA0039365 (Nashville) discharges to the Withlacoochee River. The nearest discharger associated with Little River should have been: GA0031950 (Lenox); Discharges to an unnamed tributary to the Little River."

And they promised to send more details as to which ag land, hog farms, chicken houses, urban areas, dischargers, etc., and where? Since there is ongoing correspondence, I'd rather wait until there is more resolu-

tion on what their reasons were for elimination and then post a summary.

Meanwhile, please send in your pictures and text.

-jsq, John S. Quarterman, [Suwannee RIVERKEEPER®](#)

You can join this fun and work by becoming a WWALS member today!

Short Link:

<https://wwals.net/?p=556>

This entry was posted in GA-EPD, Lake, Law, Quantity, River, Swamp and tagged Alapaha River, Banks Lake, conservation, GA EPD, Grand Bay, LAKE, Lake Irma, Law, Little River, north Florida, Okefenokee Swamp, Quantity, river, south Georgia, Suwannee River, Suwannee Riverkeeper, swamp, watershed, Withlacoochee River, WWALS, WWALS Watershed Coalition on May 23, 2021 [<https://wwals.net/2021/05/23/calling-for-pictures-of-swimming-diving-rapids-tubing-water-skiing-or-surfing-suwannee-river-basin-georgia/>] by jsq.
