

Similarly, the Withlacoochee River from Langdale Park is a great paddle, but it is quite depressing to arrive at Sugar Creek and find rafts of trash. The Mayor [helped open a deadfall](#) back in May during a paddle on that stretch.

Fortunately, there are solutions, from cleanups at logjams, upstream to trash traps, trash cans, and code enforcement. Other creeks are also a problem, such as Stillhouse Branch coming out of the Country Club, with its trash jam at the Withlacoochee River. However, Sugar Creek and its tributaries Hightower Creek, Onemile Branch, and Twomile Branch appear to be the major trash sources. Trash at the boat ramps on the Withlacoochee and Little Rivers used to be a problem, but since Lowndes County has implemented its own litter collection team, which leans up the boat ramps weekly, that situation is much better. The main source of trash into the Withlacoochee River is Sugar Creek. So we focus on Sugar Creek for the moment.



## Federal Correlation

There is a correlation to the current litter problem in the City of Valdosta and the Federal Solid Waste Disposal Act of 1965. The Federal definition of solid wastes mirrors the City of Valdosta's definition of litter. It wasn't until 1959 that the American Society of Engineers published the first guide of establishing a sanitary landfill to reduce fire hazards, odor, and rodent infestations. Well into the mid-1960s, open pit dumping was the most common way of disposing of Solid Waste. The EPA estimated that even as recent as the 1990s, more than 75% of the landfills in the US were contaminating groundwater.

## Trash Cans

Consider now a current local litter issue that has been identified as far back as the 2007 Two Mile Branch Watershed Management Plan as it was listed as an impaired stream. Meaning it was not supporting its designated use for fishing due to fecal coliform violations. This plan begins to reference trash buildup in specific areas but also includes discussion about pet waste. It provides a remedy for pet waste that could also be translated into a solid waste remedy with regards to litter. It suggested from a study from the North Carolina Department of Transportation that ***“stressed the importance of providing a trash receptacle and placing stations away from water bodies. Additional recommendations resulting from the study showed that the stations worked best with well-identified signs explaining the pickup process, bag usage increased when the trash receptacle was located next to the station, and that educational material at the stations about pet waste issues was needed.”*** It stated that the required informational pamphlet needed to help educate the citizens of Valdosta had already been developed and pet waste receptacles installed to capture 70% of pet waste. This plan stated that the 2007 price for trash receptacles was \$320 each and that the VLPRAs empty these as part of its regular park maintenance. There was a recommendation in this plan that installing educational signs on water quality and pet waste would be worth the additional cost. This is a segue into stormwater management discussion as this plan introduces the effort to educate the citizens on stormwater management issues.