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BACTERIAL CONTAMINATION IN THE WITHLACOOCHEE RIVER

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Madison, FL – The Florida Department of Health (DOH) is providing a precautionary update regarding elevated fecal bacteria levels south of Valdosta, Georgia in the Withlacoochee River which flows into the Florida Suwannee River. This may result in potential exposure to the public in following Florida counties: Madison, Hamilton and Suwannee counties.

DOH, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and Suwannee River Water Management District are working together to assess and closely monitor the situation. As these assessments continue, we will provide updates to the public.

Until further information is known, residents and visitors in the area should take precautions in the area of Withlacoochee River. Anyone who comes into contact with the river water should wash thoroughly, especially before eating or drinking. Children and older adults, as well as immunocompromised individuals, are particularly vulnerable to disease.

Water contaminated with elevated fecal bacteria presents several health risks to humans. Microbes normally found with fecal bacteria could cause gastrointestinal issues and other conditions.

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