

October 12th, 2023 (Soque River) at Habersham EMC, Clarkesville, Georgia

Links to Recording of Meeting: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V8WQZ13-nY> and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PA3Cy42ncrE>

The following individuals provided testimony at the meeting: Scott Robinson (DNR); Mike Worley (Georgia Wildlife Federation); April Lipscomb (Southern Environmental Law Center); Brad Coppage (Soque River Watershed); Mark Alley; Marty Simmons; Stanley London; Paula Hanington; Emily Owenby; Roman Figurilli; Rob Bennison; Jimmy Harris; Noland Glenn; Mark Lovell; Mike Van Winkle; Dink NeSmith; Rutherford Seydel; Frank Dorman; Shelby Guzzetta; and Joe Rose.

October 18th, 2023 (Toccoa River) at Old Toccoa Farm, Mineral Bluff, Georgia

Link to Recording of Meeting: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fRbds-Jl-tU>

The following individuals provided testimony at the meeting: Rhonda Thomas (Mayor of Blue Ridge); Jamie Hensley (Fannin County Commission Chairman); Christie Gribble (Fannin County Chamber of Commerce); Scott Robinson (DNR); Mike Worley (Georgia Wildlife Federation); April Lipscomb (Southern Environmental Law Center); Judson Hill (former Georgia State Senator); Robb Billue; Jay Hamilton; Rodney Tumlin (Trout Unlimited); Jeff Roach; Terry Bramlett; Bill Oyster; Steve Seitz; Eric Wilhelm; Charles Glenn; Justin Turner; and Senate Majority Leader Steve Goch.

October 25th, 2023 (Ogeechee River) at Georgia Southern University, Statesboro, Georgia

Link to Recording of Meeting: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yO3sivb3_2k

The following individuals provided testimony at the meeting: Scott Robinson (Georgia Department of Natural Resources); Jake Tench (Georgia Agribusiness Council); Adam Belflower (Georgia Farm Bureau); Damon Mullis (Ogeechee Riverkeeper); Mike Worley (Georgia Wildlife Federation); Neil Fleckenstein; Dale Sandlin (Georgia Cattlemen's Association); April Lipscomb (Southern Environmental Law Center); Ben Boyd; Jake Matthews (Georgia Forestry Association); Dominic LaRiccia (Georgia Department of Agriculture); Reggie Dickey (Georgia Hunting and Fishing Federation); Robert Shockley; and Mike Smith.

An additional committee meeting was held on November 30, 2023, at the State Capitol to discuss and adopt the study committee report.

COMMITTEE FINDINGS

Georgia's Fishing Landscape

Fishing is important to the history, economy, and culture of Georgia. As stated by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources during its testimony, Georgia has more than 1.1 million licensed anglers, more than 14,800 jobs connected to fishing, and at least \$1.5 billion in fishing retail sales. Those retail sales have led to more than \$85 million over the past 10 years returning to the state from federal excise taxes on fishing equipment.