



### Water Quality Monitoring on the Satilla River

Press Release – June 1, 2022

For Immediate Release

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Summer has arrived in South Georgia complete with increasing temperatures and humidity. The Satilla River is a beautiful place to beat the South Georgia heat. The Satilla River experienced much needed rain during the early spring and water levels are currently at a great level for the fishermen. Some segments of the river are lower and have exposed the beautiful white sand bars and have been the site of many family outings. The concentration of *Escherichia coli* (*E. coli*), a species of coliform bacteria can be an indicator of the presence of other harmful bacteria or pathogens in the water. *E. coli* in high concentrations can have a negative effect on human health. When levels are low, we encourage the public to take a refreshing dip in the river to beat the summer heat.

During the summer months, water quality samples are taken every two weeks. The most recent testing took place between May 18, 2022 and June 1, 2022 and the results are listed in the table below.

| Site               | Date         | Bacteria Count (cfu/100mL) |
|--------------------|--------------|----------------------------|
| *Jamestown Landing | May 25, 2022 | 0                          |
| *Hwy 121 Nahunta   | May 25, 2022 | 100                        |
| *US 84 Waycross    | May 25, 2022 | 0                          |
| *FFA Camp Landing  | May 25, 2022 | 33                         |

|  |              |    |
|--|--------------|----|
| *US 301 Nahunta                        | May 25, 2022 | 33 |
| *US 82 Ava Lightsey Strickland Landing | May 25, 2022 | 33 |
| *Warner's Landing                      | May 25, 2022 | 0  |
| ^Woodbine Waterfront Park              | Jun 1, 2022  | 33 |
| ^White Oak Creek at US 17              | Jun 1, 2022  | 33 |
| Burnt Fort Landing                     | May 18, 2022 | 0  |

Satilla Riverkeeper's bacteria monitoring program seeks to provide real-time information for safe recreational activities in and around the water, and results are available on the SwimGuide app for iPhone or Android, or at SwimGuide.org.

A green "pin" at a swimming location indicates that the most recent bacteria sampling was within safe-swimming standards. A red pin indicates E. coli levels exceeded the safe swimming standards or there is not enough recent data to make a determination.

Contact or consumption of water containing elevated E. coli levels may cause a variety of illnesses. Symptoms could range in severity from mild gastrointestinal discomfort such as diarrhea or nausea, to serious complications in small children and the elderly. Sources of E. coli range from wildlife and livestock to leaking sewage pipes and failing septic systems.

"It's important that our community has access to clean water for swimming, boating, fishing, and paddling," said Chris Bertrand, Satilla Riverkeeper. "It is just as important for our community to have access to the information that lets them know when water quality might pose a health risk."

The Environmental Protection Agency recommendations for E. coli levels in recreational waters are in the table below:

|                            | <i>Designated swimming</i> | <i>Moderate swimming area</i> | <i>Light swimming area</i> | <i>Infrequent swimming area</i> |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <i>E. coli (cfu/100ml)</i> | <235                       | <298                          | <410                       | <576                            |

In addition to monitoring bacteria levels, volunteers use the protocols developed by Georgia Adopt-A-Stream to monitor dissolved oxygen, pH, temperature, and conductivity. These water quality parameters serve to provide an early warning to the potential of nonpoint source contaminants in the

Satilla River. Volunteers sample sites along the Satilla River on a monthly basis and report the data to Adopt-A-Stream (<https://adoptastream.georgia.gov> ).

If you are interested in becoming a water quality monitoring volunteer, please contact Trish DuBose, [waterquality@satillariverkeeper.org](mailto:waterquality@satillariverkeeper.org).

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The Satilla Riverkeeper is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization established in 2004 whose mission is to protect, restore, and educate about the unique and beautiful, blackwater Satilla River. To learn more about the Satilla Riverkeeper, membership opportunities, and how you can get involved with protecting YOUR Satilla River, visit [www.SatillaRiverkeeper.org](http://www.SatillaRiverkeeper.org).

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