

# ASSAULT ON CLEAN WATER THREATENS ALABAMA

**DESPITE THE FUNDAMENTAL NECESSITY OF CLEAN WATER**, politicians in Washington are trying to dismantle the Clean Water Act, which has kept our nation's waters clean for nearly 50 years. This bedrock environmental safeguard is a central tool used by state and local governments to shield and protect clean water needed for healthy communities and families. Without it, polluted waters would threaten Alabama's local economies, communities, and way of life.

Allowing open dumping into upstream waters spells trouble for everyone downstream. Pollution dumped by industry flows from smaller streams into our rivers and lakes, across state lines and downriver, contaminating waters used by families and communities for drinking and recreation. The best way to protect clean water is to stop harmful pollution at its source, before it reaches our waterways.

If the administration's proposal becomes law, more than half of the stream miles in the United States are at risk.<sup>1</sup> In the South, this proposal puts at risk the drinking water sources for over 32 million people, or seven out of ten southerners.<sup>2</sup> A host of upstream waters such as smaller streams and wetlands would be at risk of pollution and fill under the proposal. Estimates show it would end protections for most of the 110 million acres of wetlands in the contiguous United States.<sup>3</sup>

## WHAT'S AT STAKE IN ALABAMA?

This proposal threatens to remove protections from drinking water sources for 200 million Americans,<sup>4</sup> including the drinking water for four of every five Alabamians.<sup>5</sup>

### CLEAN WATER IS BIG BUSINESS IN ALABAMA

 **\$456 MILLION SPENT ON FISHING**

 **\$615 MILLION FROM LOCAL BREWERIES**

 **\$251 MILLION FROM SEAFOOD INDUSTRY**

 **\$2.7 BILLION SPENT ON WILDLIFE RECREATION**

Under the proposal by the administration and supported by industrial polluters, more than 69,000 miles of streams that flow into Alabama's rivers, lakes, and bays would be at risk for pollution if the Clean Water Act is cut as the administration suggests.<sup>6</sup>

Millions of acres of wetlands in Alabama that provide flood protection, filter pollution, and provide essential wildlife habitat are at risk.<sup>7</sup>

At least eighty-four percent of Alabamians get their drinking water from sources that rely on small streams that may lose critical Clean Water Act protections under the administration's proposal.<sup>8</sup>

## ECONOMIC IMPACTS FOR ALABAMA

By EPA's own estimates, their proposal will put at risk at least \$339 million and up to \$572 million annually in benefits to Americans, including reducing flooding, filtering pollution, providing wildlife habitat, and supporting hunting and fishing.<sup>9</sup>

Protecting small streams and wetlands supports fish and wildlife, and Alabama's vibrant recreational industry. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

reports that in 2011 \$2.7 billion was spent on wildlife recreation in Alabama, including \$456 million on fishing, and more than 1.7 million people participated in wildlife related recreational activities in Alabama.<sup>10</sup> These small streams and wetlands also filter the water that flows into our largest rivers and lakes.

Alabamians are more likely to participate in fishing than the average American.<sup>11</sup> In 2015, over 831,000 anglers took 2,324,000 recreational fishing trips in Alabama waters.<sup>12</sup>

Alabama's seafood industry adds \$251 million annually to the state's economy and supports 9,956 jobs.<sup>13</sup>

Teeming with plants and wildlife, Alabama's waterways are among the most diverse in the country. The number of aquatic

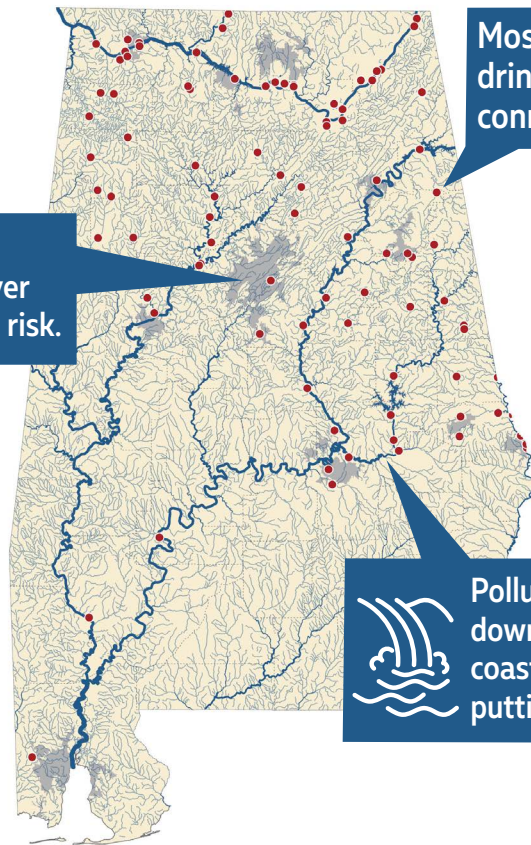




species in Alabama is unrivaled, ranking 1st in the nation for the number of freshwater fish and freshwater turtles, with 332 species of fish and 27 species of turtles.<sup>14</sup>

Alabama's thriving brewing industry relies on clean water. Small Alabama breweries contribute more than \$615 million to our economy every year and support 3,386 jobs.<sup>15</sup>

## ALABAMA'S COMMUNITIES ARE INTERCONNECTED WITH WATERWAYS



Most people in Alabama get their drinking water from surface water intakes connected to rivers and streams.

● Public drinking water intakes



In Birmingham, the drinking water for over 750,000 people is at risk.



Pollution dumped upstream travels downstream and eventually flows into our coastal waterways, estuaries, and the ocean, putting billions of dollars of revenue at risk.

For more information please visit [ProtectSouthernWater.org](https://ProtectSouthernWater.org)

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). 2013. Water: Streams. Accessed at <https://archive.epa.gov/water/archive/web/html/streams.html>.

<sup>2,4,5,8</sup> Calculations from EPA Safe Drinking Water Information System (SDWIS). 2017. Accessed at <https://ofmpub.epa.gov/apex/sfdw/f?p=108:1::NO::>; AND U.S. Census Bureau (USCB). 2017. National and State Population Estimates. Accessed at <https://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-kits/2017/estimates-demographics.html>

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). 2009. Status and Trends of Wetlands in the Conterminous United States 2004 – 2009. p37. Accessed at <https://www.fws.gov/wetlands/documents/Status-and-Trends-of-Wetlands-in-the-Conterminous-United-States-2004-to-2009.pdf>

<sup>6,7</sup> EPA and U.S. Department of the Army. 2018. Economic Analysis for the Proposed Revised Definition of "Waters of the United States". p219-221. Accessed at [https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2018-12/documents/wotusproposedrule\\_ea\\_final\\_2018-12-14.pdf](https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2018-12/documents/wotusproposedrule_ea_final_2018-12-14.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> EPA and U.S. Department of the Army. 2015. Economic Analysis of the EPA-Army Clean Water Rule. p53-54. Accessed at [https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2015-06/documents/508-final\\_clean\\_water\\_rule\\_economic\\_analysis\\_5-20-15.pdf](https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2015-06/documents/508-final_clean_water_rule_economic_analysis_5-20-15.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI), USFWS, and U.S Department of Commerce (DOC), USCB. 2011. National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife Associated Recreation - Alabama. p5-8. Accessed at <https://www.census.gov/prod/2013pubs/fhw11-al.pdf>.

<sup>11</sup> The Outdoor Industry Association. 2017. The Outdoor Recreational Economy – Alabama. Accessed at [https://outdoorindustry.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/OIA\\_RecEcoState\\_AL.pdf](https://outdoorindustry.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/OIA_RecEcoState_AL.pdf).

<sup>12,13</sup> National Marine Fisheries Service. 2017. Fisheries Economics of the United States, 2015. U.S. Dept. of Commerce, NOAA Tech. Memo. NMFS-F/SP0-170, p13, 170-171. Accessed at <https://repository.library.noaa.gov/view/noaa/16121>.

<sup>14</sup> Byington, Pat. 2017. Who Knew? Alabama ranks first in biodiversity. How did that Happen?. BHAM NOW. Accessed at <https://bhamnow.com/2017/10/30/knew-alabama-ranks-first-biodiversity/>

<sup>15</sup> Brewers Association. 2016. Economic Impact by State. Accessed at <https://www.brewersassociation.org/statistics/economic-impact-data/>.