

# ASSAULT ON CLEAN WATER THREATENS GEORGIA

**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 Georgia'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 GEORGIA?

This proposal threatens to remove protections from drinking water sources for 200 million Americans,<sup>4</sup> including the drinking water for nearly seven out of every ten Georgians.<sup>5</sup>

Under the proposal by the administration and supported by industrial polluters, more than 53,000 miles of streams that flow into Georgia's rivers, lakes, and coastal waters would be at risk for pollution if the Clean Water Act is cut as the administration suggests.<sup>6</sup>

## CLEAN WATER IS BIG BUSINESS IN GEORGIA

 **\$4.6 BILLION**  
SPENT ON WILDLIFE RECREATION

 **\$11.3 BILLION**  
SPENT ON CANOEING, KAYAKING, & RAFTING

 **\$1.5 BILLION**  
FROM THE LOCAL BREWERIES

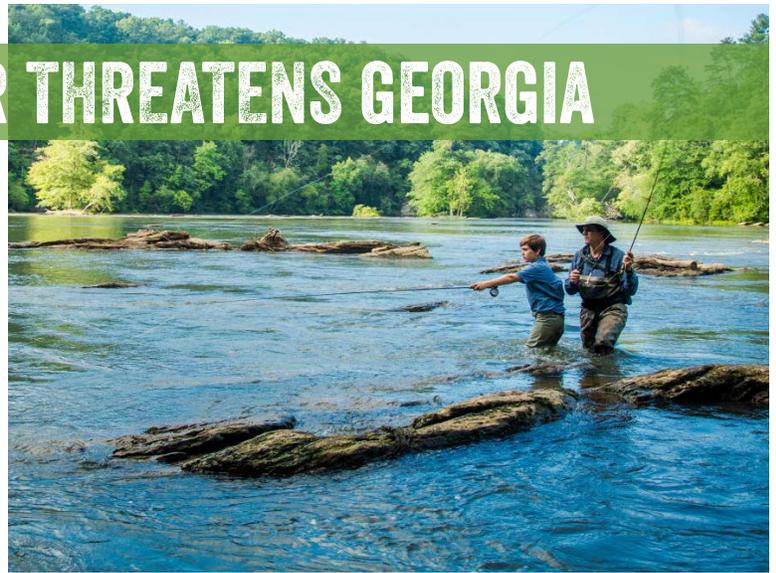
 **\$63.1 BILLION**  
FROM TOURISM INDUSTRY

\$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 Georgia's vibrant recreational industry. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service reports that in 2011 \$4.6 billion was spent on wildlife recreation in Georgia, including \$873 million on fishing, and more than 3.1 million people participated in wildlife related recreational activities in Georgia.<sup>10</sup>

Georgia tourism is reliant on clean water – people come from across the country to hike, bike, and paddle our rivers and trails. The Chattahoochee River National Recreational Area welcomed 2.7 million people in 2016, adding \$166,687,300 in benefits to the local economy.<sup>11</sup>

In Georgia, \$11.3 billion is spent annually on canoeing, kayaking, and rafting.<sup>12</sup> A Georgian is more likely to participate in fishing than the average American.<sup>13</sup> In 2015, over 231,000 anglers took 590,000 recreational fishing trips in Georgia waters.<sup>14</sup>



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

At least sixty-nine percent of Georgians 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 GEORGIA

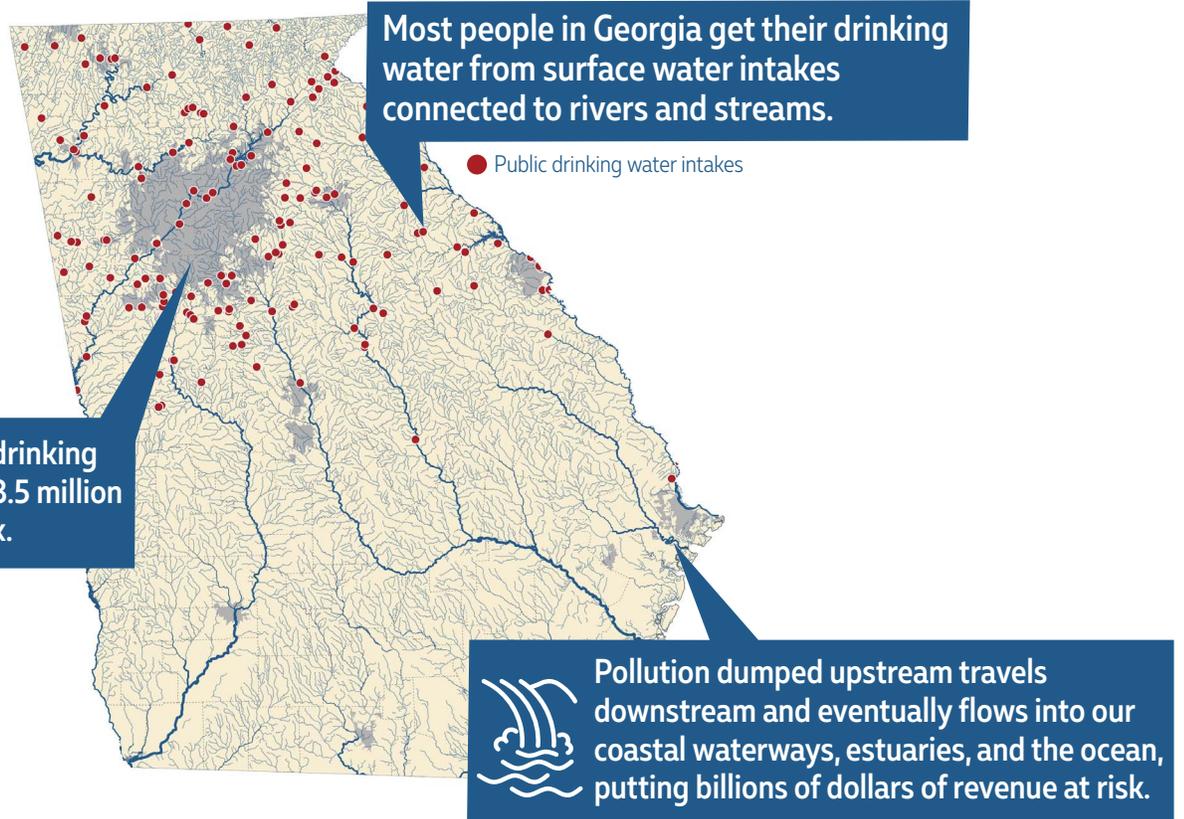
By EPA's own estimates, their proposal will put at risk at least \$339 million and up to



People come to Georgia for our mountains, coastline, and thriving cities – all which depend on clean water. The tourism industry is vital for the growth and prosperity of Georgia's economy, contributing a record-breaking \$63.1 billion in 2017.<sup>15</sup>

Georgia's thriving brewing industry relies on clean water. Small Georgia breweries contribute more than \$1.5 billion to our economy every year and support 10,895 jobs.<sup>16</sup>

## GEORGIA'S COMMUNITIES ARE INTERCONNECTED WITH WATERWAYS



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>6,7,9</sup> EPA and U.S. Department of the Army. 2015. Economic Analysis of the EPA-Army Clean Water Rule. p53-54, 220. 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, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau. 2011. National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife Associated Recreation - Georgia. p5-8. Accessed at <https://www.census.gov/prod/2013pubs/fhw11-ga.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> National Park Service (NPS). 2017. Tourism to Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area. Accessed at <https://www.nps.gov/chat/learn/news/tourism-impact-2017.htm>.

<sup>12</sup> Association of Fish and Wildlife Agency (FWA). Discover Georgia Outdoors - Tourism Impact Brochure.

<sup>13</sup> The Outdoor Industry Association (OIA). 2017. The Outdoor Recreational Economy - Georgia. Accessed at [https://outdoorindustry.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/OIA\\_RecEcoState\\_GA.pdf](https://outdoorindustry.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/OIA_RecEcoState_GA.pdf).

<sup>14</sup> National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). 2015. Fisheries Economics of the United States. U.S. Dept. of Commerce, NOAA. p147. Accessed at <https://repository.library.noaa.gov/view/noaa/16121>.

<sup>15</sup> Mandel, Eric. 2018. Gov. Deal: Georgia tourism hits all-time high economic impact. Atlanta Business Chronicle. Accessed at <https://www.bizjournals.com/atlanta/news/2018/05/07/gov-deal-georgia-tourism-hits-all-time-high.html>

<sup>16</sup> Brewers Association. 2016. Economic Impact by State. Accessed at <https://www.brewersassociation.org/statistics/economic-impact-data/>.