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The assault on clean water threatens Georgia.

DESPITE THE FUNDAMENTAL NECESSITY OF CLEAN WATER, the previous administration dismantled the longstanding safeguards of the Clean Water Act, which has kept our nation's waters clean for nearly 50 years. This bedrock environmental law is a central tool used by state and local governments to shield and protect clean water needed for healthy communities, businesses, and families. Without its protections, polluted waters threaten Georgia's local economies, communities, and way of life. **It is urgent that EPA restore strong clean water protections.**

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.

Clean water is big business in Georgia.

 **\$4.6 billion spent on wildlife recreation**

 **\$11.3 billion spent on canoeing, kayaking, and rafting**

 **\$1.6 billion from local breweries**

 **\$63.1 billion from the tourism industry**

The Trump administration's removal of federal clean water protections in 2020* left up to half of the nation's stream miles,¹ over 45 million wetland acres,² and many important public recreational lakes and drinking water reservoirs³ vulnerable to pollution and destruction by industry. In the South, the removal risks the drinking water sources for over 35 million people, or three out of four Southerners.⁴



WHAT'S AT STAKE IN GEORGIA?

The prior administration's removal of federal protections threatens drinking water sources for 217 million Americans,⁵ including the drinking water for nearly seven out of every ten Georgians.⁶ Under the rule, supported by industrial polluters who continue to litigate to uphold it, more than 53,000 miles of streams that flow into Georgia's rivers, lakes, and coastal waters are at risk.⁷

Millions of acres of wetlands in Georgia that provide flood protection, filter pollution, and provide essential wildlife habitat are also at risk under the 2020 rule.⁸ In the Chattahoochee River watershed alone, over 160,000 acres of wetlands are vulnerable.⁹ A proposed mine near Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge would destroy hundreds of acres of wetlands that the rule removed from federal protection.

ECONOMIC IMPACTS FOR GEORGIA

By EPA's own estimates, the rule put at risk at least \$339 million and up to \$572 million annually in benefits to Americans, including streams' and wetlands' capacity to reduce flooding, filter pollution, provide wildlife habitat, and support hunting and fishing.¹⁰ Protecting small streams and wetlands sustains 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.¹¹

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 Recreation Area welcomed 2.7 million people in 2016, adding \$166,687,300 in benefits to the local economy.¹²

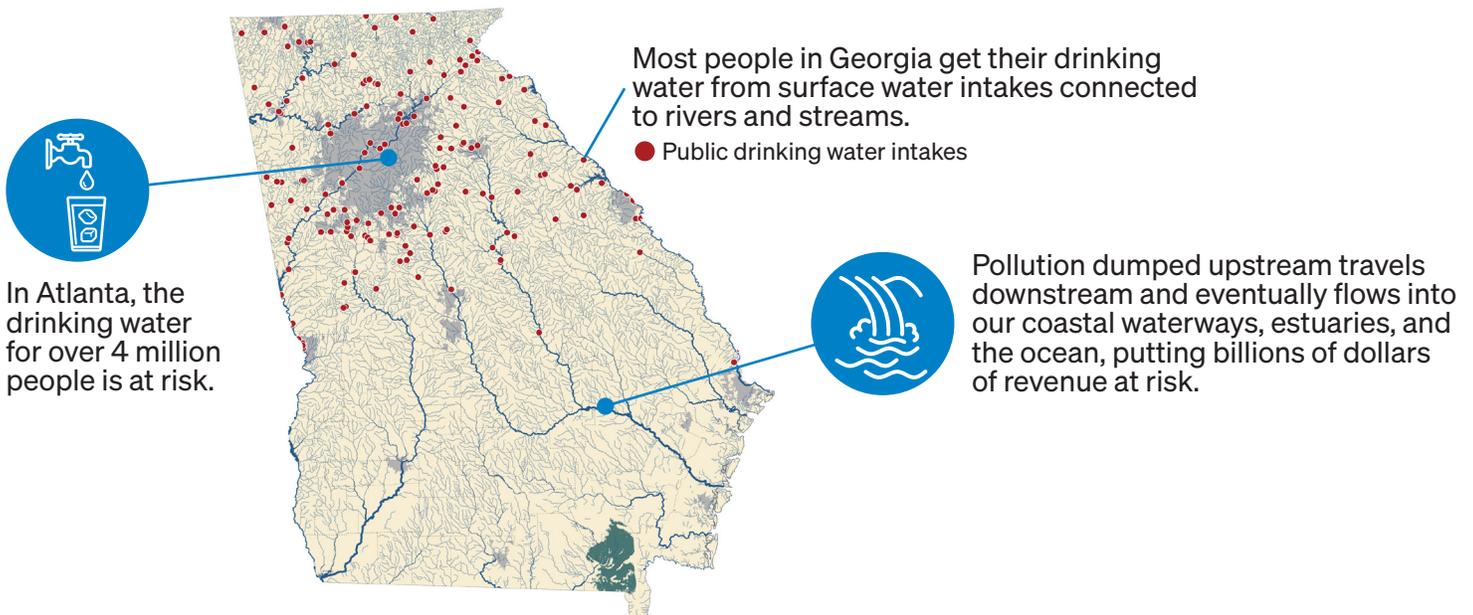
In Georgia, \$11.3 billion is spent annually on canoeing, kayaking, and rafting.¹³ A Georgian is more likely to participate in fishing than the average American.¹⁴ In 2015, over 231,000 anglers took 590,000 recreational fishing trips in Georgia waters.¹⁵

People come to Georgia for our mountains, coastline, and thriving cities—all of 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 2017.¹⁶

Georgia's thriving brewing industry relies on clean water. Small Georgia breweries contribute more than \$1.6 billion to our economy every year and support 9,934 jobs.¹⁷



Georgia's communities are interconnected with waterways.



For more information, please visit ProtectSouthernWater.org.

* Two federal courts vacated the Trump administration's unlawful rule as of October 15, 2021. Until litigation is final, there is a risk that the 2020 rule could be reinstated. At the time of this writing, protections for streams and wetlands remain in jeopardy.