

INNOVATIVE TOOL: USING ADOPT-A-STREAM WATER QUALITY MONITORING METHODS IN THE DEVELOPMENT & IMPLEMENTATION OF WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PLANS FUNDED BY SECTION 319(H) GRANTS

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Abstract. Georgia EPD awards Section 319(h) Grants through a competitive process that puts priority on the development and implementation of watershed management plans addressing impaired waters of the State. Planning involves identifying and ranking non-point sources of pollution most likely to cause water quality impairment; evaluating on-the-ground controls and practices; and installing solutions determined to reduce pollutant loads from the most likely sources.

Georgia EPD's Section 319(h) Grants Unit and Adopt-A-Stream Volunteer Monitoring Program have recently collaborated to provide 319(h) grant recipients with the tools and training needed to properly assess water quality in impaired waterways both before and after management solutions are in place. Due to the dynamic nature of rivers and streams, each 319(h) Grant project presents a unique set of water quality concerns to be monitored. Georgia Adopt-A-Stream trainers customize grant-driven workshops to meet the specific needs of each project and, using EPA- approved Adopt-A-Stream methods, train project partners to collect water quality data related to the type(s) of impairment in the stream. Baseline data and pollutant loading "hot spots" are analyzed to identify the most likely pollutant sources and to prioritize areas that would benefit from specific management solutions. Continued data collection after best management practices are installed helps to measure the effectiveness of these same controls.

This presentation will summarize Adopt-A-Stream monitoring methods and showcase selected Section 319(h) projects that are currently benefiting from the monitoring partnership between the Georgia EPD Grants Unit and Adopt-A-Stream Volunteer Monitoring Program.