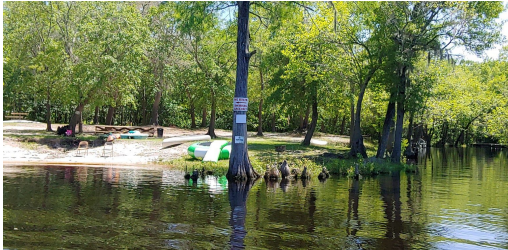




Project Briefing

www.stmarysriverkeeper.org

Water Quality Monitoring Program



- Quantifiable tool that can either reassure us that the water is good... or confirm there is a problem and thus lead us upstream to find it
- Identify point or non-point sources of pollution in our watershed

Summary

Click on our “Water Data” tab to review our archived Water Data.

The St. Marys Riverkeeper is focused on identifying sources of non-point-source pollution in our watershed through a dedicated citizen science water quality monitoring effort. We use Georgia Adopt-a-Stream monitoring protocols and share our data with their network and openly on our website to ensure transparency.

We sample more than 50 sites throughout the watershed using staff as well as trained volunteers to perform chemical and bacterial water quality monitoring throughout the watershed, which we then report to local and state environmental agencies and to the community.

Project Updates:

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| August 20, 2020 | See Water Test Results live with our data now on our website! |
| January 2020 | With our support, students at Charlton County High School began regular water quality monitoring on Spanish Creek. |
| October 2019 | Began phase 1 of an incentive grant to clean up the bacterially impaired Spanish Creek watershed in Charlton County began. We are working with the Charlton County Board of Commissioners, the St. |

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| | Marys River Management Committee, Charlton County High School, and numerous other local government agencies on this project. |
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Project Details:

With the support of the Rayonier Community Fund Grant, we use our bacterial and chemical monitoring programs as an educational tool. We have established water quality monitoring programs in high schools throughout the watershed, including Camden County High School, Fernandina Beach High School, Hilliard Middle-Senior High, and Charlton County High School.

We have also joined with local governments to clean up tributaries impaired for fecal coliform with EPA 319 grant and EPD coastal incentive grant projects. In 2017, the EPA awarded Camden County over \$400,000 in funds to clean up failing septic systems in the bacterially impaired Horsepen Creek watershed in the Browntown community.

We began monthly water quality monitoring there in January of 2018, where we found very high levels of fecal coliform. The Camden County Department of Health began septic system inspections and pump outs there in the spring of 2018, and septic system replacements in 2019. Our monthly data gathered for the past two years already shows a dramatic decrease in fecal coliform levels, and Camden County was awarded another \$212,000 to continue work on the project.

In October of 2019, phase 1 of an incentive grant to clean up the bacterially impaired Spanish Creek watershed in Charlton County began. We are working with the Charlton County Board of Commissioners, the St. Marys River Management Committee, Charlton County High School, and numerous other local government agencies on this project. With our support, students at Charlton County High School began regular water quality monitoring on Spanish Creek in January 2020.

*** Interpretation of Water Quality Results**

Bacterial (E. coli) Levels: We are sharing our Bacterial testing results even though we collect much more information. E. coli levels are relatively simple to understand, directly affect humans health, and are a great red flag indicator of many other water quality problems that may need our special attention.