



# Project Briefing

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## Spanish Creek



- Began monitoring impaired watershed in 2019
- Created program with Charlton County high school students to perform water monitoring
- Recent [DNA sampling](#) shows waste from both feral pigs and humans.
- [Five bi-monthly Coastal Incentive Grant reports](#)

## Summary

In October of 2019, phase 1 of an incentive grant to clean up the bacterially-impaired Spanish Creek watershed in Charlton County began. The Charlton County Citizens Advisory Committee is currently developing a Watershed Management Plan. During its most recent meeting, illegal dumping was identified as a potential major cause of the pollution in a citizen survey. However, recent DNA sampling shows both feral pigs and human fecal matter is a problem. The wastewater treatment plant has been ruled out as a source. Solutions are now under consideration.

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.

## Project Updates:

October, 2020	The Charlton County Citizens Advisory Committee is currently developing a Watershed Management Plan. During its most recent meeting, illegal dumping was identified as a potential major cause of the pollution in a citizen survey. However, recent DNA sampling shows both feral pigs and human fecal matter is a problem. Solutions are now under consideration.
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. 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.

## Project Details:

Since the 1990's, Spanish Creek has been listed as not meeting its designated fishing use because of excessively high fecal coliform levels and excessively low dissolved oxygen. In 2006, EPD published a TMDL Implementation Plan for Spanish Creek with a deadline of 2016 for remediation efforts. That deadline was not met and grants to accomplish the efforts now require a more extensive EPA Nine Element Watershed Management Plan. The plan is now being developed by the Charlton County Citizens Advisory Committee using a \$29,000 Coastal Incentive Grant from GA-DNR Coastal Resources Division. The grants committee is on track to present the plan to the full committee at the December meeting.

The committee is attempting to identify the source of the pollution. A recent "e-DNA" test showed high levels of fecal matter from both feral pigs and humans. Further testing will be done to narrow down the causes and propose corrective measures.

Two new sites are now being monitored on Gibson Post Road that had very high bacteria (E. coli) counts. Students at Charlton High School will attempt to source trace a few other areas upstream.