

Sample Location Rationale

The City of Valdosta is sampling the segment of the Withlacoochee River from N. Valdosta Rd to Highway 133. To avoid duplication of sampling, the County will use N. Valdosta Rd for the downstream sample station. This will allow for determining water quality for 2 discrete subsegments of the New River to Little River segment.

Sampling Schedule

For trophic weighted residue (TWR), the 2018 Georgia Water Quality report prepared by Georgia EPD as an integrated document in the 305(b)/303(d) list, states “Mercury is a naturally occurring metal that cycles between the land, water, and the air. As mercury cycles through the environment, it is absorbed and ingested by plants and animals. It is not known where the mercury in Georgia’s fish originates. Mercury may be present due to mercury content in natural environments such as in South Georgia swamps, from municipal or industrial sources, or from fossil fuel uses. It has been shown that mercury contamination is related to global atmospheric transport. The EPA has evaluated the sources of mercury loading to several river basins in Georgia as part of TMDL development, and has determined that 99% or greater of the total mercury loading to these waters occurs via atmospheric deposition.”

The County does not have the resources to monitor TWR in fish tissue from the Withlacoochee River at this time. Therefore, quarterly sampling for low level mercury (LLM) in streams impaired with TWR will be contracted to a private environmental firm who will engage a certified laboratory for analytical services and reporting. Three (3) dry weather samples and one (1) wet weather sample will be collected in accordance with the GA EPD’s Watershed Assessment and Protection Plan Guidance: Watershed Protection Plans. See *Table 3: Sampling Schedule* for proposed sampling months.

Table 3: Sampling Schedule

Sampling Station	Scheduled Sampling Months
Station #1	March, June, September, December
Station #2	March, June, September, December

Bacteriological Reporting

Bacteriological results (fecal coliform and e-coli) must be reported as a geometric mean consisting of at least four samples collected within a 30-day period at intervals no less than 24 hours. The samples should be distributed evenly over the 30-day period, and collected regardless of weather conditions.

Dry Weather Sampling

A dry weather sample will be defined as one captured at least 72 hours after the most recent rain event totaling 0.1 inch of rain or more. All dry weather samples will be grab samples. Bacteriological samples (if applicable) will be collected in a sterile container, separate from the other samples.

Wet Weather Sampling

The suggested wet-weather criteria are at least 0.2 inches of rainfall and at least 72 hours since the last storm event. Bacteriological samples (if applicable) will be collected in a sterile container, separate from the other samples.