

Ocmulgee River Basin



The early English settlers called it OCHISE creek. The Indian name of this waterway is from the Hitchiti, oki, “water” and “mulgis,” “it is boiling (or bubbling).” The first element of the Indian word has also been said to be from the Indian work “och,” meaning “in” or “down in”.



Quick Facts

- The South River watershed is located in the Upper Ocmulgee River Basin. It is composed of 155,239 acres and includes portions of DeKalb, Fulton, Rockdale, Clayton, and Henry Counties.
- The current trend in the South River corridor is the development of single-family housing. In 1997, 37 permits for subdivision development created 1,920 lots, a 79% increase in this activity from the previous years.
- Water from Jackson Lake flows into the Ocmulgee River, which combines with the Altamaha River, and reaches the Atlantic Ocean between Darien and Brunswick, Georgia.
- The lower Ocmulgee and the entire main stem of the Altamaha flow unimpounded for over 300 miles with a gradient of only about one foot per mile.
- There are approximately 13 facilities, including industries and municipalities, authorized to discharge wastewater into the Ocmulgee River Basin pursuant to NPDES (National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System) Permits.

Health of the River

- In the Ocmulgee River Basin, there are about 48 rivers and streams listed on the 2002 303(d) list as waters not meeting their designated use of fishing. (Two of those 48 also not meeting their designated use of drinking water.) These impaired waters include roughly 415 miles of rivers and streams in the Ocmulgee River Basin. Additionally, the following lakes/reservoirs are included on the 303(d) list as not fully supporting designated uses:
 1. Big Haynes Reservoir (Black Shoals Lake) - 650 acres - drinking water
 2. High Falls Lake - 699 acres - recreation
 3. Lake Jackson – 4,752 acres - recreation
 4. Little Ocmulgee State Park Lake – 224 acres - fishing

Tourist Sites / Significant Parks Pertaining to River

Ocmulgee National Monument in Macon, GA – www.nps.gov/ocmu

Get Involved!

Ocmulgee Riverkeeper

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Middle Georgia Advisory Group

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Intrenchment Creek Coalition

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