

WALLACE DAM



WATER RESOURCES BRIEF

- The Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) classifies water use for Lake Oconee downstream to GA Hwy 16 below the Wallace Dam for Recreation and Drinking Water Uses.
- Based on historical data and EPD's Water Quality in Georgia report (GAEPD 2012 Integrated 305(b)/303(d) List), Lake Oconee supports its designated uses and meets water quality standards.
- Georgia Power has maintained a routine water quality monitoring program for Lake Oconee since its construction in 1979. Water quality parameters that have been monitored include nutrients, oxygen demanding constituents, pH, temperature, turbidity, alkalinity, dissolved oxygen, specific conductivity, and hardness. Lake Oconee has exhibited good water quality conditions throughout this monitoring period.
- Lake Oconee waters remain vertically mixed due to pump back operations. Georgia Power's historical water quality data for Lake Oconee indicate normal seasonal patterns which show that dissolved oxygen concentrations are highest in the winter months and lowest during summer months.
- Lake Oconee waters support a popular fishery comprised of a diversity of sport- and game fishes.
- The Georgia EPD is currently conducting a study that could result in a regulatory standard being placed on Lake Oconee chlorophyll concentrations. Chlorophyll-*a* is a green pigment found in algae and green plants that is vital for photosynthesis and serves as an indicator of nutrient levels in a waterbody. If a standard is developed, the regulation would aim to limit nutrient concentrations in Lake Oconee. Thus far, the EPD has only developed chlorophyll-*a* standards for a few lakes.
- The Federal Power Act provides for use of a project for water supply purposes under certain circumstances. For this reason, Georgia Power works closely with the EPD and FERC to provide water to various municipalities and irrigation users in the Lake Oconee Basin. The largest permitted water sources on Lake Oconee include the City of Greensboro, the City of Madison, and Reynolds Plantation.

Summary: Lake Oconee supports its designated uses for drinking water and recreation, and supports a popular fishery comprised of a diversity of fish populations.

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