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For Immediate Release

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Georgia EPD announces Ogeechee River fish kill caused by Columnaris

The Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) announced today that the fish kill in the Ogeechee River was caused by Columnaris, a bacterial disease induced by environmental stress. Humans are not known to be affected by this disease. The cause of the environmental stress is still unknown; therefore, EPD continues to advise citizens in Bryan, Bulloch, Chatham, Effingham and Screven counties not to swim in or consume fish from the Ogeechee River until further notice.

The Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD), DNR Wildlife Division, US EPA, US Fish and Wildlife Service, ATSDR, local emergency management agencies and other organizations continue to investigate the recent fish kill and water quality issues in the Ogeechee River. A comprehensive sampling investigation initially began Sunday morning May 22 by state and federal agencies.

"Georgia EPD and the agencies involved in this investigation have Georgia residents' health as our greatest concern and priority," said Jim Ussery, Assistant Director of the Georgia EPD. "We will continue this investigation and release more test results as they become available."

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