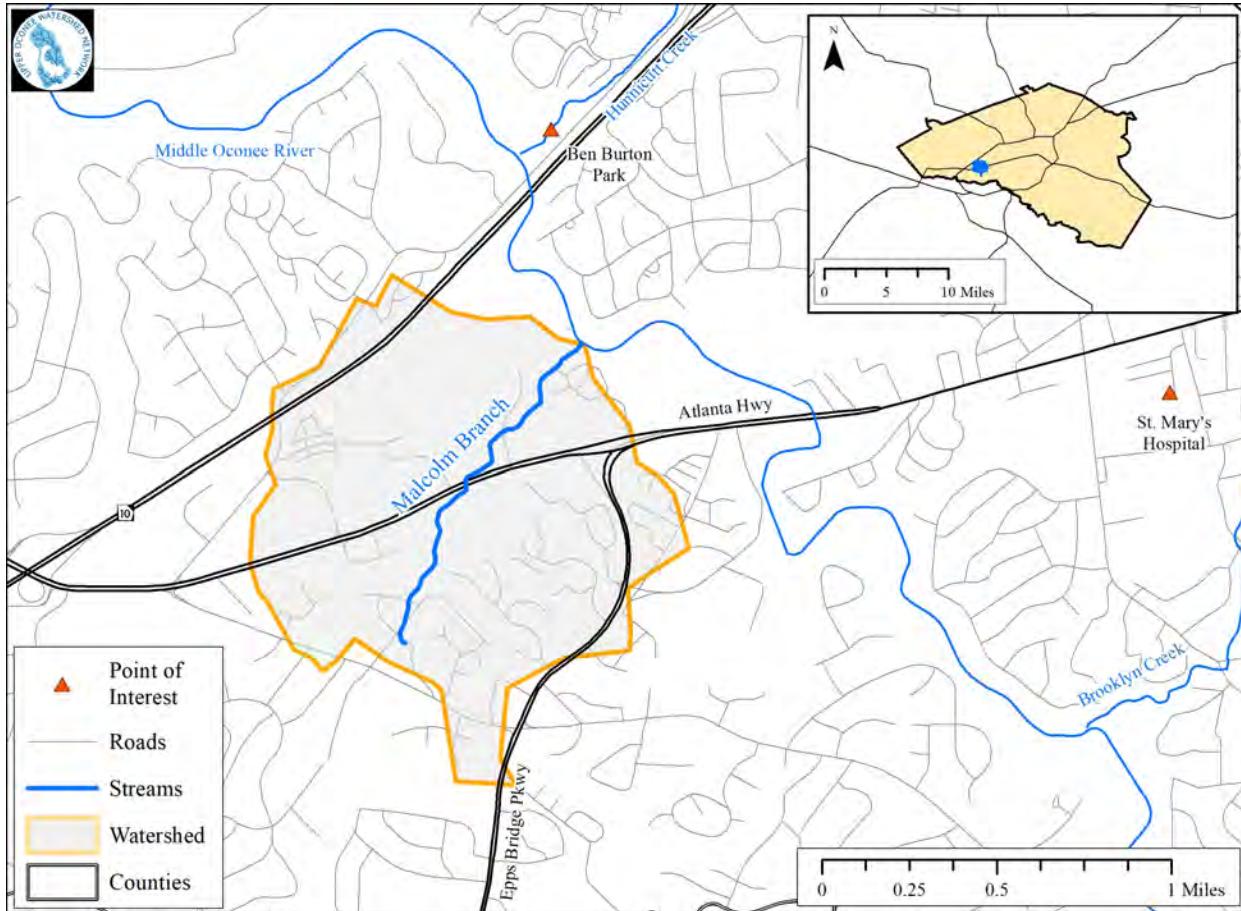


# Where's My Creek?



# Malcolm Branch



## Where is Malcolm Branch?

Malcolm Branch is located in the west-central part of ACC and is roughly bounded by Timothy Road to the southwest and State Route 10 (Athens Perimeter) to the northwest. Three small creeks, originating in the vicinity of Wilde Trail, Benjamin Drive, and Woodlake Drive, join to form Malcolm Branch which then empties into the Middle Oconee downstream of Ben Burton Park.

The watershed is contained entirely within ACC. The drainage area of the Malcolm Branch watershed is 1.1 square miles with 2.6 miles of stream. 81 percent of the watershed is developed, 17 percent forested, and less than 2 percent other land covers.

Parts of Malcolm Branch have been piped underground to accommodate the Target shopping center on W. Broad, Abbey West and Woodlake apartment complexes.

## Why Care?

Due to the watershed's high impervious coverage (29%), Malcolm Branch seems to be suffering the "urban stream syndrome", causing it to have lower baseflow and higher peak storm flows that tend to cause significant erosion. Potential nonpoint sources of pollution in the Malcolm Branch watershed include stormwater runoff from roads and parking lots.

## Watershed Issues!



### Impervious Surfaces

Due to development, there are large areas of impervious surface where water cannot soak into the ground. This can cause increased runoff which leads to erosion and sediment buildup in the creek.



### Nutrient Pollution

Malcolm Branch has elevated levels of nutrients, specifically nitrogen, which can be caused by overuse of fertilizer, storm-water runoff, and sewage discharges. This can cause algal blooms and deplete oxygen in the water.



### Buffer Zone Reduction

It is unlawful to remove vegetation within 75 feet of a stream in Athens-Clarke County. Riparian buffers stabilize soil, filter runoff, and slow down rushing water before it enters the stream. Buffers in the Malcolm Branch watershed have been impacted by development.



### Poo-lution

Malcolm Branch has high levels of fecal coliforms (poop). This is due to leaking sewer pipes, sewer overflows, and animal waste.



### Overloaded with Sediments

Most of Malcolm Branch's stream bed is filled with sand and sediments which leads to poor stream health and reduced diversity of aquatic life.

# Water Quality in Malcolm Branch



UOWN's data set for Malcolm Branch is sparse. Data from ACC's monitoring station (100 yards east of Heyward Allen Pkwy) was only collected between 2012 and 2013.

A visual inspection of the stream shows that it has been heavily impacted by urban development with eroded stream banks, culverted segments, and high siltation.

UOWN welcomes citizen scientists willing to regularly monitor Malcolm Branch.

## How You Can Help



**Reduce fertilizer application.** Contact the UGA Cooperative Extension Office for a soil test kit to determine soil fertility in your lawn or garden.

**Pick up your pet's waste** to prevent fecal coliforms from ending up in your creek.



**Plant native vegetation** in riparian buffers along stream banks to help remove pollutants and reduce erosion.

**Use permeable pavement** to allow infiltration of water when it rains.



**Disconnect roof downspouts from drainage systems** to reduce the amount of concentrated stormwater runoff leaving your property.

**Harvest rainwater** to reduce runoff and use it to water your plants and garden.



**Create rain gardens** with plants and sandy soils to drain stormwater and filter nutrients and other pollutants.

**Pick up trash** from your neighborhood and the stream.



## Become a UOWN member today!

The Upper Oconee Watershed Network is dedicated to protecting water resources and improving stream health in your watershed through community-based advocacy, monitoring, education, and recreation.



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