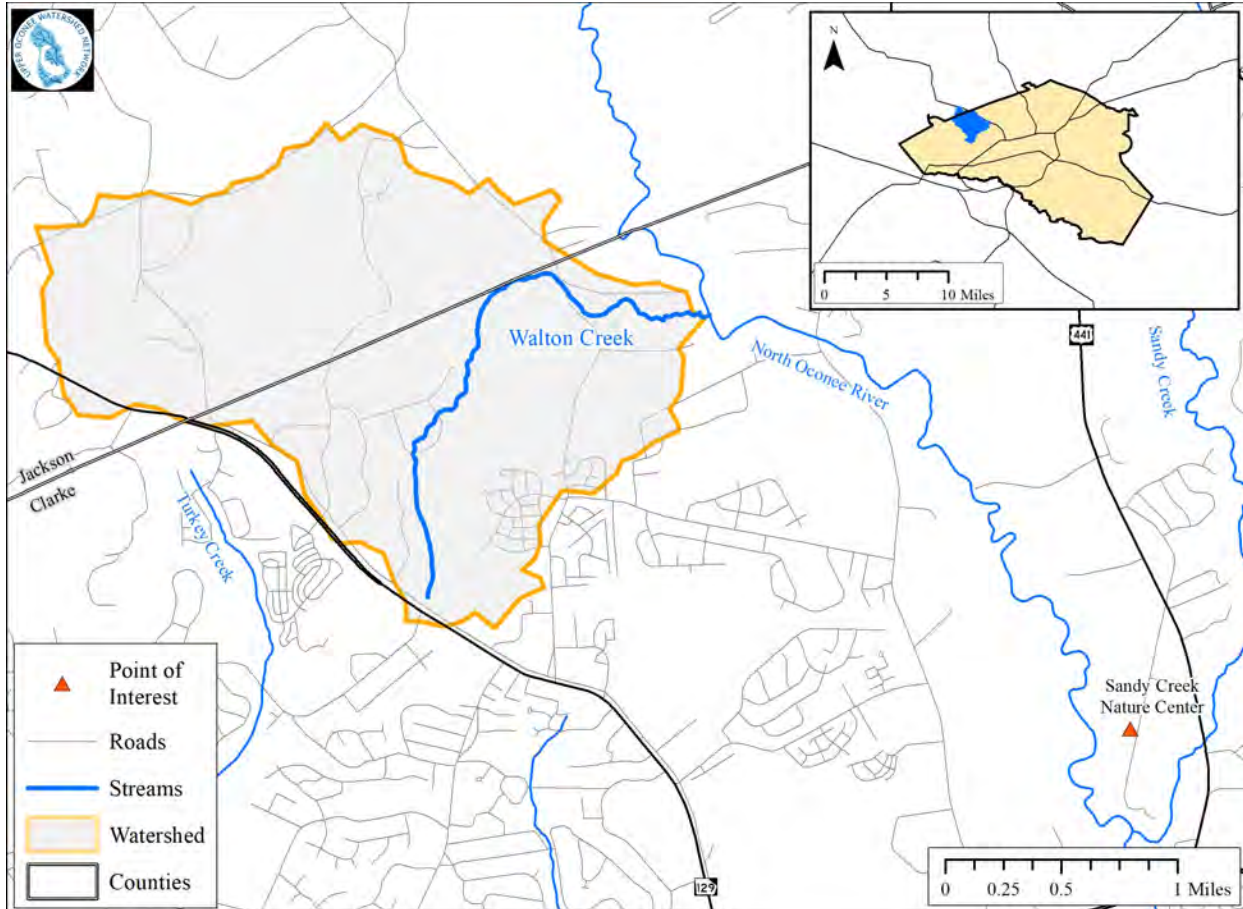


Where's My Creek?



Walton Creek



Where is Walton Creek?

The Walton Creek watershed is located in northern ACC and extends outside of ACC to the north. The total drainage area of the Walton Creek watershed is 3.5 square miles of which 1.8 square miles is contained within ACC. Walton Creek originates in a pond south of Thornton Circle and flows into the North Oconee River in the vicinity of Clarkewoods Road.

Land cover in the watershed primarily consists of forest, developed land, and pasture/cropland, with about 5 percent impervious cover.

Moderate to severe erosion occurring throughout the length of Walton Creek, particularly in the stream bends, leads to overall stream condition scores of suboptimal or marginal. Stream buffers are being impacted by stables, invasive species, pasture land, clearing, and fallen trees throughout the watershed.

Why Care?

The severe erosion, stream buffer incursion, and runoff of fertilizers, insecticides, and fecal matter from agricultural and residential lands has significantly degraded this rural stream. Walton Creek enters the North Oconee river upstream of one of ACC's water intake facilities, from which drinking water is derived.

Watershed Issues!



Impervious Surfaces

Due to development, there are 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

Walton Creek 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 Walton Creek watershed have been impacted by development.



Poo-lution

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



Overloaded with Sediments

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

Water Quality in Walton Creek?



UOWN's data set for Walton Creek is sparse. Data from ACC's monitoring stations were only collected between 2012 and 2013.

A visual inspection of the stream shows that its stream banks have been heavily eroded leading to excess siltation. Grab samples indicate the stream is polluted with excess nutrients (fertilizer) and fecal runoff.

UOWN welcomes citizen scientists willing to regularly monitor Walton Creek.

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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