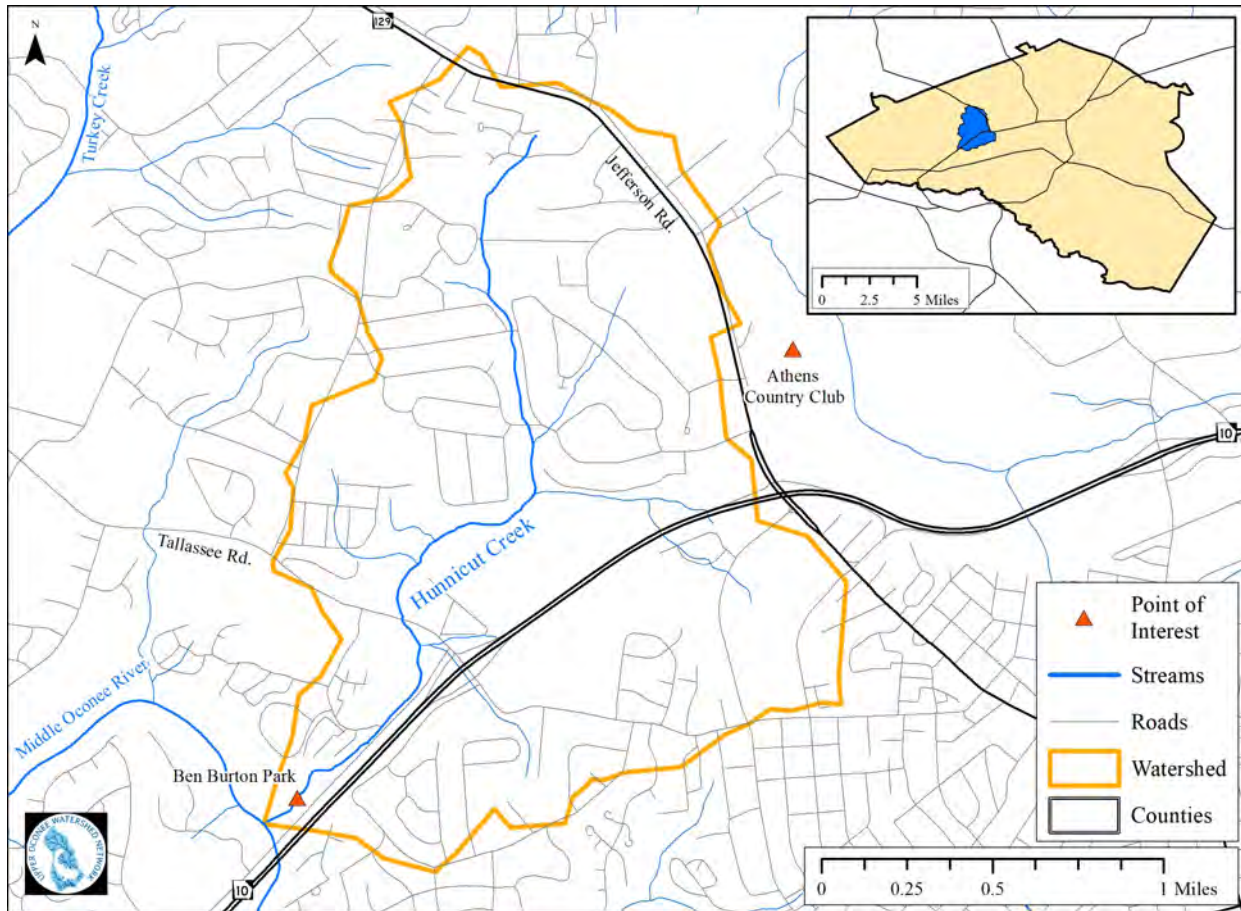


Where's My Creek?



Hunnicut Creek



Where is Hunnicutt Creek?

The Hunnicutt Creek basin drains 2.67 square miles of land including 1.6 miles of Loop 10. The area is dominated by residential and commercial uses.

The watershed lies along Jefferson Road in the north and east and Whitehead Road in the west. The headwaters of Hunnicutt Creek are approximately 800 feet southwest of Jefferson Road / Highway 129. Hunnicutt Creek flows into the Middle Oconee River at Ben Burton Park, just upstream of a main regional drinking water intake.

Neighborhoods located here include Homewood Hills, Tallassee Station, Putter's, Hawthorne Park, Bowden Park, Elder, Moss Side, and the Cottages at Homewood. Bishop Park, the YMCA on Hawthorne Avenue, parts of Ben Burton Park, and Oglethorpe Elementary are also within the watershed.

Why Care?

In 2003, a fuel spill of 14,000 gallons from the storage facilities on Jefferson Road temporarily contaminated the creek. Runoff carries pollutants from parking lots, roads and other impervious surfaces into Hunnicutt Creek, which flows into the Middle Oconee River, a primary source of drinking water for Athens-Clarke County.

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

Hunnicut 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 Hunnicutt Creek watershed have been impacted by development.



Poo-lution

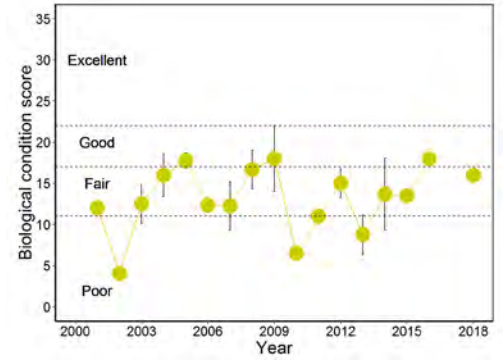
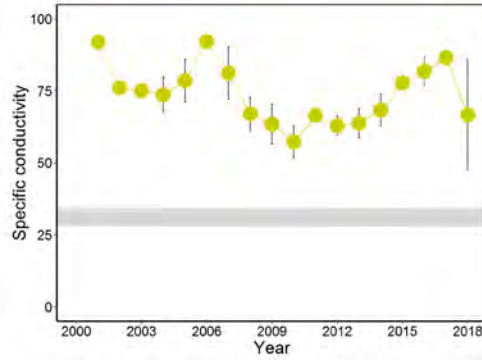
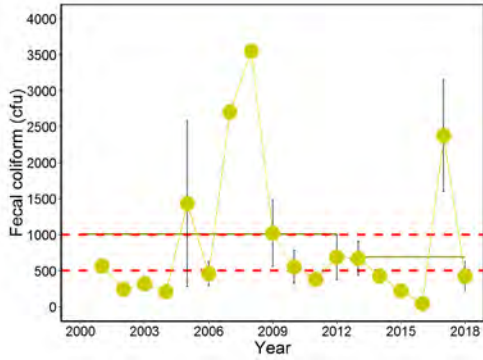
Hunnicut Creek has abnormally high levels of fecal coliforms (poop). This is due to leaking sewer pipes, sewer overflows, and animal waste.



Overloaded with Sediments

Most of Hunnicutt 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 Hunnicutt Creek



Fecal coliform bacteria are an indicator of pollution from human and animal waste. *E. coli* is a species of coliform bacteria. The horizontal lines show the average concentration during the previous 5 years. The dashed lines represent limits at which it is unsafe to recreate in the water (>500) or a significant pollution problem (>1000).

Specific conductivity is a measurement of dissolved solids in water. Regular monitoring helps determine baseline levels. Fluctuations in these levels are an indicator of pollution. The grey shading indicates baseline level of a typical minimally impacted stream in our region.

Biological scores are determined by diversity and abundance of macroinvertebrates (aquatic bugs) in a stream. The macroinvertebrates that are present in a stream can be used to determine stream health.

In the graphs above, each point represents the average concentration within a year. The vertical bars indicate the variation in that measurement.



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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