

HERE'S THE DIRT

2024
Issue

STORMWATER COMPLIANCE DEPARTMENT - ENGINEERING SERVICES DIVISION

TRASH TALK

By Heather Lewis

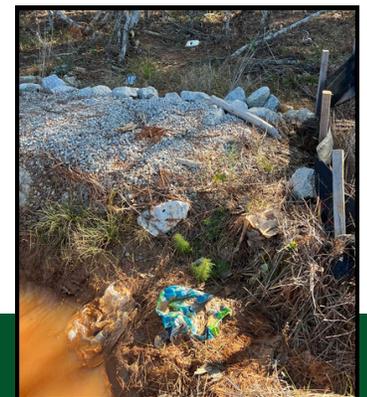
Plastic bags, paper cups, Styrofoam to-go boxes, napkins, aluminum cans, and plastic bottles are among the most common types of household litter seen on construction sites. But these products are more than just an eye-sore, they cause problems too.



Much like sediment, litter causes issues to our Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) and natural waterways by clogging stormwater systems and impacting wildlife. However, unlike sediment, litter varies significantly in type and material and is affected differently by things like wind and rain. Although sediment can be affected by wind and rain, it can generally be captured and contained by Best Management Practices (BMPs). These same BMPs do not as easily capture and contain litter.

Litter can blow in the wind and float over barriers allowing it to evade BMPs and infiltrate MS4s and the environment outside of a construction site. Once off-site, a lot of this trash will stay there for years unless it is cleaned up. Depending on what it is made of, household litter can take anywhere from a month to hundreds of years to decompose, leaving generations of people, plants, and animals to deal with the impacts.

There are no specific BMPs for controlling litter, but our code of ordinances does require the control and proper disposal of construction waste, including litter, so it is important for the site superintendent, contractors, and each individual to be responsible for ensuring the wellbeing of our infrastructure and our environment.



**COLUMBIA COUNTY CODE OF ORDINANCE
SECTION 34-69(E) STATES:**

Construction waste. Wastes such as discarded construction materials, concrete truck washout, chemicals, litter, sanitary waste, and any other similar material which may cause adverse water quality impact must be controlled at the construction site, and transported to an appropriate disposal facility for such waste. On-site burial of such wastes is not allowed.



COMMUNAL CONCRETE WASHOUT

By Wheeler Cowart

As a community, we are constantly working together to come up with better ways of accomplishing the tasks before us. One opportunity for this collaboration presents itself in the form of communal concrete washout stations in large scale residential developments. In this way, developers and builders can share the responsibility of maintaining permit compliance. As with anything, there are potential challenges and benefits to this method and some of these are demonstrated here:

BENEFITS

- **Centralized Location**
- **Larger workspace**
- **Ease of access and maintenance**
- **Potential cost reduction**
- **Containment of pollution**



CHALLENGES

- **Who will pay when multiple builders are involved?**
- **Can drivers find the location?**
- **Who is responsible for maintenance?**

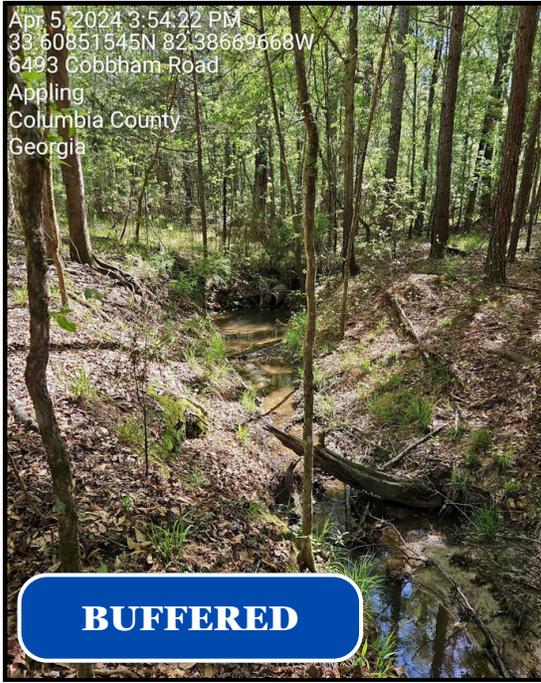


When the appropriate stations are not readily available, drivers will often washout wherever they can. This involves using unapproved locations such as construction exits, vacant lots, and even the stations on other lots. Offering a centralized location offers a solution to this in addition to reducing the overall mess associated with truck wash down.

The washing of tools and materials by concrete crews has also been identified as a pollutant source for the stormwater systems. This activity can be mitigated by removing the water source on the trucks from the roadway and having crews wash tools at a more appropriate location such as interior to the lot.

Constantly working toward improvement results in better practices being developed. By working together and trying new things, advancements are made. It is with great appreciation that this community does just that. Thank you from the Columbia County Stormwater Compliance team, and let's keep improving!

Apr 5, 2024 3:54:22 PM
33.60851545N 82.38669668W
6493 Cobham Road
Appling
Columbia County
Georgia



STATE WATERS

By Hunter Martenn

When looking at a site or developing a site, the term “State Waters” may come up. It can be a confusing term. Is it water owned by the state? Is the land owned by the state? Or maybe you are just wondering what the state has to do with anything on a piece of property?

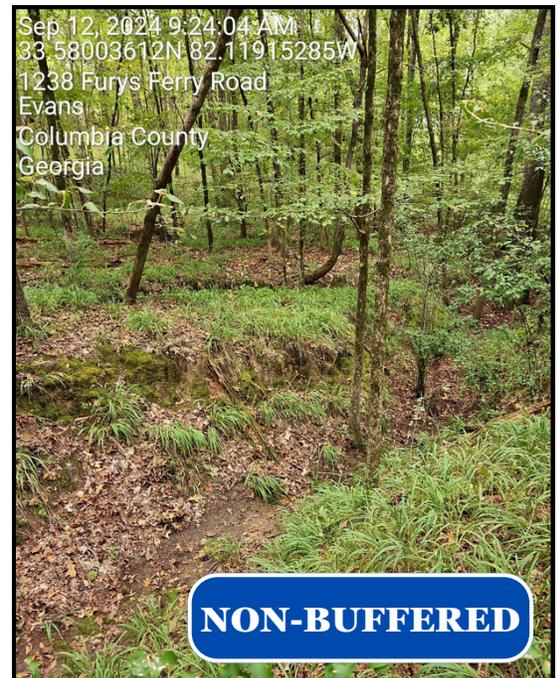
According to the Official Code of Georgia Annotated (O.C.G.A.) § 12-7-3(16), State Waters is defined as, “Any and all rivers, streams, creeks, branches, lakes, reservoirs, ponds, drainage systems, springs, wells, and other bodies of surface water, natural or artificial, lying within or forming a part of the boundaries of the state, which are not entirely confined and

of the state, which are not entirely confined and retained completely upon the property of a single individual, partnership, or corporation.” In a more common language, State Waters can be described as surface water that drains from one property to the next.

State Waters can be divided into two categories: buffered and non-buffered. To be a buffered state water, two things must be present: wrested vegetation and base flow. Wrested vegetation refers to the movement of water that removes soil, debris and vegetation, creating a clear demarcation, or line, between water flow and vegetative growth. Base flow is any discharge of water that enters a stream channel mainly from groundwater, but also from lakes during periods when no precipitation occurs.

This 25-ft buffer, measured from the point of wrested vegetation, must remain intact and no land-disturbing activities may be conducted within this buffer. It is to remain in its natural, undisturbed state to protect water quality, aquatic habitat, and provide a natural canopy that will shade a stream bed. Examples of buffered State Waters are perennial streams that flow year-round, intermittent streams which only flow when the groundwater seeps up to the surface, and ephemeral trout streams which only flow when there has been precipitation. Non-buffered State Waters do not exhibit wrested vegetation and/or base flow. Examples of non-buffered State Waters are freshwater wetlands, concrete channels, seawalls, rip rap lined channels, and impoundments of water.

It is important to know that a buffer for these State Waters is under the jurisdiction of the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (GA EPD), and the channel could be under the jurisdiction of the U.S Army Corps of Engineers. To delineate which State Waters are buffered or non-buffered, you should reach out to the GA EPD or contact the Columbia County Stormwater Compliance Office for an official delineation.



BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICE (BMP) FEATURE: SLOTTED BOARD DAM WITH STONE

Rt-B

By Rachael Osborne

It's important to consider the unique features of a site when considering the BMPs to install. The Georgia Soil and Water Conservation Commission (GSWCC) Manual for Erosion and Sediment Control in Georgia, commonly referred to as the Green Book, contains the entire list of approved BMPs. Here is a little information on one of them, the slotted board dam with stone.

A slotted board dam with stone, or Rt-B, is in the retrofitting section of the GSWCC Green Book. This BMP is used as a device, or structure, placed in front of a permanent stormwater detention pond outlet or roadway drainage structure to serve as a temporary sediment filter. Similar to the more well known and widely used perforated half-round pipe with stone filter (Rt-P), water travels through 3 inch to 4 inch stone. However, instead of using a perforated half round pipe, a dam is constructed using:

- 4 inch by 4 inch posts
- 2 inch by 6 inch boards with a 0.5 inch to 1 inch space in between each board
- Approved filter fabric wrapping the upstream side of the constructed dam

This BMP can also handle more drainage, an area of up to 100 acres, where as the half round can only handle up to 30 acres of drainage.

To learn more about the Rt-B and other BMPs approved for use in Georgia, check out the GSWCC Green Book by scanning the QR code.



INSTALLED LOCALLY ON
A COMMERCIAL SITE



GSWCC
GREEN BOOK
FIELD MANUAL

2024 Land Disturbance Permit in Review:

Permits Issued: 1,043

Inspections Performed: 22,492

QUESTIONS?

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