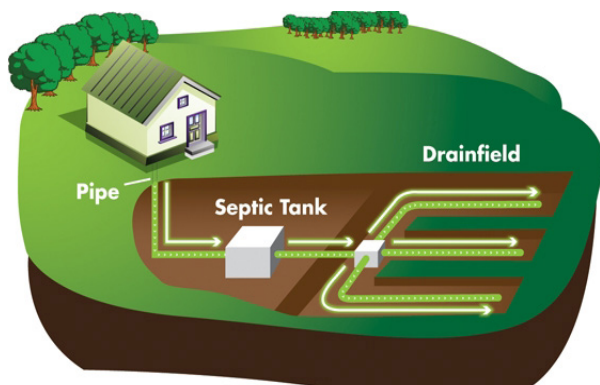


YOUR ROLE IN PROTECTING WATER QUALITY

Do your part to help improve Fourmile Creek's water quality by properly maintaining your septic system and also picking up animal waste.

In addition to what gets flushed down the toilet or washed down a drain, septic systems also take in drainage from washing machines, dishwashers, and any appliance where water is used.

Without periodic pumping and maintenance, septic tanks can become too full or develop clogged field lines that can lead to backups and overflows in your home and also into nearby creeks and streams.



How to Maintain a Healthy Septic System

- » Follow water conservation practices.
- » Space out clothes and dishwashing to avoid water overload to system.
- » Don't pour grease, oil, paint or chemicals down the drain.
- » Landscape drain field to direct water away from area.
- » Establish a maintenance schedule based on size of septic tank, amount of use, and household size.

The **Forsyth County Health Department** regulates septic systems. For more tips and to find certified septic pumpers, visit <http://forsythhhd.com>.

PARTNERING FOR IMPROVEMENTS

The **Fourmile Creek Watershed Improvement Project** represents a coordinated federal, state, and local effort to improve water quality.



The **Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)** helps agricultural landowners conserve natural resources in ways that benefit the landowner and the environment. NRCS provides federal funding for the project.

The **Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD)** focuses on protecting the state's natural resources and promoting a sustainable environment for all residents. EPD will help oversee the project with local partners.

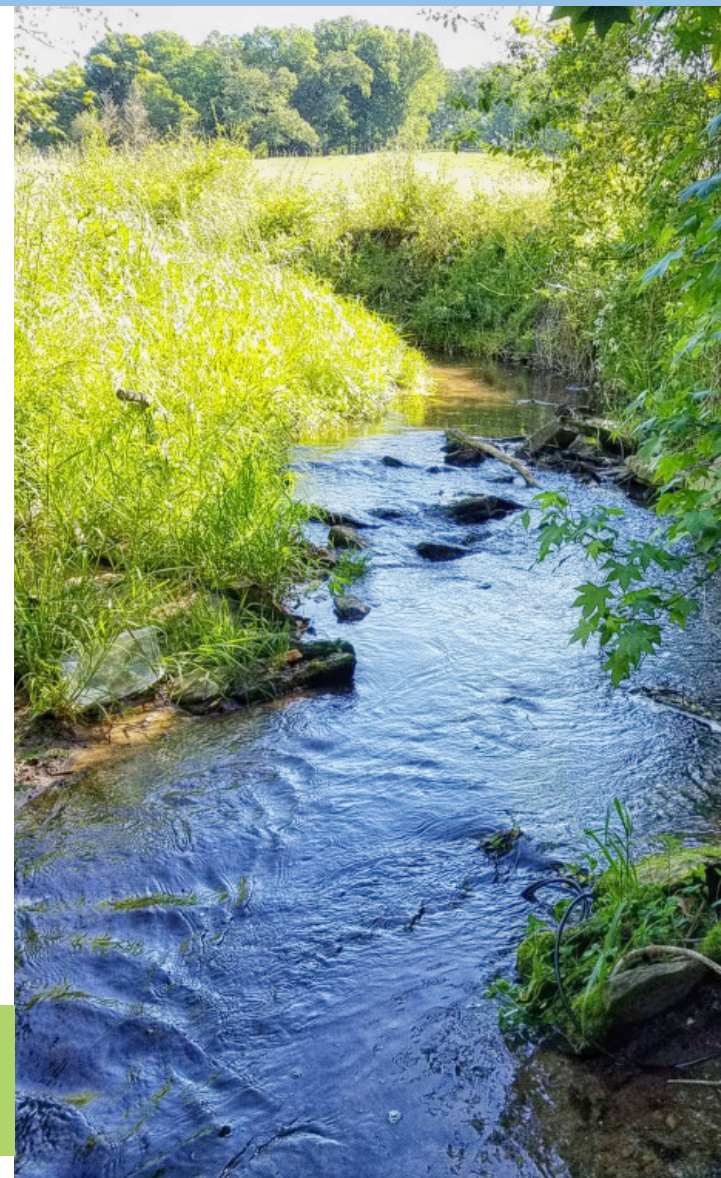


The **Forsyth County Engineering Department** and **Keep Forsyth County Beautiful** will oversee project design, support educational efforts, and implement and monitor the effectiveness of the project.

For more information on the **Fourmile Creek Watershed Improvement Project**, please contact **Steve Dempsey at 770-781-2165 or bsdempsey@forsythco.com**.

This document was financed in part through a grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to the Georgia Environmental Protection Division, Watershed Protection Branch, under the provisions of Section 319(h) of the Clean Water Act.

PROTECTING WATER QUALITY THROUGH COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS



IMPROVING THE FOURMILE CREEK WATERSHED

Forsyth County Department of Engineering
Stormwater Division
110 East Main Street, Suite 120
Cumming, GA 30040



A FEDERAL GRANT RENEWS FOURMILE CREEK USING SCIENCE AND NATURE

FOURMILE CREEK IS A STATE-DESIGNATED "IMPAIRED" WATERWAY CURRENTLY LIMITED IN ITS ABILITY TO SUPPORT AQUATIC LIFE. THE COUNTY IS PARTNERING ON A WATER QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT TO STUDY AND IMPROVE THE CREEK THAT FLOWS THROUGH NORTHEAST FORSYTH.

As part of the County's ongoing water monitoring effort, Fourmile Creek was identified as having ongoing problems with bacteria.

DNA testing showed that cattle and deer waste contributed directly to high levels of bacteria near the headwaters. Scientists monitoring the creek also saw signs that cattle have direct access to the waterway.

The County will work with several partners to implement best management practices (BMPs) to improve water quality, such as:

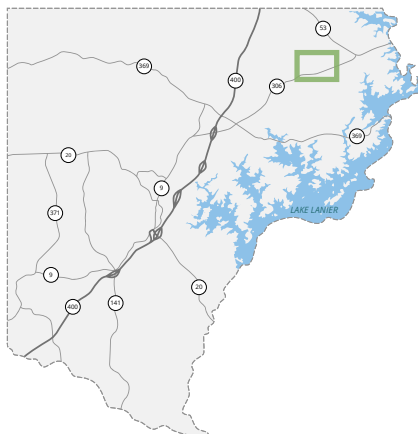
- » Fencing along the creek with limited access points for animals
- » Vegetative buffers of native grasses, plants, and trees along the banks



Photo by Stephen Kirkpatrick,
USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

The state will administer a federal grant to cover the costs of establishing the BMPs at **no cost to landowners.**

The limited access points for animals are graveled to prevent erosion while allowing access for livestock to drink. They also protect the stream banks.



As part of the project, scientists will conduct water quality monitoring and a stream walk along Fourmile Creek to gather data and monitor potential improvements in water quality.

If successful, the effort will serve as a pilot project for future water quality improvement projects in the watershed and beyond. It may also improve water quality in neighboring communities in the watershed and even contribute to improvements in Lake Lanier.

