



**For Immediate Release June 19, 2020**

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### **Senate Committee passes coal ash drainage bill**

Atlanta, GA - The Senate Natural Resources Committee met this morning and passed HB 93, which would require Georgia Power to notify communities when the utility drains waste water out of its coal ash ponds situated along rivers at power plants across the state.

“Coal ash ponds are already being drained into rivers and lakes around Georgia,” said Jennette Gayer, director of Environment Georgia and chair of the Georgia Water Coalition’s coal ash committee. “This legislation was needed yesterday; we urge swift passage in the Senate agreement from the House.”

Two amendments were accepted in the Senate Committee. The first, from Sen. Frank Ginn (Danielsville), removes a requirement that notification take place in a local newspaper or legal organ. The second, from Sen. Lindsey Tippins (Marietta) will ensure notification happens in a more timely manner.

“Georgia Power began sending Plant McDonough’s minimally treated wastewater from coal ash ponds directly into the river without notifying the public,” said Chris Manganiello, Chattahoochee Riverkeeper’s Water Policy Director. “Georgians need to know when coal ash pond water from Plant Wansley, which could contain lead and arsenic, might threaten their fishing trip, a paddle adventure or their drinking water.”

Unfortunately, none of the bills currently still alive in the legislature require liners on any facilities storing coal ash. Liners were specifically requested by residents of Juliette, GA that visited the Capitol and shared details of the high level of coal ash toxins found in their drinking water wells located near Georgia Power’s Plant Scherer.

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*The **Georgia Water Coalition** is a consortium of more than 260 conservation and environmental organizations, hunting and fishing groups, businesses, and faith-based organizations that have been working to protect Georgia’s water since 2002. [www.gawater.org](http://www.gawater.org)*