SWAMP IS:

- A watershed management plan created by stakeholders, which involves the cooperative efforts of local government, business and community groups to clean up Saugahatchee Creek and educate others of its value. A watershed is comprised of the total land area drained by a river or a stream (the Saugahatchee Watershed is marked with an orange boundary on the map).

THE CREEK IS VITAL TO US BECAUSE:

- A portion of the City of Opelika’s drinking water comes from the creek (from Saugahatchee Lake).
- Many local residents use the creek for recreation including canoeing, kayaking, swimming, fishing and wildlife viewing.

![Saugahatchee Lake in Opelika. PHOTO: Opelika Utilities Board](image1)

![A kayaker shoots the rapids on Saugahatchee Creek](image2)

The creek assimilates municipal wastewater (about 5 million gallons/day) from approximately half of the 120,000+ people in the Auburn-Opelika area.

- Water demands will only increase as the area’s population continues to grow.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS ON THE CREEK ARE INCREASING BECAUSE:

- Population growth rate in Lee County is among the highest in the state.

![Projected population growth of the Auburn-Opelika Metropolitan Area, 2000-2025](image3)

- With increasing population come increases in pollutants from lawns, roads, parking lots and construction sites flowing into the creek (called nonpoint source pollution).
- As more buildings and pavement (known as impervious surfaces) cover the landscape, the volume of runoff following rain events increases, which can erode the landscape and stream channels.
- Cumulative effects of these pressures have impacted the creek and resulted in two sections of the creek being 303(d)-listed by ADEM (impaired to the point that these sections no longer meet the requirements of their use classifications, including Fish and Wildlife, Swimming and Public Water Supply - sections are highlighted in red on map).

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP?

- Be a proponent of Smart Growth in the Auburn/Opelika area to maintain our quality of life (for more information on Smart Growth, go to www.smartgrowth.org).
- Actively support ongoing municipal efforts in protecting vegetated zones along streams (called stream buffers), erosion control measures, and conservation subdivision regulations.
- Advocate and employ sustainable management practices on forest, agricultural and urban lands.
- Avoid draining oil, antifreeze, chemicals, paint, lawn debris or pet waste down the storm drain on the street because storm drainage flows untreated into local streams.
- Avoid applying excess fertilizer to lawns, pastures and fields because it can pollute streams if flushed off by heavy rains.
- Minimize soil erosion from construction sites, agricultural fields and timber harvest lands.

![Developers, builders and farmers learning techniques to minimize erosion from cleared lands](image4)

- Promote environmental education in local schools and throughout the community.
- Become a watershed watchdog, get trained and certified to be a water quality tester.
Join in the SWaMP Effort

Residents learning about pollution in runoff from the EnviroScape at the Loachapoka Syrup Soppin’

For more information about SWaMP:

- Visit our website at [www.swamp.auburn.edu](http://www.swamp.auburn.edu), click on 'The Project' -> 'Partners' for a list of SWaMP Partners
- Visit the Alabama Water Watch Office at:
  249 Upchurch Hall
  Auburn University, AL 36849
- Call: (888) 844-4785

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