



ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION DIVISION

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Georgia Adopt-A-Stream
2018 Excellence in Education
Bill Blythe**

Georgia Adopt-A-Stream (AAS) recognizes Bill Blythe with the Excellence in Education award. This award is given to a group or individual who has excelled in connecting students to their local watershed by bringing AAS into their curriculum and introducing students to citizen science by giving them the opportunity to participate in events such as water quality monitoring, watershed assessments, AAS trainings, stream restoration, or river cleanups.

Bill Blythe, a teacher at Pope High School in Cobb County, started conducting water quality monitoring with his A.P. Environmental Studies students in fall of 2013. Mr. Blythe has taken the time to conduct over 150 monitoring events with students since then at two sites on their campus. The students engage in analyzing any changes due to nonpoint source pollution. According to Mr. Blythe, his students have “developed a deep concern for the waterways (on campus) and in particular how our campus can be a bellwether for the local environment and contribute to the bigger picture downstream”. Pope High School has monitored consistently for five years, and each year they start the semester with dedication to quickly master the sampling protocols. In spite of the difficulty of scheduling and logistics, Bill’s leadership at the school embodies the goals of the program. For his great work in shaping future environmental stewards, we are pleased to recognize Bill with the Excellence in Education Award!

On March 23, 2019, volunteers, trainers, nonprofit organizations and local government agencies from across the state were honored for their efforts to improve Georgia’s waterways at Confluence, Georgia Adopt-A-Stream’s annual volunteer water quality monitoring conference. The conference was held at the Unicoi State Park and Lodge in Helen, Georgia, and award winners were recognized at the awards ceremony. As the statewide volunteer water quality monitoring program, Georgia Adopt-A-Stream is dependent on forming strong partnerships with local volunteers and community programs. Each of the award winners demonstrated efforts that exemplified the program’s goals, which are to increase public awareness of the state’s nonpoint source pollution and water quality issues, provide citizens with the tools and training to evaluate and protect their local waterways, gather observations of waterways, encourage partnerships between citizens and their local government and to collect quality baseline water quality data.

Georgia Adopt-A-Stream encourages individuals and communities to monitor and improve sections of streams, wetlands, lakes or estuaries. For more information or to participate in Adopt-A-Stream or Confluence, call the Environmental Protection Division’s State Office at 404-463-1511 or visit www.AdoptAStream.Georgia.gov.