03050207-07

(Combahee River)

General Description

Watershed 03050207-07 (formerly 03050208-010) is located in Colleton and Beaufort Counties and consists primarily of the ***Combahee River*** and its tributaries. This watershed occupies 167,088 acres of the Lower Coastal Plain and Coastal Zone regions of South Carolina. Land use/land cover in the watershed includes: 36.8% forested land, 31.8% forested wetland, 15.0% nonforested wetland, 7.7% agricultural land, 5.2% water, 3.4% urban land, and 0.1% barren land. A map depicting this watershed is found in Appendix B, page B-21.

The Combahee River is formed by the confluence of the Salkehatchie River and the Little Salkehatchie River watersheds. Downstream of the confluence, the Combahee River accepts drainage from Bull Creek, Black Creek, and Cuckolds Creek (Bluehouse Swamp, Folly Creek). Further downstream, the Chehaw River (Social Hall Creek) enters the Combahee River followed by the New Chehaw River. The Combahee River drains into the Coosaw River, which drains into St. Helena Sound. There are a total of 533.5 stream miles, 550.9 acres of lake waters, and 4,849.0 estuarine acres in this watershed. Upstream of the saltwater intrusion (in the vicinity of U.S. Hwy 17), the Combahee River and its tributaries are classified FW; downstream of the intrusion, the Combahee River and its tributaries are classified SFH. The Chehaw and New Chehaw Rivers are classified SFH.

Surface Water Quality

Station #	Type	Class		Description
CSTL-583 BIO		FW		BLACK CREEK AT U.S. HWY 21
CSTL-111 W		FW		COMBAHEE RIVER BELOW YEMASSEE SEWAGE OUTFALL
CSTL-098 W		FW/SFH		COMBAHEE RIVER AT U.S. HWY 17, 10MI ESE OF YEMASSEE
MD-252 INT		SFH	C	OMBAHEE RIVER OFF FIELDS POINT LANDING OFF END OF S-15-161
RT-06019 RT06		SFH		CHEHAW RIVER, 1.3MI NE OF OLD CHEHAW BOAT LANDING ON S-15-161
RT-02017 RT02		SFH		CHEHAW RIVER AT OLD CHEHAW BOAT LANDING ON S-15-161

Black Creek (CSTL-583) – Aquatic life uses are fully supported based on macroinvertebrate community data.

Combahee River – There are three SCDHEC monitoring stations along the Combahee River. This is a blackwater system, characterized by naturally low pH and dissolved oxygen conditions. At the upstream site ***(CSTL-111)***, aquatic life and recreational uses are fully supported. Although dissolved oxygen excursions occurred, they were typical of values seen in blackwater systems and were considered natural, not standards violations. A significant decreasing trend in turbidity suggests improving conditions for this parameter. At the midstream site ***(CSTL-098)***, aquatic life uses are not supported due to dissolved oxygen excursions; which is compounded by a significant decreasing trend in dissolved oxygen concentration. In addition, there are significant increasing trends in turbidity and total suspended solids. There is a significant increasing trend in pH. Recreational uses are fully supported and a significant decreasing trend in fecal coliform bacteria concentration suggests improving conditions for this

parameter. At the downstream site ***(MD-252)***, aquatic life and recreational uses are fully supported. Although dissolved oxygen excursions occurred, they were typical of values seen in blackwater systems and were considered natural, not standards violations. *Fish tissue analyses on species caught from the Combahee River downstream of Highway 17 indicate no advisories or restrictions on consumption of fish from these waters.*

Chehaw River – There are two SCDHEC monitoring stations along the Chehaw River. This is a blackwater system, characterized by naturally low dissolved oxygen conditions. Although dissolved oxygen excursions occurred at both sites, they were typical of values seen in blackwater systems and were considered natural, not standards violations. At the upstream site ***(RT-06019)***, aquatic life and recreational uses are fully supported. At the downstream site ***(RT-02017)***, aquatic life uses are not supported due to occurrences of zinc in excess of the aquatic life chronic criterion. Recreational uses are fully supported.

A fish consumption advisory has been issued by the Department for mercury and includes the Combahee River and Cuckolds Creek within this watershed (see advisory p.54).

Shellfish Monitoring Stations

Station #	Description
14-05	COMBAHEE RIVER INLET AND COOSAW RIVER

NPDES Program

Active NPDES Facilities

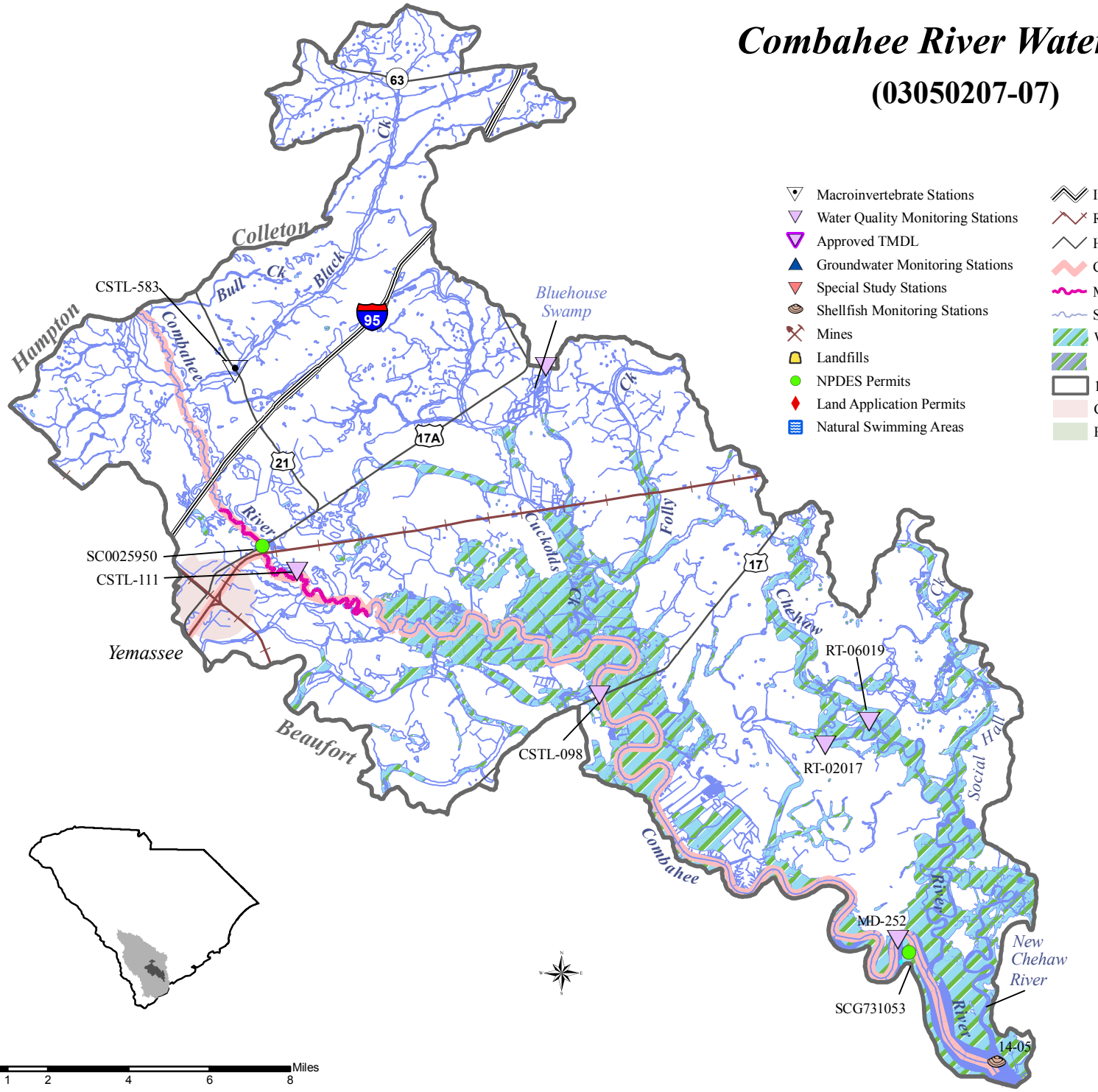
RECEIVING STREAM / *FACILITY NAME*		*NPDES#* / *TYPE*
COMBAHEE RIVER		SC0025950
TOWN OF YEMASSEE	MINOR	DOMESTIC

Growth Potential

There is a low potential for growth in this watershed, which contains the Town of Yemassee.

Combahee River Watershed

(03050207-07)



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