



Mayor Levy D. Moore
2531 W Main St.
P.O. Box 207
Franklin Springs, GA 30639
levy.moore@cityoffranklinsprings.com

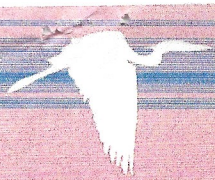
20 March 2025

Dear Mayor Levy D. Moore,

Savannah Riverkeeper has grave concerns about the proposed wastewater treatment plant expansion in Franklin Springs. Upper Savannah/Ogeechee water planning documents have already identified Franklin Springs and Franklin County as a water-poor area with existing drought issues, as experienced last year with the Toccoa River. Rapid expansions of water use without substantial and significant investments in water conservation are likely detrimental to the waterway and the citizens who will ultimately bear the financial burden of this new facility.

We are also deeply concerned about the potential construction of a rendering facility within city boundaries, which could increase soil amendments and putrid discharges from such operations. Purina remains one of the most chronic violators of waste disposal regulations in surrounding counties, including those directly downstream on the Broad River. Establishing a new facility would only amplify the production of soil amendments and the need to discharge waste around the clock into the community. This will have lasting impacts on the lives of Franklin County residents and those living downstream.

While we support the development of upgraded wastewater treatment facilities that replace outdated systems and allow for limited growth within the community's water supply capacity, many rumors surrounding this facility suggest that is not the case here. The Broad River serves a critical role for downstream communities, including supporting the largest lake east of the Mississippi River. An increase of 4,000,000 gallons per day of effluent discharge will significantly alter the chemical makeup of this vital waterway, impacting its current ecological function. Communities and businesses downstream rely heavily on this water, and it is unjust to negatively impact one community of business owners to benefit others who are not even located in the county.



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We are further troubled by some of the individuals and organizations rumored to be involved in this project. There is a genuine concern that Franklin Springs may face a situation similar to Madison County's biomass facility debacle. In that case, violations of environmental laws and clear harm to the community were overlooked to ensure the county could meet bond payments for water infrastructure serving the facility. Madison County is now burdened with an industry that has proven detrimental rather than beneficial to the local community.

For over 15 years, I have worked with counties surrounding Franklin County in their efforts to stop the abuses of the rendering industry and soil amendment companies. The proposed expansion will permanently alter Franklin Springs and the communities downstream.

It is also essential to note that we will ensure water quality monitoring downstream of the new wastewater treatment plant is conducted continuously to verify compliance with all permits. That data will be made available in real-time to all citizens within the community and the Savannah River basin, providing transparency and empowering residents to hold the facility accountable.

We would appreciate the opportunity to sit down and discuss this project with the responsible parties, including Franklin Springs leadership, and look forward to active engagement in the months ahead as the project moves through the regulatory process.

Tonya Bonitatibus
Savannah Riverkeeper