

## **RESOLUTION REGARDING CITY OF SAVANNAH WATER SUPPLY**

WHEREAS, the City of Savannah, for approximately 80 years has relied on the Abercorn Creek, which is a tidally interconnected tributary of the Savannah River, as the primary source for the supply of drinking water; and

WHEREAS, the increased presence of certain pollutants has threatened the viability of the Abercorn Creek, and the Savannah River, as a continuing supply source for drinking water purposes; and

WHEREAS, perfluorinated chemicals (known as “PFAS”) are man-made substances that do not naturally occur or breakdown in the environment. Among other things, these chemicals are used to make textiles, carpet, paper and other products. In April 2024, the EPA released a final, enforceable National Primary Drinking Water Regulation (“NPDWR”) to establish legally enforceable Maximum Contaminant Levels (“MCLs”) for six PFAS in drinking water: PFOS, PFOA, PFBS, PFNA, PFHxS and Gen-X. The NPDWR will require public water systems to provide drinking water with no more than 4 parts per trillion (“ppt”) PFOS, 4 ppt PFOA, 10 ppt PFHxS, 10 ppt PFNA, or 10 ppt Gen-X. Further, the NPDWR sets the Maximum Contaminant Level Goal (“MCLG”) for PFOS and PFOA at zero.

WHEREAS, at the time of the EPA’s announcement, readings of PFOS and PFOA in the Abercorn Creek watershed were above the MCL of 4 ppt; and

WHEREAS, the City of Savannah and the region currently rely on Abercorn Creek as the primary source of drinking water, and the region will become increasingly more dependent on this surface water source of supply because of regulatory mandated groundwater withdrawal reductions that were required due to documented salt water intrusion into the aquifer that resulted from long-term, high volume groundwater consumption in the region; and

WHEREAS, the City of Savannah is already experiencing and expects to be further burdened by increased demands for additional drinking water supply due to the projected economic growth related to unprecedented residential, commerce and manufacturing construction, as well as anticipated increases in the population of the City of Savannah and the region; and

WHEREAS, the City of Savannah must be able to rely on the supply of source water from the Abercorn Creek for an abundant freshwater resource. The regulatory mandated reductions in groundwater withdrawals, coupled with the increased demands for drinking water production, means that groundwater supply is and will continue to be insufficient to supply the needs of the City of Savannah for the short and long-term needs of the region. Therefore, the City of Savannah must be able to withdraw and treat the Abercorn Creek source water supply to overcome the reduction in groundwater availability for meeting future drinking water demands of the region.

WHEREAS, the water quality pollution impacts to the Abercorn Creek source water supply caused by the presence of PFAS, including but not limited to PFOS and PFOA in the water, is a threat to Savannah’s ability to produce drinking water that is safe for human consumption; and

WHEREAS, the release and presence of PFAS, including but not limited to PFOS and PFOA in the water supply for the City of Savannah tends to the immediate health threat upon the public in general, and is manifestly injurious to the public health and safety of both the residents of the City of Savannah as well as any City customers that consume this drinking water; and

WHEREAS, governments (including federal, state, and local) have borne substantial financial and societal burden related to this public health crisis and threat and will incur costs for this nuisance and environmental impairment into the foreseeable future; and

WHEREAS, upon information, research, and belief, certain manufacturers and distributors, knowing of the serious risks and adverse outcomes related to the use of their products, including their discharge into the water supply, purposefully set out to persuade regulators, public water system operators, and the general public that their products were safe and effective; and

WHEREAS, upon information and belief, PFAS, including but not limited to PFOS and PFOA, has also been discharged and/or released via industrial discharges into the wastewater and wastewater treatment facilities operated by the City of Savannah; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Mayor and Aldermen of the City of Savannah find and declare that there exists a public nuisance that threatens the health and safety of the community and the long-term sustainability of the region's drinking water supply that the City of Savannah relies upon as well as the operation of the City of Savannah's wastewater treatment facilities regarding the effluent water quality discharged to receiving waters; and that the City of Savannah shall pursue such legal action as is available against such manufacturers, distributors, and others as necessary, either by itself or in concert with others, and to the full extent available under the law.

IT IS SO RESOLVED, this \_\_\_ day of May 2024.

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Van R. Johnson, II, Mayor

Attest:

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Mark Massey  
Clerk of Council