

Public Waters Pollution Caused Fish Kill Investigation Reporting Form

Fish Kill Investigation Summary		CTS# 115288 (EPD use)						
1 Water Body	Flint River							
2 County	Clayton							
3 Nearest City/Town	Atlanta							
4 Major River Basin	Flint River							
5 Estimated Start of Kill	January 30, 2026							
6 Date Investigation Started	January 30, 2026	Investigation Ended February 5, 2026						
	Latitude	Longitude						
7 Upper Fish Kill Extent	33.628122	-84.414573 degrees						
8 Lower Fish Kill Extent	33.587602	-84.388563 degrees						
9 Length of Fish Kill	3.88	miles						
	☐ Municipal ☐ Industrial ☐ Agricultural ☒ Transportation							
10 Pollution Source ("x" all that apply)	☐ Construction ☐ Residential ☐ Dumping ☐ Commercial ☐ Mining ☐ Recreational ☐ Other (Describe):							
11 Pollutant or Factor _(ex. low DO)	Jet fuel (Jet-A)							
12 Fish Kill of any Length Where Sewage is Present <u>or</u> Investigator Safety is a Concern	☒ Yes ☐ No If the answer to either of these questions is "yes", then simple presence of dead fish is reported below to confirm "adverse impacts to aquatic life" were observed by the investigator(s).							
13 Fish Kill 1-Mile or Less in Length <u>and</u> Not on a 5 th Order or Larger Stream (Check Stream Order here)	☐ Yes ☒ No							
14 Were Dead Fish Present	☒ Yes ☐ No (Photo documentation below)							
15 Threatened or Endangered Fish Species Killed	☐ Yes ☒ No If "yes", list species here							
WRD Investigative Costs		\$1,746.92						
16 WRD Investigator(s)	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 30%;">Name</th> <th style="width: 30%;">Title</th> <th style="width: 40%;">Phone</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Jim Hakala</td> <td>Fisheries Supervisor</td> <td>706-295-6102</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Name	Title	Phone	Jim Hakala	Fisheries Supervisor	706-295-6102
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Jim Hakala	Fisheries Supervisor	706-295-6102						
Prepared By Jim Hakala Fisheries Supervisor								
								
This investigation was supported with state and federal funds allocated to the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Wildlife Resources Division, Fisheries Section.								

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Initial Report

Flint River

(Clayton Co.)

	Name	Affiliation	Phone
18 WRD Staffer Reported To	Jim Hakala	WRD	706-295-6102
19 Reported By	Jacob Coldren	EPD	912-506-9533
20 Date/Time Reported	1/30/2026	Time	1503 hours
21 Information Provided	EPD personnel had observed dead fish in the Flint River at Forest Parkway (596-600 block, Atlanta, GA) at approximately 1430 hours (1/30/2026) during an investigation of a jet fuel spill originating from Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport (HJAIA).		
	Name	Affiliation	Phone
22 Observed By	Alex Conti	EPD	404-548-2991
23 Date/Time Observed	1/30/2026	Time	1430 hours
24 Information Provided	Mr. Conti and the other EPD On-scene Coordinator, Jonathan Peng (470-547-3059), had observed dead fish in the Flint River at Forest Parkway (596-600 block, Atlanta, GA) at approximately 1430 hours (1/30/2026) during an investigation of a jet fuel spill originating from HJAIA. He reported that an oily sheen was present over an approximate 5-mile stretch of the Flint River from where it emerges on the southside of the airport downstream to the Valley Hill Road Bridge crossing.		
	Name	Phone	Time Contacted
25 SOC Operator # (ex. 132)	159	1-800-241-4113	1545 hours
26 EPD Duty Officer (ERT)	Jacob Coldren	912-506-9533	1509 hours
27 EPD On-Scene Coordinator	Alex Conti	404-548-2991	1552 hours

Investigation

Describe body of water characteristics (flow, water level, color, residues, odors)

Heavy oily surface sheen and strong fuel odor present. Thick rust-colored surface film observed behind containment booms deployed at several locations in the Flint River (Photo 1).

Climactic conditions

Cold (<32 °F), windy, clear sunny skies

Condition of dead fish

☒ Dead <72 hours ☐ Dead >72 hours

Were fish still dying

☐ Yes ☒ No Distressed fish symptoms: N/A

List non-fish species killed

turtles, frogs, worms, crayfish, aquatic insects

Describe how kill occurred

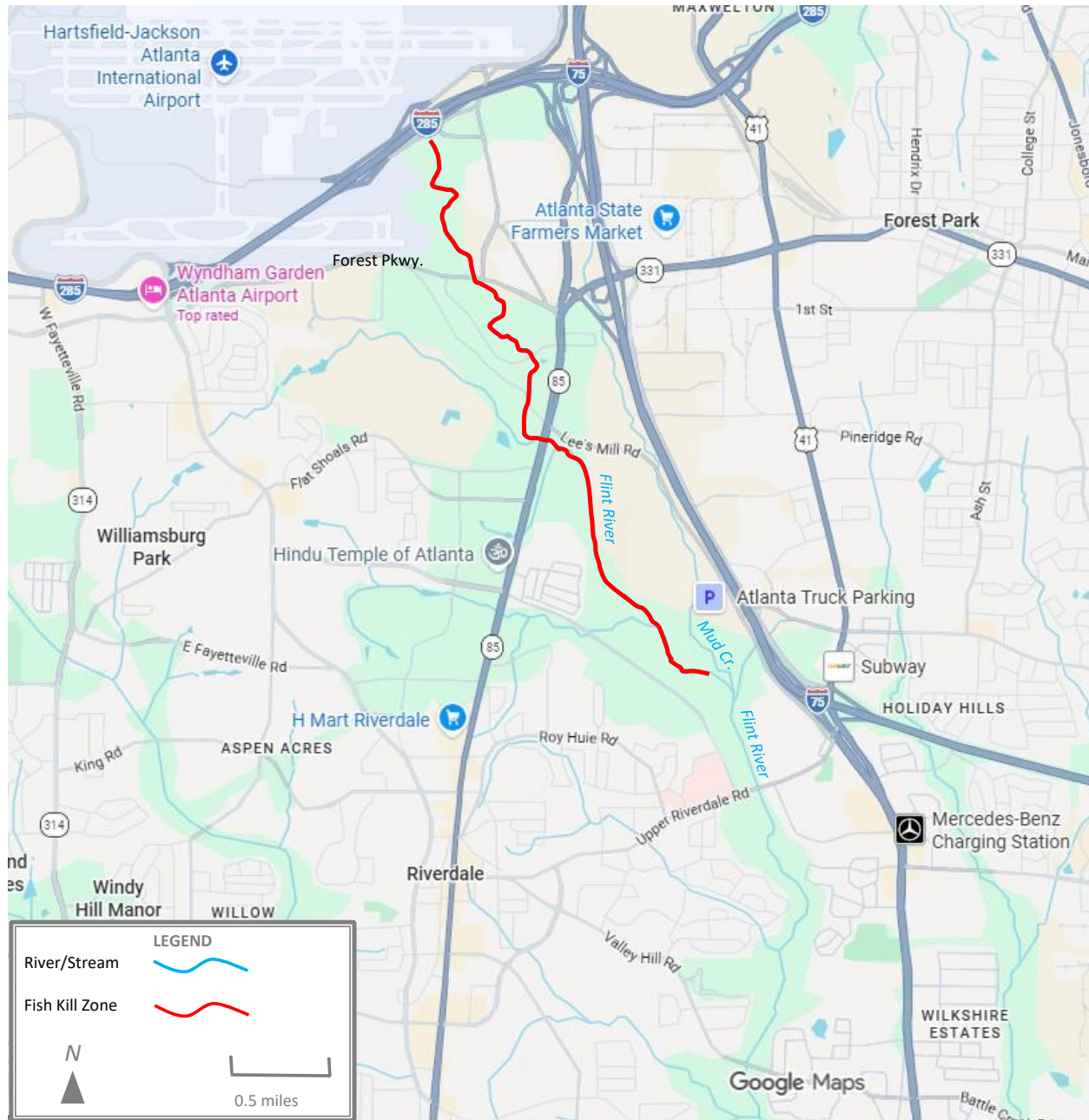
On 1/30/2026 a jet fuel leak occurred at HJAIA. The US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimated that 10,000 gallons of jet fuel (Jet-A) leaked into the airport's storm water drainage system and then into the upper Flint River (Figure 1). Mr. Conti indicated that containment booms had and were being placed at multiple locations to slow and trap the leaked fuel, but an oily sheen was visible as far downstream (~5-miles) as the Valley Hill Road Bridge crossing over the Flint River. I subsequently spoke to Mr. Peng at 0956 hours on 1/31/26 and he stated remediation efforts to remove the fuel from the river were being delayed by abnormally cold air temperatures (frozen equipment). Given the potential for the jet fuel to continue to kill fish in the Flint River, an assessment of the extent of the kill would be performed the next day (2/1/26). I (Jim Hakala) arrived at the incident location at 1201 hours on 2/1/26 to determine the extent of the fish kill. By the presence/absence of dead fish I determined the fish kill began in the upper Flint River where it emerged from under the southside of the airport (immediately south of I-285) and extended approximately 3.88 miles downstream to a point just upstream of the Flint River's confluence with Mud Creek (Figure 1). While an oily sheen and strong fuel odor was present at several locations farther downstream (as far as Valley Hill Road Bridge), only live fish were observed downstream of the Flint River's confluence with Mud Creek. In communications with Mr. Peng and Mr. Conti later that day (2/1/26), cold weather conditions were still hampering remediation efforts, but those efforts would likely be restarting on 2/2/26. An in-stream assessment to estimate the number of fish killed was not performed on 2/1/26 due to the inherent safety risk the jet fuel (largely still present) would have posed to WRD staff wading into the affected waters. Mr. Peng continued to provide me daily phone or email updates regarding the ongoing remediation efforts through 2/5/26. The initial cold weather-related delay (2-days) and protracted remediation efforts to remove the jet fuel from the Flint River were of sufficient duration to ultimately preclude a meaningful instream estimate of the number of fish killed. Loss of dead fish to scavengers (ex. birds, mammals), natural decay, and likely removal during the extended fuel reclamation efforts (ex. vac-trucks) would have resulted in significant under-estimation of the actual number of fish killed. Nevertheless, WRD and EPD photo documentation (Photos 2-6) of dead fish and other aquatic wildlife clearly demonstrated the jet fuel spill resulted in adverse impacts to aquatic life in the Flint River.

Investigator's conclusion

Given the presence of dead fish within the affected stream reach, the data collected, and my field observations during the investigation, I can reasonably conclude that the 3.88-mile fish kill in the Flint River was the result of the 1/30/26 jet fuel spill at Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport. It should be noted that a previous jet fuel spill at HJAIA in September 2021 caused a 2.14-mile fish kill in the Flint River over the same reach.

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Figure 1. Extent of fish kill determined by WRD Fisheries personnel during a 1/30/2026 fish kill investigation on the Flint River, Atlanta, Georgia. (Clayton Co.)
Fish kill zone is highlighted in red.



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Table 1. Investigative costs associated with a 1/30/2026
WRD Fisheries Section fish kill investigation on the Flint River,
Atlanta, Georgia. (Clayton Co.)

Personnel	Effort (hours)	Rate (\$/hour)	Value
Fisheries Supervisor	23.0	\$64.79	\$1,490.17
Fisheries Biologist 3	2.0	\$55.95	\$111.90
			\$0.00
			\$0.00
			\$0.00
			\$0.00
Vehicle (Decal #)	Miles	Rate (\$/mile)	Value
116830	186	\$0.725	\$134.85
		\$0.725	\$0.00
		\$0.725	\$0.00
		\$0.725	\$0.00
		\$0.725	\$0.00
Supplies, Photocopying			\$10.00
TOTAL			\$1,746.92

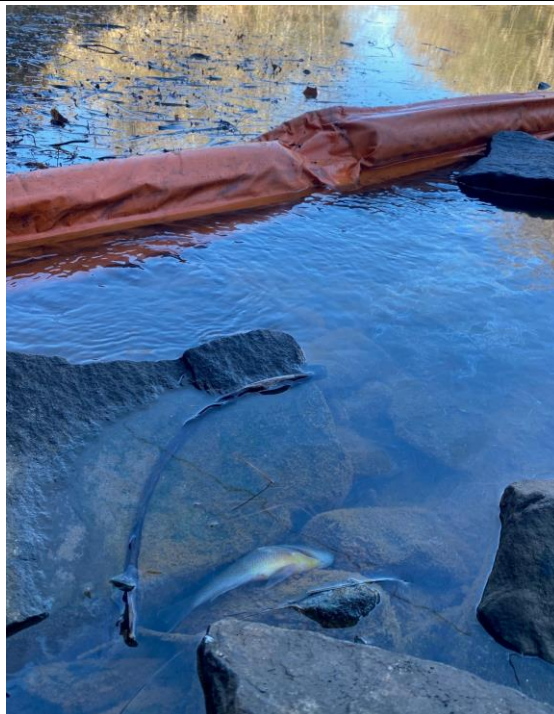
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Photos taken by WRD Fisheries Section personnel during a 1/30/2026 fish kill investigation on the Flint River, Atlanta, Georgia. (Clayton Co.)

Photo 1. Thick rust-colored surface film observed upstream of containment boom deployed in the Flint River upstream of Forest Pkwy.



Photo 2. Dead fish observed in the Flint River near containment boom at Forest Pkwy. Bridge.



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Photos taken by Georgia EPD personnel on 1/31/26 during a fish kill investigation on the Flint River
Atlanta, Georgia. (Clayton Co.)

Photo 3. Dead fish and oily sheen observed in the Flint River.

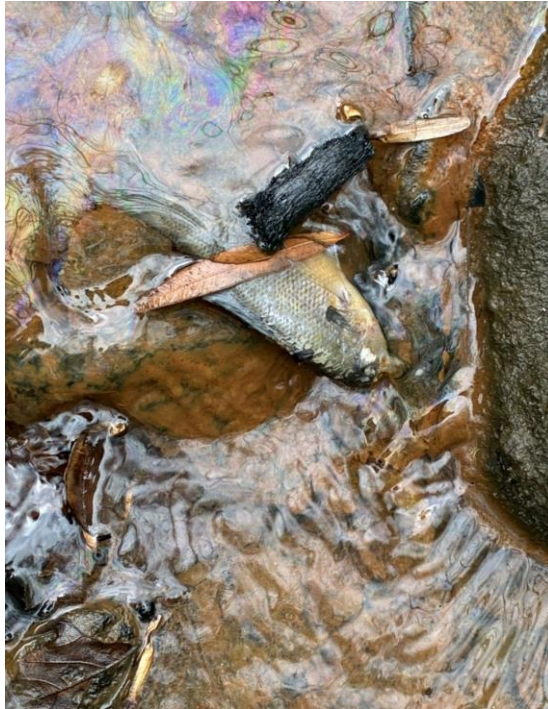


Photo 4. Dead fish and surface film observed in the Flint River.



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Photos taken by Georgia EPD personnel on 1/31/26 during a fish kill investigation on the Flint River
Atlanta, Georgia. (Clayton Co.)

Photo 5. Dead fish and worms observed in the Flint River.



Photo 6. Dead turtle observed in the Flint River.

