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$1 Billion Suit Filed Against GE, Monsanto

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (AP)—A $1 billion pollution suit has been brought against the General Electric Co. and the Monsanto Corp. by a group of 21 people who depend on the Coosa River for the livelihood and recreation.

The suit, filed Wednesday in federal court, charges that pollution from a General Electric plant near Rome Ga., into the Coosa River has ruined their businesses.

The plaintiffs said they filed the suit in the interest of more than 3,000 residents of northeast Alabama who depend on Weiss Lake—on the Alabama-Georgia border—for their livelihood, either directly or indirectly.

The damages sought may be the largest on record in an Alabama court.

Last September, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency warned people living and working along the Coosa that the GE plant near Rome was discharging PCBs—polychlorinated biphenyls—into the river.

The chemical is used to make electrical transformers. The EPA says it has been found to cause cancer in laboratory mice.

The EPA also said test showed heavy concentration of PCBs, often more than the five parts per million limit set by the Food and Drug Administration, in fish taken from the Coosa as far south as Weiss Lake.

Georgia officials banned commercial fishing on the Coosa, but Alabama officials did not.

Monsanto was named in the suit because it manufactures the chemical used by the GE plant.

A Georgia group has filed a $500 million suit against GE and another group has filed a $500,000 suit in connection with the PCB solution.

After that suit was filed, GE concreted the area in which the PCBs were being dumped. Officials said that halted the runoff of the chemical into the river, and that all use of PCBs would be ended by next summer.

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D. 44,405 SAT. 88,948

DEC 3 0 1976

Coosa River group sues GE, Monsanto

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (AP) — A group of 21 people who depend on the Coosa River for their livelihood and sport filed a $1 billion pollution suit against General Electric Co. and Monsanto Corp. Wednesday.

The federal court action charges that pollution from a GE plant near Rome, Ga., into the Coosa has ruined their businesses.

The plaintiffs said they filed on behalf of more than 3,000 northeast Alabama people who look to Weiss Lake on the Coosa, on the Alabama-Georgia line, directly or indirectly for their livelihood.

The amount could be the largest damages ever sought in an Alabama court.

The Environmental Protection Agency in September began warning people living and working along the Coosa that the GE plant near Rome was dumping polychlorinated biphenyls, or PCBs, into the river.

The chemical is used in the manufacture of electrical transformers. The EPA said it has been found to cause cancer in laboratory mice.

The EPA said tests showed heavy concentrations of PCBs, often well above the five parts per million limit set by the Food and Drug Administration, in fish taken from the Coosa as far south as Weiss Lake.

Commercial fishing was banned on the Coosa in Georgia, but not in Alabama.

Monsanto was named in the suit because it manufactures the chemical used by the GE plant.

A group in Georgia has a $500,000 suit pending against GE in connection with the PCB pollution.

After that suit was filed, GE concreted the area in which the PCBs were being dumped. Officials said that stopped the runoff of the chemical into the river, and that all use of PCBs would be ended by next summer.

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