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# Class action suit nixed on Coosa pollution case

ATLANTA (AP) — A federal judge has denied a motion to create a class action suit from two lawsuits filed by 16 plaintiffs asking more than $500 million in damages for pollution of the Coosa River.

U.S. District Court Chief Judge Albert J. Henderson sent eight of the 16 plaintiffs back to state courts Thursday and ordered three others to show they suffered $10,000 each in damages.

The suits were filed against General Electric Co. and Monsanto Co. after the state banned all commercial fishing in the Coosa River in northwest Georgia in 1976.

Henderson ordered claims from eight of the plaintiffs remanded to the Fulton County Superior Court.

He granted a summary judgment against five of the plaintiffs and gave the other three 10 days to show that they suffered individual damages of more than $10,000. Otherwise, he said, those three cases also should be in Superior Court.

THE STATE'S BAN on commercial fishing in the Coosa River, still in effect, was instituted when the Georgia Department of Natural Resources traced pollutants called polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) to the General Electric plant near Rome.

GE allegedly used the chemical, purchased from Monsanto, in its manufacturing of electric transformers.

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