

ROME, GA.
NEWS-TRIBUNE
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ALLEGED PCB POLLUTION

GE sued for \$1-billion

A \$1-billion pollution suit has been brought against the General Electric Co. and the Monsanto Corp. by a group of 27 people who depend on the Coosa River for livelihood and recreation.

The suit, filed recently in federal court in Birmingham, charges that pollution from a General Electric plant in Rome 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 Lake Weiss, on the Alabama-Georgia border for their livelihood, either directly or indirectly.

According to spokesmen, the damage suit 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 G.E. plant in Rome was discharging polychlorinated biphenals (PCBs) into the river.

The EPA also said tests 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 G.E. plant.

A Georgia group has filed a \$500-million suit against G.E. and another group has filed a \$500,000 suit in connection with the PCBs solution.

G.E. 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.