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"COVERS DIXIE LIKE THE DEW"
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# Coosa River PCBs Object of Big Suit

The Associated Press

Businessmen, property owners and fishermen have filed a $500 million lawsuit against [redacted] and the [redacted], charging that they polluted the Coosa River.

The class action suit, filed in U.S. District Court in Atlanta Monday, charges General Electric with poisoning fish by dumping polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) into a tributary of the river.

Monsanto Co. sold the chemical to General Electric, the suit says.

Two weeks ago state officials ordered a halt to commercial fishing in the river because the fish contained levels of PCBs above the limit recommended for human consumption by the federal Food and Drug Administration.

A spokesman for General Electric denied that the firm was responsible for the fish contamination. W.R. Buchanan, manager of employe and community relations, said that because General Electric still uses PCBs, it is a "natural target for anyone" who wants to file suit.

The use of PCBs has been restricted in recent years, but "until 1972, there were any number of uses of PCB," Buchanan said. "It was used in lubricating oil that might have been disposed of and ultimately found its way into the water system."

An Atlanta attorney representing the plaintiffs, who are from both Georgia and Alabama, said he will attempt to prove that Monsanto did not fully inform General Electric of the dangers of PCB.

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