

Press Release from Cape Fear River Watch and the Southern Environmental Law Center

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**Conservation Groups Reach Agreement for  
99 Percent Reduction of Chemours' GenX & Other PFAS Water Pollution**  
*Agreement Specifies Next Steps under Consent Order with DEQ and Chemours*

CHAPEL HILL, N.C.—On behalf of Cape Fear River Watch, the Southern Environmental Law Center today reached agreement on the details of next steps under a consent order with the N.C. Department of Environmental Quality and Chemours that requires the company to stop 99 percent of GenX and other PFAS water pollution from its site into the Cape Fear River, the source of drinking water for Wilmington, Brunswick County, and Pender County. A public comment period will be held on the agreement before it is submitted to the Bladen County Superior Court for approval. If approved by the court, this agreement will be enforceable and amend the consent order the parties finalized in February 2019.

“This agreement is an important investment in the future of the Cape Fear River,” said Geoff Gisler, senior attorney at the Southern Environmental Law Center. “The commitments required of the company will result in significant reductions in PFAS levels in the river quickly and ensure that communities downstream are protected over the long-term.”

Combined with the 2019 consent order’s requirement that Chemours reduce its pollution from air emissions by 99.99 percent and from a large on-site stream by at least 99 percent, today’s agreement ensures that pollution from every other significant pathway of PFAS contamination from the Chemours’ Fayetteville Works Facility to the Cape Fear River is reduced by at least 99 percent.

“This is a huge win for the Cape Fear River and the people who depend on it. This plan will ensure that contaminated groundwater, streams, and runoff no longer pollute the river and don’t reach communities downstream,” said Kemp Burdette, Cape Fear Riverkeeper. “Along with a reduction of PFAS in air emissions from the facility and a complete elimination of process water discharges into the river that were part of the earlier consent order, these commitments get us closer to a goal of a clean Cape Fear.”

The agreement requires Chemours to take the following actions to prevent PFAS pollution from on-site groundwater, small streams, and stormwater from reaching the Cape Fear River and downstream drinking water supplies.

- To control its groundwater pollution, Chemours will build an in-ground barrier between the Cape Fear River and its contaminated site. Chemours will pump out polluted groundwater trapped by the barrier and treat it, removing at least 99 percent of the PFAS. This remedy is expected to be completed in spring 2023.

- To control its contaminated streams flowing into the Cape Fear River, Chemours will install in-stream filters subject to strict pollution reduction requirements. After the barrier wall is installed, these filters must remove at least 99 percent of GenX and other PFAS pollution in the streams compared to existing conditions. In the interim, the company is required to reduce pollution in the streams by a minimum of 80 percent.
- To control stormwater pollution from its site, Chemours must capture stormwater from the portion of its facility that contributes the most contaminated runoff and treat it, removing at least 99 percent of the PFAS.

This amendment to the consent order is a critical next step for cleaning up contamination that took place over decades. It will be submitted to the Bladen County Superior Court following a 30-day public comment period. Next, the company must re-submit a corrective action plan to ensure that contaminated groundwater on- and off-site is cleaned up and communities near the facility are protected. Chemours' previous corrective action plan submittal was rejected by DEQ in April.

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For more than 30 years, the Southern Environmental Law Center has used the power of the law to champion the environment of the Southeast. With more than 80 attorneys and nine offices across the region, SELC is widely recognized as the Southeast's foremost environmental organization and regional leader. SELC works on a full range of environmental issues to protect our natural resources and the health and well-being of all the people in our region. [www.SouthernEnvironment.org](http://www.SouthernEnvironment.org)