

Statement of Work: DeKalb County Environmental Education & Engagement



Overall Goal

DeKalb County is embarking on an ambitious program to ensure a cleaner, more just, environment for all their citizens. They are actively engaged in Justice 40 work, creation of an EJ Commission, and a Clean Energy and Clean Transportation Plan.

In alignment with this work, Science for Georgia (Sci4Ga) proposes to work with DeKalb County to educate, engage, and empower DeKalb residents to be an active participant in these initiatives and programs.

The goals of this proposed Sci4Ga engagement is to

1. Produce a first draft of a [Data for Georgia](#) data story specific to DeKalb
2. Expand a citizen science water-quality monitoring project
3. Understand and scope the larger air and water quality monitoring and reporting needs
4. Hold a community meeting to educate about the current environmental situation, ongoing projects, the EJ Commission, and ways to get involved.

Together, these are the first steps toward a larger initiative where DeKalb regularly engages with the community and hosts an informative dashboard with granular information about ongoing projects and environmental health. These activities will provide methods for the DeKalb Government and DeKalb Community to communicate with each other and working together toward a healthier future.

Sci4Ga Prior / Ongoing Work in DeKalb County

Since late 2023, Sci4Ga has been working on various projects and initiatives in and around DeKalb County.

In Oct 2023 and Jan 2024 we hosted [two EJ Forums](#) at New Life Community Alliance with Rep Becky Evans and other partners, including Commissioner Ted Terry. At these forums we presented information about current environmental concerns in DeKalb including water quality and air quality. We provided an update from DeKalb on the ongoing consent decree. Out of these forums, we learned that residents wanted more testing of harmful pollutants and more awareness and education on environmental health issues in DeKalb.

Sci4Ga then provided information on *e. coli*, radon, power burden, and indoor air quality. We hosted a clean-up day in Ormewood Forest and started a community water testing club along the South River in Everett Park.

Proposed Work

One. Data for Georgia DeKalb Specific Data Story

Science for Georgia's **Data for Georgia** program joins communities, data science students, public health students, and experienced science communicators to tell actionable data stories that communities can use to create and monitor change. We combine existing public (and with access, private) data sets to create an overall picture of the socio-economic and environmental health of a community.

Sci4Ga works with communities to define actionable questions to be answered, builds an appropriate semester-long internship / capstone program, guides the team through generation of actionable information, and then reports out to the community.

The overall focus is producing information that is:

- **true** – backed by science facts and data that Sci4Ga is confident in
- **relevant** – applicable and contextualized to community needs and concerns
- **concise** – short and to the point
- **actionable** – empowers personal and community-wide change

Deliverables:

1. A draft Data Story specific to DeKalb. [Click here to see an example story about Augusta.](#)
2. Outlining a data project to be executed during the first six months of 2025 (final deliverable 2025 of an initial GIS-based data story and dashboard for DeKalb).

Two. Expand Citizen Science Water Monitoring

Sci4Ga started a citizen science water monitoring project, [as part of the Adopt-a-Stream \(AAS\) program](#), along the South River in Evertt Park, 5106 Klondike Rd, Stonecrest, GA 30038.

AAS is a Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) program that provides testing kits and training to local volunteers to monitor their water quality. There is a lack of AAS monitoring in DeKalb (see below map).

This water monitoring data is publicly available and can be utilized to urge GA EPD and other agencies to take action such as more in-depth monitoring, investigation of point source polluters, and remediation. This data will be folded into the DeKalb Data Story (one above).

Deliverables

1. Identification of two additional AAS testing locations in DeKalb
2. Procurement of two AAS testing kits
3. Kick-off training events scheduled

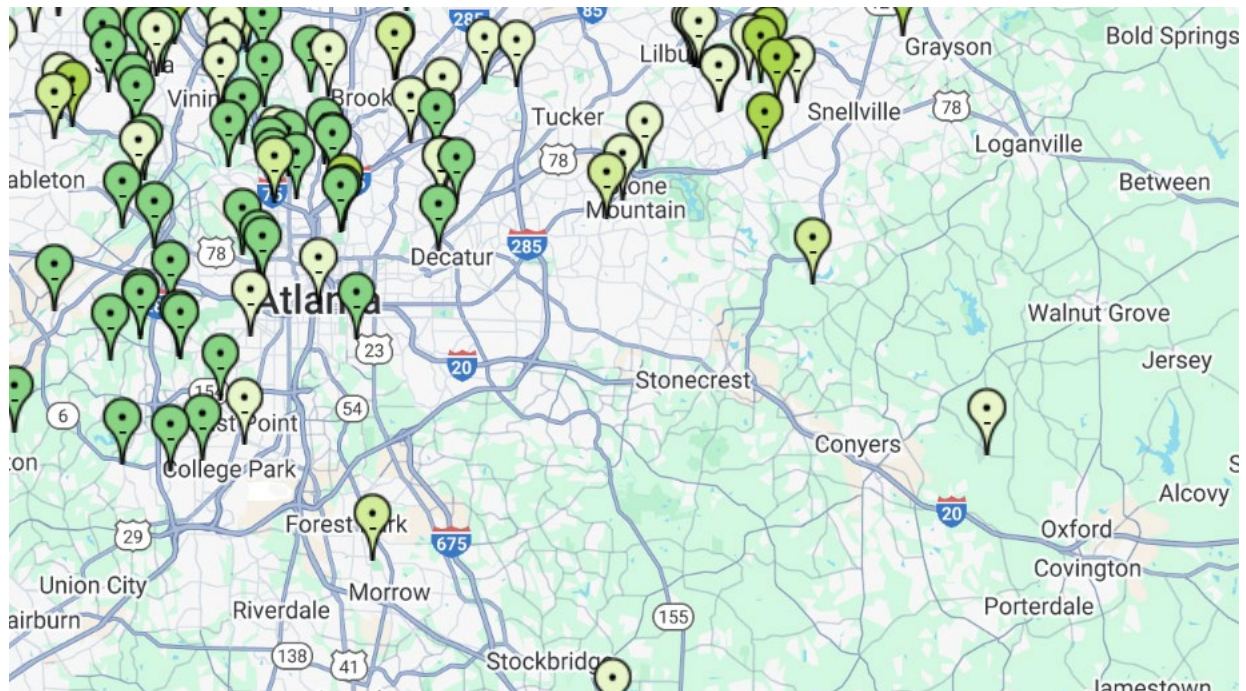


Figure 1. AAS monitoring locations near Atlanta. <https://adoptastream.georgia.gov/>

Three. Scope increased air and water quality monitoring and reporting needs.

The recent BioLab fire highlighted the lack of air quality monitoring in DeKalb. Purple Air Quality monitoring has been proposed. Emory, GA State, and Georgia Tech all have professors interested in air quality monitoring.

Monitors can't just be placed, and then their results spit out on a dashboard. The data must be analyzed and contextualized to provide actionable information for both the government and citizens. Example contextualization can be seen in [this pamphlet we made for South Fulton](#).

During the next few months, Sci4ga will understand current capacity and scope what a monitoring project and program would look like. Where are current monitors now? What would it take to setup more robust coverage? How can the results be communicated and made actionable?

Using the data story as a foundation, Sci4Ga will conceptualize the components needed to create a DeKalb Dashboard that contains project and program information, GIS maps, and contextualized, actionable, socio-economic and environmental health information. This concept will guide next steps.

Deliverables

1. Work plan to set-up an air quality monitoring program
2. Concept of dashboard

Four. Community Meeting

Sci4Ga will host a community meeting similar to the ones we held earlier at New Life Community Alliance. At this meeting we will:

1. Provide an update on ongoing programs and initiatives in DeKalb (including the EJ Commission)
2. Present what we have found in the draft data story
3. Provide ways for people to get involved with the EJ Commission and Water Testing.

Deliverable

1. Community meeting including hand-outs, online streaming, and snacks.

About Sci4Ga

Science for Georgia was founded on the premise that science can address many problems, but only if it gets out of the lab and into our communities. Our mission is threefold: to train scientists to be effective communicators, to increase public engagement with science, and to advocate for the responsible use of science in public policy.

Through the neutral lens of science, we can bring community members, policy makers, and researchers together to identify and implement evidence-based best practices. Since 2020, we have established a decision-making process to identify topics of interest and then Convene, Collaborate, and Activate (CCA) based on those topics. Our CCA strategy enables us to work with stakeholders through an iterative process. We hold public forums and smaller working groups to identify community needs and actionable changes. We then do background research on evidence-based best-practices and perform data analytics. This information is then transformed into clear, concise, and actionable information in the form of one-pagers, pamphlets, data stories, and worksheets. We then iterate with the community and host workshops, citizen science working groups, and ongoing touchpoints to activate and create change.

Cost of Service

	Expense
Initial Data Story and scoping	\$4500
Citizen science set-up and events	\$1000
AAS Testing Kits	\$500
Scoping monitoring and reporting	\$3000
Community meeting	\$1000
TOTAL	\$10,000