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'Relay Down the Hooch' will travel entire length of Chattahoochee River

In 2019, Chattahoochee Riverkeeper (CRK) will celebrate 25 years of keeping watch over the Chattahoochee River—the lifeblood of our region. To celebrate this anniversary and to honor the mighty river that provides so much for so many, CRK is organizing Relay Down the Hooch - a 435-mile, Olympic torch-style river relay from the Chattahoochee's source in the North Georgia Mountains down to Florida border.

"We are thrilled to invite our partners to join in a year-long river patrol," said Riverkeeper Jason Ulseth. "We have made tremendous progress in water quality improvements and this is an opportunity to celebrate the river's revival."

Relay Down the Hooch will highlight our love for the river by engaging more than 25 partner organizations, outfitters, advocates and others throughout the watershed. Beginning on March 9 with a hike from the mountain spring to where the Chattahoochee first becomes navigable by boat, hikers will pass the official "torch" (a custom paddle) to a team of tubers who will float a section of river, then pass the torch to a team of kayakers downstream, and so on – ultimately traveling more than 30 river sections before reaching the Jim Woodruff Dam at the Florida border.

The project will highlight the many ways that people experience the Chattahoochee and will include hikers, tubers, paddlers, anglers, sailors and power boaters. The river itself touches three states, countless communities, and more than five million people who depend on it for drinking water. The Chattahoochee also provides crucial wildlife habitat and is a valuable resource for recreationalists and nature-lovers.

All are welcome to follow along as participants "pass the paddle" from community to community. The months-long journey will end in November. For more information, visit chattahoochee.org/relay.

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Chattahoochee Riverkeeper's mission is to protect and preserve the Chattahoochee River, its lakes and tributaries for the people, fish and wildlife that depend upon it.