

NEW CAMPAIGN FOCUSES ON INDUSTRIAL STORMWATER POLLUTION

Look no further than **Proctor Creek**, starting in downtown Atlanta, for the impact of industrial stormwater pollution on nearby streams and neighborhoods. Recently selected as one of 11 waterways in the nation to participate in the EPA's Urban Waters Federal Partnership, this tributary to the Chattahoochee has long been plagued by polluted runoff from sources such as landfills, auto salvage yards, chemical and concrete plants.

Controlling industrial stormwater runoff is a daunting challenge throughout the Chattahoochee River basin. Our watershed is home to thousands of industrial facilities that operate equipment and store materials outside, which are exposed to precipitation. In fact, state and federal environmental regulatory agencies have identified the pollutants of concern from more than 28 types of industrial activities. For example, food-processing facilities may discharge bacteria; auto salvage yards may discharge oil and grease; metals manufacturing may discharge zinc, arsenic and chromium; and agricultural chemical production may discharge nutrients.



CRK uses Google Earth imaging to identify problem facilities.

CRK has found that hundreds of industrial operations in the Chattahoochee River watershed are not fully complying with clean water laws. In response, we've launched our latest initiative, **"Protecting Streams and Communities from Industrial Pollution."** Our goal: achieve compliance from 100 industrial facilities within four years.

State program understaffed

To minimize the impact of stormwater discharges on waterways, the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) issues

a general permit under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) every five years that sets out requirements for best management practices, inspections, water quality monitoring and reporting. CRK participated as the sole environmental representative in the stakeholder group that negotiated and helped strengthen the permit, which was issued in 2012.

With thousands of industrial facilities across the state currently managed by a single state employee, EPD is woefully understaffed to ensure compliance and enforce the permit. CRK has been told that the agency does not have the resources to fully implement the permitting program. Our research shows that there may be as many as 500 unpermitted industrial facilities in the Chattahoochee watershed, and others that have filed paperwork but are failing to comply with terms of the permit.

Nearly 200 industries contacted

Given the inability and/or unwillingness of the EPD to enforce the law, CRK is using this new regulatory tool (the permit) to help clean up the Chattahoochee watershed. Our focus: industries that are not meeting water quality standards and are located near residential communities, recreation areas and drinking water supplies. Since we expanded our patrol jurisdiction throughout the entire Chattahoochee basin in 2012, we are now investigating problem industries in the middle and lower sections of the watershed, in addition to the upper section.

With the use of advanced mapping tools such as Google Earth, water quality testing, site visits, research and agency file reviews, we are identifying facilities using this comprehensive approach. Armed with this information and the regulatory requirements applicable to each facility, our intent is to work collaboratively with industrial operators to achieve results. We notify each industry we identify that it may be discharging without a permit in violation of the



CRK's Jess Sterling samples runoff from an industrial site in the Proctor Creek watershed.

Clean Water Act, or that it may be failing to meet the terms of the permit.

Since last fall, we have communicated with nearly 200 problem facilities and already seen encouraging progress from our efforts. An asphalt manufacturing plant in Gwinnett County has developed a pollution control plan and installed best management practices. A large auto salvage yard in Fulton County has hired an environmental consultant to help them comply with the law.

In Atlanta's Utoy Creek watershed, a metal-plating company that discharges into an impaired water body is taking steps to comply with an impending effluent limitation. And, in the Proctor Creek watershed, a paving company has made visible progress to stop the flow of contaminated stormwater from its property.

CRK will continue to help enforce the clean water laws by advising these industries of practices they must follow to keep our river clean.

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Our mission is to advocate and secure the protection and stewardship of the Chattahoochee River, its tributaries and watershed.

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Reflections

My 92-year-old mother recently moved to nursing care, and I became the custodian of our family history: dozens of large envelopes, bulging albums and even a small “horse-hair” trunk, all filled with handwritten deeds, certificates, wills and other memorabilia from the late 1700s to the 1940s.

In this unorganized jumble of births, deaths, news stories, old photos and family trees, I have found an amazing woman — my grandmother, **Helen Cowles Whitehead**.

Born in New York City in 1880 and educated there in physical education and social work, my grandmother moved to Norfolk, Va., as the bride of a physician in 1909, and got involved in her community. Today, we would call her an activist.

By the time she died in 1948, a few years before I was born, she had helped improve public welfare programs throughout the city — from better-quality and reasonably priced food to programs for soldiers' families and juvenile justice advocacy.

In 1913 — exactly one hundred years ago — my grandmother helped establish, and for years supervised, Norfolk's public playground program in five parks. The first-ever municipal playground was installed in New York City just a dozen years before Norfolk decided to provide its youth with a safe place to play, exercise, learn games and compete in a friendly atmosphere.

Child and family welfare advocates, including my grandmother, saw the immense benefits offered by this innovative new concept — the public playground.

Sixty years later in Atlanta, another group of visionary activists got involved in their community. They rallied



Helen Cowles Whitehead

to protect public recreation on the Chattahoochee River from sewer lines, roads and development.

Spotting zoning notices along the river corridor, concerned citizens learned that both Fulton and Cobb Counties had plans to run sewer lines along the river. Fulton County's plan called for a ledge to be blasted out of the Palisades' cliffs, above the water line, to accommodate the pipes.

Friends of the River — or as they were informally called, “river rats” — stopped the Fulton County sewer line. Their river protection efforts led to the passage of a precedent-setting state land use law (the 1973 Metropolitan

River Protection Act), which has helped ensure a green corridor for much of an 84-mile section of the Chattahoochee in the metro region.

In 1978, the river rats stood in the Rose Garden when President Jimmy Carter signed the law establishing the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area, a protected playground. Today, more than 3 million people boat, fish, paddle, picnic, walk and jog in this national park every year — many of them unaware of the history behind the creation of this park that provides 65 percent of the green space in metro Atlanta.

Government and business may offer essential support for needed improvements, but the germ for those visions is almost always found in the actions of individuals and small groups. Communities depend on the inspired actions of ordinary citizens, like the river rats and my grandmother.

Sally Betha
Executive Director and Riverkeeper

Watershed Moment

The “metro Hooch,” especially around Powers Ferry, is the closest escape to a river I have. I can be surrounded by God's amazing beauty of nature and mountain scenery in the middle of a big city. Most days I paddle, I have the river all to myself. Jackson Thompson, my son (pictured), has been near rivers since he was born. He has watched me from the shore since the age of 2 weeks old. Most people use a baby tub to wash their child, but I used to fill up the bathtub and float him in his baby tub.

— **Rick Thompson**, Sandy Springs

What's your “Watershed Moment”? Email your hi-res color image of the river, and about 100 words about its inspiration, to dsimmons@chattahoochee.org.



On Patrol

For further details on CRK's investigations and enforcement actions, go to www.chattahoochee.org/on-patrol.

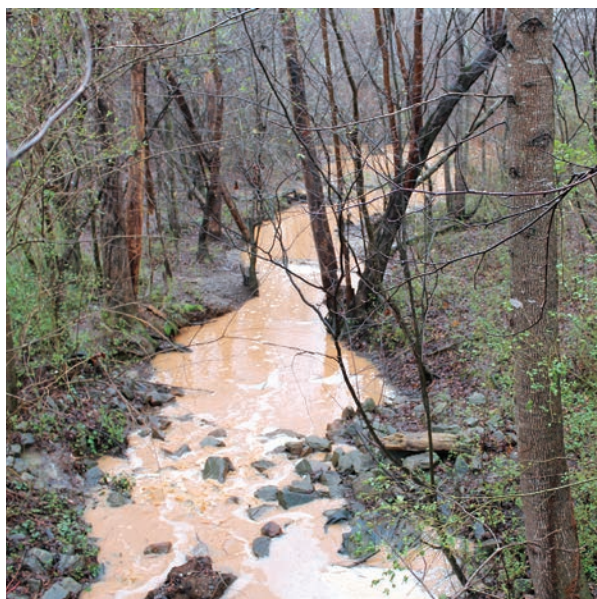
DEVELOPER THREATENS WATER QUALITY IN HALL COUNTY

Last spring, CRK received a Hotline call from a citizen in Hall County about a 61-acre site near Lake Lanier that was being cleared without implementing any best management practices (BMPs) to prevent silt from flowing into nearby streams and the lake. During a site visit, we confirmed the clearing activities and resulting damage to streams.

America's Home Place (AHP), the property owner, claimed that they met a forestry exemption within the state's Erosion and Sediment Control Act and therefore were not required to adhere to stream buffer or BMP requirements. After discussions with the **Georgia Forestry Commission**, Hall County and the Hotline caller, BMPs for forestry activities were eventually installed on the property. Since AHP claimed a forestry exemption and harvested timber within a stream buffer, Hall County placed the property under a three-year moratorium for any development.

At the same time, we learned about another AHP site in Hall County where the company requested and received permission to pipe over several hundred feet of a stream in order to build a commercial development close to Lake Lanier.

When residents in an adjacent neighborhood expressed concerns about potential polluted stormwater flowing from this site during construction, CRK's technical programs director, Jason Ulseth, hosted a **"Get The Dirt Out" Workshop** for the neighbors. At the workshop, he taught several dozen residents how to spot and report water quality violations at construction sites. CRK will be closely monitoring both AHP sites in Hall County to ensure compliance with clean water laws.



Streams flowed red with mud downstream of America's Home Place site near Wade Orr Road in Hall County.

State Supreme Court denies petition

In March, the Georgia Supreme Court denied CRK's petition for review of our appeal of a wastewater discharge permit issued to Forsyth County for its new **Shakerag sewage plant**. We worked for more than four years with state officials and in the courts to change the permit to set stricter limits on the amount of bacteria and phosphorous that will be discharged into the river. A stronger permit would have better protected the **Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area**, ensured that the river continues to bring millions of dollars in recreation and tourism spending to Georgia, and saved treatment costs for the municipalities that take water from the river downstream of Forsyth County's discharge point. While we are very disappointed, we will continue to fight for strong permits to protect our river.

Nutrient standards proposed for Lanier, West Point Lakes

The Georgia EPD has been studying Lake Lanier and West Point Lake for several years to develop new watershed models to better understand how nutrient pollution reaches the lakes and, importantly, how it can be controlled. The Lanier effort was undertaken as a result of the lake's "impaired" status and a legal requirement to develop a plan to limit nutrients entering the lake. The West Point Lake effort was requested by the **city of LaGrange** to revisit the nutrient standard set in the mid-1990s that was based on insufficient data. The models have led to proposed changes in the standards that are expected to be approved in late summer. CRK has been actively involved in the lake assessments and will now focus on implementation of measures to reduce nutrient loadings from sewage plants and polluted stormwater.

Hall seeks state funding for Glades reservoir

The Hall County Commission submitted an application to the Georgia Environmental Finance Authority in April for \$14.5 million in funding from the **Governor's Water Supply Program** to support Glades Reservoir; this sum represents a fraction of the \$130 million estimated cost of the 850-acre real estate amenity lake masquerading as a water supply project. The most current version of Glades depends on the withdrawal of more than 100 million gallons per day (mgd) from the Chattahoochee upstream of Lake Lanier and storage of that water in the reservoir to yield up to 49.8 mgd. While the project is undergoing an extensive environmental review by federal agencies, CRK continues to evaluate the ever-changing project plans and raise questions about operations, cost and environmental impact.

Dive into summer with the Swim Guide

CRK has joined forces with our fellow waterkeepers to provide the latest information on recreational safety at beaches and other water locations across North America — including the Chattahoochee. The **Waterkeeper Swim Guide** website and app provide the latest information to keep you informed about two locations within the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area: **Medlock Bridge and Paces Ferry Road**. Samples are collected weekly at these locations and analyzed in conjunction with a long-time partnership with the National Park Service, U.S. Geological Survey and CRK. When new sample data is available, CRK updates Swim Guide which is at www.theswimguide.org.

River Stewardship

CLEAN WATER FESTIVAL CELEBRATES A REVITALIZED LAKE

The 2nd Annual Clean Water Festival at West Point Lake benefited this year from expanded programming, beautiful weather and surprise guests, as we welcomed 250 people to Yellowjacket Beach Creek on June 1. The festival serves as a reminder that West Point Lake has come a long way since the 1980s. It's an important recreational destination that can deliver more than \$700 million annually to the local economy.

CRK Technical Programs Director Jason Ulseth hosted rides on our patrol boat. Guests hit the beach in droves, but also got a chance to learn about the importance of the lake as their drinking water source. CRK Watershed Protection Specialist Mike Meyer presented our “enviroscape,” an interactive tabletop demonstration model that explains how everything from stormwater runoff to pet waste can impact on our water.

Lake fishing, kayaking

Dr. Bill Conine, a retired minister and expert fisherman, offered a demonstration that explained the lake's history as a fish habitat. Frank Hardestein of Pine Mountain Adventures showed how the lake isn't just for fishing and motor-boating anymore, but also serves as a great place for kayaking and canoeing. “You can find everything at West Point Lake — fantastic boating and fishing, wildlife, bird-watching and beautiful views,” said CRK Regional Outreach Manager Jill Sistino.

Representatives from the city of LaGrange's Department of Watershed Management were on hand to discuss their efforts to keep area waterways clean. There also was an added bonus to the afternoon when



Festival attendees enjoyed rides on our patrol boat and water monitoring demonstrations.

members of the Watertown, Mass., police department — in town for the Boston Relief Fund 5K to benefit those injured in the May bombing — attended the festival to greet attendees.

Big thanks to our sponsors for the festival: **Interface** (Presenting Sponsor), **LaGrange Grocery Co.**, **Coca-Cola Company**, **The Branding Firm**, **Pine Mountain Adventures**, **Highland Marina Resorts**, **PC Screening**. Also thanks to our partner in hosting, the **U.S. Army Corps of Engineers**.

COUPLE'S TIRELESS WORK HELPS RESTORE PRECIOUS RIVER CANE

River cane (*Arundinaria gigantea*) is a species of the single genus of bamboo native to North America and was historically abundant along river bottoms in the Southeastern United States. Dense stands of river cane, called canebrakes, provide critical environmental services.

Like other vegetated stream buffers, canebrakes slow runoff, have root systems that hold soil in place (decreasing erosion along rivers), and filter pollutants from stormwater that would otherwise enter drinking and recreational waters.

As transitional areas between water and land, these canebrake ecosystems also serve as an important habitat for a diversity of wildlife. At least six species of butterflies and moths feed exclusively on river cane and are increasingly rare as their food source and habitat disappears. The Bachman's Warbler, a small perching bird last sighted in 1988, is thought to be extinct for the same reason.

A study by the U.S. Department of the Interior in 1995 estimated that a mere 2 percent of large canebrakes remain throughout their range. As with the disappearance of wetlands, the loss of these canebrakes — to agriculture, urbanization and changing land use patterns — has ecological consequences.



Bob and Joanne Steele have helped river cane thrive along the Chattahoochee River in the Nacoochee Valley.

River cane in the Nacoochee Valley

Fortunately, there remain isolated areas where river cane thrives. One such place exists along the Chattahoochee in the Nacoochee Valley in White County. **Joanne and Bob Steele** have been caretakers for the Montag property since 1976.

With support and agreement from the **Montag family**, the Steeles consciously decided to dedicate areas on the property for river cane to spread.

“We were inspired to invest time and effort in river cane restoration as we learned more about how indigenous cultures used river cane for so many practical purposes,” Bob said.

Thirty-five years later, canebrakes now thrive where pasture previously adjoined the river. The stands are so thick that they're difficult to see through and provide a riparian buffer of up to several hundred feet between hay fields and the river.

“We value the river cane for the aesthetic beauty, wildlife diversity — it provides amazing habitat, and utility of the cane itself,” Joanne said.

For information on canebrake restoration, see <http://www.rivercane.msstate.edu>.

A TRIP OF A LIFETIME DOWN THE HOOCH

Dr. Robert Fuller has lived a life full of adventure.

As a boy growing up near St. Petersburg, Fla., he and his brother fished for gunnet in Tampa Bay. After high school, Fuller served in the Marines, running a radio relay station in the demilitarized zone between North and South Vietnam. Before joining the faculty at North Georgia College & State University — where he's a professor of geosciences — Fuller was an engineer, diver, pilot and photographer.

During his Vietnam service, he was exposed to Agent Orange, and by 2010 he'd been diagnosed with chronic lymphocytic leukemia — a form of cancer linked to the chemical defoliate.

An ordinary person might have given up, but not Fuller. He viewed his diagnosis as a sign: "I decided I would take the trip of a lifetime. It was a lifelong dream of mine to paddle the full length of the Chattahoochee."

Fuller paddled from the Chattahoochee headwaters near Helen to the Flint River confluence and then down the Apalachicola River to the Gulf of Mexico. He then made the return trip by paddling from the Gulf west along the Florida panhandle



"I knew I'd never forgive myself if I quit," Dr. Robert Fuller said of his river journey to the Gulf of Mexico and back.

Photo courtesy of Dr. Robert Fuller

coast to Alabama's Mobile Bay before returning northward up the Alabama, Coosa and Etowah rivers to his home in Dahlgonega.

By the time he was done, Fuller had paddled 1,500 miles in four and a half months.

Hurdles and highlights

Fuller faced many challenges. When asked if he ever wanted to give up, Fuller recounted flipping his canoe during a heavy storm in freezing temperatures and said, "I knew I'd never forgive myself if I quit." So he gathered his gear, dried himself out and got back on the river.

His favorite memories: dolphins in Apalachicola Bay, the solitude of camping along the Chattahoochee, and the help of his friend Richard Grove, who literally carved a path through logs lying between Fuller and home along the Etowah.

Fuller ranks stormwater runoff as the highest threat facing the Chattahoochee and says, "I really hope my journey inspires others to take action to protect our river."

Read more about Fuller's incredible journey at <http://blog.ung.edu/rcfuller/>.

PARTNER CAMPAIGNS FUEL CRK PROGRAMS

While CRK continually benefits from support from our partners, two fundraising campaigns over this past spring and through this summer will play a particularly important role in our efforts on the Chattahoochee.

For the second consecutive year, **Aveda** selected CRK as its Earth Month partner for Georgia, and the response was impressive. During the month of April, salons throughout the state and especially in metro Atlanta promoted our efforts to their clients, with CRK receiving a percentage of sales. In fact, participating salons in Georgia staged a "Cut-a-Thon" by offering discounted haircuts to clients, again providing proceeds to CRK!



Van Michael Salon supported Aveda's Earth Month Campaign with a "cut-a-thon" on Earth Day, benefiting CRK.

Photo courtesy of AJC

"We were so happy to be raising money for Chattahoochee Riverkeeper again this year for our Earth Month efforts," said Susan Dykstra, Van Michael Salon's CEO. "We know how valuable the river is to all of us and hope that we were able to raise some awareness in addition to the financial contribution."

This summer, longtime partner **SweetWater Brewery's** support heats up again, but this year with a new twist. For nearly a decade CRK has benefited from the brewery's Save the Hooch campaign. But this year the brewery is changing it up a bit with its new **Save Our Water Campaign**.

From July through August, SweetWater once again will be selling beer throughout the Southeast, using its traditional paper fish and T-shirt sales that will represent money earmarked for "keeper" groups in markets that sell their beer (including CRK!). Supporters also can donate at www.WaterkeeperBrew.org.

Since our partnership with SweetWater began in 2006, the brewery has helped raised more than \$350,000 to support CRK's river patrol and water quality monitoring programs.

River Matters

For information on these and other river-related events, visit www.chattahoochee.org/calendar

August 3

Watershed Outing

Join CRK's Jason Ulseth aboard Chota Princess II, our 40-foot catamaran, on Lake Lanier

August 10

Paddle Cleanup

CRK and Trout Unlimited Cleanup, Medlock Bridge to Jones Bridge

August 17

River Discovery Series

Morgan Falls to Paces Mill

September 28

Watershed Outing

Hike to the Chattahoochee Headwaters

October 9

19th Annual Patron Dinner

The Foundry, Atlanta

October 12

Watershed Outing

Sweetwater Creek State Park

October 12-13

McIntosh Reserve Camp and Paddle Trip

McIntosh Reserve to Franklin

October 19

Watershed Outing

Water Conservation 101 at Hansgrohe's Aquademie

THE CRK STORE IS OPEN!

With new T-shirts, caps and more, our CRK Store features lots of great ways to enjoy the warm weather and support our work. We now have a redesigned long-sleeve T-shirt and a light, short-sleeve T-shirt.



Also fresh on our virtual shopping shelves are three different styles of caps: an army-style cap, a "trucker"-style cap, and the more traditional ball cap. We also feature a CRK koozie (made with recycled materials) and a dry pouch to keep your gear water-proof, perfect for storing your key and phone during your trip down the Chattahoochee.

Shop with CRK by visiting <http://www.chattahoochee.org/shop-with-crk.php>

AS DROUGHT OPERATIONS FILL LANIER, DOWNSTREAM FARMERS AND FISHERMEN SUFFER

The past year has been a good one for those advocating for a full Lake Lanier. In May 2012, in response to yet another drought, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers reverted to drought operations across the **Apalachicola-Chattahoochee-Flint (ACF) basin**. As a result, Lanier and West Point Lake were kept relatively full while Chattahoochee River flows were allowed to dwindle.

Add to this Georgia's request to reduce target flows in the Chattahoochee at Peachtree Creek, from 750 cubic feet per second (cfs) to 650 cfs. The Corps complied from late December 2012 through April 2013, even after the drought was over, normal rainfall patterns had resumed, and Lanier had returned to above-average lake levels. By May 2013, Lanier and West Point Lake were full again. Only then did the Corps cease drought operations.

Meanwhile, other ACF communities suffered. Last year, the Flint River basin experienced one of the worst droughts in its history, with many streams dropping to record low flows. As wells ran dry, farmers again faced the prospect of economic ruin.

Simultaneously, Apalachicola Bay oyster populations crashed, and by September Florida Gov. Rick Scott sought federal assistance for families and businesses impacted by the decline. In April 2013, the University of Florida Oyster Recovery Team attributed the massive oyster die-off to reduced freshwater flows coming out of both the Chattahoochee and Flint rivers, causing high salinity in the bay.

Balancing Act

The **ACF Stakeholders** have accepted the challenge of balancing these competing needs across the basin. The Stakeholders — which include local governments, businesses, farmers, environmentalists, and fishing and recreation groups from Alabama, Georgia and Florida — are working to develop an equitable water-sharing agreement.



While Lake Lanier is at full pool, the Apalachicola Bay's oyster population has been decimated by drought.

Ongoing ACF Stakeholder efforts range from characterizing healthy river flows, lake levels and bay salinity to developing a sustainable management alternative to the Corps' current operations. The ACF Stakeholders will share their results with the Corps in conjunction with the agency's effort to update the ACF Water Control Manual governing its operations.

As an ACF Stakeholder, Chattahoochee Riverkeeper is working with other partners to achieve an equitable solution that balances the needs of people, farmers, oysters and others.

To learn more about the ACF Stakeholders, visit <http://acfstakeholders.org/> or contact Laura Hartt at lhartt@chattahoochee.org.

WATER ADVOCATES FROM AROUND THE WORLD GATHER IN GEORGIA

The 15th Annual Waterkeeper Conference organized by the **Waterkeeper Alliance** and co-hosted by Chattahoochee Riverkeeper and Flint Riverkeeper was held in June at Callaway Gardens. The inspirational four-day event brought 250 water advocates from around the world to learn and strategize about water issues in workshops and panels led by a wide range of experts.

In addition to Alliance president **Robert F. Kennedy Jr.**, conference speakers included former Atlanta mayor **Shirley Franklin**, the **Rev. Gerald Durley**, **Shawn Wilson** with Usher's New Look Foundation, and **Kevin Butt** with Toyota.

Established in 1999, Waterkeeper Alliance provides a way for communities to stand up for their right to clean water and for the wise and equitable use of water resources, both locally and globally. The vision of the Waterkeeper move-



CRK board chair Rutherford Seydel (right) introduced Waterkeeper Alliance president Robert F. Kennedy Jr. at the recent Waterkeeper conference.

GEORGIA'S RIVERKEEPERS

Robbie Arrington | Altamaha River | www.altamahariverkeeper.org

Sally Bethea | Chattahoochee River | www.chattahoochee.org

Joe Cook | Coosa River | www.coosa.org

Gordon Rogers | Flint River | www.flintriverkeeper.org

Emily Markesteyn | Ogeechee River | www.ogeecheeriverkeeper.org

Ashby Nix | Satilla River | www.satillariverkeeper.org

Tonya Bonitatibus | Savannah River | www.savannahriverkeeper.org

ment is for fishable, swimmable and drinkable waterways worldwide.

200 Waterkeepers, 6 continents

From the Great Lakes to the Gulf of Mexico, the Amazon to the Ganges, Waterkeeper Alliance has become a powerful voice for the world's waters with a fast-growing international program.

The Alliance aspires to protect every major watershed around the world, while collaborating with other leading national and international environmental and public health organizations.

CRK has participated in the Alliance at the leadership level with Sally Bethea serving on the board of directors from 1999-2005 and Juliet Cohen, our general counsel, currently serving on the Alliance's Watershed Council and International Committee.

BILL PITS NORTH GEORGIA VERSUS SOUTH GEORGIA

In the waning hours of the 2013 legislative session, the **Georgia Water Coalition (GWC)** stopped a bill that would have resulted in less water in the Chattahoochee downstream of Atlanta, and further depleted flows in the upper Flint River.

Introduced by Sen. Ross Tolleson (R-Perry), **Senate Bill 213** changes Georgia's regulated riparian water law to accommodate an "aquifer storage and recovery" (ASR) scheme promoted by powerful political insiders.

The bad news is that this bill is still in play for the 2014 session and must be defeated again to protect Georgia's rivers, aquifers and property rights.

Change in water rights

The scheme involves pumping water out of the Floridan aquifer in south Georgia's Baker County, which lies just under the surface of the ground in the lower Flint Basin, and treating the water before injecting it back into deeper aquifers for storage purposes.

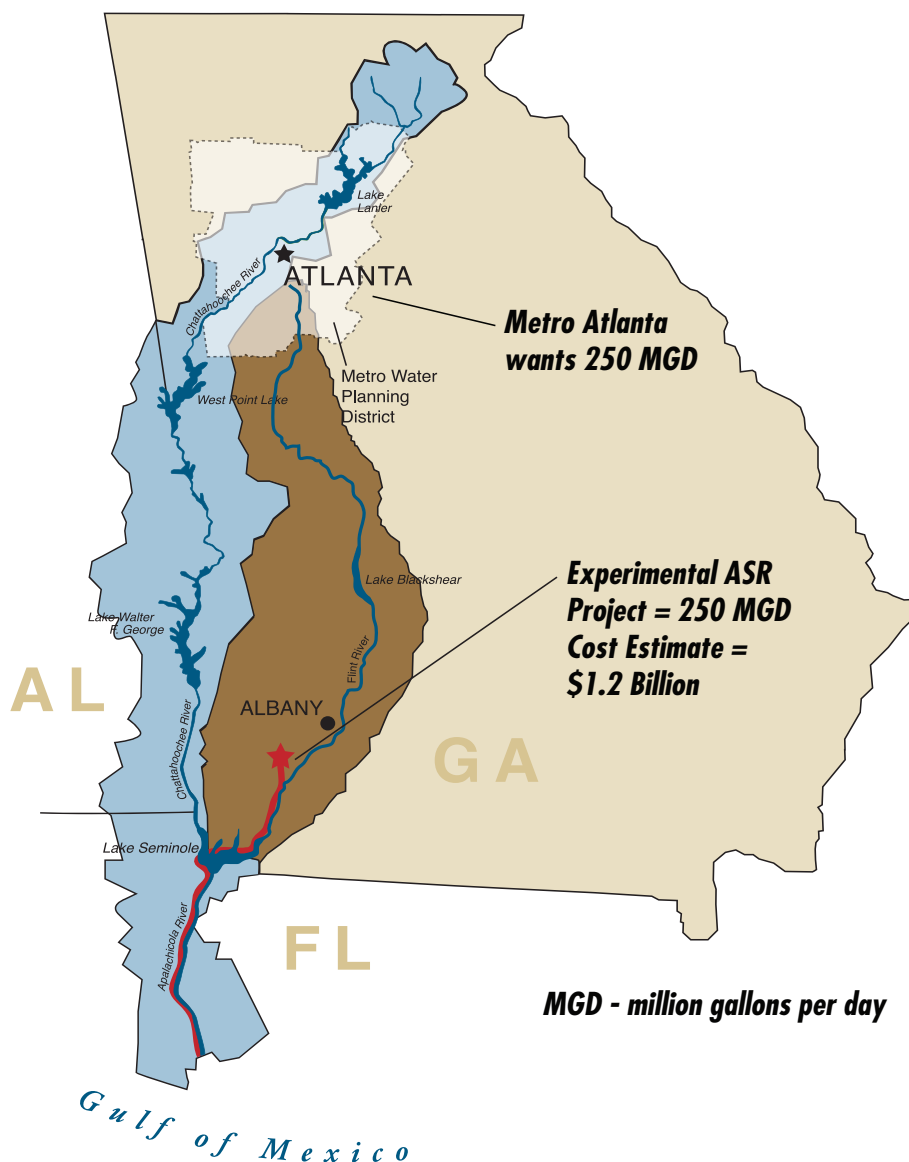
During drought, the water would be pumped out of the deep aquifers and released into the Flint to "augment" stream flow to satisfy requirements to protect endangered species in Florida's Apalachicola River, formed by the confluence of the Flint and the Chattahoochee rivers.

According to the language of SB 213, the state would own the added water, requiring its unimpeded flow past downstream riparian landowners holding valid water withdrawal permits. Fundamentally, the bill would change water law in Georgia, threatening property rights.

North-south tradeoff

As long as water demands downstream in Florida are met, aquifer transfers into the lower Flint could be used to offset additional water withdrawals from the upper Chattahoochee – up to 250 million gallons of water per day.

As a result, communities along the middle and lower Chattahoochee River – including **Newnan, LaGrange, West Point, Columbus, and Eufaula, Ala.** – could face severely reduced flows threatening water supply, recreation, fishing, navigation, power generation and other needs.



This north-south tradeoff is outlined in detail in the grant application submitted by the Southwest Georgia Regional Commission to the **Georgia Environmental Finance Authority (GEFA)** and approved last year. More than \$5 million in state grant funds will support an ASR demonstration project, prior to a program build-out that is projected to cost at least \$1.2 billion for 150 wells.

Georgia Gov. Nathan Deal supports the ASR project as a way to bolster water supplies for the metro region. Those who stand to benefit most significantly include real estate interests and reservoir promoters in north Georgia.

Story shifts with audience

As SB 213 made its way through the state legislature this past winter, bill proponents offered different rationales for the ASR water scheme, depending on the audience.

ASR proponents even convinced south Georgia farmers that without the passage of the bill and greater state control of

the Flint River, federal agencies will "shut down" their farms to protect endangered species. In fact, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service noted in a letter to a state legislator last spring that the agency is doing everything it can with grant funds and collaborative outreach to support restoration and irrigation projects to keep the farmers in business.

Faced with mounting media attention and scrutiny over possible conflicts of interest with ASR project consultants – including Allen Barnes, the former head of Georgia's EPD and the state's current point person in the tristate "water war" negotiations – the state announced in May that it would take over the water project. GEFA is now soliciting new consulting firms to manage the project.

"Success" for the ASR project has not yet been defined, yet metro Atlanta taxpayers could ultimately be on the hook for the \$1.2 billion total cost, as noted in the grant application.

South Georgians have long worried that north Georgia interests would try to pipe their aquifer water north to Atlanta, which is dependent on surface water in small rivers. If SB 213 passes, these fears will be realized, but with a twist: aquifer water would flow south to Florida, allowing Atlanta to suck the Chattahoochee River dry, and avoid the expense of a long pipeline.

RECORD TURNOUT FOR BACK TO THE CHATT



And they're off! Another wave launches at Garrard Landing.

It has become a recurring theme in 2013; record numbers are showing up for CRK events, and the 11th Annual Back to the Chattahoochee River Race & Festival on June 15 is but the latest example.

We welcomed an all-time-high 419 paddlers in 322 boats spanning all ages and skill levels for the annual race, which launches at Garrard Landing and covers a scenic 8-mile course down to Riverside Park in Roswell. Speaking of record turnout, we enjoyed a massive turnout of about 1,300 for this "super-sized" festival that featured longer hours, more bands and more exhibitors and vendors at the park.

We also netted \$15,000 for our river protection and monitoring programs! The successful turnout for Back to the Chatt comes on the heels of a sold-out Wild & Scenic Film Festival in March and our largest turnout for the multi-site Sweep the Hooch cleanup in April. For info on future outdoor events, visit www.chattahoochee.org.



Chris Nadine (aka Wonder Woman) won Best Costume.



Preston Dean of Georgia Disc Dogs thrilled the crowd with tricks.

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Keeping Watch Over Our Waters

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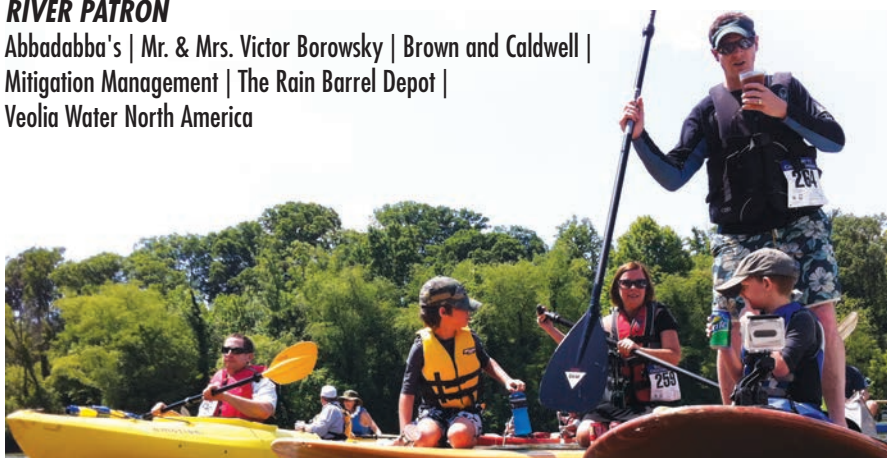
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Perennial favorite: The SweetWater Beer Barge!

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