



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Monday, January 27, 2020

Chattahoochee Riverkeeper to install first-in-county litter collector to keep Carroll County trash from entering river

Carrollton, Ga. – Chattahoochee Riverkeeper (CRK) is proud to announce the installation of a litter collection system known as a trash trap on Bay Springs Creek near the city of Villa Rica. For years, tributaries of the Chattahoochee have suffered from litter pollution, swept into storm drains and tributaries by stormwater runoff. Trash that enters Bay Springs Creek eventually finds its way into the Dog River, where it harms wildlife and pollutes Douglas County’s drinking water supply.

“Bringing trash traps into West Georgia, along with our continued volunteer cleanup activities, is a major step toward solving our plastic pollution crisis,” says Riverkeeper Jason Ulseth.

The trash trap uses floating booms to guide litter into a mesh container, which can be emptied after a rainstorm. The device can float up and down with the water level while letting fish and other wildlife pass safely underneath. Initial tests indicate an 80% success rate in intercepting floating litter.

The installation and maintenance of this trash trap is generously funded through an Alice H. Richards and Coca-Cola Foundation grant. “We deeply appreciate our partners’ commitment to environmental protection and curbing litter pollution before it enters the river,” says Ulseth. “Building a powerful coalition of non-profits, local governments, and business owners is the only way we’re going keep litter out of our oceans long-term.”

Osprey Initiatives LLC., an Alabama-based environmental contractor, manufactured and will help maintain the device. During routine cleanouts, CRK and Osprey staff will conduct forensic litter analyses following the Environmental Protection Agency’s Escaped Trash Assessment Protocol, or ETAP. These assessments will allow CRK to track the amount of litter collected by the device as well as the litter’s composition and recyclability.

“The data should give us clear insights,” says Jordan Yu, Watershed Protection Specialist at CRK. “By knowing what types of trash are flowing into the Creek, we can be more proactive about stopping litter at its source. If we find that most of the trash is coming from a specific business, like a restaurant, we can devise targeted solutions.”

With this installation, CRK expands their successful litter-capture pilot program outside of Metro Atlanta for the first time. The organization already operates two traps on Atlanta’s Proctor Creek with the help of Osprey Initiative and Groundwork Atlanta. Since June, the traps have collected over 350 pounds of floating trash with 28% of the total volume recycled.

Local government welcomes the first-in-the-region devices. “Hopefully this is just the beginning,” says Carroll County Commission Chair Michelle Morgan. “We’re proud to support Chattahoochee Riverkeeper in their efforts to halt the flow of trash that’s polluting our waterways. This project will not only benefit the homeowners living along our creeks, but all those downstream of Carroll County who rely on the River.”

After the installation, Chattahoochee Riverkeeper and partners will hold a media availability.
RSVP required to jregeski@chattahoochee.org.

Who: Riverkeeper Jason Ulseth, Trash Trap Inventor Don Bates, CRK Watershed Protection Specialist Jordan Yu

When: Wednesday, January 29, 2020 from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Where: Exact location forthcoming (North Carroll County, Ga.)

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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.

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