

RIVER CHAT

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF UPPER CHATTAHOOCHEE RIVERKEEPER
WWW.CHATTAHOOCHEE.ORG

DAILY WATER QUALITY TESTS ALERT RECREATIONAL RIVER USERS BACTERIA LEVELS EXTREMELY HIGH AFTER STORMS

The Chattahoochee BacteriALERT Program, a partnership between Riverkeeper, the **National Park Service (NPS)** and the **U.S. Geological Survey (USGS)**, has supported the collection and analysis of water quality data at three locations within the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area since October 2000. Thanks to an eleventh-hour infusion of funds, this private-public project will continue to operate for another year, providing information to anglers, paddlers, and other recreational users about the safety of recreating in the Chattahoochee. This data is also useful for the many local utilities that use the river for drinking water and need to know the condition of this raw water supply.

Sampling Results Posted on the Internet

Seven days a week, NPS and Riverkeeper staff collect water samples and other relevant data (e.g., weather and water conditions) from three sampling stations on

the Chattahoochee: Medlock Bridge Road (Norcross), Johnson's Ferry Road, and Paces Ferry Road (Vinings). These samples are then refrigerated and sent to USGS's District Headquarters in Norcross, where they are analyzed within 24 hours by USGS technicians to determine concentrations of E. coli bacteria. The results of the analyses are posted on the Internet at <http://ga.water.usgs.gov/bacteria> and at NPS kiosks at within the Park, where they can be accessed by the recreating public, who can then make an informed decision regarding contact recreation.



Sign at National Park unit informs the public about recent bacteria counts. Photo by Joe Cook

Strong Relationship between River Turbidity and Bacteria Levels

The Program is unique, both because of its collaborative nature and because it is the *only* such source of current, accurate bacteria data for recreational users in the Chattahoochee River watershed.

Eventually, data collected for the Program will enable USGS to develop "predictors" for bacteria concentrations in the Chattahoochee River. USGS has already established a positive relationship between turbidity (sedimentation in the river) and E. coli bacteria levels, suggesting that the concentration of soil, measured instantaneously, may someday serve as a surrogate indicator for bacteria concentrations, which cannot be

See *BacteriALERT*, page 6

THE RIVER MATTERS

For Additional Information Check Our OnLine Calendar

WWW.CHATTAHOOCHEE.ORG

Adopt-A-Stream Workshop

Call 404.352.9828 ext. 17 or kröse@ucriverkeeper.org

Riverkeeper Annual Meeting at REI

Call 404.352.9828 ext. 14 or bcrawford@ucriverkeeper.org

Benefit Xmas Party at The Tabernacle

Call 404.352.9828 ext. 12 or slayton@ucriverkeeper.org

Soil Watch Workshop - White County

Call 404.352.9828 ext. 16 or achampagne@ucriverkeeper.org

TBD

November 29

December 7

January



ALL IS BORN OF WATER;
ALL IS SUSTAINED BY WATER.
Goethe



Reflections

Like everyone else in the nation, we at Riverkeeper have been contemplating the effects of September 11 on our work, as well as our personal lives.

Those who follow philanthropic giving predict that non-profits such as Riverkeeper are going to have a tough time raising much-needed funds to support our advocacy and education programs, at least in the short-term, since donors are focusing their attention on the many victims of September 11. Long-term, however, there is reason for hope—not just to keep Riverkeeper's lights on, but to re-connect people to their communities in ways that they become participants, not mere observers, in the important decisions that define and renew civic values (see pg 8).

There has been a clear shift in our views of what is truly relevant in our lives—the importance of life itself, community, family, public service, and coalition-building. Our interdependence on each other and our natural life support systems have never been more obvious than in the past few months. The need for a strong, competent government created by engaged citizens has never been more apparent.

With the equally obvious need to reduce our dependence on oil, both imported and domestic, we are compelled to look for ways to live, enjoy, and give back to, life more locally. For those whose watershed address is the Chattahoochee River basin, this means taking a closer look at recreating on, and caring for, the river that we use daily, but rarely think about—despite its presence in our coffee cups, our bathtubs, and our watering cans.

Bill Moyers said that the survivors of September 11—all of us—will be defined by the lives that we lead from now on. As you contemplate ways in which to re-shape your life, take a walk along the Chattahoochee or paddle its swift waters, and also consider getting more involved with Riverkeeper. Together, we can work on a more just and environmentally safe future—in our own backyards.

Sally Bethae
Riverkeeper

BBQ at Sandy Bottoms on the Chattahoochee River

More than 80 guests enjoyed an October day on the River at Sandy Bottoms courtesy of our Host and Board Member, **Gary Gaines**. Twenty kayakers and canoeists braved Class III rapids on a whitewater trip led by Dave Gales of **Wildwood Outfitters** and our own Bill Crawford. Many guests just enjoyed the bluegrass music, fabulous view, delicious barbecue and a chance to visit with folks in the headwaters of the Chattahoochee. Thank you Gary and Tracy !!



Gary Gaines at Sandy Bottoms BBQ with friends.

Patron Appreciation Dinner at Canoe

On Thursday, September 20th, two hundred guests filled the riverside tent on the Chattahoochee for a wonderful, candlelight dinner to honor some of our most valued environmentalists. The River Guardian Award was presented to **Roy Richards, Jr.**, Chairman and CEO of Southwire, our Mike Egan Legislative Award was presented to **Rep. DuBose Porter** of Dublin and two fisheries biologists, **Russ England** and **Jimmy Evans** were given our newly-established River Pioneer Award. Many thanks to our sponsors:

River Guardians: Butler, Wooten, Scherffius, Fryhofer, Daughtery & Sullivan, LLP, Colonial Pipeline Company, Donna & Michael Coles, Cox Enterprises, Inc., Georgia Power, S. Taylor Glover, JST Foundation, Lord, Bissell & Brook, Paul B. & Mildred Seydel Foundation, Smith, Gambrell & Russell, LLP, The Coca-Cola

Company, The Home Depot, The Marcus Foundation, The Turner Foundation, Turner Broadcasting System, Inc. and Wachovia Bank, N.A.

River Sponsors: Alston & Bird, LLP, Ford Motor Company, Ivan Allen Furniture Company, LLC, Lawson, Davis, Pickren & Seydel, LLP, Plantation Pipe Line Company, Post Properties, Inc.

Friends of the River: W. Moses Bond, Lucy & Stephen Draper, Ernst & Young, LLP, Lora & Geoff Fishman, Jane Fonda, Ginair & George McKerrow and Susan & Ken Tepper.

Special thanks to Laurie Vance, Gary Mennie and George McKerrow for their generosity and hospitality at Canoe Restaurant.

2001 Patron Appreciation Dinner netted over \$93,000 for Riverkeeper.



From left to right, Canoe co-chair Susan Smith, Marion Stevens, co-chair and Board member Walton Smith and Preston Stevens.

THE RIVERKEEPER STAFF

Sally Bethae - Executive Director and Riverkeeper
Michelle Fried - General Counsel
Darcie Boden - Director Headwaters Conservation
Alice Champagne - Watershed Protection Specialist
Matt Kales - River Basin Program Manager
Kristi Rose - Director Watershed Education
Pam Davee - Development Director
Bill Crawford - Business Manager
Birgit Bolton - Programs Coordinator/Legal Support
Sandy Layton - Special Events Coordinator
Harlan Trammell - Boat Captain
Mary Manson - Receptionist
Kristin Costley - Source Water Specialist

ON PATROL

"EAGLE" EYES SPOT BUFFER DESTRUCTION NEAR GOLF COURSE

In late August, Riverkeeper's HOT-LINE rang with a caller outraged that a ditch was being dug directly to the river through woods targeted for a county park. Upon investigation, we discovered a backhoe (see pg 4) along the shores of Morgan Falls Lake near Roswell. A trench 1,900 feet long had been dug to the river from the adjacent **Eagle Golf Course**, with the intent of withdrawing water from the river for irrigation. Based on conversations with the County and EPD, it appeared that the trench was dug without the County's knowledge, without securing permits, and in violation of the river buffer protection requirements under two state laws and the federal General Stormwater Permit. Without approved erosion control plans to dig the ditch and install the pipe, fines could have been levied at up to \$50,000 per day. Instead, "miscommunication" is cited by Eagle Golf Course developer, **Kay Broaddus** and, to date, no corrective actions have been taken by the County. Riverkeeper urged the state Environmental Protection Division (EPD) to take action, but they chose to refer the matter to the County. Because the developer needs more water than she may legally withdraw from the river, the County has said that she is now attempting to secure groundwater.

JUDGE TO HEAR CHALLENGE TO GWINNETT'S WASTEWATER PERMIT

A year ago, Riverkeeper and the Sierra Club challenged the state EPD's issuance of a permit to **Gwinnett County** to discharge 40 million gallons per day (mgd) of treated sewage into **Lake Lanier**. (Lake Lanier Association, Save Our Communities and Terence Hughey also challenged the Permit and these two actions have been consolidated.) Gwinnett's discharge, from the **F. Wayne Hill Water Resources Center**, will be located offshore approximately 20-30 feet below the surface of the Lake near Lanier Park and Buford Dam Park. Riverkeeper is

concerned that the permit issued to the County is not stringent enough to protect existing water quality and the health of the thousands of people that use Lake Lanier for swimming, fishing and boating. A key issue for a healthy future for Lake Lanier will be the control of nutrients, such as phosphorus, into the lake from new and expanding sewage plant discharges, chicken facilities in Lanier's watershed, and runoff from development. Riverkeeper is also concerned that EPD and Gwinnett failed to study the impact of the discharge on the Lake's fish populations in the vicinity of the discharge. Administrative law judge, Jessie Altman, will hear the case beginning November 13, 2001.

EROSION PROBLEMS AT CARROLL COUNTY'S RESERVOIR

The **Carroll County Water Authority** is constructing a drinking water reservoir on **Snake Creek**, a tributary to the Chattahoochee below Atlanta. This summer, Riverkeeper members that live along Snake Creek downstream of the reservoir reported highly turbid water coming down the Creek, apparently from the reservoir site. In response, we inspected the site on July 31, 2001 and observed that the Authority had diverted the original Creek channel by pushing piles of dirt across the Creek. The newly-diverted channel was completely bare and unstable. Riverkeeper immediately notified the state EPD of potential violations of erosion control laws and learned that EPD inspectors had already visited the site and were in the process of taking an enforcement action against the Authority. We also wrote a letter to the Authority about the potential violations, but received no response. Three months later, in late October, we contacted the state again regarding the status of this matter and were told that EPD had still not finalized the enforcement action. In the meantime, our members tell us that the Creek continues to fill up with mud after every rainfall.

"FISHERMAN'S RIGHT-TO-KNOW" REGULATIONS APPROVED

In a major win for the public's right-to-know about the environment, the **Department of Natural Resources Board** recently approved new regulations mandating labels on outfalls of pipes that discharge treated sewage and industrial wastes into state waters. This initiative, a Riverkeeper priority for the past several years, gained momentum last spring when the DNR Board asked EPD to draft new notification regulations covering sewage spills and to also consider posting signs with emergency contact information at the outfalls of permitted wastewater discharges. Despite vigorous opposition from the Georgia Chamber of Commerce, the Georgia Textile Manufacturers Association and several other industry groups, the DNR Board voted unanimously to support this measure which calls for the pipe labeling signs to be erected within 12 months—by November 2002. Each sign must contain the permit number, type of discharge and state emergency phone number. Pipes discharging treated sewage must also be labeled with the name and phone number of the permittee for use in emergency situations. Special thanks to **Altamaha Riverkeeper, GA PIRG, Sierra Club, The Georgia Conservancy** and others for helping make Georgia the fifth state in the country to enact these important right-to-know requirements.

Permit #12345
Treated Wastewater Discharge
City of Mayberry: 770-123-4567
EPD Emergency Contact:
1-800-123-4567



AUDIT HIGHLY CRITICAL OF STATE EROSION CONTROL PROGRAMS

DNR Board Adopts Plan for Improvement

Twenty-six years ago, state legislators passed a law to control soil erosion and sedimentation from land disturbing activities associated with construction. The goal—keep drinking water and recreation sources clean and protect the ecology of the state's rivers, streams and lakes. More than half a dozen statutory amendments and a federal general stormwater permit later, Georgia's erosion control program remains critically ineffective, according to a recent audit.

In accordance with a request made by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Board last January, the state Department of Audits conducted a major evaluation of the state's erosion control program which was released in September. *This audit confirms that erosion and the resultant sedimentation have a detrimental impact on the quality of Georgia's waters, including:*

- a reduction in the storage capacity of reservoirs and an **increase in the cost of treating water** to meet standards;
- an **increase in the level of harmful microorganisms and toxic compounds** that are present in the water (as a result of being transported on the surface of the sediment);
- a loss of spawning sites, gill clogging and **oxygen depletion for aquatic life**;
- an **increase in the cost of power generation** resulting from the scouring of turbine blades; and
- a decrease in the aesthetic attraction of water resources, with a corresponding **decrease in property values**.

Once sediment has entered a stream, it may take decades for it to finally be transported to the oceans. During the past 10 years, Georgia's population increased 26% from 6.5 to 8.1 million people. Within the 13-county metropolitan Atlanta area, however, the population increased 39%! This concentration of development in the northern part of the state, the headwaters for Georgia's major river basins, is resulting in high levels of erosion and sedimentation.

Basically, the Laws Aren't Being Enforced!

The performance audit concluded that "action should be taken to develop a more effective system for protecting state waters from sedimentation caused by land disturbing activities". Major problems that were uncovered include:

- Lack of a single state agency to be held accountable for the sediment entering state waters, and lack of sufficient state personnel to enforce existing laws;
- Failure by local governments to conduct routine site inspections or take enforcement actions and fully implement erosion control laws, typically due to lack of resources and political will;
- Failure of the state to require local governments to demonstrate that they have sufficient resources to implement an effective program as a condition of being certified to issue land disturbance permits;
- Inadequate oversight of locally certified programs, with no real consequences for those whose programs are deficient;
- Failure to maintain data to determine if the state's erosion program is achieving its purpose;
- Failure to require that builders and developers obtain training in erosion control procedures and
- Failure to adequately respond to, and resolve, citizen complaints.

User Fees Recommended to Fund State Program Implementation

The good news is that the audit and materials presented by the state Environmental Protection Division (EPD) to the DNR Board have ignited interest in making improvements to the state's erosion control programs. *The question remains whether or not this Board will take the bold steps*



Bulldozer digs ditch for Eagle Golf Course water withdrawal.

necessary to fix all the breaks in the system. At its October meeting, the DNR Board did approve a phased approach that recommends changes in governance structure, program funding, certification of erosion plan designers, reviewers and inspectors, mandatory stop work orders and other initiatives. The Board approved the possibility of pursuing "narrowly focused" legislation in 2002 in an interim bill covering user fees, certification and stop work orders.

The majority of the DNR Board also voted to take strong action against the counties and cities whose erosion programs were deemed to be "poor" (Wheeler, Caswell, Rutland and Taylor voted *against* this motion.). EPD was tasked with reporting back to the Board at its December meeting with a plan to take such action.

For a copy of the Erosion Audit, contact Paul Bernhard at 404-657-5220. For a copy of the DNR Board's action on this topic, call 404-656-3500.

Chattahoochee Counties with "Poor" Erosion Programs:

White	Forsyth	Coweta
Harris	Troup	Heard
	Lumpkin	

Chattahoochee Cities without Updated Erosion Ordinances:

Palmetto	East Point	Cornelia
Grantville	Berkley Lake	

Source: EPD

Promoting River Stewardship Throughout the Watershed

Corporate Leadership on Restoration Projects

This fall we have been busy restoring the river alongside our corporate sponsors and the **National Park Service**. Our first army of volunteers came to us through **Turner Volunteer Day** on September 29, when we were able to plant over 200 trees in the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area's Abbott's Bridge site. The following Saturday, with a group of over 150 volunteers gathered for Hands on Atlanta Day and Rivers Alive from **Coca-Cola**, **Six Continents** and **EDS**, the NPS once again hosted as we our successfully planted 1500 trees, pulled hundreds of invading privet plants and conducted other restoration activities. Thanks to all of our corporate partners for your hard work!

Rivers Alive!

Throughout the month of October, several events were held to celebrate Rivers Alive—the annual Georgia River Cleanup Month. During the month of

October more than 100 cleanups were held in streams, rivers, lakes and wetlands from the Chattahoochee River in the Atlanta area to the Flint River in Albany.



Volunteers floated down the Hooch on GEO's boats to remove trash from the banks of the river. Photo courtesy of Geoff Wallace.

On Saturday, October 20th, more than 45 volunteers from Riverkeeper, **Fulton County Water Quality Program**, **National Park Service**, **Bank of America**, **Parsons Engineering**, **Georgia Environmental Organization (GEO)**, and **American Red Cross Youth** pitched in to remove over 55 bags of trash and debris. Volunteers were able to access garbage by floating down the Hooch in GEO's rubber boats or gather trash along the trails of the Island Ford Unit of the Chattahoochee National Recreation Area.

Lake Lanier Aquatic Learning Center

A very special thanks to **Aqualand Marina's General Manager Kirby Scheimann** for allowing in-kind dock space for the **Chota Princess** at Aqualand.

This fall, 25 trips have been booked aboard the **Chota Princess** for more than 800 students in grades 4-12. To date, more than 3,700 students have participated in water quality studies at LLALC since the program began in 2000.

REI Stewardship Trunks

Riverkeeper is very excited to be one of four organizations selected nationally for the **REI "Great Places"** grant award. This generous grant will provide River Stewardship Kits to 20 schools—reaching



Riverkeeper Director of Education Kristi Rose accepts a check for \$20,000 from Marc Reich, REI Atlanta Store Manager and Tim Black, REI Specialty Shop Coordinator at a kick-off celebration. Photo courtesy of Kent Ruby

approximately 2,000 students—throughout the Upper Chattahoochee Watershed. Kits will include monitoring supplies, stream activities, river videos, and additional

water quality resources for students to learn the importance of protecting our water resources. Teachers participating in the program will be trained how to use the monitoring equipment in the trunk with hopes that these schools will provide consistent monitoring data of their local waterways.

Riverkeeper Youth Program Continues to Promote an Ethic of Stewardship

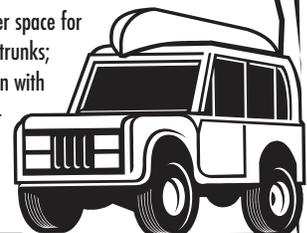
For its third consecutive year, the **Riverkeeper Youth Program** continues to provide innovative environmental education programs for more than 3,000 children in Fulton County districts four and seven. This year, children will participate in boat rides on the Chattahoochee, fishing tournaments, local nature center tours and adopt-a-stream activities to foster a greater appreciation of



Students in Horizons Student Enrichment Program at Holy Innocents School participate in a "Let's Go Fishing" event. Photo courtesy of Rick Blackwell

Heavy Duty Vehicle Needed

Our Atlanta office needs a vehicle for conducting water monitoring, site investigations, event set-ups, education trips and as a prime mover for patrol boat and canoes. Vehicle needs passenger space for six and a minimum cargo space for four large trunks; plus, it needs to have an automatic transmission with towing package. If you are interested in donating a vehicle of this type, please call Bill Crawford at 404-352-9828, ext. 14 or email bcrawford@ucriverkeeper.org



BACTERIALERT

Continued from page 1

measured instantaneously. This will allow resource managers and the public to make a *real-time* determination



Riverkeeper staff member Birgit Bolton collects water sample at the Paces Ferry site.
Photo by Joe Cook

as to whether or not bacteria concentrations in the Chattahoochee may pose a threat to human health. We expect that this Program is just the first component of a much larger, comprehensive water quality monitoring network for the Upper Chattahoochee River watershed, which has already been scoped by the USGS.

Monitoring, thus far, has revealed two interesting items:

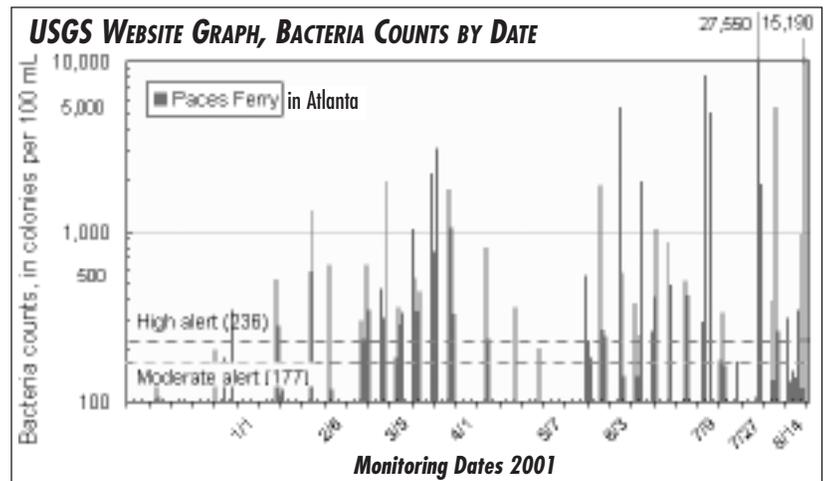
- Bacteria levels during normal and dry periods are lower than one might intuitively expect, given the number of wastewater discharges and non-point source pollution impacts to the Chattahoochee as it flows through the CRNRA, and
- Bacteria levels following rain events are extremely high, often exceeding the 236 bacteria colonies per 100 milliliters of water "safe standard" established by the U.S. EPA, by more than 100 times. (see graph spike, right, for 7/27/01)

Every time it rains, Atlanta's aging and broken sewer pipes and manholes typically overflow with untreated sewage that, along with storm runoff from city streets, yards and farms, pollutes the river with billions of gallons of bacteria-laden rainwater. This problem is evident throughout metro Atlanta, not just within the city.

Eleventh Hour Funding Supports Monitoring Through 2002

Despite the BacteriALERT Program's obvious utility, it was almost terminated this fall, due to a lack of funding. While the NPS and Riverkeeper committed to continue their in-kind contributions to the Program, the USGS, who provided the initial "start-up" financial support in 2000, could only commit a portion of an additional year's operating budget due to financial constraints. Enter the **Trust for Public Land** and the **Georgia Environmental Protection Division**, who directed much-needed monies to the Program, not only guaranteeing its continuance, but also allowing NPS to add a third monitoring site at Johnson's Ferry Road to the Program's scope. Thanks also to **The Georgia Conservancy** for helping to advocate additional funding and for supporting the Partnership for Regional Liveability, out of which the Program grew.

Riverkeeper is proud to be part of such an innovative initiative, one that promotes public-private cooperation and a greater public understanding of, and investment in, the health of the Chattahoochee River and its viability as a recreational resource.



Ed Martin, USGS District Chief, Calls Public-Private Partnership Exemplary

One of the principal architects of the Chattahoochee BacteriALERT is **Ed Martin**, Georgia District Chief for the USGS. A native of Little Rock, Arkansas, Ed holds BS and MS degrees in Civil Engineering from Louisiana Tech and Colorado State Universities, respectively. Ed has been with the USGS since 1976, working with that agency in Florida and Louisiana before taking the helm of the Georgia District in 1998. In his free time, Ed, his wife Diane, and their two sons enjoy outdoor activities including hiking, mountain biking, and especially canoeing on the Chattahoochee River.

Of the Chattahoochee BacteriALERT, Ed says: "The BacteriALERT System is an innovative partnership that includes a diverse group of public and private agencies and organizations. It is the best example I know of the positive, worthwhile, and effective programs that can be accomplished when agencies and stakeholders work together." Riverkeeper greatly appreciates Ed's efforts, as well as those of his highly capable staff, to develop and promote sound, scientific information about the health of the Chattahoochee River.

HOLIDAY SUGGESTIONS FROM RIVERKEEPER STORE

Prices include sales tax, box and free freight

River Song A Journey down the Chattahoochee and Apalachicola Rivers by Joe & Monica Cook

"River Song is an engaging travelogue, a gorgeous photographic portfolio, and a call to action for those who care about this endangered waterway." \$40

Songwriters Riverkeepers CD

A collection of songs by local artists to benefit Upper Chattahoochee Riverkeeper. Features Bill Kahler's, *The River Runs Through Me*. \$10

The Riverkeeper's Guide To The Chattahoochee

By Fred Brown and Sherri M. L. Smith and the "Chatsworth" river cap, a holiday special at a member price of \$15

The Flint River by Fred Brown and Sherri M. L. Smith

A recreational guidebook to the Flint River and environs. Includes preface by Jimmy Carter and A Book within a Book, Rio's Guide to How Rivers Work \$25

Wildflowers of the Watershed Series # 1 Mug

Ceramic mug with art by Monica Cook with Upper Chattahoochee Riverkeeper logo. A collector's item for every member! \$10

To order: email bcrawford@ucriverkeeper.org or call 404-352-9828 ext 14 or fax us at 404-352-8676
Credit cards accepted

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

November 29, 2001, REI Perimeter, 7-9 PM

Dear Members,

You are cordially invited to the annual membership meeting to be held this year at REI's Perimeter store. The date is Thursday, November 29 and the time is 7-9 PM.

This year's program will include a presentation by the **Georgia Canoeing**

Association titled "Paddling in Georgia with the GCA, a greeting from Sally Bethea, our Executive Director, and a visit from the "River Rookie", a story teller who will introduce the Watershed Patch Project to our watershed schools.

Refreshments will be served and items like Joe & Monica Cook's *River Song* will be available for sale at the Riverkeeper table. In addition, **REI is offering our members a discount for the evening. At 8:45, there will be a raffle of an REI paddling jacket.**

You will find the Riverkeeper booth and table at the rear of the store. Presentations will be given in the room just behind the booth.



The River Rookie storyteller in action with a young student.

Membership up for renewal? Please send it in today!

BECOME A MEMBER OF THE UPPER CHATTAHOOCHEE RIVERKEEPER

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$10 Student | <input type="checkbox"/> \$35 Family | <input type="checkbox"/> \$500 Steward |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$25 Individual | <input type="checkbox"/> \$100 Protector | <input type="checkbox"/> Other \$ _____ |

A contribution of \$_____ is made to reserve a membership for:

Name _____

Address _____

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email _____

Please make checks payable to: **Upper Chattahoochee Riverkeeper** or charge to your credit card.

Contributions are tax deductible. Riverkeeper is a 501(c)(3) organization. Your gift will be acknowledged by letter.

Quarterly newsletters are provided to our members. Please visit our website at www.chattahoochee.org. Members receive discounts on our merchandise.

Upper Chattahoochee Riverkeeper
1900 Emery St. Suite 450
Atlanta, GA 30318

Credit Card

Amex Master Card Visa

No: _____

Exp: _____ Month

_____ Year

ACTION ALERT!

MAKE IT EASIER FOR ALL GEORGIANS TO GET INVOLVED IN ENVIRONMENTAL DECISIONS

- Do you want better information on state decisions on environmental issues?
- Have you found it difficult to get documents from the State Department of Natural Resources (DNR)?
- Is 25 cents per copy excessive for a public document?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, or have other public participation related complaints, please get involved in the DNR public participation stakeholder process and encourage DNR to make public participation more "people" friendly.

New DNR Public Participation Committee Convenes

In May 2001, DNR's Board directed DNR Commissioner Lonice Barrett to create a stakeholder committee to address public participation issues in response to a memo submitted by **Turner Environmental Law Clinic** and the **Georgia Center for Law in the Public Interest** on behalf of Riverkeeper and others. The memo highlighted several problems within one of DNR's most active divisions, the Environmental Protection Division (EPD). The committee will meet several times over the next three months to discuss and provide recommendations to improve DNR's contact with the public.

Barriers to Engaging the Public

A key concern is that the current process has barriers that inhibit citizens, particularly minority and rural communities, from understanding and participating in decisions that will directly impact their communities. For example, if you wish to copy a document in EPD's files, EPD charges \$.25 per page—over three times the market rate for copies. Some questions the committee will address include:

- Who is the public and what is meaningful communication?
- How can public notices and public meetings and hearings be improved?
- How can DNR balance obligations to the public with its many other obligations?

Voice Your Concerns and Ideas to the Committee

Julie Mayfield, Director of the Turner Clinic, and Justine Thompson, Director of the Georgia Center, are two of the environmental representatives on the committee. **If you have public participation stories, concerns or ideas, email Julie at jmayfie@law.emory.edu, or Justine at jthompson@cleangeorgia.org.**



Reclaiming Our River

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

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Address Service Requested

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