

RIVERCHAT

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF UPPER CHATTAHOOCHEE RIVERKEEPER

Sewage in Neighborhood Streams

ARE ATLANTA'S CSO TREATMENT FACILITIES REALLY WORKING?

When it rains, they pour. Thousands, sometimes millions, of gallons of raw and undertreated sewage and sanitary and household hazardous wastes, mixed with stormwater, flow out of "combined storm and sewer overflows" (CSOs). They enter Atlanta's creeks and ultimately the Chattahoochee River—as they have for close to three decades.

Five CSOs in Atlanta spew pollutants through City neighborhoods into Utoy, Clear, Proctor and Tanyard Creeks—all tributaries of the Chattahoochee. Although state law required Atlanta to treat CSO discharges to levels that "meet the water quality standards of the receiving streams" by December 1993, there is *still* no treatment at Utoy and Clear Creeks and minimal treatment at the remaining three CSOs. The state Environmental Pro-

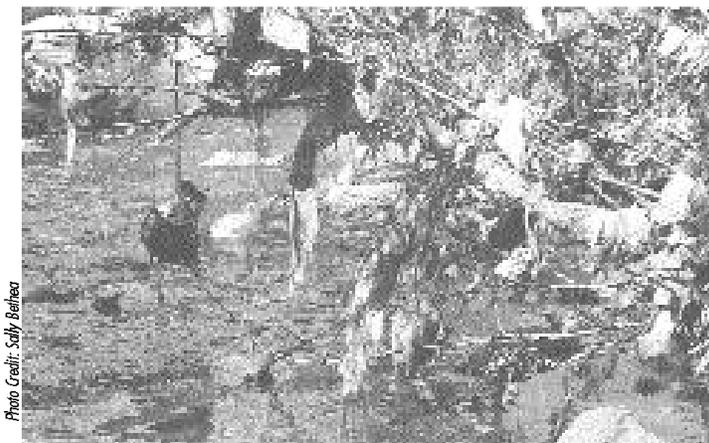


Photo Credit: Sally Beebe

Toilet paper, condoms, and other sanitary waste line Clear Creek near Ansley Mall.

tection Division (EPD) has fined Atlanta for failing to complete the two treatment facilities, with a new mandate and higher fines (\$20,000 per day) levied in 1996 by state legislators.

What few people realize is that the three CSO treatment facilities on Proctor and Tanyard Creeks, completed in 1994, aren't doing the job. The City's

own records show that these facilities have discharged pollutants at levels that are *millions* of times above water quality standards. With minimal screen-and-chlorinate treatment, the City says it did not expect that toxins and metals would be prevented from entering the Chattahoochee from CSOs.

It is particularly disturbing and unacceptable that the pollution from these CSOs is entering a major drinking water supply source—the Chattahoochee River basin. While CSO dis-

charges are located *below* the drinking water intakes for Gwinnett, Forsyth, and Cobb Counties and the City of Atlanta, they are unfortunately located *above* the drinking water intakes for more than one million Georgians in cities such as LaGrange, West Point, and Columbus.

"Cesspool Theory" Of Sewage Treatment

The City says that since our urban streams are already polluted, the law doesn't require it to reduce pollutants from CSOs. According to the City, the legal standards don't apply when discharging into already polluted streams. We call this the "cesspool theory of sewage treatment." Twenty years of federal Clean Water Act enforcement and letters from the U.S. EPA support Riverkeeper's belief that the City's position is wrong. The City of Columbus, for example, has been able to construct and operate a CSO treatment facility which *does* meet water quality standards.

See CSOs, page 6

THE RIVER MATTERS

Annual Membership Meeting

6-8 PM Riverkeeper Office.

Adopt-a-Stream Workshop

Chemical monitoring at Chattahoochee Nature Center

Riverkeeper Brown Bag Lunch

"The 'Lower' Chattahoochee-Apalachicola River and Bay"

Town Hall Meeting in Cornelia

Ga. Water Resources Conference—Athens

Call 706-542-3063 for information

November 25

December 7

January 24

January 28

March 20-22



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

member RIVERKEEPER during the holidays— memberships, T-shirts and posters. See page 7.

Reflections

The streams of my childhood flowed through woods in what was then—in the late 1950s and early 1960s—the outskirts of Atlanta on the edge of Buckhead. Before Lenox Square. Before Phipps Plaza and Niketown. These streams were clear and filled with life. And they were safe for me and my friends to explore.

Like many of you, I spent hours skipping rocks, catching crawfish, salamanders and tadpoles, and sailing leaf and stick boats. I tested the strength of frozen ponds on cold winter days, and listened to the gurgling water flowing downstream towards the river. Competing with neighborhood children, I built rock dams, jumped across the creeks, and tried to fish.

Last summer I visited these streams again for the first time in many years, and wished I had not. Filled with mud and sluggishly moving water and trash, they now serve only to carry away the unwanted by-products of urbanization, not to entice children to explore and learn.

Most of our urban streams have become little more than polluted ditches, or they are lost forever in underground pipes. Some carry toilet paper and other bathroom wastes from broken sewer lines and combined sewer overflows, and sediment loads, trash from city streets and industrial toxins.

I caution my children to avoid the stream running through the city park in front of our house. They learn about nature from television and from trips outside the city.

Fortunately, individuals and community groups are beginning to take responsibility for the condition of their waterways by monitoring them, removing trash, and demanding that government agencies enforce clean water laws to stop pollution. And, for what better reason than to make sure that future generations can safely skip rocks, fish, and race leaf boats in their own neighborhoods.

Sally Bethea

RIVERKEEPER

RIVER GUARDIANS, SPONSORS AND FRIENDS WELCOME ROBERT F. KENNEDY, JR.

In early October, Riverkeeper hosted a patron appreciation dinner at CANOE Restaurant featuring **Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.** and Hudson Riverkeeper **John Cronin** as speakers, and a presentation by photographers **Joe and Monica Cook**.

Special thanks to River Guardian Sponsors: **Cox Enterprises, Inc., Great American Cookie Co., King & Spalding, Merrill Lynch, Post Properties, Inc., Price Waterhouse, Beau Turner**, and the **Turner Foundation**.

Additional River Sponsors included: **Captain Planet Foundation, Lawson, Davis, & Pickren, Scientific Games Inc., Paul B. and Mildred Seydel Foundation, Seydel International, Smith, Gambrell & Russell, Susan and Walton Smith, Susan and Ken Tepper, The Marcus Foundation**, and **Trinity Title Insurance Agency, Inc.**

Riverkeeper's annual benefit will be held next spring—look for announcements!



Robert Kennedy Jr. accompanies Riverkeeper General Counsel David Moore and Captain Harlan Trammell on a ride down the Chattahoochee.

David Pope Leads Offense Against Atlanta

Environmental lawyers experienced in plaintiff representation are few and far between in Georgia. Riverkeeper was fortunate to snare one of the best in early 1994 when David Pope agreed to take a position on our Board of Directors.



David Pope

Widely recognized for his skills in environmental law and toxic torts, Mr. Pope's practice includes representation of individual property owners, environmental groups, local governments and businesses in a wide range of environmental matters. After graduation from the University of Florida (where he quarterbacked the Gators), Pope received his J.D. degree from the University of North Carolina.

As lead attorney in Riverkeeper's federal lawsuit against the City of Atlanta, David Pope has capably demonstrated his legal abilities in a complex and challenging case. He says, "The only way our natural resources will be there for our children is

if we protect them now. It is an honor to be on Riverkeeper's Board of Directors and have the opportunity to represent the organization in its efforts to protect our environment." David enjoys coaching his sons' youth sports teams and spending time with his wife Vicki and sons at their beach house in Florida.



THE RIVERKEEPER STAFF

Sally Bethea—Executive Director and Riverkeeper
David Moore—General Counsel
Alice Champagne—Adopt-a-Stream Coordinator
& Assistant To The Riverkeeper
Mary Johnson—Staff Attorney and Permit
Monitoring Project
Katherine Baer—Headwaters Project
Susan Smith—Office Manager
Harlan Trammell—Boat Captain
Dana Poole—Proctor Creek Project
Donahue Studios—*River Chat* design
Caub Communications—*River Chat* production

The Docket

RIVERKEEPER'S LEGAL ACTION PROGRAM

DEFENDANT

BACKGROUND

STATUS

CITY OF ATLANTA
(FEDERAL CASE)

Atlanta's sewer overflows continue to discharge pollutants including sewage into the Chattahoochee River; Atlanta's sewage treatment plants show new violations of fecal coliform limitations. A recent "accident" nearly washed Sally Bethea and reporter Bill Schultz down the river with 500,000 gallons of untreated sewage.

City witnesses testify that CSO monitoring and reporting is even more shabby and lax than Riverkeeper previously thought. City leadership is totally absent, as Atlanta refuses to meet with Riverkeeper or the State EPD on similar matters. Instead of complying with new laws, Atlanta has chosen to challenge them.

CITY OF CORNELIA
(FEDERAL CASE)

Case filed in Federal District Court on Jan. 24. Riverkeeper is seeking court ordered upgrades to the City's plant and stream restoration, and an appropriate civil penalty.

EPD issued "letter extension" purporting to give Cornelia another nine months to complete upgrades which City testified will take six months. Ammonia levels are 20-30 times the "toxic" limit.

CITY OF CORNELIA
(STATE CASE)

Ammonia/nitrogen discharges into Mud Creek continue to be very high. Fifth consent order issued by EPD expired May 30, and City failed to comply with its requirements. Toxic condition in South Fork of Mud Creek continues and EPD reports document twenty years of environmental problems with discharges from the Cornelia plant.

At hearing before Superior Court Judge Alice Bonner, State claimed Cornelia's ammonia discharges cause "no harm" to the environment, despite 20 years of EPD tests showing toxicity. Judge Bonner has requested a rehearing on EPD's failure to notify the public.

FIELDALE FARMS

Fieldale Farms owns a chicken processing/rendering plant which discharges into the City of Cornelia sewage treatment plant, accounting for up to 80% of the pollutant loading for that plant. Fieldale's permit states that its discharges cannot cause violations at the Cornelia plant.

Fieldale is working with Riverkeeper to establish a multi-year Mud Creek study plan, to be funded by Fieldale and which may be complete by next newsletter.

EPD's "Secret" Enforcement Orders Waive Pollution Limits

Good government is open and accessible. Georgia's Environmental Protection Division (EPD) does not always practice this seemingly simple concept. Public interest groups like Riverkeeper must spend thousands of dollars in increased file review and investigation costs to seek the truth. And, the public pays in more pollution in our waterways, poorer drinking water quality and greater water treatment expense due to "backroom deals" cut by state officials.

Federal and state laws require that the public be given an opportunity to participate in decision-making regarding our natural resources. The Georgia Center for Law in the Public Interest reported last year *over two dozen* instances where EPD's "secret" enforcement orders waived pollution limits in publicly distributed permits. The public never knew.

One of those instances is the City of Cornelia (see Docket above), where EPD recently issued another extension, the

sixth such "enforcement" action. As a result, Cornelia may go a full five years discharging toxic ammonia into Mud Creek in Habersham County, without any limit or any penalty or enforcement.

Even though Riverkeeper regularly reviews files at five EPD offices, and despite repeated phone calls, Cornelia's most recent extension was kept hidden, even from EPD's own Attorney General's office. EPD wrote Riverkeeper to say that no action had been taken on Cornelia some 11 days *after* giving Cornelia another extension on permit compliance.

Riverkeeper and others should not be required to sue the state to uncover these backroom deals. Our tax dollars are already paying the EPD to protect the environment. We should not have to pay again to review EPD's files to find out about these deals that often delay much-needed solutions to environmental problems.

STREAM LINES

\$400,000 GRANTED TO CONTROL EROSION FROM URBAN DEVELOPMENT

Fine money paid by the City of Atlanta for pollution of the Chattahoochee River will be used for projects to benefit downstream communities. Thanks to action by **Sen. Steve Langford, Sen. Clay Land** and others during the 1996 General Assembly, \$2.7 million was earmarked and eight projects were recently approved for funding by the Ga. EPD.

At the top of both Riverkeeper's and EPD's lists was a \$400,000 request by the Chat-Flint Regional Development Center to support the work of Dirt Panel II. This diverse stakeholder group convened by Lt. Governor Pierre Howard is charged with developing practical, cost-effective, and performance-based best management practices (BMPs) to control soil erosion from urban development.

The \$400,000 grant, long advocated by Riverkeeper, brings much-needed resources to Dirt Panel II Chair Dr. Ben Dysart and panel members.

The grant enables Dirt Panel II to:

- Develop common-sense guidance for developers;
- Identify the most economical erosion

prevention and sediment control systems that protect waterways;

- Conduct computer modeling of erosion control techniques;
- Create a demonstration video; and
- Offer technical outreach/training programs to educate the development community and others regarding erosion prevention.

RIVERKEEPER GETS MORE TESTING AT GWINNETT'S PROPOSED SEWAGE PLANT

Riverkeeper and Gwinnett County recently sent a joint letter to EPD requesting that the discharge permit for the County's proposed wastewater treatment plant include additional water quality testing requirements. This joint letter agreement is the result of Riverkeeper negotiating with Gwinnett County over the last year regarding the permitting of this sewage plant which will treat 20 MGD of wastewater. Gwinnett already treats 16 MGD of wastewater at its Crooked Creek facility and it proposes to pipe the additional 20 MGD to Crooked Creek where the combined effluent will be discharged into the Chattahoochee River.

While Gwinnett's new treatment plant will use state-of-the-art technologies, Riverkeeper expressed concerns about the discharge of more treated wastewater *above* the drinking water intake for the City of Atlanta as well as the increased development this new plant will bring. Riverkeeper proposed the following actions to which Gwinnett County has agreed:

- Increase **water quality testing**, at a very low cost, to better protect our drinking water supply-specifically:
 - Annual and quarterly testing for 129 priority pollutants;
 - Quarterly whole effluent toxicity testing;
 - Annual testing for an additional 300 toxins;*(EPD only requires the first two tests once every five years and does not require the third)*
- Consider certain **water conservation/efficiency measures** to address the increased water demands that the continuing growth will bring; and
- Develop a **BMP Stormwater Manual** which focuses on long-term, permanent solutions to runoff and erosion problems.

West Fulton Middle School's BANKHEAD ECO-PLAYERS Protect Proctor Creek

MELISSA DUFF, A SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER AT WEST FULTON MIDDLE School, grew up in rural New York in the midst of an Indian reservation surrounded by the state's dense hardwood forests.

In her childhood, those forests were inviting places. Forest and fields mean something dramatically different to the children she has taught for the past five years at West Fulton. Most live in public housing, and most are afraid of anything off pavement. In their Bankhead Road community, vacant woods and streambanks are places where drugs are dealt and where bodies are found.

"My forest is not their forest," Duff said, explaining the gulf between her childhood and her students. This kind of paradox called her to teach at the inner-city school.

"I didn't think these kids were being exposed to the things that I thought were important like learning the importance of clean water or learning to respect your natural surroundings," she said.

In April, she and her 10-member class of children with learning disabilities adopted Proctor Creek, a heavily polluted tributary of the Chattahoochee that runs through their community. Students are monitoring water quality, conducting garbage pickups along the creek, and planning streambank stabilization projects.

Their first visit to the stream was an eye opener. "They were surprised that there was that much garbage," she said. "They

thought the aquatic worms were really cool until they found out that those worms only lived in heavily polluted water."

Hands-on activities like the Adopt-a-Stream program are particularly useful learning tools for these special-needs children. Though they score high on intelligence tests, they lag behind other students because of their learning disabilities. When they return from the field, they are required to write short essays about their experiences.

Duff hopes the project will instill in her students an appreciation for their water resources, but in the impoverished neighborhood environmental concerns are a predictably low priority. "They don't think about nature much because they're wondering where their next meal is coming from," she said.

For the rest of the school year, Proctor Creek and the children who call themselves the **BANKHEAD ECO-PLAYERS** will have a unique relationship. The neglected creek will be a teacher for the children, and the children will become their teacher's protectors.



Melissa Duff

Contributed by Joe Cook

BACKYARD STREAMS NEED HELP

Adopt-A-Stream Begins at Home

There's bad news and good news for urban streams in metro Atlanta, the Chattahoochee watershed and, for that matter, throughout the country.

First the bad news: there are approximately 1,000 urban stream miles in the Chattahoochee River watershed which generally do not support their designated uses for drinking, swimming, fishing and recreation. (Reference Water Quality in Georgia: 1994-1995 Report. Also known as the 305(b) Report. See box below on how to get a copy of this report.)

Many of the 70,150 miles of streams in Georgia suffer from sediment, trash, pesticides, bacteria, fertilizers, metals, oils, and a variety of other non-point source pollution carried by stormwater. Changing the landscape by increasing impervious surfaces, modifying hydrology, removing natural vegetation, and otherwise altering natural habitats has rarely, if ever, improved water quality and routinely pollutes our waterways.

The good news: people want their streams restored to better health. They want to be able to let their children wade in backyard streams without getting sick, eat the fish they catch, and swim in rivers. They don't like the sewage smells or the "funny color" of the water and are beginning to realize that the degradation of our water resources is not "someone else's" problem. Solutions begin at home.

Individuals, civic groups and schools are participating in the Adopt-A-Stream Program by learning about their backyard creeks and taking action. They are (1) building community awareness about problems associated with pesticides, fertilizers and soil

erosion, (2) making lists of contacts for problems such as leaking sewer lines, and (3) conveying to their elected officials why clean water is important to them and their children's future.

Riverkeeper Network Unites Adopt-A-Stream Groups

During the past year, the Riverkeeper Adopt-A-Stream Network has built relationships with the **Captain Planet Foundation, Georgia's Adopt-A-Stream Program (DNR), U.S. EPA, Riverkids Network** (based in Columbus), **local governments, communities, citizens and schools.** The Network has successfully helped form eight new adopt-a-stream groups throughout the Chattahoochee watershed and recently received an Environmental Education Grant from EPA to promote watershed-based solutions and the Adopt-A-Stream program. In partnership with the Captain Planet Foundation, eight grants have been awarded to schools to purchase



Alice Champagne, Riverkeeper's Adopt-A-Stream Network Coordinator, talks "water" with school kids.

water quality monitoring equipment. A quarterly update (*Stream Chat*) is distributed to Network groups who are also connected via Riverkeeper's Web Page. For information on how to join the Network, call Alice Champagne at the Riverkeeper office—404-816-9888.

THE WATER QUALITY IN GEORGIA 1994-1995

REPORT, also known as the 305 (b) report is now available through the Georgia Environmental Protection Division. This biennial state report is required by Congress of all states. It describes water quality in Georgia and state water quality programs. Included in this report is a compilation of state waters that do not meet their designated uses. In addition to sending this report to Congress, Georgia uses it as a public information document. To get a copy of the report call the EPD Water Quality Division at 404-656-4905.

URBAN FOCUS: PROCTOR CREEK WATERSHED EDUCATIONAL INITIATIVE

Proctor Creek, a major tributary to the Chattahoochee River, is a highly urbanized, degraded stream which traverses the western portion of the City of Atlanta. Its watershed suffers from urban runoff, eroded streambanks and two combined sewer overflows (CSOs) (see page 1). The Education Initiative, managed by Project Coordinator **Dana Poole**, will introduce urban kids to the natural environment, Proctor Creek and ultimately, the Chattahoochee River. This initiative is part of an overall Proctor Creek Watershed Management & Protection Plan which includes **Riverkeeper, Carver Hills Neighborhood Association, GA EPD, City of Atlanta, Georgia Environmental Organization, the U.S. EPA** and others. The students at the six schools and the one community group who participate in the project will learn about watershed issues and incorporate science with language arts, social studies, math and community involvement.

New Grants Fund Major Headwaters Project

Riverkeeper's advocacy and education work in the Chattahoochee's Headwaters region will increase *dramatically* thanks to major funding from the **U.S. Environmental Protection Agency** and additional grants from the **Lyndhurst Foundation** and the **National Fish & Wildlife Foundation**.

Portions of Hall, Lumpkin, Habersham and White Counties, and slivers of Union, Towns and Rabun Counties are drained by the uppermost tributaries of the Chattahoochee River (see map). This "Headwaters" area, lying within the mountainous Blue Ridge and the lower Piedmont physiographic provinces, contains a mixture of land uses, including agriculture, rural residential, manufacturing and commercial development. Streams support reproducing populations of rainbow, brown and brook trout.

Primary water quality problems in the headwaters are due to erosion and sedimentation, elevated fecal coliform (bacteria) and temperature levels with the principal causes of this pollution being nonpoint sources and urban runoff.

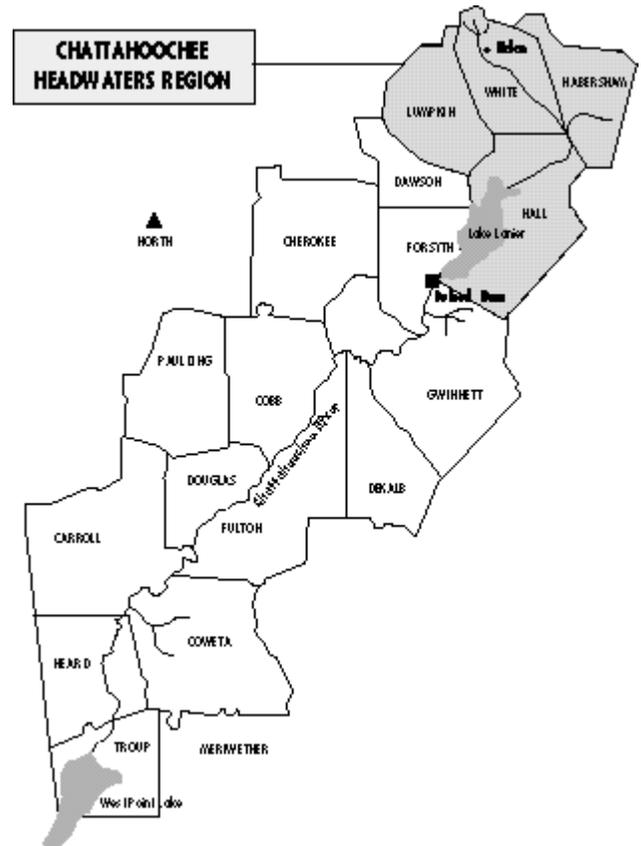
Riverkeeper's Headwaters Riparian Restoration and Education Project will address water quality problems in a multi-year effort which will focus on:

- Demonstrating the value of functioning riparian (streamside) zones in protecting stream health,
- Assisting interested communities in designing and implementing stream restoration projects, and
- Developing locally-based, county-specific educational programs for community groups, schools, developers and local decision-makers.

The project will result in a "road map" for restoration and protection efforts in the Chattahoochee's Headwaters region. To achieve project objectives, Riverkeeper will collaborate with the U.S. EPA, Ga. Department of Natural Resources, local governments, the Ga. Mountains RDC, private landowners, fisheries biologists, Trout Unlimited, the University of Georgia, North Georgia College,

Gainesville College, Soil and Water Conservation Districts, local whitewater outfitters, and the U.S. Forest Service.

Katherine Baer, a recent graduate of UGA's Masters Program in Conservation Biology with extensive experience in field work and policy analysis, has been hired to serve as Riverkeeper's Project Manager. Katherine will be based in Gainesville, within the Headwaters area.



Are CSOs Really Working?

Continued from page 1

While spending thousands each month on fines for the two uncompleted treatment facilities and a cool million on a watershed study which conspicuously fails to test water quality around CSOs, the City has spent *minimal* resources and effort monitoring the three on-line CSO treatment facilities to determine if they are operating properly and in compliance with their permits.

A major problem: Atlanta is required to test the CSO facilities only once every three times it rains and a discharge occurs. That means it will take three times as long to secure sufficient data and work towards solving treatment problems. City (and state) personnel have said that the sampling plan currently being implemented provides meaningless information. Our conclusion: the City's data collection efforts are misleading.

Federal Lawsuit Attempts to Solve CSO Problems

Riverkeeper and 11 downstream plaintiffs filed suit in federal court in 1995 in an attempt to resolve problems with the CSO facilities, but a lack of City leadership has stalled settlement negotiations. The plaintiffs have spent thousands of dollars in this legal action, yet our efforts to negotiate a solution have been called "annoying" by at least one City attorney.

The City's "head-in-the-sand" approach fails to protect the public and will delay solving the CSO pollution problem. Instead of spending taxpayer money on lawyers, fines and studies that conspicuously avoid CSO discharges, the City should develop a scientifically sound monitoring plan and sample the CSOs during each rain event. Riverkeeper would be more than willing to work jointly with the City on such a project.

It is disappointing that Georgia's Olympic city would rather fight the law than try to comply with it, particularly when compliance could improve our quality of life, our drinking water supply, and the environment.

HOTLINE Tips Turn The Tide

Each year, the Riverkeeper HOTLINE receives hundreds of calls reporting environmental problems in the Chattahoochee watershed. These reports involve issues such as developments proposed for environmentally sensitive areas, soil erosion resulting from urban construction, and sewage leaks. We provide advice on ways to solve these problems and encourage the caller to take action. In cases which are particularly serious and/or are likely to set a precedent, Riverkeeper becomes actively involved.

Following are Riverkeeper cases which came in on our HOTLINE:

- In Habersham County, a landowner channelized a large section of Porters Mill Branch, removed streamside vegetation, and damaged adjacent wetlands. The Corps of Engineers has taken an enforcement action requiring stream restoration and other mitigation measures.
- An unnamed tributary to Proctor Creek in south Atlanta was blue-black with pollution and filled with bacteria strands due to chronic sewage overflow problems. The City has finally repaired the damaged sewer lines and the stream health has significantly improved.
- A talc mining operation in Lumpkin County loaded Cavendar Creek, a trout stream, with sediment, decreasing property values for adjacent landowners. The mining company has installed erosion control measures.
- A fire at a composting facility in Cobb County resulted in a discharge of toxic materials and a massive fish kill. The state has taken an enforcement action to review the facility's stormwater control plan and repay the state for lost fisheries and other aquatic species.
- In Robertstown (White County), a leaking underground storage tank resulted in saturation of the riverbank and gasoline seepage into the Chattahoochee. A multi-year cleanup was initiated in 1995; 5,500 gallons of gasoline and 700,000 gallons of contaminated groundwater have been removed.

IF YOU OBSERVE A THREAT TO OUR RIVER:

- (1) **Document** the problem with a photograph or video, without trespassing on private property.
- (2) **Record** your observations in writing, including the date, time of day and other pertinent information.
- (3) **Call** the Riverkeeper at 404-816-9888 and we will help investigate and contact the appropriate government agency.

"WATER WARS" Study Extended

A second one-year extension has been granted for the \$15 million comprehensive study of the Apalachicola-Chattahoochee-Flint (ACF) and Alabama-Coosa-Talapoosa (ACT) River basins, originally anticipated for completion September 1995 and now to be concluded by September 1997.

In the meantime, Georgia, Alabama, and Florida are drafting enabling legislation to create an interstate compact. This legislation will be presented to the three state legislatures during the first half of 1997 and subsequently to the U.S. Congress for ratification. Georgia's willingness to enter into a compact and create an interstate commission authorized to make basinwide management decisions was quite a surprise to "water war" observers.

Riverkeeper and others are working to ensure that the compact legislation contains language supporting a "conservation vision" which fully embraces environmental and ecological concerns. (See *River Chat*, Summer 1996.)

Membership up for renewal? Please send it in today!

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Contributions to the Upper Chattahoochee Riverkeeper Fund are tax-deductible.

Riverkeeper is a 501(c)(3) organization. Quarterly newsletters are provided to members and other subscribers.



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ACTION ALERT

State's Water Program Not Meeting Minimal Standards

Georgia's water programs are underfunded and understaffed. A District Court recently found it would take "OVER 100 YEARS" to complete water quality studies required to be done by 1980. Other problems with Georgia's Environmental Protection Division's ("EPD") water program include: lack of enforcement (see page 1), denial of citizens' rights to participate in protecting their resources (see page 3), and failure to respond to citizen

concerns. EPD's problems could cause the U.S. EPA to strip the State of its permitting and enforcement authority.

The state's delay has resulted in more pollution of our rivers, streams and lakes, and a lack of information on water quality throughout the state. Historically, the Georgia legislature has not adequately supported the EPD's water programs.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Tell your state representatives and Governor Miller that it's time to get serious about addressing water quality in Georgia:

- Increase EPD's funding for water quality studies and enforcement.
- Lower the tax burden on citizens through WASTEWATER FEES, which place the cost of regulation on those who discharge wastewater rather than citizens and which are collected in Florida, Alabama, Tennessee, North and South Carolina.
- Stop cuts to EPD's aquatic biomonitoring and laboratory programs.

Call your Georgia Representative at: 800-282-5800 or 404-656-5082;

Georgia Senator at: 800-282-5803 or 404-656-0028;

Write Rep. or Sen. _____, Georgia House of Representatives or Georgia Senate, State Capitol, Atlanta, GA 30334

Write Governor Miller, State Capitol, Atlanta, Georgia 30334

Call your county voter registration office to identify your state representatives.



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