

## CHATTAHOOCHEE NAMED THIRD MOST-ENDANGERED BY AMERICAN RIVERS

For the second time since **American Rivers** began ranking the nation's threatened rivers, the Chattahoochee has made the group's annual **Most Endangered Rivers** list. The river was ranked third on their list because of significant environmental and economic threats posed by two reservoirs: Glades Reservoir, proposed for the headwaters above Lake Lanier (Hall County), and Bear Creek Reservoir, proposed for a Chattahoochee tributary downstream of Atlanta (Fulton County).

"The America's Most Endangered Rivers report is a call to action to save rivers that are facing a critical tipping point," said Jenny Hoffner, Water Supply Director for American Rivers. "We all need healthy rivers for our drinking water, health, economy, and quality of life. We hope citizens will join us to ensure a healthy Chattahoochee River and secure water supply for generations to come."

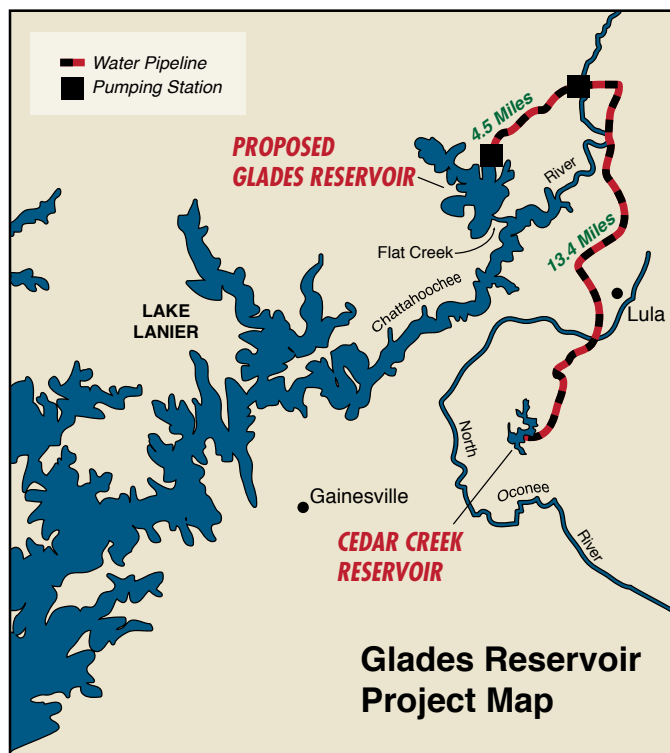
Proponents point to a need for more reservoirs to accommodate future growth. However, current U.S. Census and employment data do not bolster their argument, because growth has slowed and the economy remains stagnant. Nonetheless, reservoir proponents continue to rely on inflated estimates of population and economic growth to overstate future water demand.

"These dams are being sold as critical water supply projects, but they always have been planned as amenity lakes designed to benefit a few private landowners," said CRK's Sally Bethea. "The environmental damage is not only irreversible, but also avoidable when one considers other options such as conservation and better management of existing reservoirs. With a price tag in the hundreds of millions of dollars at a time when local governments are struggling, these projects also are fiscally irresponsible."

### Threat to downstream fisheries, economy

In the late 1990s, American Rivers included the Chattahoochee on the Most Endangered

Rivers list because of the water quality problems associated with sewer overflows. Since then, CRK and others have made great progress cleaning up our river to support fishing, recreation, drinking water, and other uses. The 2012 listing by American Rivers highlights the need to ensure not only that our water is clean but also plentiful enough for ourselves and for future generations.



Impounding our rivers reduces flows, harming downstream communities and uses, including fish, wildlife, recreation, water quality, and power generation.

For example, the Chattahoochee provides one of the nation's most abundant trout streams in North America. "Consistent, cold, clean instream flows are required to sustain this unique urban fishery which is both a recreational and economic resource for the Atlanta Metro area," said Kevin McGrath, President of the **Upper Chattahoochee Chapter of Trout Unlimited**.

Steve Farace, spokesman for the Atlanta-based **SweetWater Brewery**, agreed: "We need a clean and abundant water supply for our product, not a river that's threatened by overuse and pollution."

The proposed reservoirs are also a waste of taxpayer money. Hall County's estimate for the Glades Reservoir project is \$345 million.

That's a substantial amount of money but likely an underestimate. The smaller Hickory Log Creek reservoir near Canton has cost taxpayers five times more than originally projected. Twelve years and \$100 million later, the project is still not providing water to communities.

"This 'most endangered' status for the Chattahoochee underscores not just the threat to the environment, but the threat to taxpayers who are being asked to pay for incredibly expensive and unneeded reservoir projects that will negatively impact our river system," said Barbara Payne, Executive Director of **Fulton County Taxpayers Foundation**.

The announcement sparked widespread media coverage across Georgia, including a strongly worded editorial in the *Columbus Ledger-Enquirer*, downstream of Atlanta. "... Georgia needs to exercise due diligence and produce some solid science that will either justify these projects or not," the editorial noted.

"And let's be wary of the inevitable attempt (count on it) to dismiss such concerns as 'junk science' just because they threaten somebody's plans or profits."

Take ACTION! Visit [www.americanrivers.org/our-work/protecting-rivers/endangered-rivers/](http://www.americanrivers.org/our-work/protecting-rivers/endangered-rivers/), click on the Chattahoochee location on the map.

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**We dropped "Upper" – and are now Chattahoochee Riverkeeper (CRK)!  
Our new name reflects our growing commitment to the entire river system.**

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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

Every winter for the past twenty years or so, I've spent time at the State Capitol while the Georgia legislature was in session — eating peanuts, drinking Cokes (that used to be free), and trying to understand the arcane rules that govern law-making in this state.

In truth, although I enjoy working with our colleagues, I have a hard time developing much enthusiasm for the legislative process, especially given the current political climate and the difficulty of getting even a hearing for important water issues.



## Respected and respectful statesmen

When I first arrived at the Capitol in the early 1990s, I met respected, and respectful, statesmen and women in both parties who wanted to know the facts, asked good questions and thoughtfully developed their positions on matters of importance to the general electorate.

These days, they are few and far between.

**Sen. Mike Egan**, a Republican representing in-town Atlanta neighborhoods, was one of those statesmen and he was “my” senator. I miss him, and all the others who have retired or left office because they weren't having “fun” anymore or were tired of the ugly political gamesmanship that now largely prevails under the Gold Dome.

Luckily, **elected officials still pay attention** when they are contacted by the people who vote for them on matters of importance to their communities.

## Coalition defeats bad bills

This year, the **Georgia Water Coalition** worked its

175+ member organizations to identify people in important legislative districts with personal connections to elected officials. The targeted effort helped defeat half a dozen bad environmental bills — even if we weren't able to proactively pass bills to “put the trust back in trust funds” (ensuring that monies collected to clean up abandoned tire and hazardous waste sites were used as intended) or win mandatory regulation of interbasin transfers of water.

- SB 269 would have permitted **violators of clean water laws** to take voluntary action to fix their problems, instead of being fined.
- SB 467 would have deregulated the **disposal of septage sludge**, now permitted by EPD by turning the activity over to the under-staffed state health department.
- SB 360 would have legalized the **rearing of tilapia** in ponds by classifying the exotic African fish as “domestic,” threatening nearby waterways where they would escape.
- SB 362 would have allowed the **mining of submerged logs**, which destroys fish habitat and causes pollutants long settled in stream beds to become re-suspended into the water.
- SB 415 would have allowed municipalities to **construct sewage treatment plants** before securing permits to discharge wastewater.
- SB 110 would have allowed the siting of **landfills above aquifers**.

The 2013 session of the Georgia General Assembly starts on Jan. 14. Find out who your legislators are at this link: [www.congress.org](http://www.congress.org). They need to hear from you!

*Sally Bethea*  
Executive Director and Riverkeeper

# Watershed Moment

Each time I'm at the river — whether it's in my kayak, on my bike, or running along its shores — my intention is to notice something new. A springtime bike ride on the paths along the river did not disappoint: blooming trees and plants to dabble the fresh green landscape with color; the woods just beginning to fill in and the glisten of puddles and pools showing evidence of recent spring showers; geese in the water and perched on the sidewalk. The Chattahoochee is an inspiration.

— **Cristin Connelly Zegers**, Atlanta



# On Patrol

For further details on CRK's investigations and enforcement actions, go to [www.chattahoochee.org/on-patrol](http://www.chattahoochee.org/on-patrol).

## FIXING WATER LEAKS SAVES MONEY, PROTECTS OUR RIVERS

While walking the Atlanta Beltline near Ansley Mall last February, CRK staff noticed a steady stream of water flowing from a storm drain into Clear Creek behind the mall.

The discharge was notable because it had not rained, the water was very clear, and it appeared to be flowing under pressure. Our water quality tests revealed the presence of chlorine and no bacteria, confirming that it was treated water.

We immediately notified **Atlanta's Watershed Department**. After several months of investigation, inspectors finally located a water main break that had been leaking at least 100 gallons per minute for the past 14 months — a total of more than 60 million gallons of treated water that never made it to homes and businesses.

### Data to action?

The 2010 Water Stewardship Act requires cities and counties with populations of more than 10,000 to evaluate their drinking water systems for leaks and unaccounted for water loss using a proven methodology developed by the American Water Works Association.

This water loss data was due to the Georgia Environmental Protection Division this past spring — to be reviewed and then made public this summer.

Past estimates of average water loss in metro Atlanta have ranged from 15-18 percent with some individual utilities believed to be losing as much as 25 percent. CRK has recommended a goal of 10 percent water loss, or less, and supports state assistance to local governments in the form of matching grants with specific benchmark goals.

To report a leak in the city of Atlanta, see [www.atlantawatershed.org/emergency](http://www.atlantawatershed.org/emergency) or call 404-658-6500.



Treated drinking water flowed from a storm drain under Ansley Mall into Clear Creek; this leak was stopped in May.

## Illegal structure removed from riverbank

We received numerous reports last year about an illegal structure built on the edge of the riverbank in **Gwinnett County**, violating stream buffer protection laws. In our patrol boat, we flagged the GPS coordinates of the structure and relayed them to the county, which subsequently identified the property owner and referred the case to the Gwinnett County Police Department. After opening a case file, the police learned that the property was scheduled to be annexed into the **city of Berkeley Lake**. Once the property was annexed, we were finally able to get positive results working with the Berkeley Lake Code Enforcement Department, which told the property owner to demolish the building and restore the area.

## Connally Nature Park gets needed attention

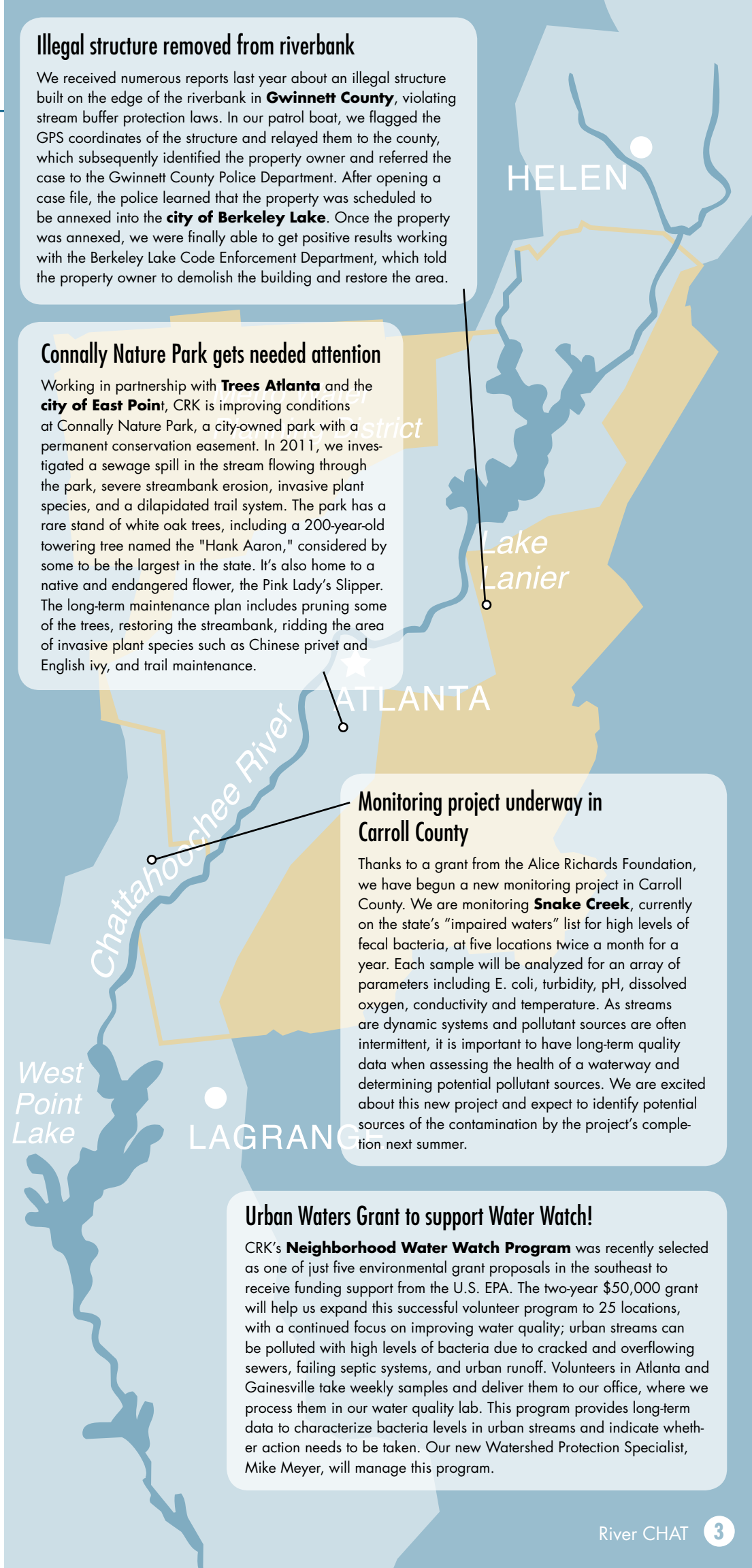
Working in partnership with **Trees Atlanta** and the **city of East Point**, CRK is improving conditions at Connally Nature Park, a city-owned park with a permanent conservation easement. In 2011, we investigated a sewage spill in the stream flowing through the park, severe streambank erosion, invasive plant species, and a dilapidated trail system. The park has a rare stand of white oak trees, including a 200-year-old towering tree named the "Hank Aaron," considered by some to be the largest in the state. It's also home to a native and endangered flower, the Pink Lady's Slipper. The long-term maintenance plan includes pruning some of the trees, restoring the streambank, ridding the area of invasive plant species such as Chinese privet and English ivy, and trail maintenance.

## Monitoring project underway in Carroll County

Thanks to a grant from the Alice Richards Foundation, we have begun a new monitoring project in Carroll County. We are monitoring **Snake Creek**, currently on the state's "impaired waters" list for high levels of fecal bacteria, at five locations twice a month for a year. Each sample will be analyzed for an array of parameters including E. coli, turbidity, pH, dissolved oxygen, conductivity and temperature. As streams are dynamic systems and pollutant sources are often intermittent, it is important to have long-term quality data when assessing the health of a waterway and determining potential pollutant sources. We are excited about this new project and expect to identify potential sources of the contamination by the project's completion next summer.

## Urban Waters Grant to support Water Watch!

CRK's **Neighborhood Water Watch Program** was recently selected as one of just five environmental grant proposals in the southeast to receive funding support from the U.S. EPA. The two-year \$50,000 grant will help us expand this successful volunteer program to 25 locations, with a continued focus on improving water quality; urban streams can be polluted with high levels of bacteria due to cracked and overflowing sewers, failing septic systems, and urban runoff. Volunteers in Atlanta and Gainesville take weekly samples and deliver them to our office, where we process them in our water quality lab. This program provides long-term data to characterize bacteria levels in urban streams and indicate whether action needs to be taken. Our new Watershed Protection Specialist, Mike Meyer, will manage this program.



# River Stewardship

## LAGRANGE BOARD MEMBER RAISED NEAR THE SOUND OF WATER

**C**harles Smith has always wanted to be on or near the water – following in the footsteps of his father who loved to fish, was a great outdoorsman, and urged his children to be good stewards of the land.

From his early years on the family farm near Yellowjacket Creek in Coweta County, to a decade of college and work in Atlanta not far from the Chattahoochee River, and then back to Troup County for a career with Hutchinson Traylor Insurance, Charles has lived his entire life in the Chattahoochee watershed.

He says, “When we weren’t working at growing food or cotton, we were hunting or fishing. Every aspect of my early years was spent outdoors and impacted by water, specifically the Chattahoochee River.”

### First house on West Point Lake

Charles camped and fished for catfish near Franklin at Bush Head Shoals in the 1950s and '60s, and, in 1974, built the very first house on West



Charles Smith (left) proudly shows the giant rainbow trout that he caught on a wilderness river in Alaska.

Point Lake — even before the lake was completely filled.

His sons, Edward and Wesley, grew up on the lake and the water brought them, like their father, closer to the outdoors. The boys helped build an irrigation system to water a garden that they planted and maintained. They harvested vegetables and fruit that they sold on a corner near LaGrange College, learning that water is an essential component to commerce and productivity.

Proud of the men they have turned into, Charles says that some of his sons’ best qualities — responsibility, prudence, diligence and an awareness of their place on Earth – can be attributed to being raised near the sound of water.

Today, Charles is retired and spends his time on numerous community projects and traveling, often on fishing expeditions such as a recent one to Alaska. He also serves on CRK’s board of directors where his life experiences and life-long connection to the Chattahoochee add immense value to our work.

## CLEAN WATER FESTIVAL DEBUTS ON WEST POINT LAKE

**O**n a beautiful day in early June, families and friends celebrated West Point Lake at the **First Annual Clean Water Festival** held at Yellowjacket Creek Beach and Recreational Area.

The free event organized by CRK Regional Outreach Manager Jill Sestino with the assistance of community partners offered kayaking and water safety demonstrations, environmental exhibits, water quality testing and boat rides. A kayak was raffled to festival-goers, thanks to a contribution from the Zachry family of **LaGrange Grocery Company**, an event sponsor.

David Barr, Chief Park Ranger for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, which manages the lake, noted that Yellowjacket Beach reached its maximum capacity on a number of occasions last year. He said, “It’s recreation that’s affordable.”

The kayaking and canoeing rides were provided by **Pine Mountain Adventures**, whose owner Frank Hardenstein said, “When you use the waterways for a living, you want to take care of them.”

### Celebrating a clean lake

Just a few decades ago, West Point Lake was not so clean. Untreated sewage, excess nutrients, and eroded soil from the metro Atlanta region flowed downstream into the reservoir, polluting recreation areas and threatening the drinking water source for the city of LaGrange.

Today, the lake is healthy and the primary concern is fluctuating water levels due to drought, other water demands in the river system and outdated federal policies.

In addition to LaGrange Grocery and Pine Mountain Adventures, we’d like to thank the **U.S. Army Corps of Engineers-West Point Lake, The Branding Firm, Coca-Cola, Home Depot, Jackson Printing, and Chad Mann** for their support of the festival.



Festival participants enjoy a ride around the lake on CRK’s patrol boat.

## SCRAPPY RECYCLING COMPANY ADDS VALUE TO SWEEP THE HOOCH

The 2nd Annual Sweep the Hooch, a multi-site trash cleanup held in April, had some impressive numbers this year: 445 volunteers, 3.81 tons of trash removed, 1.2 tons of that trash recycled, at 21 cleanup sites throughout the 48-mile stretch of the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area.

Included in all the numbers and all that trash is a success story of a scrappy little company that puts people to work while promoting environmental sustainability: **ReMix Recycling**. The woman-owned business, operating in Atlanta since 2009, designs, implements and manages recycling programs for commercial offices, small businesses and municipalities.

For the second consecutive year, ReMix worked with Sweep the Hooch partners, CRK, **Upper Chattahoochee Chapter of Trout Unlimited** and the **National Park Service**, to take recyclable trash, weigh it, and make sure it's distributed appropriately. This way, according to co-founder Ashley D. Parker, "You're engaging your program, and you're maximizing your participation."

ReMix is also a company with a mission, offering employment to people on the city's socioeconomic margins. Parker points to the high number of homeless people, some of whom have been incarcerated and need an opportunity.

## FLOATING CLASSROOM A WINNER IN SOUTHWEST'S LUV GRANT PROGRAM!

To celebrate the start of its service from Atlanta, **Southwest Airlines** worked with the Georgia Center for Nonprofits to launch LUV Grants for Good, making available \$150,000 to nonprofit organizations in Georgia. CRK's essay about the importance of our work, and specifically the need to fund our floating classroom program, convinced a panel of judges to select us as one of 15 finalists from more than 350 submissions.

The finalists were given nine days to create a 90-second video highlighting the contest theme of how a group shows its love for the community. Then began an online voting period of 10 days in March. More than 15,000 votes later, our video,



From L-R: Karen Beavor, Georgia Center for Nonprofits; David Lee Simmons and Becca Klein of CRK; Debra Bratton Southwest Airlines director of community relations and charitable giving.



ReMix Recycling's Ashley D. Parker helped us recycle 1.2 tons of trash.

"Recycling lives is what we do – in every capacity," Parker said.

This year's sweep built on the success of last year's inaugural cleanup when 350 volunteers pulled out more than 3.5 tons of trash and recycled nearly a ton of the debris.

### THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS:

**RIVER ADVOCATE:** 99X/Atlanta's Alternative Station | Rock 100.5/Atlanta's Rock Station **RIVER CONSERVATOR:** Porsche Cars North America | ReMix Recycling; **FRIEND OF THE RIVER:** OrangeHalo.com | Republic Services; **RIVER SUPPORTER:** Aquascape Environmental. *Please consider being a Sweep the Hooch sponsor in 2013 — contact us now!*

*You can watch the video on our YouTube channel, UCRiverkeeperVideos.*

"The Chattahoochee River runs through all of us," emerged a winner in the category for medium-size charities, based on annual budgets. The Atlanta Beltline Partnership also won in this category.

Thanks to all of you who helped us win the \$25,000 grant to support Georgia's only floating classroom! Annually, CRK partners with Elachee Nature Science Center to bring nearly 4,000 students and teachers on board a 40-foot catamaran on Lake Lanier for hands-on learning activities and to inspire environmental awareness.

**Additional thanks to video participants:** Chris Scalley, River Through Atlanta; Amanda Mayberry, water monitoring volunteer; Christine Hung, CRK Board; Charles Freed, Atlanta Rowing Club members; Darryl Haddock, West Atlanta Watershed Alliance; Jessica Preston, CRK intern; Andy Thompson, Smith, Gambrell & Russell; Elijah Simmons, son of CRK's David Lee Simmons; Juliet Cohen, CRK General Counsel; Laura Caviezel Rett, The Home Depot; Atlanta Watershed Department employees; Zak Ray, SweetWater Brewery; Stephanie Stuckey Benfield, state representative and GreenLaw director; and First Wednesday Home School Group.

*You can watch the video on our YouTube channel, UCRiverkeeperVideos.*

## River Matters

For information on these and other river-related events, visit [www.chattahoochee.org/calendar](http://www.chattahoochee.org/calendar)

### August 4

#### River Discovery Series

Series of paddle trips that takes place from June through August and hosted by CRK in partnership with the National Park Service.

Segment 4: Abbotts Bridge to Island Ford (8 miles).

### August 4

#### End of Summer BBQ

Canoe Restaurant

### August 18

#### River Discovery Series

Segment 5: Morgan Falls Dam to Paces Mill (9 miles).

### August 21

#### Rain Barrel Workshop

City Hall, Dunwoody

### September 9

#### Paddle Trip

Chestatee River

### September 13

#### 18th Annual Patron Appreciation Dinner

The Foundry

### September 29

#### Paddle Trip

Lower Soque River

### October 13

#### Paddle Trip

Middle Chattahoochee below West Point Lake

## Bethea honored at River Rally



The largest gathering ever of clean water advocates occurred at the River Rally in Portland, Ore., in May. More than 750 members of Waterkeeper Alliance and River Network, agency and business leaders convened for an invigorating and memorable four-day conference. At the event, CRK's Sally Bethea received the James Compton River Achievement Award for showing "passion, respect and actions toward the protection of our rivers."

# GOOD FAITH EFFORT WINS ATLANTA A SEWER EXTENSION

The Chattahoochee downstream of Atlanta is flowing cleaner today than it has in the memory of most Georgians now living — and, importantly, people and wildlife are coming back to the river.

But, 40 years ago, it was a very different story.

In the 1970s, the city's sewer system was so overloaded that every time it rained raw sewage was discharged into creeks and, ultimately, the river — leaving toilet paper hanging in trees and human waste rotting in stagnant pools.

During even small rain events, the sudden inflow of rainwater swamped the sewage treatment system and created combined sewer overflows (CSOs). The resulting overflow of stormwater and untreated sewage was discharged into waterways, carrying human feces, condoms and other matter downstream.

In the rest of the city, sanitary sewer overflows (SSOs) polluted neighborhood streams — even during dry weather — thanks to decades of failure to maintain, repair and replace 1,500 miles of sewer lines. The city's three sewage treatment plants were not in much better shape than the pipes feeding them.

As hard as it is to believe, environmental officials at all levels knew about the situation that threatened public health, recreation areas and property values, but they did nothing — even though Atlanta's pollution was



City workers stand in front of the massive boring machine used to cut through granite under Atlanta and create storage for sewage and polluted stormwater prior to treatment.

threatening the region's economic prosperity with potential development moratoriums.

## Final deadline extended

One major lawsuit (filed in 1995 by CRK and downstream co-plaintiffs), one federal judge, two consent decrees and nearly \$2 billion later — city streams and the river are measurably cleaner today.

Ninety-seven percent of the volume of untreated sewage that flowed into city waterways 15 years ago has been stopped and hundreds of billions of gallons of raw sewage no longer threaten public health and environmental quality. By 2014, 99 percent of

that volume will no longer flow into the river and all major capital projects will have been completed.

Stressed by the recession, repeated droughts and a “high burden” on its ratepayers, the city petitioned the U.S. EPA in 2010 for extra time to finish the remaining SSO upgrades; in May, they received a 13-year extension. This additional time also gives Atlanta the ability to invest in much-needed upgrades to its drinking water system.

Given the city's good-faith efforts to date which have resulted in significant water quality improvements, CRK supported the extension and will continue to monitor the work until it is completed.

Photo courtesy of city of Atlanta

# ATLANTA'S GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE ORDINANCE TO PROTECT LOCAL STREAMS

The city of Atlanta is proposing a new “post-construction stormwater ordinance” that will greatly benefit the Chattahoochee River and its tributaries through a new “green infrastructure” approach. As a member of the city's technical stakeholder group, CRK supports the proposed approach for new development and redevelopment.

Impervious surfaces such as roadways, rooftops and parking lots prevent the natural flow of rainwater into the ground, instead of allowing the water to soak into soil and naturally flow underground, eventually feeding into waterways and recharging groundwater supplies.

When the ground is covered with a hard surface, rainwater shoots off of the surface and directly into local streams, causing flooding and pollution problems.

## Replacing outdated practices

Traditional stormwater practices (curb drains, pipes and above-ground detention ponds) do little to help rain soak into the ground. Green infrastructure measures such as pervious concrete and asphalt, rain gardens and green roofs allow rainwater to soak into ground — solving many of the pollution, flooding and water supply problems associated with the built environment.

As currently drafted, the proposed ordinance focuses on all new development in the city and larger redevelopment sites of 5,000 square feet or more. We will work with all affected parties to finalize an ordinance that is cost-effective and protective of our waterways.

For more information, contact Jason Ulseth at [julseth@ucriverkeeper.org](mailto:julseth@ucriverkeeper.org)



The parking lot at Stone Mountain Park is a highly successful example of pervious paving.

# THE FIVE STAGES OF GEORGIA'S GRIEF OVER DROUGHT

**D**uring the last drought (2006-09) Georgia went through all five stages of grief. First came **denial**, when, in spite of climatologists' warnings, state leaders failed to act swiftly to implement aggressive water conservation measures.

Then came **anger** — Georgia blamed others, pointing the finger at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for releasing too much water downstream to protect mussels and sturgeon. Georgia blamed Florida for wanting more freshwater in Apalachicola Bay to protect oysters. Georgia even blamed environmentalists for wanting enough water left in the river to protect human health and aquatic life.

Next came **bargaining**, as then-Gov. Sonny Perdue appealed to a higher authority by praying for rain, followed by **depression**, as reality set in. Watering restrictions came too little, too late. By December 2007, Lake Lanier reached an all-time low, dropping 20 feet. Local governments bought water from neighboring governments. Fishing, boating and property values suffered. Businesses went bankrupt.

Finally **acceptance**, as citizens succeeded where government failed, reducing water use 20 percent in 2008.

## **Relief short-lived, crisis returns**

By 2009, the drought was over and Lanier was full thanks to historic rainfall; however, relief was short-lived. According to the U.S. Drought



Monitor (<http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/>), we are now in the midst of another drought.

In south Georgia, tributaries, wells and soils are abnormally dry. In north Georgia, Lanier is low again and promises to stay that way for months. In short, we are in a crisis. The state has remained virtually silent about the situation, since replacing its independent climatologist last year with a state bureaucrat.

Gov. Nathan Deal has yet to declare drought or finalize a response plan. Worse, after much fanfare and expenditure, the new state water plan is filled with suggestions and empty promises, but no mandates to help manage water supplies more sustainably.

Of course, Georgians could save ourselves a lot of grief if we skipped past denial and went straight to acceptance of the crisis at hand, by taking action.

In 2011, CRK released "Filling the Water Gap," where we identified actions that could save 160 million gallons of water per day, nearly one-third of metro Atlanta's water demand. This summer, we updated this report and identified more water savings measures.

Once again, we conclude that conservation is the most immediate, cost-effective, and sustainable option for managing our water supplies with or without drought. *To read "Filling the Water Gap" and learn what else CRK is doing to promote sustainable water management, see <http://www.ucriverkeeper.org/water-conservation.php>.*

## RECORD TURNOUT FOR ANNUAL RIVER RACE & FESTIVAL

**W**e marked a decade of answering the declaration, "Your river is calling," with perfect weather and unprecedented crowds at the 10th Annual Back to the Chattahoochee River Race & Festival on June 9. A record 400 paddlers and more than 1,000 guests came to the river and along the way helped raise \$23,000 for our river awareness and protection programs.

Organized and presented in partnership with the **National Park Service**, **Fulton County**, and the **city of Roswell**, the race included open and recreational categories, various age divisions, solo and tandem canoe divisions, as well as kayak and sea kayak divisions. There also was a 10-mile course for competitive racers. The course concluded at Riverside Park. Timing officials were provided by Georgia Canoeing Association.

### **BIG THANKS TO OUR MAJOR SPONSORS:**

**RIVER BENEFACTOR:** MeadWestvaco; **RIVER DEFENDER:** 99X/Atlanta's Alternative Station | Rock 100.5/Atlanta's Rock Station; **RIVER ADVOCATE:** 755 Restaurant Corporation | Federal Home Loan Bank | SweetWater Brewing Company | SignUp4; **RIVER ADVOCATE:** AGL Resources, Inc. | City of Atlanta Department of Watershed Management | Georgia Canoeing Association | MWH Global Inc. | Tree Sound Studios | Twin Bear Management | Upper Chattahoochee Chapter Trout Unlimited; **RIVER CONSERVATOR:** AGL Resources, Inc. | City of Atlanta Department of Watershed Management | Georgia Canoeing Association | MWH Global Inc. | Tree Sound Studios | Twin Bear Management | Upper Chattahoochee Chapter Trout Unlimited | Whole Foods Market.

*400 paddlers hit the water for the 10th Annual Back to the Chattahoochee River Race & Festival on June 9.*



# GUESTS WEIGH IN ON BEST-EVER RIVER REVIVAL!



Guests loved the music lineup, including our headliner and River Rock Star Award recipient, Ben Sollee.

CRK raised \$52,000 for our river protection programs – and apparently, the roof – at our 16th Annual River Revival underneath Park Tavern’s Big Tent in early May, as more than 650 guests danced to music, dined on great food, and enjoyed SweetWater beer!

We expanded our number of musical performers to four bands this year: Atlanta’s Burnt Bacon, New York City’s Julia Haltigan, headliner (and River Rock Star honoree) Ben Sollee, and finally Atlanta’s Ruby Velle & the Soulphonics to close out the night. We also honored Atlanta musicians Gareth Asher and Johnny Colt (Black Crowes, Train, Lynyrd Skynyrd) as River Rock Stars.



River Rock Star Award recipient Gareth Asher.



Atlanta’s Burnt Bacon opened the evening with a bluesy set.

Feedback on the event, based on our first-ever online survey, was overwhelmingly positive and also instructive. Some of the most interesting statistics and comments:

- 96 percent feel they got their money’s worth
- 55 percent had never attended a River Revival previously, while 48% had not attended any CRK event previously
- 97 percent said they were likely to attend other CRK events this year.



Keeping Watch Over Our Waters

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Guests review the silent auction offerings.



Ruby Velle & the Soulphonics closed out the night with a rousing, R&B revue-fueled set.