

POWER INDUSTRY AND RIVER FLOWS

ENDANGERED SPECIES, A CONVENIENT SCAPEGOAT?

At the height of north Georgia's water crisis last fall, members of the state's Congressional Delegation introduced legislation that they said would alleviate north Georgia's shortages by allowing states with droughts to get temporary waivers from the federal Endangered Species Act. These waivers would be available in river basins managed by the federal government.

In the case of the Chattahoochee/Apalachicola Basin, the federal management agency is the Army Corps of Engineers (Corps)—operator of four major dams that have largely controlled the flow of water in the basin from north Georgia to Florida for the past fifty years.

The Georgia Delegation claimed that Atlanta's diminishing water supply was being threatened by large amounts of water that were being sent downstream to protect mussels and sturgeon in Florida's Apalachicola River. One House Member said that the health and livelihood of millions of human beings should not be outweighed by endangered mussels. Another said: "...we're united in this crisis to put our people before sturgeon and mussels."

The actual history of the Corps' management of its dams reveals goals unrelated to endangered species and that history shows the significant role of the electric power industry in the demand for water downstream of metro Atlanta.

Four Federal Dams

Jim Woodruff Dam, the first federal dam built on the Chattahoochee, created Lake Seminole on the Georgia-Florida border and was dedicated in March 1957. Corps engineers who designed the dam believed that the flow in the river at the dam site had never been less than 5,000 cubic feet per second (cfs) and adopted an operating plan using that target flow.



Farley Nuclear Plant on the Chattahoochee in southeast Alabama.

Photo Credit: Joe Cook

Plant Scholz, a coal-fired power plant on the Apalachicola below Woodruff Dam that was constructed at the same time, was designed to be operational at flows of 5,000 cfs or above. For the next fifty years, the river flow rarely dipped below this minimum because of the Corps' management—even though the upstream federal dams were not authorized by Congress to support the generation of power at electric generating facilities.

Seven months after the dedication of Woodruff Dam, Corps dignitaries gathered 350 miles upstream to dedicate Buford Dam and the creation of Lake Lanier. Lake Walter F. George, 75 miles upstream of Lake Seminole was also dedicated in 1957; Lake West Point below Atlanta was authorized by Congress in 1962 and completed in 1974.

See **Power Plants**, page 7

GEORGIA POWER ELIMINATES THERMAL DISCHARGE TO THE RIVER

Eight years ago, as part of the Metro Atlanta Chamber's *Clean Water Initiative*, Georgia Power made a big announcement and a commitment. The company said that by 2008 it would eliminate the discharge of heated water to the Chattahoochee from Plant McDonough, its coal-fired facility located on the river in Cobb County and downstream of several major wastewater outfalls.

Making good on its promise, two cooling towers were installed at the plant at a cost of \$96 million and began operation in April. According to Georgia Power, each unit draws 137,000 gallons per minute of water through its condensers to cool the steam that is used to turn the turbines. Previously, this volume of condenser cooling water was drawn from the river, passed once through the condenser, and returned immediately to the river at up to 20 degrees F warmer than the upstream temperature.



Georgia Power's Plant McDonough in Atlanta

Photo Credit: Courtesy of Southern Alliance for Clean Energy

Now, this water is circulated continuously between the condensers and the cooling towers in a closed loop, preventing the heating of the river water. The excess heat is dissipated to the atmosphere through evaporation from the towers and a small portion of the circulating water is returned to the river at ambient temperature.

Water Quality Expected to Improve

The elimination of heat dissipated to the river will help achieve instream water quality standards for temperature and dissolved oxygen, thereby enhancing the waste assimilation capacity of the river.

Prior to the operation of the cooling towers, Plant McDonough withdrew an average of 344 million gallons per day (MGD) from the Chattahoochee River. Georgia Power estimates that future withdrawals will average less than 20 MGD and return about half of that to the river.

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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

I've been thinking lately about the streams and rivers that have flowed through my life and some even through my veins.

Although it was the **James River** in Virginia that supplied water to the Richmond hospital where I was born, my first memory of water was the unnamed stream behind our house in Atlanta where my family moved in the mid-1950s.

The sound of this small creek lulled me to sleep every night through my childhood and teenage years, until I left for college. Not knowing much about rivers or watersheds back then, I always wondered where the stream went after it left our neighborhood. Now I know its course—into Nancy Creek, then Peachtree Creek and the **Chattahoochee River**, ultimately flowing hundreds of miles to help sustain Apalachicola Bay in Florida.

On family vacations, it was the alligator-filled **Sanibel River** on the island off the west coast of Florida where we spent weeks every year. In North Carolina during college, the river I remember is the **Haw** near Chapel Hill and a chilly Valentine's Day picnic on its banks, as well as the **Ichetucknee River** in north central Florida



Photo credit: Betq Hanarvar/
Atlanta Journal Constitution

where I rafted its crystal-clear waters on spring break. On a 10,000-mile road trip after college, my friends and I encountered a sudden, bone-chilling snow storm while rafting the **Snake River** in Wyoming, and we sat beside a river in Indiana on one of our last days on the trip, pondering what adventures lay ahead.

In the past twenty years, my time on and around rivers has increased—from the **Nantahala** in North Carolina, the **Darien River** on Georgia's coast, and the **Potomac** outside of D.C. where I tried (unsuccessfully) to maneuver a whitewater kayak—to the **Kenai River** in Alaska, the **Rogue** and **Sandy Rivers** in Oregon, and the **Shubenacadie River** in Nova Scotia where I watched the tidal bore race upriver from the Bay of Fundy.

Visiting my sons when they worked summer jobs in national parks, I saw the upper reaches of the **Yellowstone River** and the magnificent falls in the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone, as well as the jade-colored **Merced River** in California as it plunged over Nevada and Vernal falls, flowing through Yosemite.

As these rivers of my life come flooding back to me, I realize how many of my most important memories have a river, a stream, the marsh or the sea flowing through them.

Sally Bethea

NEW MEMBER OF UCR'S DEVELOPMENT TEAM

Lynn Naylor joined UCR's development team in April as our new development director. With more than 25 years of experience in helping organizations achieve significant growth, in terms of funds raised as well as volunteers involved, she brings important skills to our work. Lynn was the executive director of the Georgia Firefighters Burn Foundation for 13 years; more recently, she served as the chief development officer for the National Kidney Foundation of Georgia.



Lynn Naylor

Lynn and her husband have a special interest in the Chattahoochee's headwaters, as they own a condo in White County near Helen. She says: "I am honored to have

been invited to become part of the UCR staff team. Over the last decade or so, I have become quite alarmed at the growth in north Georgia and its impact on the environment, especially the Chattahoochee River, so I am thrilled to be part of the premier organization that is fighting for the health and the well-being of my river."

DJ Strickland Sweet, our former development director, moved back to her home in Wyoming after getting married and to take a job as the director of the Fremont County Fair in Riverton. We thank her for many important new initiatives at UCR, as well as her energy and creativity that helped raise our profile in the community.

UCR AND PARTNERS HOST ENVIRONMENTAL FILM FESTIVAL

With hundreds of people in attendance, Upper Chattahoochee Riverkeeper, **Georgia River Network**, and **Georgia ForestWatch** hosted Patagonia's Wild and Scenic Environmental Film Festival Tour at the Tara Theater in Atlanta in April.

The Film Festival, created by the South Yuba River Citizens League in Nevada City, CA, brings together award-winning environmental films in a spirit of inspiration and education. Each night offered 5-7 films of varying lengths—from documentaries on mountain top removal and the outer banks to adventure films featuring kayakers and cyclists on the road promoting environmental causes.

Local Interest Films Highlighted

Each evening concluded with a local interest film aimed at informing guests of issues and concerns close to home. *Chattahoochee: River of Life* presented stunning photography, including underwater images, and explored some of the challenges to the future health of the river. *Trash Tales* focused on the continuing efforts to clean up 50 years of trash from Lake Lanier's shoreline. Guests were invited to join in a cleanup on the lake organized by UCR.

Thanks to Film Festival sponsors: **Patagonia**, **Whole Foods Market**, **John A. Williams**, **REI**, **SweetWater Brewing Company**, **Cadmus Construction** - Building a Better Environment, **Weatherford Place** - A Solar Community of Net-Zero Energy EcoCraft(tm) Homes, **Remax Around Atlanta** - Sandy Springs, **Stormwater Systems, Inc.**, and **Utana Bluffs**.



Photo Credit: Photo Collection of Gimme Green

MORE CLEANUP PROGRESS AT WATTS ROAD LANDFILL

Allied Waste Industries has continued to make progress with its cleanup of the Watts Road Landfill on Donald L. Hollowell Parkway (formerly Bankhead Hwy) in Atlanta. In 2004, UCR and the state Environmental Protection Division (EPD) advised the company of serious problems at the old landfill, largely due to a re-channeling of stormwater flow that allowed trash and contaminated water from within the landfill (leachate) to flow into a small tributary to Proctor Creek. Allied spent well over \$100,000 to fix the breach in the landfill, remove trash and stabilize the streambank, and the problem appeared to have been remedied. Continuing to monitor the site, UCR noticed erosion and leachate seeps in 2006. Last year, the company installed additional erosion controls and expanded its leachate collection and pumping. The amount of wastewater being hauled off-site by an industrial liquid waste disposer increased to as much as 28,000 gallons per week, depending on weather conditions. Allied is working with the city to obtain a permit for its long-term solution to tie its wastewater storage tank into Atlanta's sewer system.

LEGAL ACTION AGAINST DEVELOPER IN HARRIS COUNTY

Several months ago, we learned about an illegal damming of a stream in a Harris County development project called **Timberland Subdivision**. The developer, **Daniel Hodge of DD&M Investments**, destroyed at least 1,671 linear feet of buffer and stream to build a dam and 9-acre amenity lake without *any* of the necessary local, state, or federal permits—even though he had apparently been advised that permits were required. Harris County issued a stop-work order, after learning that the stream was being dammed without any permits; however, the developer continued to work, completing the dam construction! Mr. Hodge is now seeking after-the-fact permission from the state and federal government for his actions which destroyed several streams. We do not believe that it is appropriate for this developer to receive after-the-fact approval for his illegal actions; therefore, we recently sent Mr. Hodge and DD&M Investments a 60-day notice of intent to sue under the federal Clean Water Act to force him to remove the dam and restore all impacted streams.



POOR HOUSING MARKET TAKES ITS TOLL ON THE ENVIRONMENT

Everyone is aware of the current condition of the housing market and the economic effects that it is having in metro Atlanta and elsewhere. It is almost impossible to sell a house, and home builders and developers have all but stopped building new residential developments. An outcome of this situation that few people may realize is the adverse effect that it is having on our environment.

In the metro Atlanta area, there are many large tracts of land that had already been cleared to make way for homes, when the downturn in the housing market accelerated. On these properties, the native forested canopy has been removed, exposing the red Georgia clay to rainfall that is sending muddy water into nearby waterways.

Muddy Legacy at Abandoned Development Sites

State law requires developers to use a series of vegetative and structural best management practices to keep eroded soil out of our streams, lakes and rivers. In fact, developers are supposed to stabilize land that has been disturbed within two weeks. During this slow housing period, however, developers and home builders are finishing projects at a much slower rate and in some cases are even abandoning their projects. These areas are now being left out in the open for long periods of time, and eroded soil is flowing into our streams every time it rains.

In most areas, local governments are responsible for

On Patrol



SURVEY CONFIRMS OPPOSITION TO CARROLL'S WOLF CREEK PROJECT

UCR has been following the progress of the proposed Wolf Creek mega-development in rural Carroll County for several years. Since this development would cover more than 11,000 acres and require large amounts of water supply and wastewater capacity, citizens in Carroll County have been working to determine the development's impact on their quality of life. The **Snake Creek Property Owners Association (SCPOA)** conducted a county-wide survey and learned that most citizens were opposed to the Wolf Creek development. SCPOA provided the results of its poll in January, which surveyed 699 randomly-selected people by phone. Almost 72% of those surveyed said that Wolf Creek would have a negative impact on Carroll County, and 62% chose water as an important issue to consider when deciding on a large development, ranking above taxes and rural quality of life.



CONCERNS AT SEPTIC WASTE DISPOSAL SITE IN WHITE COUNTY

In January, UCR began receiving HOTLINE calls from citizens concerned about water quality impacts from **LHR Farms**, a 350-acre waste disposal site in White County. Residents living near LHR Farms complained of odors and waste running into Dean Creek. Operating since 1996, this facility was originally regulated by the county health department, but in 2003 when county officials denied owner **John Hulsey's** application for a new permit, Hulsey recruited state legislators **Carl Rogers** and **Casey Cagle** to intervene on LHR's behalf, ultimately passing a bill to strip the local government of any enforcement capacity over Hulsey's operation and hand it to EPD. Since then, LHR Farms has operated with little regulation until citizen complaints in 2006 resulted in the issuance of a consent decree by EPD that required Hulsey to apply for a commercial waste disposal permit. In 2008, Department of Natural Resources determined the disposal of septic waste must be permitted as well. UCR has attended public meetings and is gathering information awaiting the issuance of a draft permit for review and comment.

Upper
Chattahoochee
Basin

Helen

Lake
Lanier

Buford
Dam

Atlanta

West
Point
Lake

West Point Dam



Under a stop-work order for more than 2 1/2 years, this residential development in East Point is still not properly stabilized.

River Stewardship

DEVELOPER TREADS LIGHTLY ON THE EARTH

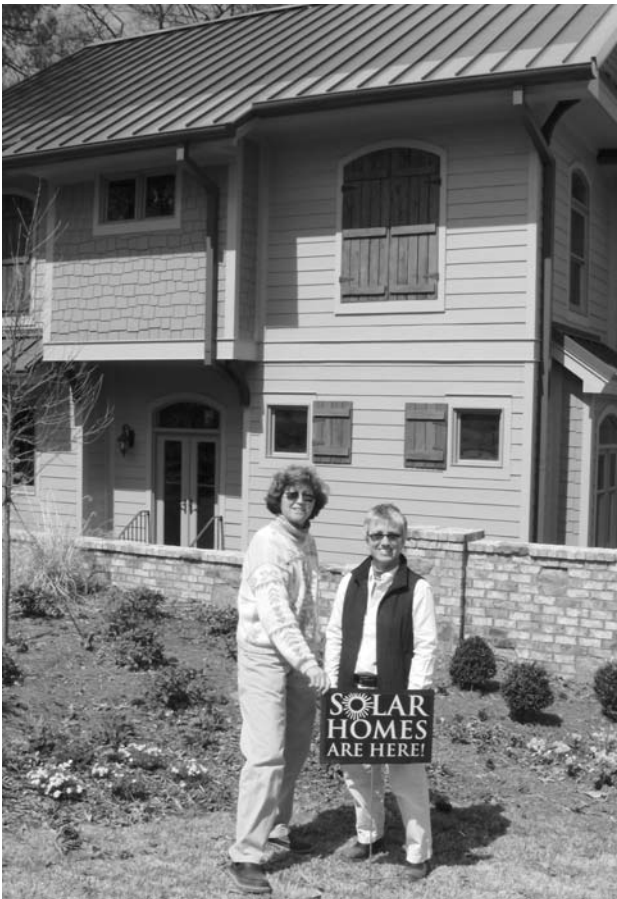
"We all share common ground and together we can build a better environment," says **Denise Donahue of Cadmus Construction, LLC.**

A longtime UCR supporter and board member, Denise and her partner **Simone du Boise**, an award-winning architect, have taken that philosophy and created a real-world demonstration of it in **Weatherford Place**. This "green" neighborhood development is the first solar community of net-zero energy design and will have eight energy efficient EcoCraft™ Homes - Designed and Built to Natures Code.

Located in the heart of the city of Roswell, Weatherford Place sits beside Crossville Creek, a stream whose quality actually *improved* during the land development process. This result is due in no small part to the 150-foot protected stream buffer and a design plan that controls runoff for a 100-year storm event. Cadmus has also established a conservation easement and added 400% more green space to the site.

100% More Energy Efficient Than The Typical Home

Cadmus's signature style, EcoCraft™ Home, is over 50% more energy efficient than a home built to the 2006 Energy Code and over 100% more efficient than a typical home. These homes are part of the EnergyStar®, Premium EarthCraft™ House and LEEDs* and are designed for platinum level LEEDs certification. Featuring comprehensive alternative energy systems, including solar-powered hot water and electric, they also incorporate innovative



Denise Donahue and Simone du Boise at Weatherford Place.

water conservation measures such as a rain harvesting system for both stormwater attenuation and collection for irrigation.

Every house has monitors and sensors so that the homeowners can track their energy use. Giving people the means to closely monitor and adjust their electricity use lowers their monthly bills and could significantly reduce the need to build new power plants, according to a year-long government study.

This information will also be monitored in real time via the internet through a system created in partnership with Kennesaw State University, Georgia Power and Southern Company. The comprehensive data collection and display program will be available to students, utilities, environmental groups, architects and others. In this way Weatherford Place, the EcoCraft™ Homes and their operation will be a living laboratory for energy management and efficiency studies and innovative design research and development.

A more subtle feature of each home will be the inclusion of beautiful weathered wood from a barn that used to sit on the property-another example of the Cadmus philosophy embodied in Weatherford Place. "If you honor the past and the good things that have come before you," says Denise, "and you take responsibility for the future, you'll be more likely to do the right thing here and now." *For more information go to www.weatherfordplace.com.*

*LEED - Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, a program of the US Green Building Council.



ANDY THOMPSON—SUPPORTING UCR'S LEGAL PROGRAM FOR A DOZEN YEARS

Emory Law School has provided legal interns to Upper Chattahoochee Riverkeeper for many years. In 1995, an Emory law student named **Andy Thompson** became one of our first interns in the summer program that we have operated every year since. Raised in Roswell, Andy graduated summa cum laude from Wake Forest University.

When Andy began his internship, we had just filed our first major legal action against the city of Atlanta for decades of polluting the river and its tributaries with untreated sewage. One of his tasks was to review reams of paperwork to tally the city's hundreds of violations at its combined sewer overflows (CSOs). Andy also helped us work on a case to resolve pollution problems at an asphalt recycling company located on the river.

Lake Lanier, Landfills and Stream Buffers

After law school where Andy placed at the very top of his class, he was hired by Smith, Gambrell & Russell and has worked closely with UCR board member Steve O'Day at the firm. In 2004, he was a key member of the team that won a precedent-setting case to protect Lake Lanier, when the Georgia Supreme Court decided in favor of Lake Lanier Association, UCR and others. Andy has continued to represent UCR pro bono on cases ranging from a polluting landfill in north Fulton County to violations of erosion

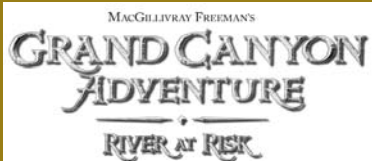
control and buffer protection laws at development sites throughout the Chattahoochee watershed.

Andy says, "For many years, UCR has effectively and sensibly used the law to protect and preserve one of Georgia's most important natural resources and it has been a privilege to support UCR in its efforts."

We count Andy Thompson as one of our most valuable assets in our fight to protect the Chattahoochee.



Andy and Liz Thompson with daughters Sally and Molly.



Showing through July 18th at Fernbank Museum's IMAX Theater

Witness the majesty of the Grand Canyon in this trip down Colorado River with Robert F. Kennedy Jr., anthropologist Wade Davis, and their two daughters. *Grand Canyon Adventure: River at Risk* is a journey of adventure through some of the world's best whitewater rapids, but it also a tale of the drought plaguing the American Southwest.

For more information go to www.fernbankmuseum.org.

SALLY BETHEA, OTHERS HONORED BY GEORGIA RIVER NETWORK

On February 22, Georgia River Network (GRN) presented the 2008 River Celebration Awards at its annual conference in Rome—among them a surprise honor for Upper Chattahoochee Riverkeeper's Executive Director.

The **Sally Bethea River Champion Award**, a new lifetime achievement award to be given by GRN every ten years, was established in tribute to Sally's leadership in protecting Georgia's water resources and in celebration of GRN's tenth anniversary.

According to GRN: "Sally has been a friend and role model to each of Georgia's waterkeeper groups and to many oth-



Riverkeepers from Georgia and Florida with Sally Bethea at the GRN Conference.

ers in Georgia's conservation community. Her ability of speaking truth to power characterizes Sally's 25 plus-year career of effectively advocating for Georgia's swamps, streams, rivers lakes, and marshes. She is an important, statewide voice for water planning and a strong advocate of watershed groups outside of her own."

The "Mama" of the Georgia Riverkeepers

Riverkeepers from Georgia and Florida offered praise and thanks to Sally for her years of work and hard-fought successes. Savannah Riverkeeper Frank Carl called Sally the "Mama" of the Georgia riverkeepers for her mentoring of other keepers around the state.

GRN's Watershed Group of the Year Award went to the **High Falls Towaliga Watershed Alliance**, a citizen-based group in Jackson. **Frank Sanoga** was named River Conservationist of the Year for his leadership as Director of the Conasauga River Alliance. And, Rivers Alive board member and self-dubbed "Trash Queen", **Bonny Putney**, was honored as Volunteer of the Year.

Georgia River Network's mission is to ensure a clean water legacy by engaging and empowering Georgians to protect and restore our rivers from the mountains to the coast. See www.garivers.org.

LUMPKIN COALITION EXPANDS FOCUS TO INCLUDE WATER MONITORING

When the hemlock woolly adelgid began to invade the north Georgia forests, a group of citizens rose to the challenge of fighting off this invasive insect to save the hemlock trees, one of our most important and beautiful forest species. They organized as the **Lumpkin Coalition** (named for their county) and created an annual Hemlock Fest as a benefit for the three labs in Georgia that raise predator beetles to destroy the adelgids.



Lumpkin Coalition Chairman Forest Hilyer measures conductivity in the Chestatee River during this year's Beetle Battle Paddle.

The Coalition monitors the effect of predator beetle releases on hemlock health and conducts outreach activities to raise awareness about the seriousness of this threat to the hemlocks that line and help protect mountain streams. The organization has also hosted river cleanups in conjunction with Georgia's Rivers Alive program for the past several

years and has recently added stream monitoring to its agenda.

Volunteers Focus on Chestatee, Yahoola and Etowah

UCR's Headwaters Conservation Director **Darcie Holcomb**, now a member of the Coalition's Board of Directors, recently helped organize a water quality monitoring committee within the group. Ten Coalition volunteers completed the Georgia Adopt-A-Stream biological and chemical workshops and are now certified to collect data.

These volunteers are in the process of acquiring equipment and adopting monitoring sites from a preliminary list of over thirty possible sites in Lumpkin County, including locations on the Chestatee and Etowah Rivers, as well as on Yahoola Creek—above and below the new water supply reservoir. See www.lumpkincoalition.org for more information.

HEADING INTO SUMMER—KEEP CONSERVING!

The winter storms in north Georgia caused many people to conclude that the drought was over and water conservation efforts were no longer needed. Nothing could be further from the truth, especially for those of us who live and work in the Chattahoochee watershed. Lake Lanier continues to register record low levels and meteorologists say we could see a summer of drought this year, surpassing that of 2007.

As we enter the hot summer months, keep up your conservation efforts at home and support efficiency measures in your community.

Replace Old-Fashioned Plumbing

Earlier this year, DeKalb County passed an ordinance requiring that older homes up for resale be retrofitted with the water-saving plumbing fixtures that have been required in all new homes since 1993. The passage of this measure—the first of its kind in the state—was due largely to the leadership of **DeKalb CEO Vernon Jones** and **County Commissioner Jeff Rader**.

Plumbing retrofits can save 50-75% of a toilet's water use and save you money as well! Your local utility may offer a rebate or other incentive program to replace your water-wasting plumbing fixtures with low-flow toilets. Metro Atlanta residents can visit www.northgeorgiawater.com or

call 404-463-8645 for more information. DeKalb County residents specifically should go to www.dekalbwatershed.com.

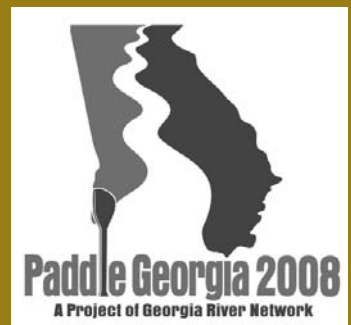
More Ways to Use Water Efficiently

- Use less air conditioning. Saving energy saves water!
- Repair leaky faucets and pipes and report leaks you see in the streets until they're fixed.
- Replace the grass in your yard with drought tolerant native plants or mulch.
- Allow trees and native plants to grow undisturbed for 25-50 feet around waterways to keep them healthy.



Lake Lanier in the fall of 2007—the summer of 2008 could be even worse.

Photo Credit: Tom Wilson



Paddle Georgia On the Flint River June 21-27

Join fellow paddling enthusiasts on Paddle Georgia, a week-long, 92-mile canoe/kayak adventure on the Flint River from Thomaston to Montezuma, and experience Georgia as you never have before!
www.garivers.org/paddle_georgia/pghome.html

With an extreme drought, endless litigation over water with neighboring states and Georgia's first water plan proposed, there was little doubt that water would be a big issue during the 2008 General Assembly. Water legislation did begin and end the session; however, the result was a bucketful of promises and a few pipedreams sure to waste tax dollars.

Governor Sonny Perdue and his legislative leadership pushed through a state water plan in the first five days of the session—less than two weeks after the plan had been completed and turned over to the General Assembly and the public for review.

The resulting 40-page document of policy statements has no force of law and is best described as "a plan to make a plan". While it requires new water assessments, the plan's ill-conceived water planning districts ignore natural river basin boundaries and will likely doom Georgia to more intra-state water conflicts.

Conservation Ignored, Fight with Tennessee Ignited

Although Gov. Perdue took to the radio last fall urging Georgians to take shorter showers and take pride in their dirty cars, he proposed no conservation measures during the session and the legislature didn't pass any measures of their own, except a single sales tax holiday for water efficient appliances.

Perdue persisted in his mandate that north Georgia providers reduce their water use by 10 percent; however, he offered little assistance in meeting this mandate. Instead of supporting common sense funding to replace water-wasting toilets or tax incentives for businesses and homeowners to reduce water waste, the legislature passed a bill that *prevents* local governments from implementing more aggressive water restrictions without approval from the state.

At the same time that Georgia lost a key legal battle in the water wars between Alabama and Florida, the legislature

opened a battle with Tennessee by passing a resolution instructing the Governor to take water from the Tennessee River and pump it 120 miles to metro Atlanta. Never mind that such a project would cost Georgians hundreds of millions, perhaps billions, and violates current state law.

Backdoor Parliamentary Maneuvers

House and Senate leadership thwarted every attempt to improve the water plan passed early in the session. River advocates from across the state secured enough votes in the Senate on the last day of the session to amend the

Cagle-Richardson reservoir bills to regulate interbasin transfers—the practice of moving water from one river basin to another that has proven to be one of the state's most divisive water issues.

Fighting back, the leadership pulled a backdoor parliamentary procedure that assured passage of the cart-before-the-horse reservoir bills and killed any hope of interbasin transfer regulations by combining their two reservoir bills into one, refusing any amendments, and ramming it through in the last two minutes of the session.

Some Damage Averted

With Sen. Chip Pearson (R-Dawsonville) carrying its legislation, the Georgia DOT presented a bill intended to exempt the agency from paying any fines when they or their contractors violate erosion control

laws, despite the fact that DOT is the largest violator of these laws in the state. UCR led the effort to help this legislation die in committee.

We also helped defeat a bill promoted by suburban legislators interested in creating water and sewer authorities for new cities in north Fulton County. Our concern with this legislation was that Atlanta would lose longtime water customers outside the city; this would decrease the city's revenue stream and jeopardize its ability to meet the deadlines in the 1998 consent decree that settled UCR's lawsuit against Atlanta to clean up its sewers.



CAPTAIN'S CORNER

Spring is prime time for boating

Spring is a good time to be on the water. Weather is usually pleasant all day and water temperatures continue to rise. Most warm-water fish bite well as preparations for spawning begin, and paddling is very nice as temperatures aren't so hot.

Before you go, make sure your fishing licenses and registration(s) are current and that the boat and trailer are in good shape. Spring is a prime time for a safety equipment inspection. Make sure paddles, life jackets, signaling devices, fire extinguishers, first aid kits, etc., are in good shape and stored properly.

Oil in any 4-stroke outboards should be changed at least once per year (or per your engine manufacturer's direction). Spring is a good time for this as well as any other scheduled maintenance. Make sure the trailer bearings are greased and rolling smoothly. The bearings should never be hot to the touch after a few miles of travel.

Good Fishing

In the river, crappie, stripers and hybrids began to bite in March in the lower stretches of the river. Crappie will bite

well in the Morgan Falls area up to late mid-May. The schools are large, and so are the fish. Look for them around holes and treetops. Yellow perch bite well along with white bass and are often caught while fishing for crappie. Big plugs in the Franklin area work well in shoal areas. Trout stocking in the delayed harvest areas has been excellent in the Chattahoochee and fishing in the spring is the best.

Though water has risen a few feet in Lake Lanier, use caution in navigation. Numerous shoals that were exposed and dry are now hidden below shallow water; passage over them could leave a lower unit behind or cause other damage. I steer clear of them with good marks on a good gps—especially in times of low visibility. High speed and night operation are not recommended at this level. Choose routes in the river or creek channels to avoid the shoal or trees. Fishing along these channels edges is good as the water near the surface begins to warm.

Now is the time to dust off the paddle or fire up the boat, so get out there and use this wonderful resource.



UCR's Boat Captain
Harlan Trammell

POWER PLANTS

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Blaming the Mussels

In 1998, after four decades of managed flow in the river, several mussel species in the Apalachicola River were listed by the Fish & Wildlife Service (Service) as endangered. The Service later issued a Biological Opinion which found that the Corps' operations, including the 5,000 cfs minimum release from Woodruff Dam, would not jeopardize the mussels.

As the drought in north Georgia worsened in 2007, Georgia officials blamed the mussels for the millions of gallons of water flowing out of upstream reservoirs, ignoring the Corps' operation of its dams to accommodate minimum flows for Plant Scholz and Farley Nuclear Plant, built on the Chattahoochee in Alabama in 1977. The battle cry became "mussels vs. man" in speeches from Governor Perdue's office to metro Atlanta chambers of commerce.

The Corps continued to release large amounts of water from its upstream reservoirs in 2007, claiming that it was doing this solely because of the demands of the Endangered Species Act (ESA). The water demands of the power industry were never mentioned, until enterprising journalists began to write about this issue.

On November 1, 2007, the Corps finally made a formal request to the Service to consider a flow lower than 5,000 cfs in the Apalachicola. By that time, Lakes George and West Point were at extremely low levels and Lake Lanier was 19 feet below normal pool. Within two weeks of the request, the Service had completed another Biological Opinion, this time concluding that operating to maintain flows as low as 4,500 cfs until May 31, 2008, would also not jeopardize the mussels, although doing so would kill some of them.

Power Industry Party to Secret Negotiations

If there was ever any doubt about the role of the power industry in the allocation of water within the Apalachicola-Chattahoochee River Basin, that notion should have been erased in February. News reports revealed that Georgia, Alabama and Florida had signed a confidentiality agreement for



The endangered Fat Threeridge Mussel.

Photo Credit: Courtesy of U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

water negotiations, along with two private companies—Georgia Power and Alabama Power.

We all need electricity to run our homes and businesses. Power production at coal-fired and nuclear plants requires large volumes of water for cooling. The problem is that the role of power generation, as a significant influence on our waterways, has seldom been clearly acknowledged, or sufficiently quantified, by state and federal regulatory agencies. Neither has this use been openly factored into the ongoing tristate water negotiations or in Georgia's statewide water planning.

The 18-year old water war will never be resolved until *all* water users in the three states are willing to share their data and agree on future water needs—from power generation, drinking water and wastewater assimilation, to wildlife habitat and recreation—along the entire length of the Apalachicola-Chattahoochee River Basin.



TAPPED OUT: THE DRYING UP OF ATLANTA

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, metro Atlanta ranks No. 2 in the nation for total population growth of metropolitan areas in the past year—just behind Dallas-Forth Worth. Anyone who has lived in Atlanta for even a few years has felt the effects of this growth in traffic jams, polluted air and disappearing trees and green space.

Although the metro region experienced severe droughts in 1988 and 1999, it was not until last year that the effects of drought and downstream uses converged with Atlanta's population explosion to create water shortages in the upper Chattahoochee watershed.

Water demand is outpacing supply, largely because of the way that we have chosen to grow in the Atlanta area—in addition to the highly inefficient way that we use water. With droughts coming more frequently, we are on a collision course with an uncertain future if we continue growing as we have for the past three decades.

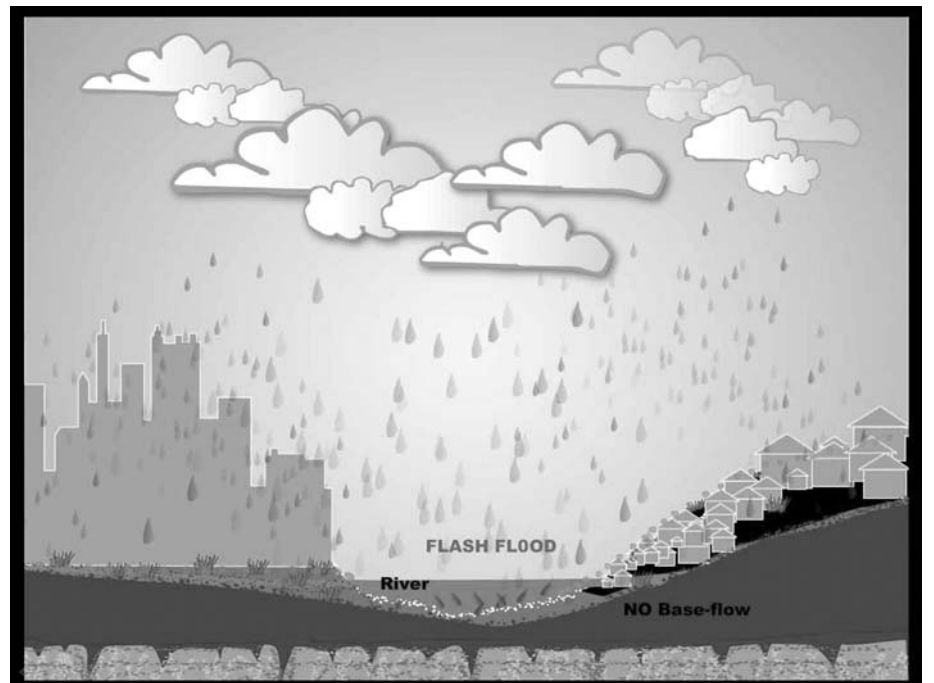
We can keep on growing, or we can keep on wasting water, but we cannot do both.

Upper Chattahoochee Riverkeeper (UCR) has developed a brand-new PowerPoint presentation—*Tapped Out: the Drying Up of Atlanta*, which highlights the seriousness of our water crisis, the trends over the past five decades and those expected in the next two, as well as practical solutions.

This presentation is one of the tools that UCR is using to get accurate information about our water situation disseminated to diverse audiences—from decision-makers to business and civic groups and opinion leaders. If we fail to make the changes that are necessary, the region's economic vitality and the quality of life of its residents will be significantly diminished.

Alarming Trends Can be Reversed

Tapped Out begins with a look at the small size of the watershed that supplies Atlanta's water in comparison with other major cities. We explore the rate of population growth and development of impervious surfaces—the covering of the watershed with roads, roof tops and parking lots. These hard surfaces prevent the rain from being absorbed by the ground, thereby



Animated graphic demonstrates how urban development reduces our water supply.

reducing the base flow in underground channels that would otherwise help sustain streams during dry periods. (See graphic.)

We show the land cover changes in metro Atlanta from 1974 through 2005 and then project this pattern out to 2030, using the latest GIS data from the University of Georgia. We also review rainfall data that shows a steady decline over the past 45 years and the "heat island" effect on our climate, as the urban core has expanded outward. We look at some of the water proposals that have been put forward (new reservoirs, Tennessee River, and desalination of sea water) and then offer a range of solutions.

Thanks to **Turner Productions** and **NewFields, Inc.** for tremendous assistance in data analysis and graphic development for *Tapped Out*. If you are interested in having this presentation given to your group, please contact Alexandra Adams at aadams@ucriverkeeper.org.

'SAVE THE HOOCH' CAMPAIGN IS BACK!

Atlanta's own **SweetWater Brewery** will be kicking off its third annual **'Save the Hooch' Campaign** on **May 15**, as part of UCR's **12th Annual River Revival** at **Park Tavern** at Piedmont Park.

From **Memorial Day through July 4th**, a portion of all SweetWater beer sales will go to support UCR's river patrol and water quality monitoring programs. Last year's campaign raised \$28,000—this year's goal is \$42,000!



SweetWater is a 49,000-barrel microbrewery located in Atlanta.

"Water is our most vital natural resource for survival and the main ingredient in our beer," says Steve Farace, Marketing Director for SweetWater. "Working with UCR is a fantastic way to make sure that Atlanta and our access to clean water will continue to thrive."

Paper Fish and Summer Brews

As part of this campaign, local bars and taverns, such as **Taco Mac** and **Six Feet Under**, will be selling paper fish to their clientele from Memorial Day to July 4th. It's fun and

easy to participate! Go to www.savethehooch.com for a list of participating businesses. When patronizing these establishments, ask to buy a fish for \$1 or \$5. You'll get to decorate your fish or write your name on it before it takes its place on the fish wall of fame.

The month of June is also a great time to check out one of SweetWater's summer brews. The winner of "Small Brewery of the Year" at the 2002 Great American Beer Festival, SweetWater specializes in producing aggressive West Coast style beers for the Southeast.

Whole Foods Joins 'Save the Hooch'

Whole Foods Market is adding its own special touch to the campaign this year. On June 18, *five percent* of the sales at all seven metro Atlanta Whole Foods Market (WFM) and Harry's Farmers Market stores will go to the 'Save the Hooch' campaign! So mark your calendars and make plans to purchase some fantastic SweetWater beer and do your grocery shopping—while also helping to save the river.



WFM Atlanta stores: 5930 Roswell Rd; 77 West Paces Ferry Rd; 650 Ponce de Leon Rd; 2111 Briarcliff Rd.

Duluth: 5945 State Bridge Rd. **Marietta:** 70 Powers Ferry Rd. **SE. Roswell:** 1180 Upper Hembree Rd.

Visit www.wholefoodsmarket.com for more information and store directions.

Special thanks are also in order to **Honda Marine**, **REI** and **High Country Outfitters** for providing promotional items as part of this fundraising campaign. For more information go to www.savethehooch.com

DON'T MISS OUT ON THE BACK TO THE CHATTAHOOCHEE RACE & FESTIVAL-JUNE 14!

Join your community in this annual celebration of our river! The race starts at Garrard Landing Park at Holcomb Bridge Road and finishes at Roswell's Riverside Park with the festival, music and awards.

The race is a family event with recreational categories (solo and tandem) for most ages and abilities following an 8-mile course. **Pre-registration is open until June 12** - register online, download registration form at www.chattahoochee.org, or visit a local outfitter for a brochure. Be sure to register early to ensure your spot as registration will close when we reach boat capacity. Start time is 9 a.m.

The festival runs from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. and offers a little something for everyone. . . live music, great food, activities for the kids and over 50 exhibitors representing environmental organizations in Atlanta.

Organized by UCR, National Park Service, Fulton County and the City of Roswell. Visit www.chattahoochee.org for more information.



Keeping Watch Over Our Waters

Upper Chattahoochee Riverkeeper Fund, Inc.
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Atlanta, GA 30318-5280
404-352-9828

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Atlanta, Georgia

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River Matters

Grand Canyon Adventure: River at Risk Through July 18
IMAX Film
www.fernbankmuseum.org

12th Annual River Revival May 15
www.chattahoochee.org

Adopt-A-Stream Workshop May 30-31
Helen, GA
www.GeorgiaAdoptAStream.org

UCR Camping and Paddling Trip May 31-June 1
www.chattahoochee.org/rivertrips2008-2.htm

Cool Waters Teacher Workshop June 3-5
Johns Creek, GA
www.gawp.org

6th Annual Back to the Chattahoochee River Race & Festival June 14
www.chattahoochee.org

Whole Foods Market Save the Hooch Promotion June 18
5% of sales go to UCR
www.savethehooch.org

Paddle Georgia 2008 June 21-72
Flint River
www.garivers.org

RIVER DISCOVERY TRIPS
Visit www.chattahoochee.org/rivertrips2008.htm
for details on the following:

River Discovery Trip 1 June 21
From Buford Dam to Settles Bridge

River Discovery Trip 2 July 12
Settles Bridge to Abbotts Bridge

River Discovery Trip 3 August 2
Abbotts Bridge to Jones Bridge

River Discovery Trip 4 August 9
Jones Bridge to Island Ford and the historic Hewlett Lodge

River Discovery Trip 5 August 23
Morgan Falls Dam to Paces Mill



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