

GEORGIA

Adopt-A-Stream

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2003: A Year in Review

One of the pleasures of working at Georgia Adopt-A-Stream is that things are always changing. Although the core program has stayed pretty much the same since our inception in 1993, we are always expanding and developing new ideas and projects. 2003 was no different.

To start with, we increased our number of local watershed and community coordinators for the 5th year running. We now have over 50 local contacts that can help serve your water quality needs, conduct stream monitoring workshops or answer your water quality questions. To find a local coordinator go to our website at www.riversalive.org/aas.htm and look under **List of Local AAS Watershed & Community Coordinators (& Trainers)**.

With so many local coordinators and trainers, it's not a surprise that 2003 produced our most impressive citizen participation numbers ever. One of our proudest achievements is the certification of some 1,383 Quality Assured Quality Control (QA/QC) volunteers. This is a fifty percent increase from our previous highest mark in 2002. In addition, over 500 volunteers participated in our watershed and visual stream workshops (non QA/QC), which puts the number for citizen workshop participants in 2003 at around 2,000 volunteers. This means that now more than ever citizens in Georgia are better educated on clean water and the environment.

How much support does the State Program receive from its local coordinators and trainers? Based on some quick calculations, we estimate the value of our local coordinators and trainers at \$1 million per year.



Here are some other highlights. The Coastal Georgia Adopt-A-Wetland program produced their monitoring manual and quickly established itself as a leader in promoting citizen participation. This program helped register more monitoring groups than any other program in the State. Dr. Joe Richardson of Savannah State College and University was the most active trainer in the State, individually certifying some 200 volunteers, initiating new monitoring programs and distributing monitoring equipment in coastal schools.

Rivers Alive exceeded all expectations in 2003, increasing volunteer participation and the volume of trash removed from Georgia streams. See the article on the next page for the latest update.

In 2003 Georgia schools and educators received more monitoring equipment through Adopt-A-Stream in the Classroom, a program made possible through an International Paper grant. So far this program has provided equipment, replacement reagents and safety gear for over 25 monitoring groups.

A new program was created within The Garden Club of Georgia called FLOW, *Forging Leadership in Our Watersheds*. With a vision to encourage “community-based watershed protection,” this program helped organize and educate members about watersheds and Georgia’s water quality issues. See the Georgia Adopt-A-Stream newsletter Sept/Oct 2003 for full details about this program.

Next year Georgia Adopt-A-Stream looks forward to initiating several projects envisioned in 2003, including an amphibian monitoring program to investigate connections between water quality and amphibian populations. A pilot project for monitoring methodology is currently being conducted and a manual is being produced.

By now, most folks in Georgia have heard of the River Rendezvous single day monitoring events. AAS is partnering with several groups to try to take this idea “on the road.” This involves promoting and helping to develop single day watershed wide monitoring events in selected watersheds. These events have great potential to increase our base water quality knowledge. Let us know if your watershed group would like to participate.

Another important project we hope to complete in 2004 is the production of a Citizen Guide to Georgia’s Rivers. This document will provide people with a basic understanding of their watershed and concepts such as the history, local land uses, wildlife and threatened species, and issues facing their river.

2003 has been a lot of fun, in the new year we are looking to more opportunities for expansion.

Rivers Alive

During Rivers Alive 2003, 140 groups collected 355,872 lbs of trash from 1,306 miles of Georgia waters. Armed with 22,238 volunteers, event organizers made great strides in improving our waterways. Top items found include: beverage bottles (glass, aluminum and plastic), food wrappers, bags, paper, and tires.

One group on the Chattahoochee teamed up with the local town government to clean around one of the large bridges. During their event the town removed 10.5 tons of iron piping and 228 tons of logs and other debris that had collected against the bridge. So when you add the iron piping and logs to the total, this year's poundage for Rivers Alive 2003 is closer to 833,000 - that's 417 tons or 84 adult elephants!

This a significant increase over 2002 and 2001 which saw around 18,000 volunteers that collected 300,000 lbs from 700 miles of waterways.



Funding Opportunities

The 2004 Toyota TAPESTRY program will award grants from \$2,500 to \$10,000 to K-12 science teachers. Interested teachers should propose innovative science projects that can be implemented in their school or school district over a one-year period. Apply at www.nsta.org/programs/tapestry/

The Five-Star Restoration Program supports community-based wetland, riparian, and coastal habitat restoration projects that build diverse partnerships and foster local natural resource stewardship through education, outreach and training activities. In 2003, 56 projects (out of 240) received grants of on average \$10,000. The deadline is March 1, 2004. For information go to www.nfwf.org/programs/5star-rfp.htm

Adopt-A-Stream Calendar of Events

The following workshops, taught by certified AAS trainers, provide training in visual, biological and chemical monitoring of streams. Teachers may receive 1 SDU credit for participating – please go to the AAS website under Teacher Corner for more details. Please call to register for a workshop.

What	Who	When	Where	To Register
Getting Started w/ AAS	Elachee Nature Center AAS	Jan 16	Hall Co	770-535-1976
Chemical	Fulton County AAS	Jan 16	North Fulton	404-730-8006
Biological & Chemical	Elachee Nature Center AAS	Jan 17	Hall Co	770-535-1976
Biological	Clayton County AAS	Jan 17	Clayton Co	678-422-2838
Chemical	Cobb County AAS	Jan 24	Cobb Co	770-528-1480
Getting Started w/ AAS	Upper Etowah AAS	Feb 7	Pickens Co	770-591-7156 x5
Chemical	Upper Etowah AAS	Feb 28	Pickens Co	770-591-7156 x5
Chemical	Fulton County AAS	TBA	Fulton Co	404-730-8006
Biological	Fulton County AAS	TBA	Fulton Co	404-730-8006

NOTE: Workshop times vary. Please call to get exact times and locations. Workshop information is updated weekly on our website at www.riversalive.org/aas.htm

QA/QC Recertification: All QA/QC volunteers must renew certification on a yearly basis. This can be accomplished by participating in the second half of our regular chemical or biological workshop. To register, please contact one of our scheduled workshops.

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION: PROMOTING EXCELLENCE THROUGH TEACHING, RESEARCH AND SERVICE



Annual EEA/AAS Conference, March 12-14, 2004
The Retreat at Lake Blackshear, Cordele, Georgia

Come and join AAS at the Annual EEA Conference in South Georgia! Community leaders and educators from across the State will be gathering to share ideas, resources and network with others. We invite each of you to participate in this exciting conference. Some of the water related sessions include:

- ✓ Water Wisdom: Using Adopt-A-Stream to Raise Watershed Awareness and Develop a Sense of Place – Hands on Session
- ✓ Monitoring of Blackshear: The Good, The Bad and the Ugly - Hands on Session
- ✓ Explore the South's longleaf pine ecosystem and it's associated wetlands – all day field trip to Jones Ichauway Ecological Research Center
- ✓ Waters to Sea: The Chattahoochee River –Hands On Session
- ✓ Watershed Walk About – Presentation
- ✓ Southern Region Extension Water Quality - Presentation

For more information about the conference, including **conference program and registration**, please visit the Environmental Education Alliance's website at www.eealliance.org. Registration must be postmarked by February 10th to receive early bird rates!

Give Us Your Tired, Your Weary, Your Dedicated... Volunteers that is!

This year's award categories are:

Volunteer of the Year

Do you know someone who has gone beyond the call of duty to protect Georgia's waterways and support the Adopt-A-Stream mission, giving their time and energy to improve our waterways? Nominate a deserving individual in your community or across the State.

Extraordinary Volunteer Watershed Effort

We all live down stream, therefore most successful water quality programs start at the watershed level. Help us recognize the group that has accomplished the most to blur political boundaries and confront the issues where they are: working in watersheds.

Red Flag Award

Perseverance, environmental awareness, a keen understanding of water related policy and a desire to act when a problem is detected, are the traits we are looking for in our Red Flag Award.

Outstanding Outreach and Partnership

The first step in conservation is awareness. And awareness only happens through effective outreach efforts and partnerships. Nominate a group or person that has demonstrated skill in effectively organizing and educating others.

Adopt-A-Stream in Action: Video or Photography

A photograph is worth a thousand words. Often times a photograph is all that's needed to identify a problem. Send us your exceptional images.

Excellence In Data Collection

Volunteer monitoring data can make a difference, but only if it's collected consistently and under a QAQC plan. Now more than ever, the need for high quality data is in demand. Nominate an individual or group who has consistently collected quality data in your community.

Send your nominations (name of person/group and short essay explaining why you think they deserve the award) to Georgia Adopt-A-Stream, 4220 International Parkway, Suite 101, Atlanta, GA 30354. The deadline is February 15. Awards will be handed out at the Annual Environmental Education Alliance Conference March 12-14th.

The Georgia Adopt-A-Stream Newsletter is published six times per year. For more information about the Georgia Adopt-A-Stream program or to contribute to the newsletter, call or write to:

**Georgia Adopt-A-Stream
Environmental Protection Division
4220 International Parkway, Suite 101
Atlanta, GA 30354
(404) 675-1639 or 1636
www.riversalive.org/aas.htm**

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