

GEORGIA

Adopt-A-Stream

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Harold Harbert and Kim Morris-Zarneke, Editors



2004: A Year in Review

In 2004, Georgia Adopt-A-Stream initiated and completed several large projects. In the spring, AAS started an amphibian monitoring program. By summer, a workshop was conducted to target teacher education and highlight our Educator's Guide. In the fall, meetings were initiated to assist with the creation of a grassroots effort to assess water quality parameters in Whitewater Creek watershed. Before the New Year, Georgia Adopt-A-Stream, through a partnership with the Pollution Prevention Assistance Division, updated and created a new introductory video to our program. And finally, throughout the year, we doggedly pursued our goal of creating a brochure for providing citizens with on the ground, hands on activities for protecting watersheds.

AAS continued to form new – and strengthen old – partnerships with organizations across the state. These included work with the Garden Club of Georgia supporting their program *Forging Leadership in Our Watersheds* (~FLOW); a new partnership with Georgia Project WET to conduct a workshop showcasing the Healthy Water Healthy People (HWHP) curriculum; continued support of the Adopt-A-Wetland program; and the partnership with the Georgia Lake Society to implement the Adopt-A-Lake program. Georgia Adopt-A-Stream continued to work in cooperation with Coastal Georgia Adopt-A-Wetland. This program, administered by the Marine Extension Service in Savannah, has greatly increase citizen involvement in coastal estuarine monitoring.

General Update

In 2004, Georgia Adopt-A-Stream was as active as ever. Our bimonthly newsletter now reaches out to over 4,000 Georgians. Over 1,100 volunteers participated in QAQC workshops conducted by our 101 State certified trainers. Many of these volunteers formed groups to register 47 new monitoring sites. Our 21 member advisory board continues to provided program guidance, assists with recruitment and expansion, supplies technical expertise, fosters partnerships, and develops support for our program. The network of professors serving as Regional Training Centers for AAS is as active as ever, with key assistance provided by Joe Richardson, William Tietjen and Becky Champion.

Adopt-A-Stream Intro Video

For many people, the AAS video is their first introduction to the program. Therefore, the *It All Begins with You* video is one of our greatest resources. Last spring we began the task of revising and updating the intro video. In the process we added information about activities and behavioral changes individuals



With over 6,000 participants and 81 exhibitors, CoastFest provides oodles of information for the environmental community.

can undertake to make a difference. The video has been completed and will be ready for distribution this February, in both VHS and DVD format.

Whitewater Creek Watershed Monitoring

Watershed wide monitoring events can serve as a valuable tool for determining watershed health. A group of folks in the Whitewater Creek watershed near Montezuma proved that lack of funding can be offset by desire and creative partnerships to create a successful event. Expect to hear more about similarly organized events in future Georgia watersheds.

Buffer Brochure & Demo Sites

Many moons have passed since Adopt-A-Stream began investigating the creation of a brochure to provide citizens with hands on activities to reduce urban land use impacts on stream systems. Finally, in 2004, after receiving a Georgia Urban Forestry Commission grant, concrete steps have been taken to complete the project. The brochure will be in print by summer of 2005, and the beginnings of a website have already been posted through a link from the AAS website. In addition, demonstration sites throughout urban areas will highlight conservation techniques homeowners can use to protect local waterways.

AAS Teacher Workshops/Study

In an effort to reach educators, AAS launched a project to see if Georgia educators were involved in the program and if not, what was preventing them from participating. In the end, we found they needed materials in lesson plan format and activities correlated to the QCC (Quality Core Curriculum). To assist educators in understanding the program and getting them materials, the state office began offering 3 and 6 hour teacher workshops to introduced teachers to the AAS Educator's Guide and water monitoring techniques. To date, two workshops have been held in Bartow and Whitfield Counties. A third workshop is planned in Milledgeville for the spring of 2005.

Amphibian Monitoring Workshop

North America boasts the greatest diversity of salamanders in the world. The Southeastern US is home to a large number of these salamanders and a diversity of frogs and toads. Because of their sensitivity to stresses on the environment, amphibians serve as early indicators of water quality problems. An amphibian monitoring program was initiated through a partnership with the Jones Ecological Research Center, with assistance from DNR Wildlife Resources Division, and with help from volunteer Lucrecia Vizcaino. Future plans include at least two workshops in 2005.

Streaming into the Future

As Adopt-A-Stream continues to grow, we will initiate activities that expand the program. New initiatives include creating a technical video on how to conduct a visual stream survey and revising the biological monitoring index assessment. In addition, we will be adding a deep-water biological monitoring component that will help volunteers assess the health of large river systems and slow moving black water streams.

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

Don't forget to submit your nomination or application for the AAS Awards. Award categories are: **Volunteer of the Year, Extraordinary Volunteer Watershed Effort, Red Flag Award, Outstanding Outreach and Partnership, Adopt-A-Stream in Action: Video or Photography, Excellence In Data Collection and AAS Watershed Award.**

Send your nominations (name of person/group and short essay explaining why you think they deserve the award) or application to Georgia Adopt-A-Stream, 4220 International Parkway, Suite 101, Atlanta, GA 30354. **The deadline has been extended to February 4.** For more information about each award or an application, please visit the AAS website under current events. Awards will be handed out at the Annual Georgia River Network Conference in February and Annual Environmental Education Alliance Conference in March.

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
Intro, Biological & Chemical	Elachee Nature Center AAS	Jan 28-29	Gainesville	770-535-1976
Getting Started w/AAS	Upper Etowah Adopt-A-Stream	Jan 29	Canton	770-735-2778
Chemical	Upper Etowah Adopt-A-Stream	Feb 5	Canton	770-735-2778
Getting Started w/AAS	Georgia Wildlife Federation AAS	Feb 19	Conyers	770-787-7887
Chemical	Upper Oconee Watershed Network	March 5	Athens	706-542-7880
Chemical	Georgia Wildlife Federation AAS	March 5	Conyers	770-787-7887
Biological	Upper Oconee Watershed Network	March 12	Athens	706-542-7880
Biological	DeKalb County AAS	March 19	DeKalb	404-371-2540

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.

Rivers Alive

Come hurricane or high water, the 2004 Rivers Alive event organizers and Advisory Board members were not deterred from the task at hand – cleaning Georgia’s waterways. Even though some groups were forced to reschedule and relocate, the will to improve our waterways held strong. With 145 events across the State engaging 23,000 people, volunteers removed over 590,000 pounds of garbage from 1,250 miles of waterways. This was a 65% increase in trash alone from 2003. Why such an increase? We believe it was because of two reasons: new areas cleaned and an active hurricane season. Over the course of 4 weeks Georgia received 12 inches of rain from three hurricanes that flooded most of the waterways in Georgia and filled them with debris. This was quite evident at Carters Lake and Lake Jackson where sections of both lakes were covered by floating mats of debris that were impassable. Several groups also noted finding illegal dumps. Among other items found were washing machines, couches, sinks, televisions, microwaves, tires, shingles and general trash left for nature to dispose of.

New for 2004, we had volunteers document what they collected using Data Collection Cards adopted from the International Coast Cleanup event. Based on the results turned in, approximately 20% of what was found glass and plastic beverage bottles, 18% cigarettes, 16% aluminum cans, and 9% bottle caps.

Thank you event organizers and Advisory Board members for making 2004 a great year!



Volunteers from P2AD take time out to help clean portions of Peachtree Creek.

Georgia River Network Conference, February 19-20, 2005, in Milledgeville

This year's conference is shaping up to be a dandy, with three excellent tracks: *Organizations that Make an Impact*, *Understanding Your Watershed*, and *The Land Connection*. Georgia Adopt-A-Stream will present the track, *Understanding Your Watershed*. To learn more and to register, please go to www.garivers.org.

Environmental Education Alliance of Georgia Conference, March 11-13, 2005, at Unicoi State Park in Helen

Come and join us as we share our experiences and discuss *Keys For Successful Partnerships*. Registration information is posted on the EEA website at www.eealliance.org.

Georgia Water Resources Conference, April 25 - 27, 2005, in Athens

Registration information is posted at <http://ga.water.usgs.gov/gwrc/index.html>.

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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