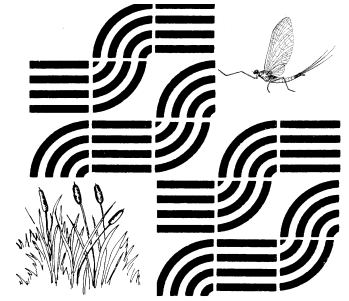


GEORGIA Adopt-A-Stream

Volume 17, Number 2 March/April 2010
Editors: Allison Hughes, Tara Muenz



Department of Natural Resources
Environmental Protection Division

Congratulations to our 2009 Award Winners

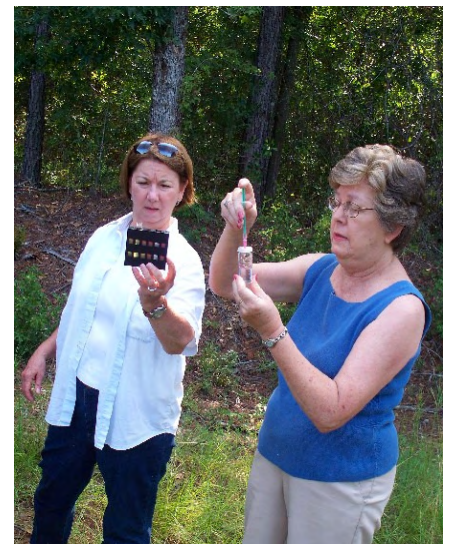
Volunteer of the Year



This award is given to an individual who has gone beyond the call of duty to protect Georgia's waterways and to support the Adopt-A-Stream mission, giving their time and energy to improve our waterways. This year we would like to recognize **Michael Reardon** with the Columbia County Adopt-A-Stream program as the Adopt-A-Stream Volunteer of the Year. Michael has been involved with Adopt-A-Stream since February of 2007, when he received his chemical and biological QA/QC certifications. He began his journey as a volunteer when he wanted to learn more about local water quality as it related to his full time job. Today, Michael is the leader and trainer for the Columbia County Adopt-A-Stream group which consists of seven active sites with 26 members. According to Jenny Hinton, Executive Director of Keep Columbia County Beautiful, Michael is selfless in his contributions and very welcoming in his approach to volunteer monitoring. We applaud Michael for his efforts to protect Georgia's waterways.

Extraordinary Outreach & Partnership

Georgia Adopt-A-Stream encourages volunteers to increase public awareness of local water quality issues and to form partnerships with local stakeholders. The **Camellia Garden Club**, in Randolph County, takes pride in their AAS monitoring site and has made great efforts to make the public aware of the local water quality. To increase public awareness they have written articles in their local paper about illegal dumping and water quality issues and sent their monthly reports to the Garden Club of Georgia and Randolph County. They have worked diligently to create partnerships with their local government, non-profits and industries. The Randolph County Code Enforcement Officer is one of their partners and he has joined them in the initiative to keep Cemochechobee Creek clear of debris and in good water quality standards. We recognize the Camellia Garden Club for setting a good example for Extraordinary Outreach and Partnership.



Excellence In Data Collection

Volunteer monitoring data can make a difference, but only if it's collected consistently and under a QA/QC plan. **Jim and Chris Nearing** who monitor Flat Creek, a tributary to Lake Lanier, have excelled in their consistent and reliable data collection efforts. Over the past eight years, they have remained certified and have recorded 66 monitoring events. This data has been submitted to the City of Gainesville and has been used by local officials in determining pH levels within the lake.



Brian Wiley, City of Gainesville AAS Coordinator states "Their knowledge and ability to look at factual data, and use a level head to determine the truth is the upstream neighbor anyone would love to have."



Extraordinary Volunteer Watershed Effort

High Falls Towaliga Watershed Alliance is the recipient of this year's Extraordinary Volunteer Watershed Effort. Their monitoring program was designed to study water quality in the Towaliga Watershed with a focus on High Falls Lake. They monitor six sites, two of which are where tributaries feed into the lake and four are in the lake. Currently, the group monitors for chemical and bacterial data on a monthly basis and has collected data for many years.

In the last year, their efforts have extended beyond the lake to work on the Total Maximum Daily Load study on three tributaries to the lake. Through their participation in this study they have gained insight for potential pollution sources, determined that there is a need to study the upstream tributaries, and have also formed new partnerships with upstream neighbors along the way. In the coming year, they plan to add at least three new monitoring sites on the tributaries. Now, this is one extraordinary watershed effort!

Red Flag Award

Perseverance, environmental awareness and a desire to act when a problem is detected are traits we are looking for in our Red Flag Award. **Edward Richards**, member of the Friends of Sweetwater Creek State Park group, was an obvious choice for the 2009 recipient. Over the past few years, Edward has developed a keen understanding of the Sweetwater and Lick Log Creeks through his visual and chemical monitoring events.

On several occasions, Edward has located illegal dumps at his two monitoring sites. Through his partnership with the local Environmental Protection Division office, he has been able to report these incidents and work with them to remove the debris. We are very appreciative of Edward's efforts to act when a problem arises.





Adopt-A-Stream in Action

In 2009, Cobb County Watershed Stewardship Program developed and launched the **Brooke and Branch Puppet Show**, a new water quality education program. The story follows Brooke as she goes on a big adventure and learns about biodiversity and water quality from the friends she meets along the way. Brooke and Branch use music, storytelling and puppetry arts to share the concepts of biodiversity, watersheds and stewardship. To further enhance the program, Cobb County Watershed Stewardship Program has developed an activity guide, SMART board lessons and an electronic jeopardy game for teachers, all of which are correlated to third grade Georgia Performance Standards.

Since its inception, Brook and Branch have visited over 2,000 third grade students. Visit Brooke and Branch on-line at <http://watershed.cobbcountyga.gov/files/BrookeandBranch.htm>.

Adopt-A-Stream Watershed Awards

Georgia Adopt-A-Stream relies heavily on our more than fifty Local Adopt-A-Stream Programs. In 2009, our local programs led over 240 workshops and trained over 2,000 volunteers. To show our appreciation, we present Watershed Awards to our most outstanding local programs each year. Our 2009 Watershed Awards were given to The City of Gainesville, Keep Forsyth County Beautiful and Cherokee County Water and Sewerage Authority. These programs have excelled in meeting the four goals of Georgia Adopt-A-Stream. You can read more about each of these programs in the following sections.

City of Gainesville Adopt-A-Stream



The City of Gainesville has been involved with Adopt-A-Stream for over 10 years. Their program has grown from one full time staff to four staff in recent years, including Brian Wiley, Scarlett Fuller, Kevin Finney and Tyler Simms, who are certified trainers for chemical, biological and bacterial monitoring.

The City of Gainesville takes pride in their efforts to promote water quality education and monitoring. In 2009, the staff dedicated over 350 hours to traditional Adopt-A-Stream activities to include 18 QA/QC workshops in which over 200 people received certification. They have four active monitoring groups, two of which are at local schools and two are monitored by community members.

In addition to the traditional Adopt-A-Stream monitoring and workshops, they led over 260 presentations and spoke with over 2,000 people. These presentations focus on nonpoint source pollution and water conservation, and some of which were led by Captain Conservation, their very own super hero. They have also launched several television Public Service Announcements to promote “Fix that Leak” week and two videos to educate the community on the importance of surface water protection. These are just a few examples of the exceptional work that is performed by the City of Gainesville Adopt-A-Stream program.

Keep Forsyth County Beautiful

2009 was a year of growth and excitement for the Keep Forsyth Beautiful Adopt-A-Stream program. Under the leadership of Kevin Smith, the local Adopt-A-Stream Coordinator, they have set the tone for clean water in Forsyth County. They have accomplished this through providing AAS training workshops, educational programming and Rivers Alive cleanups.

Forsyth County hosted fifteen water quality monitoring workshops resulting in over 140 certifications. In 2009, the Keep Forsyth Beautiful Adopt-A-Stream program recorded 539 volunteer hours that equated to \$14,989 in volunteer dollars. To emphasize the value of this free service, the Keep Forsyth Beautiful staff presented a large lottery winner style check to the County Commission. This form of presentation made a lasting impact on the Commissioners.

As with many local Adopt-A-Stream programs, Kevin has learned how to adapt monitoring activities to fit within the K-12 school setting to reach out to more students. In doing so, Kevin was able to teach his macroinvertebrate identification program to over 1,000 students, use the Enviroscope to teach about nonpoint source pollution, and has offered full training and certification to high school AP Environmental Science classes. For these reasons, it is obvious why Keep Forsyth County Beautiful was chosen as a recipient of the 2009 Watershed Award.



Cherokee County Water & Sewerage Authority

Cherokee County Water and Sewerage Authority (CCWSA) has been very involved with Adopt-A-Stream and water quality monitoring in 2009. They have led many workshops, worked with local volunteers to address issues at their sites, and have completed research to remove impaired streams from the 305(d)/ 303(d) list of waters not meeting water quality standards.

Lori Forrester and Jennifer Lowe coordinate the water quality monitoring program for CCWSA. During 2009, they led six Adopt-A-Stream workshops, training fifty volunteers and facilitated water quality programs for over 800 students. Their sticker and bookmark contest was developed to promote water quality and conservation and is very popular with local youth.

In 2009, Cherokee County had nine streams on the 305(b)/303(d) list of impaired waters. A major accomplishment for the CCWSA is that they were able to remove five streams from this list. These streams were removed from the list as a result of locating pollution sources and forming partnerships to make sure the issue is fixed. The efforts of the AAS volunteers makes finding problems easier, as they have local knowledge of their adopted sites. One such example is Toonigh Creek, which has been consistently monitored for ten years. CCWSA found elevated nitrate levels in the stream and are reviewing data collected by the Toonigh Neighbors to gain a better understanding of water quality within the watershed. Their hope is to locate pollution sources and remove this stream from the 305(b)/303(d) list. We would like to recognize CCWSA for their efforts to include Adopt-A-Stream in all levels of their work, from education and outreach to their regulatory water quality studies.



Adopt-A-Stream Welcomes our New Groups! (groups registered 01/04/2010 through 03/31/2010)

Barnard, Fulton County
The Kenari Company, Fulton County
HCRT, Henry and Rockdale Counties
Arabia Mountain High School, DeKalb County
Nile Livingston, Cobb County
Thomas University, Thomas County
Water Warriors, Baldwin County
Tapestry Community, Fulton County
CCHS Interact Club/ North Atlanta Rotary, DeKalb County
Water Makes Healthy People, Troup County
AFK Project, DeKalb County
Perkerson Park Creek Watchdogs, Fulton County
GATC, Fannin County
Alachua, Lee County
Schley County High School Stream Team, Schley County
Girl Scout Troop 1630, Gwinnett County
Georgia Power Company, North Georgia

Rivers Alive Awards Ceremony and Luncheon

On April 21, Rivers Alive hosted their annual Awards Ceremony and Luncheon at the Gwinnett Environmental and Heritage Center in Buford. Keynote speakers Ross Tolleson, State Senator and Chairman of the Natural Resources and Environment Committee, provided his vision of the future of natural resources in Georgia; Tim Banks, Assistant Chief of Operations and Law Enforcement of Georgia State Parks and Historic Sites, gave an overview of how cleanup organizers can partner with State parks to protect public lands.

Eleven cleanup organizers were recognized for their outstanding efforts in helping to preserve and protect Georgia's water resources:

- Spark of Energy Award – Georgia Power, Guerry Brooks and Sandra Hudson
- Confluence Award – Dade County Chamber of Commerce, Debbie Tinker
- Watershed Award – Savannah Riverkeeper, Frank Carl
- Adopt-A-Stream Award – Gwinnett Adopt-A-Stream, Brian Sterner
- Peach Clean State Agency Award – McIntosh Reserve Park, Daryl Johnson
- Organizer of the Year – World Class Learning Alliance and Lumpkin Coalition, Joseph and Sayuri Adams
- Keep Georgia Beautiful Award – Keep Clayton Beautiful and Clayton County Water Authority, Shayla Nealy
- Georgia Club Award – Friends of Eufaula, Ken Penuel
- Georgia School Award – Dalton State College, John Lughart
- State/Federal Park Award – Environmental Protection Agency and National Park Service, Steve Blackburn and Gail Harrison
- Corporate Cleanup – Johns Creek Software, Inc., Steve Cheatham

Thank you to our 2009 Rivers Alive Corporate Sponsors: Georgia Power, Oglethorpe Power Corporation, Coca-Cola Company, Sutherland LLP, Hunton & Williams LLP, Eastman Kodak Company, Burns & McDonnell and our fiscal partner, Keep Georgia Beautiful Foundation.

Rivers Alive 2010 Registration Now Open
Register Today at www.riversalive.org

2010 AAS Confluence was a Success all Around!

On February 27th at Stone Mountain Park, Georgia Adopt-A-Stream held the 1st annual Confluence Conference. Over 130 Adopt-A-Stream volunteers, new and old attended to learn, grow, share and meet one another. It was wonderful to see so many Adopt-A-Stream volunteers in the same place, and the positive energy that surrounded the conference was enlightening and refreshing.

We had volunteers from almost all of the fourteen major river basins; through the Basin Breakout Sessions, volunteers were able to meet others in their watershed and share experiences and learn from one another. Volunteers were educated about new “water related” laws in the Georgia Legislature, learned about the potential effects of pharmaceuticals in our waterways, explored the almost endless possibilities of the Adopt-A-Stream database, had hands-on experiences with bacterial monitoring and mapping a watershed, and much more. For those of you who missed the Confluence, we hope to have DVD’s of some of the presentations and keynote speakers in the coming months, so stay tuned. Images can be found on our website at www.GeorgiaAdoptAStream.org

We at the State office really enjoyed seeing everyone and look forward to hearing your thoughts on what you would like to see for 2011. The date for Confluence 2011 has been set for March 26, 2011.

Thank You to our Confluence Sponsors



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We would also like to thank our fiscal Partners:

Keep Georgia Beautiful Foundation
Environmental Education Alliance of Georgia

See what others are saying about their experiences at the Confluence!



“one person can make a difference”



“While I knew the health of our streams are important, I got a better grasp of the many reasons why.”



“It has inspired me to know that there are so many good folks working for the good of the earth. That is very encouraging.”



“It was the best AAS event I have attended”



“I am Amazed that the state of Georgia has so many volunteers covering so many waterways in the state and glad that the state values citizen science.”



“Very fun and inspiring!”



Mark Your Calendars!

June is National River Month. How are you going to celebrate your favorite river? Maybe a Rivers Alive Cleanup? Maybe a special outreach activity for your community? We would love to hear about your celebration.

Cool Waters Workshop: June 9th—11th Participants will learn about drinking water, wastewater, water conservation, and surface water through daily field trips and hands-on, outdoor activities. Sponsored by Georgia Association of Water Professionals. To register, visit www.gawp.org or call 770-618-8695.

Paddle Georgia 2010: June 18th—25h The week-long paddle trip sponsored by the Georgia River Network will occur this year on the Broad and Savannah Rivers. Join AAS as we sample 82 river miles and teach other paddlers about water quality in Georgia. To find out more, visit <http://www.garivers.org>.

Please visit our calendar of events at www.GeorgiaAdoptAStream.org
for upcoming monitoring workshops and Adopt-A-Stream events.

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
404.675.6240
www.GeorgiaAdoptAStream.org**



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