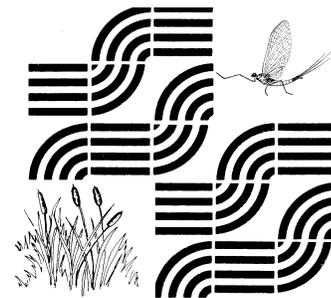


# GEORGIA Adopt-A-Stream

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Tara Muenz, Editor



Department of Natural Resources  
Environmental Protection Division

## Adopt-A-Stream Honors 2012 Award Winners

Many of Georgia Adopt-A-Stream's volunteers go above and beyond to meet the four goals of the program, contributing greatly towards the betterment of Georgia's waterways. We value the contributions of all volunteers and would like to recognize the following individuals, groups, trainers and entities for their efforts in 2012. We think you'll enjoy reading their stories and will perhaps find some inspiration that will reflect into your own monitoring activities.

**Volunteer of the Year, Michael DeLisle (G-714):** Mr. DeLisle is a teacher of Chemistry and Advanced Placement Environmental Science and has been involved with Georgia Adopt-A-Stream since starting a comprehensive school program at McIntosh High School in Peachtree City in 2003. Mr. DeLisle acquired funding for the program, which must come from outside the school system. Starting with eight sampling sites and 32 student volunteers, he has expanded the program to ten sites and nearly 45 students annually. In its tenth year, the program has been responsible for the training of over 200 student volunteers; the chemical and biological monitoring of ten sites and submission of over 1,300 sampling results; the educational outreach visits to over 5,000 residents by student volunteers and over two dozen Rivers Alive clean up events. Under Mr. DeLisle's leadership, the program has worked closely with stormwater managers as well as other local civic organizations and city managers when problems have surfaced. We applaud Michael DeLisle for his efforts and honor him with the Volunteer of the Year award.



**Extraordinary Volunteer Effort, Sierra Club Cobb Centennial (G-695):** The dedicated members of the Sierra Club Cobb Centennial Group, Ina Allison, Jeff Hite, Stacey Haire, Tim Phillips, Carina O'Bara, Delon Barfuss, and Charles Roebuck, work together to make a solid core of chemical, bacterial and biological monitoring volunteers. This group has consistently monitored three sites on Rottenwood Creek since 2004, with 324 monitoring events to date, but their efforts extend beyond the monthly site visits. For the past six years, each spring the group has expanded their monitoring events to include 30 sites throughout the watershed, taking chemical and bacterial samples, as well as picking up trash and photo documenting each site. During the fall, the Cobb Centennial Group's Rivers Alive waterway cleanup event attracts fellow Sierra Club members to participate and learn about their efforts. For these reasons, we are pleased to honor the members of the Sierra Club Cobb Centennial Group with this award.



## Adopt-A-Stream Volunteer Awards

**Adopt-A-Stream in Action, Morning Washburn (G-1493 & 632):** Morning has been an active volunteer for Adopt-A-Stream since 1996, monitoring two sites on the historic Hyde Farm property, where she is a vigilant and dedicated caretaker. Her 100 plus monitoring events established a solid baseline of data, and when the announcement came out of the Lower Roswell Road expansion project, which had great potential of impacting Mulberry Creek and Crooked Branch, tributaries of the Chattahoochee River, her data gave credibility to her concerns about the impact of the project. Morning spent her personal time and energy to form a stakeholders group, assembling representatives from the Cobb County Department of Transportation, National Park Service and Cobb County Stormwater to create a plan that would ensure the road expansion would not affect the waterways leading to the river. Her humbleness, workable approach and vigilance created an atmosphere where all parties involved were able to efficiently communicate, resolve and prevent potential issues. This is just one of the many efforts Morning has dedicated her time to in protecting our waterways, and for this we honor her with the Adopt-A-Stream in Action Award.



**Outstanding Outreach Award, Kevin McGrath (G-1618):** Over the past year, the Upper Chattahoochee Chapter of Trout Unlimited, led by Kevin McGrath, has initiated an Adopt-A-Stream program, locally called Adopt-the-Hooch. Partnering with Georgia Adopt-A-Stream, the National Park Service Chattahoochee National Recreation Area, the Chattahoochee Riverkeeper and Fulton County Adopt-A-Stream, Adopt-the-Hooch's goal is to monitor water quality of tributary streams to the Chattahoochee River. Since its formation, Adopt-the Hooch has adopted eight sites and conducted sixty monitoring events, and the program, along with its partners, has allocated over \$2,500 to the purchase of equipment for its eight water quality monitoring teams. While Adopt-the-Hooch is a new program, it has increased the awareness of nonpoint source pollution on the Chattahoochee River with three government agencies, four Trout Unlimited chapters, one conservation agency and one commercial enterprise. For his effort with Adopt-the-Hooch, we honor Kevin McGrath with the Outstanding Partnership Award.

**Outstanding Partnership Award, Arfan Siddique:** Being inspired by his Adopt-A-Stream monitoring, Arfan founded the Project CarryOn Foundation and spent the summer of 2012 in Bangladesh. Project CarryOn is a nonprofit, charitable organization whose mission is to raise awareness of arsenic poisoning and waterborne diseases in Bangladesh through health and nutrition oriented seminars. The organization is fully funded and administered by student and teacher volunteers in central Bangladesh, a region suffering from accidental arsenic poisoning via well water consumption. So far, Arfan's organization has hosted thirty-eight seminars along with three awareness rallies in six different villages, serving a total population of 30,000 villagers. Arfan has also worked with more than 12,000 students in eight high schools in Bangladesh, encouraging community involvement in reducing water pollution and training students to perform water quality tests on local waterways. Arfan hopes to continue his involvement in Atlanta and elsewhere and to continue expanding the mission of Adopt-A-Stream at a global scale. For these reasons, we honor Arfan Siddique with the Outstanding Outreach Award.



# Adopt-A-Stream Volunteer Awards

**Multimedia Award, Tom Mills:** Reaching out to local communities about environmental issues can be done in a multitude of ways. This award goes to the individual who has gone above and beyond by utilizing non-traditional formats (multimedia, art, website, music, video, etc.) to raise awareness about water quality. Tom Mills is a media professional of eighteen years with a passion for being green and a love of nature and water. Through his Greenshortz videos (<http://www.greenshortz.com>), Tom educates the public about new ideas and creative solutions, and how to take small steps toward living greener. To this end, Tom created a video about Georgia Adopt-A-Stream filmed in Braselton, Georgia. The video, titled "Meet My Son, The Stream," showcases how simple it is to get involved and make a difference with the program. For this we honor Tom Mills with the Multimedia Award.



**Excellence in Data Collection, Columbus Adopt-A-Stream (G-1127):** Volunteer monitoring data can make a difference, but only if it's collected consistently and under a QA/QC plan. Since January 2009, Bonnie Compton, Tina Armistead, Martha Mullinax and Gayle Dean have been monitoring Lindsey Creek as part of the Columbus Adopt-A-Stream group. They have been certified in chemical and bacterial monitoring and are the area's most consistent Adopt-A-Stream volunteers. No matter how extreme the temperature, you can count on them to be in the field collecting water samples. Their collection methods are of the highest quality, resulting in data that is consistent and reliable. These Master Gardeners are committed to improving the environment, and their dedication goes beyond stream monitoring. We applaud the volunteers of Columbus Adopt-A-Stream for their excellence in data collection and reporting.

**Nymph Award, Roopsha Bandopadhyay (G-1605):** The Nymph Award is given to a new volunteer or group who has excelled in meeting the goals of the program. Roopsha Bandopadhyay is a middle school student who learned about the program at a Girl Scout meet and greet event in September 2011. After the event, Roopsha was interested in pursuing Adopt-A-Stream. She attended a workshop and borrowed a chemical monitoring kit, and she has consistently monitored and submitted her data since then. Always on top of her volunteer duties, she even inquired about her expired reagents, where to get replacements and the proper method of disposal for the old reagents. When she received a notification that her chemical certification was due to expire, she recruited her mother to attend the workshop as well. This level of commitment is rare, but even more so in a student so young. We congratulate Roopsha Bandopadhyay for her efforts and dedication in 2012, and are pleased to give her the Nymph Award.



## Thank you to our 2012 Award Sponsors!



# Adopt-A-Stream Trainer Awards

Georgia Adopt-A-Stream (AAS) relies heavily on the support of its local trainers to engage citizens by conducting certification workshops and as a continuous point of contact for the program. With over 60 active trainers in 2012, our trainers helped to conduct over 450 workshops, certifying over 4700 individuals in our QA/QC monitoring programs. In recognition of our outstanding trainers, that have gone above and beyond in promoting our goals, we would like to recognize the following Trainers of the Year, New Trainers of the Year, and our Legacy Trainers who have given 10+ years as an active AAS Trainer.

## We Recognize Our Legacy Trainers for 10+ years of Active Service to the Adopt-A-Stream Program

Michael O'Shield ~ Robert Phillips ~ Eric Lindbergh ~ Sharon Smith ~ Jennifer McCoy  
William Tietjen ~ Tom Weiland ~ Brian Wiley ~ Lori Forrester

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR DEDICATION, TIME AND ENERGY!**

**Trainer of the Year, Lori Forrester:** Lori works for the Cherokee Water and Sewerage Authority (CSWA) as an Environmental Affairs Specialist and has been an active AAS trainer since 2003 being certified in our chemical, bacterial and macroinvertebrate monitoring programs. She has lead 27 workshops, certifying over 350 citizens. In addition to her duties with CWSA, Lori is very involved with the local AAS groups, promoting river cleanups, leading field trips, and sharing the data collected not only on a local basis but worldwide. She is very thorough in reviewing data and maintains strong ties to her volunteers and school groups.



**Trainer of the Year, Tom Sewell:** Tom is a teacher at Hopewell Middle School and has been an active AAS trainer since 2008, being certified in our chemical and bacterial monitoring programs. He has lead 29 workshops, certifying over 425 students and citizens, leading the water quality monitoring of 18 active sites involving both students and parents. He has developed an outstanding environmental experience for his students, incorporating good citizenship, civic responsibility and environmental stewardship. Tom is also the recipient of a Greening Forward Grant, which helps to fund his monitoring and outreach efforts.

**New Trainer of the Year, Alexa Robinson.** Alexa is an employee of the City of Griffin and also works with the Spalding County 4-H Program. As an active trainer since 2011, she has created strong partnerships to increase awareness of our waterways through social media, newspapers, radio stations and word of mouth. She has held chemical, biological, stream survey and watershed assessment workshops to teach citizens how to properly collect water quality data. In her own words, Alexa describes why she is involved with the AAS program, "I love sharing my knowledge with other people and seeing enthusiasm grow from there. The numbers in the class really do not matter, I will teach as many or as few as are present. I am happy to go out with new volunteers and help them gain confidence, and I am glad to be their contact for Adopt-A-Stream."



**New Trainer of the Year, Eric Cagle.** Eric has been an active trainer in the biological and chemical monitoring programs since 2011. He is a monitor for the Columbia County Adopt-A-Stream Group and strives not only to help waterways on a local level, but across state boundaries. Recently Eric has been a pivotal trainer in helping citizens in South Carolina get established and trained in the AAS methods. Eric also continues to improve his knowledge and background when he teaches his certification workshops, always reading up on ways to bring important information to his classes. In Eric's own words,

"I am volunteering to help ensure my son and all of the residents of the local area have clean water to play in, play on, and drink. If I have made an impact on one person who passes it along, then I have been successful."

# Adopt-A-Stream Watershed Awards

Georgia Adopt-A-Stream partners with more than sixty local Adopt-A-Stream Programs. To show our appreciation, we present 'Watershed Awards' annually to our most outstanding local AAS programs in the governmental, nonprofit, university and watershed organization levels. Our 2012 Watershed Awards were given to the **City of Griffin**, the **Chattahoochee RiverWarden** and the **Stone Mountain Memorial Association**. These programs have excelled in meeting the goals of Georgia Adopt-A-Stream and we are so grateful for their service to the program.



The **City of Griffin** began actively participating in Adopt-A-Stream in 2012 and now boasts two trainers. In addition to Adopt-A-Stream activities, the City of Griffin maintains an extensive public awareness program directed at the City's utility customers, including watershed field days for local schools, a Stormwater Utility Annual Report, and educational flyers that are distributed to Griffin's 24,000 water customers every year. As 2012 was wrapping up, the City finished construction of a Clean Water Action Section 319 grant-funded stream restoration project in which 500 feet of piped stream running between three high profile and high traffic areas was daylighted and restored. Griffin also hosts an annual Field Day as an educational opportunity to neighboring local government officials, land developers and engineers involved in watershed protection. While the City of Griffin's Adopt-A-Stream program data collection activities are just getting under way, there are few cities of a similar size that have such a comprehensive public water education and outreach program.

**Chattahoochee RiverWarden** (CRW), based in Columbus, Georgia, uses advocacy, science, and education for the protection and stewardship of the Lower Middle Chattahoochee River and its tributaries. Since its establishment as a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization in 2010, the Chattahoochee RiverWarden has become an important part of the environmental community. CRW actively monitors sixteen Adopt-A-Stream sites, with 116 monitoring events in 2012. Two of its staff members are certified to teach chemical and bacterial monitoring and they led seventeen workshops last year. In addition to its Adopt-A-Stream endeavors, CRW has partnered with numerous public, private and nonprofit organizations in Georgia and Alabama in order to educate the public and train volunteers in citizen-scientist programs; raise awareness of nonpoint source pollution, stormwater threats and other water quality issues; and organize waterway cleanups, such as Help the Hooch, the Southeast's largest river cleanup. The organization has also received several grants, including the 2012 Youth Stream Monitoring Grant from Greening Forward. Chattahoochee RiverWarden worked tirelessly in 2012 to protect the Lower Middle Chattahoochee River watershed and is committed to do even more in 2013.

The **Stone Mountain Memorial Association** (SMMA) Education Department strives to engage students and adult citizens in watershed health through its educational programs. In 2012, the program conducted 22 Adopt-A-Stream workshops for 103 volunteers who earned 129 certifications. SMMA staff also regularly monitor three stream locations in the Park. Since 2005, SMMA has partnered with Druid Hills High School, training chemistry students each semester in chemical monitoring, and provided the equipment for and supervision of those students each month during the school year to monitor the South Fork of Peachtree Creek on the Emory campus. SMMA also provides a series of public Adopt-A-Stream trainings during the summer months in partnership with the DeKalb County Department of Watershed Management.

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**  
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**Atlanta, GA 30354**  
**404.675.6240**  
**[www.GeorgiaAdoptAStream.org](http://www.GeorgiaAdoptAStream.org)**

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**Sign up by emailing us at [aas@gaepd.org](mailto:aas@gaepd.org).**



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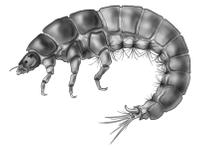
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## Thank You Allison for your Service to Georgia Adopt-A-Stream!

Well, we had to say goodbye once again to Allison Hughes. In February, she moved on to another great adventure, joining her husband full time in their very successful pet sitting business in Atlanta called 'Petmeiseters.' We were sad to see her go, and her warm heart and gentle spirit will be missed, but we wish her well on this new chapter of her life. Be sure though to know that you will see her again most likely at local watershed events, probably with a paddle in hand (and a pup or two).

During her time as one of the state coordinators (her second tenure that is, from October 2009 to February 2013), Allison helped to grow the AAS Program to all areas of the state and assisted with major improvements in the program's structure and function, which is now nationally recognized.

When asked for her thoughts to share with AAS volunteers, she had these words to share...*"Please remember that the work that you are doing is very important and much appreciated by the State of Georgia. I encourage you to bring a friend or youth to monitor with you, to spread the word about what you're doing to your local community and never underestimate the power of partnerships."*

**Thank you Allison for all your wonderful contributions and dedication to Georgia Adopt-A-Stream, we will miss you!**



Please visit our calendar of events at [www.GeorgiaAdoptAStream.org](http://www.GeorgiaAdoptAStream.org)  
for upcoming monitoring workshops and Adopt-A-Stream events.