

Winyah Rivers Foundation
Center for Marine and Wetland Studies
Coastal Carolina University
1270 Atlantic Avenue
Conway, SC 29526

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NEWS from the WINYAH RIVERS FOUNDATION
Sponsor of the Waccamaw Riverkeeper Program

FALL, 2007
VOLUME 7, NO. 3



2007

Calendar

September 15th
Beach Sweep-River Sweep

South Carolina's largest one-day volunteer cleanup event of its kind, is scheduled from 9 am to noon.

November 10th
2007 River Roast and Silent Auction

Ripley's Aquarium in Myrtle Beach from 6:00 to 10:00 pm.

join us!

Date _____

Guardian through Champion categories will earn rewards.

Champion	\$1000	_____
Defender	\$ 500	_____
Advocate	\$ 250	_____
Guardian	\$ 100	_____
Protector	\$ 50	_____
Introductory (Year 1)	\$ 35	_____
Student (full time)	\$ 10	_____

Business Categories

Business Champion \$1000 _____
(Framed certificate of membership, recognition in all newsletters and on website with your logo, 1/4 page ad in one newsletter)

Business Defender \$ 500 _____
(Certificate, recognition with your logo in each newsletter and on website)

Business Advocate \$ 250 _____
(Certificate, recognition in each newsletter)

Business Guardian \$ 100 _____
(Certificate, recognition in one newsletter)

Name _____
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City _____
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Winyah Rivers Foundation

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www.WinyahRivers.org

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Waccamaw Riverkeeper™

Christine Ellis



Volunteer Monitoring Program To Expand to NC

The Waccamaw River Volunteer Monitoring Project is a citizen volunteer-based initiative designed to collect water quality data from the Waccamaw River in South Carolina. Data collected help to meet state and federal requirements under the Clean Water Act, specifically requirements for public education and involvement and the detection of illicit discharges.

The Project is administered by Coastal Carolina University's Waccamaw Watershed Academy with Dr. Susan Libes as the Project Manager, Davinder Randhawa as the Volunteer Monitoring Coordinator and Christine Ellis as the Field Leader. We will be hosting our second annual data conference on September 26 to bring together the volunteers, the funding partners, the program administrators and the media to summarize the project's accomplishments, thank the participants and discuss the data, including how it can be used to provide background data on the state of the river and for formulating strategies for preservation and protection of water quality.

This year's meeting date was chosen to coincide with World Water Monitoring Day™, an international education and outreach program that builds public awareness and involvement in protecting water resources around the world by engaging citizens to conduct basic monitoring of their local water bodies. The kick off date for World Water Monitoring Day™ is September 18 with monitoring through October 18. We are registered as a participant and our sampling data during that month will be entered into the WWMD database. For more information on World Water Monitoring Day™, please go to www.worldwatermonitoringday.org/.

While current funding provides only for South Carolina participation, we are proposing to expand the program into the upper Waccamaw in North Carolina and adopt a broader watershed approach. In order to accomplish this we will need administrative support, funding sources and volunteers in North Carolina.

With Becky Westbrooks, WRF Board Member and

Instructor in the Department of Biology and Environmental Science at Southeastern Community College in Whiteville, NC, we are working to identify funding sources in NC to support program administration, equipment and analytical costs. We will identify potential sampling locations along the upper Waccamaw River and seek volunteer support from the local communities and organizations.

We invite you to join us in this worthwhile project. For more information on the existing efforts in South Carolina, please visit the website www.coastal.edu/envsci/vm_project.html. For more information on the expansion of the project into North Carolina, please contact us as indicated below:

Christine Ellis,
Waccamaw Riverkeeper, (843)349-4007, wrk@coastal.edu; or Becky Westbrooks, (910)642-7141, rwestbrooks@scnc.edu



Team 5 hard at work at the Hagley and Sampit sites. The Riverkeeper Program is actively seeking funding for expanding this work into the northern reaches of the Waccamaw.

RiverTalk

by Christine Ellis, Waccamaw Riverkeeper

The Waccamaw River watershed has its headwaters in the Lake Waccamaw area in southeastern North Carolina. Several extensive wetlands around the lake contribute water to streams flowing into the river. These wetlands provide many ecological functions including biological diversity and productivity, fish and wildlife habitats, water quality control, flood storage, sediment and erosion control, recreational opportunities and aesthetics. As a result, we recognize that wetlands provide many societal benefits and that we must all work towards their protection.

Notable among these wetlands is the Green Swamp, an area of great

biological diversity and uniqueness. Several years ago, the Riegel Ridge Limited Liability Corporation proposed building a regional landfill on 760 acres of land owned by Waste Management, Inc. near Clewis Corner in the Green Swamp. Columbus County Commissioners approved the site and, in 1999, entered into a franchise agreement with Riegel Ridge LLC which then proceeded to seek the necessary state and federal permits for the project.

The proposed site is in close proximity to The Nature Conservancy's Green Swamp Preserve and Lake Waccamaw, designated (Continues on page 2.)

It's That Time Again!

Please help us plan for our biggest fundraiser of the year, the 2007 River Roast Silent Auction. It will be held on Saturday, November 10 at Ripley's Aquarium.

Last year's event was our first year at Ripley's and a huge success, thanks in large part to our wonderful sponsors, donors and volunteers! This year's event will be even bigger and better! If you'd like to have a hand in the planning for the event, be a sponsor or donate an item for our silent auction, please contact the Waccamaw Riverkeeper.



Waccamaw Riverkeeper Program Issue Update

North Carolina Conservation Network (NCCN) – We are a member in this network that provides legislative and issues updates for North Carolina. One of the issues we are watching is that of sedimentation control at the regulatory level and the citizen based Muddy Water Watch. The Riverkeeper will attend training in September to learn more about the citizen initiative and opportunities for initiating the program in the Waccamaw River watershed.

Cape Fear Arch Conservation Collaborative – We are a member in this collaborative whose mission is to “Develop and implement a community conservation vision to build awareness, protection and stewardship of the region’s important natural resources.” We participate in a mapping exercise to identify the highest priority habitats and species in need of conservation attention in southeastern NC and northeastern SC.

Waccamaw River Paddle Trail in NC – Working with local government officials in both Columbus and Brunswick Counties, we hope to establish a paddle trail in the stretch of the Waccamaw River from the outlet at Lake Waccamaw to the SC state line.

Waccamaw River Volunteer Monitoring Program – As the Field Leader for this program of Coastal Carolina University’s Waccamaw Watershed Academy, the Riverkeeper participated in a volunteer get together to discuss current and proposed program initiatives. Our second annual Public Data Conference will be held on September 26 at the Waccamaw Higher Education Center and will include program administrators, funding partners, volunteers and the media to review the program’s objectives and the data being generated. See page 1 for information on the North Carolina initiative.

Coastal Waccamaw Stormwater Education Consortium (CWSEC) – The biannual meeting of the consortium was held in June, bringing together the funding partners and education providers to report on our Year 2 activities. The CWSEC was formed to help local municipalities meet their education and outreach and illicit discharge detection requirements under the Clean Water Act stormwater regulations.

River Shacks – Waccamaw Riverkeeper volunteers have a critical role to play in the enforcement of the Public Waters Nuisance Abatement Act. By August 22 existing shacks must have a permit to continue operation. Retrofitted shacks that no longer meet the definition of a river shack must meet the regulations for a boat, including the requirements of waste treatment, navigability and registration. SC Department of Natural Resources is the enforcement agency and can be contacted to determine requirements for specific structures. Let’s work together to clean up these eyesores and their pollution.

South Carolina Nonpoint Source Outreach Toolbox – The Riverkeeper is a member of a state-wide group convened by SC DHEC to discuss the possibilities for a SC NPS Outreach Toolbox, an outreach product targeting stakeholders who are working to reduce nonpoint sources of impairment to the State’s waters. The group had its initial meeting in Columbia, at which we discussed NPS outreach needs, DHEC’s role in addressing these needs and the tools, resources or assistance that would best meet our outreach needs.

Conway Water Quality and Drainage Commission and Kingston Lake Watershed Project – Work continues on several projects including a Keep Conway Beautiful initiative, a Crabtree Swamp restoration project and the development of a Paddle Trail in the Kingston Lake/Crabtree Swamp area. The committee struck to plan the proposed “Evelyn Snider Memorial Paddle Trail”, comprised of interested Conway residents, is working to integrate the paddle trail with the City of Conway’s Greenways proposal and identifying required elements.

Development along the Waccamaw River Corridor – The Riverkeeper is working with concerned citizens in Horry County on issues relating to river corridor development and potential impacts on wetlands and floodplain capacity. Agencies contacted include Horry County, US Army Corps of Engineers, SC Department of Natural Resources, SC Department of Health and Environmental Control and the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Great Pee Dee Scenic River Advisory Committee – The Riverkeeper is a non-voting member of the committee that will formulate the management plan and a member of the land use planning subcommittee. The land use planning subcommittee has identified management goals and potential inputs to the overall management plan for the Great Pee Dee Scenic River. The reconvened overall committee will meet for the second time in late August to consider the inputs of the various subcommittees.

Citizen Education, Awareness and Activism for Clean Water in Georgetown County – Several projects are underway in Georgetown County, including the development of:

- a volunteer training program to train volunteers in basic water quality science and watersheds, environmental laws, and neighborhood environmental watch basics so that they may become effective participants in local community groups;
 - an interactive tool for use at festivals to better illustrate specific water pollution principles
 - an educational video on the Waccamaw Riverkeeper Program
 - a map of the Waccamaw River to enhance community awareness of environmental issues and aid users of the river
 - enhanced website information to improve the dissemination and exchange of information via the Winyah Rivers Foundation website (www.winyahrivers.org)
- For more information on these and other projects, contact the Riverkeeper.

RiverTalk

(Continued from page 1.) as Outstanding Resource Water. Conservation groups, including Winyah Rivers Foundation, spoke out against this proposal and local citizens formed the Friends of the Green Swamp (FOGS) to save the Green Swamp from the proposed landfill.

FOGS and their partners have worked long and hard to fight the proposed landfill. And their tireless work has been rewarded. Just days after the one year moratorium on new landfill permitting in the state ended on August 1, state lawmakers passed the Solid Waste Management Action of 2007 (S1492). The bill will tighten regulations and standards for new landfills along with several other provisions. A companion bill, S6, provides solid waste companies whose current proposed landfills may be blocked the ability to recover planning costs. The result is the demise of the proposed Riegel Ridge landfill in the Green Swamp.

While the threat of the Green Swamp landfill has now passed, groups working in the watershed recognize the need for continued vigilance to protect this ecologically significant area. Working together, we will continue to protect, preserve, monitor and revitalize the health of the lands and waters of the Waccamaw River watershed.

Kudos to the Friends of the Green Swamp.



WRF Welcomes Two New Board Members

Greg Mitchell of Surfside Beach, SC

Greg was born in Deland, Florida and attended the University Of South Carolina earning a BS in Business Administration. He later earned a masters degree in Management from Webster University, as well as a graduate degree in Higher Education Leadership from the University of South Carolina. Greg currently serves as Vice President for Workforce Development and Continuing Education, and Provost (Grand strand campus) at Horry-Georgetown Technical College.

Greg’s hobbies includes, bicycling, camping, fishing and cooking for friends and family.

Becky Westbrook of Chadbourne, NC

Becky attended Austin Peay State University earning a B.S. in Biology and Chemistry in 1974. She earned her M.S. in Biology/Botany at the University of South Carolina in 1990. She has taught in several sciences in public schools in Tennessee, Kentucky, S.C. and N.C.

Becky currently teaches at Southeastern Community College in Whiteville, N.C., where she developed the Environmental Science Technical Program and the Agricultural Biotechnology Program. She is also the lead faculty for the Natural Resource Area on campus and is the keeper of the Nature Trail on campus.

She and husband Randy have two sons. Her leisure time is spent kayaking the local rivers, attending environmental organization meetings, reading, botanical illustration, gardening, promoting native plants, and spending time with her family.



Leaving Well Enough Alone

by David Scott, Director, WRF

“A man is rich in proportion to the things he can leave alone.”

...Henry David Thoreau

Bees have nothing on us humans. In fact, no other animal on Earth can “out-busy” our species. I am one who finds ethology, the study of animal behavior, extremely fascinating—curious to uncover what makes us tick. Look for a moment at the treadmill of the typical American life.

Alarm clock waking us when we’re still legitimately tired. Dressing, bathroom, breakfast, kids to school, work, lunch, work, home, dinner, meetings, TV, homework, sleep, and the alarm clock again. PC’s, faxes, cell phones, laptops, voice mail, beepers, call waiting, message machines, remote control, internet, e-mail.

Man cannot rest. He is incurably obsessed with activity: walking, jogging, internetting, building, clearing, cleaning, playing, digging, planning, planting, remodeling, eating, shopping, commuting, watching, reading, worshipping, listening, gossiping, etc.

We have but one speed—wide open, ever accelerating, eyes blazing, nerves on edge, redlining, ever faster, racing along the tightrope over a chasm of insane change.

Why is it that only Man is victimized by this manic love affair with speed, efficiency, productivity, and never-ending promotion? Climbing the corporate ladder which blindly reaches toward heaven, only to find exhaustion and disappointment there.

This all-American disease of frenzy not only takes its toll on our bodies and soul, it is subjecting our natural world to mindless plunder and destruction. Nothing is immune to this obsession with frantically creating change. When we see a forest, we have to cut it. When we cut the forest, we have to convert the land to agriculture. When we see an empty space on the map, we have to build a road through it. When we have a river, we have to dam it. When we’ve got a mountain, we have to develop a ski resort. When we’ve got a stream, we have to use it to move industrial pollution. When it’s new, we have to buy it. When it’s used, we have to discard it. If it’s wet, we’ve got to drain it. If it floods, we have to dike it. If it’s edible, we have to eat it. If it’s sellable, we have to sell it. If it’s old, we have to tear it down. If it’s empty, we have to fill it. If there’s a product, we have to create a demand. If one is good, three is better. If they’ve got one, you need one, too.

When the last river is dammed, when the last redwood is cut, when everyone has a cell phone, when everyone has a new car, when the last wilderness is four-laned, when the last swamp is drained, when the last songbird has flown south, when everyone is on-line, when all roads are paved, when all towns have a WalMart, when all the pests are exterminated, when all houses are air-conditioned, when all credit cards are maxed out, when all the strip malls are built, when all businesses are franchises, after all the lawsuits have been filed, when Sunday is just another workday, when every horizon has a microwave tower, when all food is fast-food, after everyone lives in a little box in a new development, when every fish has been caught, and every patch of heaven has its own satellite, man can finally take a break, sit back, prop up his feet, and wonder where he went wrong.

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Thank you!

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