

# Riverspeak

News from the WINYAH RIVERS FOUNDATION



Sponsor of the WACCAMAW RIVERKEEPER® PROGRAM

FALL 2009

Volume 9 Issue 3

## WATERKEEPERS GATHER IN NEW YORK

### CLINTON THANKS US FOR OUR WORK!



WATERKEEPER® ALLIANCE celebrated its 10 year anniversary by holding its Annual Conference in New York—the birthplace of our movement. From June 24 -28, some of the world's leading environmental advocates gathered at SUNY Maritime Academy to discuss the most urgent crisis of our time—climate change and the impacts on the world's water resources. The conference was hosted by Hudson Riverkeeper, Long Island Soundkeeper and NY/NJ Baykeeper, three of the founding Waterkeeper organizations.

In a private address to the WATERKEEPER® ALLIANCE members, **President William Jefferson Clinton**, introduced by the CEO, **Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.**, discussed the need for research and innovation on clean, alternative energy sources, and thanked Waterkeepers for being agents of change around the globe.

President Clinton thanks our RIVERKEEPER®

Waterkeepers hosted a number of other outstanding speakers including: **Dr. James Hansen**, renowned climate change scientist; **Richard Heinberg**, an expert on peak oil and peak coal issues; **Yun Jianli**, the Middle Han Waterkeeper in China; polar explorer and environmental leader, **Sir Robert Swan**, who was the first person to walk to both the North and South Poles; **Majora Carter**, MacArthur "genius" Fellow and green-collar economic consultant; and **Josh H. Dunnigan**, Assistant Administrator from NOAA. **A great conference and a great time!**

## NEW PADDLE SERIES "IF THE RIVER COULD TALK"

The first in a series of Waccamaw River paddle trips on August 8<sup>th</sup> was very successful! Putting in at Pireway landing, North Carolina, about 40 paddlers meandered down the Waccamaw, enjoying the beautiful scenery along the river, including the Waccamaw River Heritage Preserve, and taking breaks to swim in the river's black waters. 12 miles and 5 hours later, paddlers were happy and thankful for the generosity of Food Lion of Longs for providing lunch sandwiches. Our friends at Conway Kayak Company supplied kayaks to those without their own equipment. All in all, a very successful first paddle in this series.

This new paddle series, "If The River Could Talk", is intended to bring more people to the River, to enjoy its beauty and its riches, to bring awareness to the wonderful asset it provides to our community and to our economy, and to solicit stewardship of the Waccamaw River and interest in the Waccamaw RIVERKEEPER® Program.



Members of Yakkity Yakers Club  
Photo by: Ed Kay

Stay tuned for future paddle events. Bring your canoe or kayak and let's start a discussion with the River...what will it tell us if we listen?

## RIVER WATCHER FORUM

Protecting the water quality of the Waccamaw River, and other rivers of the greater Winyah Bay watershed, begins with safeguarding the places that each of us know and love - our very own backyard part of the river, estuary or creek. While understanding and tackling the water quality needs of an entire watershed is a lot to ask, recognizing and taking action to address and solve the water quality issues in and around your neighborhood river or creek is the least that we can do for ourselves, our families and future generations.

The Waccamaw Riverkeeper invites you to become more knowledgeable of and involved in the health of the watershed where you live, work and play by joining us for a four-week River Watcher forum.

When?

Wednesdays 1-3 pm  
September 16<sup>th</sup> through October 7<sup>th</sup>

Where?

Georgetown Public Library,  
405 Cleland Street, Georgetown

To register, contact Georgetown County Public Library at 545-3300.

### "IF THE RIVER COULD TALK"

What would the River say if it could talk?  
Let's start the discussion...

Saturday, October 3rd

Join the Waccamaw RIVERKEEPER® and members for a morning paddle on the Waccamaw River.

Departing at 9 am  
from the public landing at  
Wacca Wache Marina  
in  
Murrells Inlet, SC

Take in the beauty of our  
black water river!

**RSVP REQUIRED**

For more details about this and other events (or to learn more about us), visit [www.winyahrivers.org](http://www.winyahrivers.org)

## WACCAMAW RIVER DIVERSION CANAL NOT FEASIBLE PER U S A C E By: Christine Ellis

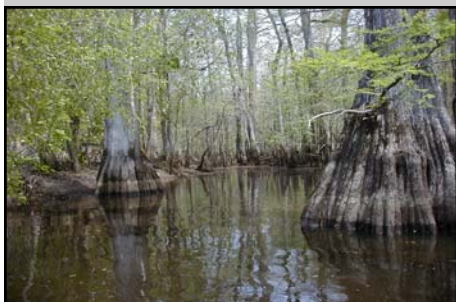
The US Army Corps of Engineers concluded in a recent report that the construction of a diversion canal to divert flood flows from the Waccamaw River to Little River is **not economically or environmentally feasible**. The Corps concluded that it is more economical to purchase those structures susceptible to flooding and that the proposed diversion canal could actually cause other issues and have substantial environmental impacts, including destruction of bottomland hardwood forests and wetlands, impacting ecosystems and threatening certain species of fish and wildlife.

**Winyah Rivers Foundation has steadfastly recommended against the proposal** for a diversion canal and supported other more economical and environmentally sustainable means of dealing with flooding. It is our view that control of flooding of personal properties along the Waccamaw River is more easily and economically accomplished by relocating affected property owners to upland areas and restricting development within the floodplain. Accurate flood zone maps are accessible to developers, builders and buyers. We are proponents of implementing County zoning requirements and developers incentives to promote development in upland areas and restrict development in the floodplain. The floodplain can then be reserved as open space and natural areas and allowed to serve its function of accommodating floodwaters, assimilating pollutants and slowly releasing the waters as water level subsides.

The Waccamaw River is historically, culturally and biological significant. Rather than changing its natural hydrology and the biological communities that have developed within this riverine system, we need to preserve and protect it and where necessary revitalize its biological functions. Proper zoning control, best management practices in land development and natural buffers along the river corridor represent a more environmentally sound methodology to prevent the economic impacts associated with flooding of personal property. We must protect the Waccamaw River and its watershed as an important source of drinking water, as a natural system supporting a diverse biota and as a place of natural beauty, history and enjoyment.

For more information, go to [www.winyahrivers.org](http://www.winyahrivers.org).

## The Value of Wetlands to Provide Flood Control



**The Value of Wetlands to Provide for Flood Control**

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) states that floods are the most common and widespread of all natural disasters—except fire. Most communities in the US have experienced some kind of flooding. FEMA encourages the use of wetlands for stormwater detention in lieu of, or in conjunction with, traditional structural flood control measures.

Wetlands function as natural sponges that trap and slowly release flood waters. A one-acre wetland can typically store about one million gallons of water. Trees, root mats, and other wetland vegetation slow the speed of flood waters and distribute them more slowly over the floodplain. This combined water storage and braking action lowers flood heights and reduces the water's destructive potential.

Development pressures along the Waccamaw River are threatening to destroy the invaluable natural systems of wetlands and buffers. Preserving our wetlands is a more cost effective way to protect against flooding and ensure safe drinking water.

### How can we protect our wetlands?

First, state and local governments need to be encouraged to establish programs to effectively protect wetlands, especially inland wetlands.

Second, because individual landowners and corporations own many of the nation's wetlands, they are in a key position to determine the fate of wetlands on their properties.

Third, **citizens can help protect wetlands** by:

- Supporting wetlands and watershed protection initiatives by public agencies and private organizations;
- Encouraging neighbors, developers, and state/local governments to protect the function and value of wetlands in your watershed;
- Selecting upland sites for development projects and avoid wetland alteration or degradation during project construction;
- Maintaining wetlands and adjacent buffer strips as open space.

## Shalotte, NC Resident Wins “Best Of Show”



**Best of Show:** David B. Keener of Shalotte, NC

The winners of our 2nd annual photo contest were announced July 31 at the Franklin G. Burroughs-Simeon B. Chapin Art Museum in Myrtle Beach.

### PEOPLE

1ST Place: **GAZING** - David B. Keener, Shalotte, NC

2ND Place: **HARVEST OF THE LOCKWOOD FOLLY** - Terrah Hewett, Supply, NC

### SCENIC

1ST Place: **FISH HOUSE** - Bill Gobbel, Conway, SC

2ND Place: **SUNSET ON THE WACCAMAW** - Frank Perrotta, Pawleys Island, SC

3RD Place: **GALIVANTS FERRY** - Anthony Morano, Longs, SC

### WILDLIFE

1ST Place: **EGRET ROOKERY** - Frank Perrotta, Pawleys Island, SC

2ND Place— **GREAT BLUE HERON** - Bill Gobbel, Conway, SC

3RD Place: **GONE FISHING** - Suzanne S. Clark, Conway, SC.

**We congratulate our winners, thank all of our photographers for their support and give special thanks to..**

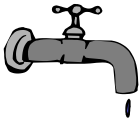
Our Primary sponsors: **803 Labs, Inc & The Horry Independent**

Our Judges: Dixie Dugan & Sean Thompson  
Our Host: Franklin G. Burroughs-Simeon B. Chapin Art Museum (*Winning photos are on display there through August 2009*)

Others: Fatz Café in Conway (appetizers)  
Springmaid Beach Resort (linens, stemware),  
Horry County Gardening Society & Grand Strand Master Gardeners (flowers & greenery) and musician Brian Roessler.

**Thanks for making our evening special!**

**Please visit our website to view all the winning photos!**



## FROM THE RIVER

by: Hal Vivian

### “Times are Tough”

Remember that old saying “I have more time than money”. That is probably truer today than anytime in the recent past. Everybody from large companies to individuals have had to tighten the belt and budget. This has made nonprofit fundraising even tougher. We still want to give, but may be feeling the pinch.

One way to **increase your giving** is to volunteer some of your **TIME**. You do not need to commit much, an hour here or there. Or schedule some volunteer time on a regular basis. Please contact Christine, Crystal or Shannon to see what you can **DO!**

**Editor’s Note: We want to thank Hal for volunteering as a WRF Board member and to Hal & Alice for volunteering on the Waccamaw River Water Quality Monitoring Project!**

**THANK YOU!  
CAROL & WILLIAM RUHLE  
For your generous donation of an  
Achilles inflatable boat &  
8 hp Yamaha motor!  
SEE YOU ON THE RIVER!**

Next time you are shopping for household appliances, both big and small, look for the logo WaterSense™. It identifies water efficient products for consumers, making it easier to save water and protect the environment.



**For the 2nd year, we are proud to have been selected to participate in Global Awareness Project’s 2010 nonprofit promotional art calendar. This year’s theme is Synergy and we are excited to be partnered with artist and photographer, Sherry Kelley of Dragonfly Art & Photography.**



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RIVERKEEPER**



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WACCA WACHE MARINA  
FATZ CAFÉ  
SPRINGMAID BEACH  
RESORT**

## RIVER TALK... by: Christine Ellis, Waccamaw RIVERKEEPER®

### Fighting to Protect the Yadkin-Pee Dee Basin in the Carolinas

Winyah Rivers Foundation was formed in 2001 to protect, preserve, monitor and revitalize the health of the lands and waters of the greater Winyah Bay watershed, servicing not only the Waccamaw River but also the other rivers that drain into Winyah Bay. Our efforts include protecting the Great Pee Dee River In South Carolina and have focused primarily on the threats to the river of the proposed Santee Cooper coal plant and serving on the Advisory Council for the Pee Dee Scenic River, an approximately 70 mile stretch of the Pee Dee River.



In November 2008, Winyah Rivers Foundation was pleased to welcome a new upstream partner, the Yadkin Riverkeeper, Dean Naujoks, whose mission is to respect, protect and improve the Yadkin Pee Dee River Basin in North Carolina. The Yadkin Pee Dee flows for almost 200 miles in NC before reaching SC.

Initially, Naujoks reviewed reports of existing contamination at Badin Lake, one of four reservoirs along a 38 mile stretch of the river that comprises the Yadkin Hydroelectric Project. He concluded that the Alcoa Company was a major reason for contamination at the lake and river and that Alcoa had insufficiently planned to correct it as part of its license renewal application to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). The Yadkin Riverkeeper, among others, has opposed Alcoa’s relicensing effort.

As a result of this opposition, legislation was written to allow the State of NC to acquire and operate the Yadkin Hydroelectric Project. The bill creating the Yadkin River Trust passed the NC Senate twice but after significant changes in the legislation, the NC House ultimately rejected creating a state corporation that would acquire and control the four dams on the River.

Regardless, the Yadkin Riverkeeper continues to fight to protect the Yadkin River with support from the Stanly County Commissioners and Governor Perdue who has intervened in favor of the return of the license instead of granting Alcoa another 50 year license for the Yadkin Hydroelectric Project. Their opposition is critically important to protecting the environment in the Yadkin River basin and ensuring that these water resources are used for the benefit of the public.

As downstream users, we couldn’t agree more. The outcome will ultimately decide the fate of the Yadkin Pee Dee River Basin for the next 50 years.

Winyah Rivers Foundation  
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 Coastal Carolina University  
 1270 Atlantic Avenue  
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**NON-PROFIT  
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**UPCOMING EVENTS**

- RIVER WATCHER FORUM  
**SEPT 16—OCT 7**  
 GEORGETOWN
- RIVER SWEEPS  
**SEPT 19**  
 CONWAY—WACCAMAW  
 GEORGETOWN-SAMPIT
- ECO MOVIE MONDAYS  
**SEPT 21-OCT 19-NOV 16**  
 LITCHFIELD
- WATER QUALITY DATA CONFERENCE  
**SEPT 30**
- PADDLE TRIP  
*IF THE RIVER COULD TALK- OCT 3*  
 WACCA WACHE MARINA
- CELEBRATE OUR RIVERS  
 @ RIPLEY'S  
**NOV 7**

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*Winyah Rivers Foundation*  
 (843)349-4007  
 WRK@coastal.edu  
 www.WinyahRivers.org

**Membership has its Rewards**

*Join us!*

	Date _____
Guardian through Champion categories will earn rewards.	
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Protector	\$ 50.00 _____
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Defender	\$ 500.00 _____
Champion	\$1000.00 _____

**Business Categories**

Business Guardian	\$100 _____
(Certificate, recognition in one newsletter)	
Business Advocate	\$250 _____
(Certificate, recognition in each newsletter)	
Business Defender	\$500 _____
(Certificate, recognition with your logo in each newsletter and on website)	
Business Champion	\$1000 _____
(Framed certificate of membership, recognition in all newsletters and on website with your logo, 1/4 page ad in one newsletter)	

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  - Judy Ellis, Vice-President, Myrtle Beach
  - Reggie Daves, Secretary, Conway
  - Peter MacIntyre, Treasurer, Murrells Inlet
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  - Robert Mimms, Jr., Pawleys Island
  - Greg Mitchell, Surfside Beach
  - Robert Moran, Murrells Inlet
  - David Scott, Lake Waccamaw, NC
  - Becky Westbrooks, Chadbourn, NC

**Waccamaw RIVERKEEPER®**  
 Christine Ellis

**Assistant to Waccamaw RIVERKEEPER®**  
 And Editor of RIVERSPEAK  
 Crystal Caschera

**Volunteer Coordinator—Georgetown County**  
 Shannon Siau



Winyah Rivers Foundation is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization. Contributions are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.