

Riverspeak

News from the WINYAH RIVERS FOUNDATION



Sponsor of the WACCAMAW RIVERKEEPER® PROGRAM

Spring 2008

Volume 8 Issue 1

2008 Waccamaw Conference & River Roast South Saturday, March 1st

The 8th annual Waccamaw Conference is just around the corner, on Saturday, March 1st. Jointly sponsored by Winyah Rivers Foundation and the Sierra Club-Winyah Group, this conference brings together concerned citizens to learn more about our river resources and the activities necessary to protect them. Experts will provide us with information on the current state of our rivers that have the potential to impact our river resources, including drinking water, recreational uses and our native plant and animal life. Come learn about contaminants, like bacteria and mercury, that impact our safe use of the river, climate change and its potential for impact on our rivers, the value of wetlands and efforts to protect the resources they provide as water filtration systems, storage capacity for flooding and diverse flora and fauna, use of rain barrels and rain gardens for stormwater pollution protection, and more. This year's conference is a must for anyone and everyone concerned about protecting our beautiful Waccamaw River!

(See the insert for registration and information)

After the conference, join us at Kimble Lodge, on the property known as Hobcaw Barony in Georgetown, for River Roast South! Our friend and longtime supporter, Bob Mimms of Litchfield Beach Fish House, will cater the menu of steamed oysters, chicken pilau and all the fixins. Live entertainment will be provided by the blues band Mr. Too Tight

Come join us for food, fun and fellowship beginning at 5 pm!

Upcoming Events

Please go to www.WinyahRivers.org for more information

**March 1
Waccamaw Conference &
River Roast South**

**March 14
Premiere screening of
Grand Canyon Adventure: River at Risk
At IMAX 3D Theatre**

**March 29
River Clean up - Conway**

**April 22
Earth Day**

**May 3
River Clean up - Hwy 9 Landing**

RiverTalk

By Christine Ellis, Waccamaw Riverkeeper

As you know, Winyah Rivers Foundation, and the Waccamaw Riverkeeper® Program, is a proud member of Waterkeeper® Alliance, the international organization dedicated to protecting **Your** water from pollution. The Waterkeeper® Alliance licenses our use of the term "Riverkeeper®" and supports the ever growing community of "keepers" worldwide. At last count, we are 172 local programs and growing!

When Winyah Rivers Foundation was formed, we received a great deal of assistance from Waterkeeper® Alliance. In particular, Rick Dove, formerly the Neuse Riverkeeper and currently Waterkeeper Liaison, Litigation Assistant, and Honorary member of the Board of Directors of Waterkeeper® Alliance, and Donna Lisenby, the Catawba Riverkeeper and a member of the Board of Directors of Waterkeeper® Alliance, provided a great deal of support and encouragement. They continue to do so to this day, as do the many fine folks at Waterkeeper® Alliance and in the local programs.

In my role as Waccamaw Riverkeeper, I work most closely with those "keepers" whose watersheds are located in the Carolinas. We are a strong group and working together have developed partnerships which strengthen each of our programs and the group as a whole. There are a total of 13 local programs in the Carolinas with two recent additions: the Upper Watauga Riverkeeper® Program, headquartered in Boone, NC, and the Yadkin Riverkeeper® Program, headquartered in Winston-Salem, NC. Welcome to both of these new programs!

I am pleased to announce that, under the leadership of Donna Lisenby, Waterkeepers® Carolina has been formed, representing the "keeper" programs of both North and South Carolina. After a decade as the Catawba Riverkeeper, Donna Lisenby is stepping away from this role and assuming two new roles; one as the Upper Watauga Riverkeeper; and the other as the head of Waterkeepers® Carolina, a coalition of Carolina "keepers" building on the synergy of the local programs and developing a region-wide emphasis on water protections. This more formalized association will enable each of the local "keeper" programs in the Carolinas to become even more powerful in our protection and preservation of our local watersheds. Congratulations to Donna! Hello Waterkeepers® Carolina!



Bird of Prey

By Gary M. Phillips, Research Specialist
Burroughs & Chapin Center for Marine & Wetlands Studies

As it makes its way from Lake Waccamaw to Winyah Bay, the Waccamaw River and associated floodplain provide habitat for a diverse array of organisms. Some are unique and little known species that incorporate the river's name into their own: Waccamaw spike, darter, killifish, and crayfish. Some better known but equally rare species that make use of the Waccamaw are categorized among the Class Aves, the group of organisms we call birds. A rare black and white patterned bird that can be seen along the Waccamaw in spring and summer is the Swallow-tailed Kite. A state endangered species in SC, Swallow-tailed kites reach the northernmost limit of their North American breeding range along the Waccamaw in Horry County. While hummingbirds are the masters of flight, all of the kite species are masters of the wind. A medium-sized raptor about 24" in length with a four foot wingspan and an unmistakable shape, Swallow-tailed kites are the epitome of their group. Rarely moving their wings and using almost imperceptible movements of their namesake tails, these elegant birds of prey gracefully soar and swoop above the river floodplains and adjacent agricultural fields or open areas as they forage primarily for dragonflies and other insect prey. As a rare and vulnerable species throughout its North American range, Swallow-tailed kites are of significant conservation interest and concern. These wonderful creatures begin to appear in SC in early to mid-March and remain thru mid-August. If you should be so fortunate as to observe one or more of these amazing birds, please take the time to report the date, time and location of your sighting, either on-line at <http://swallowtail.internationalbirdsofprey.org/> or call the STKI Hotline toll-free at 1-888-296-4732.



Photo © Russell Thorstrom

New Board Member

Dwight Fee and his wife, Mary Jo, moved to Murrells Inlet from Annapolis MD in 2000, just in time to attend the very first Winyah Rivers Conference. Dwight became a consultant to founder Joy Pinson, facilitating early meetings of the board. He is a graduate of Miami University, Oxford, Ohio, and received graduate training in organization development from George Washington University in DC. He consults to organizations in strategic planning, leadership development and team building. He consulted to the Maryland Department of Natural Resources for five years before relocation. Dwight is one of the founders of the Georgetown Conservation Committee for the Winyah Group. An active canoeist and sailor, he says, "The Waccamaw River is the reason they call this place paradise." (www.DwightFee.com)



Welcome Crystal

Crystal Caschera joined Winyah Rivers Foundation on January 2, 2008 as a part-time assistant to the Waccamaw Riverkeeper. Her initial duties will focus on membership, newsletter, website upgrades and maintenance. Crystal is a new resident to Conway. She was a part of an environmental group in Canada. Please contact her if you have any suggestions. She looks forward to being a part of the Waccamaw Riverkeeper® Program and Winyah Rivers Foundation.



According to
South Carolina's
Association of Nonprofit
Organizations' (SCANPO)
*Guiding Principles &
Best Practices,*
"People are a nonprofits
most essential asset"

**THANK YOU TO ALL OF
OUR WONDERFUL
VOLUNTEERS!**

The power of endowment

By donating to the Winyah Rivers Foundation's endowment fund, supporters make a lasting contribution to the ongoing success of the organization. There are many ways to contribute. Making gifts of appreciated stocks, real estate, or life insurance policies represent just a few of the ways you can participate in growing the fund that will benefit the Waccamaw Riverkeeper® program in perpetuity. There are tax benefits, too. Direct your questions to 843-357-GIVE (4483). *Leave a legacy.*



Also, check out WCF's Community Wish List at www.waccamawcf.org, an initiative to connect donor interests with community needs. We are on the list.

**WRF Has Received a Donation
In Honor of
Scott Jordon From Shelley Ridout**

PHOTO CONTEST

Winyah Rivers Foundation & The Horry Independent are sponsoring a **Photo Contest**. See our website for information.

Winyah Bay Heritage Festival

Thanks to all who stopped by our table at the Winyah Bay Heritage Festival! We had a great turnout, lots of questions and comments about our program and several people said "thank you" for watching over the watershed. We would also like to say "thank you" to everyone who helped.!

**Thank you
Osprey Marina
for your support as
Business Defender**



Waccamaw Riverkeeper ®Program Issue Update
See www.WinyahRivers.org for more information

<p>Spring Gardeners: Say “NO” to Cypress Mulch The cypress mulch industry is destroying Louisiana’s forested wetlands for cheap garden mulch cleverly marketed at garden supply stores. I believe that gardeners will stop using cypress mulch when presented with the facts about the cypress mulch industry. The cypress mulch industry destroys wetlands that protect coastal Louisiana from hurricanes. Cypress wetlands absorb excess water like a sponge, controlling flood height and speed. These wetlands save lives and prevent the destruction of coastal cities. Contrary to popular belief, cypress mulch is not as effective as other mulches. Only the ‘heartwood’ from mature cypress trees is rot and termite resistant. The young trees now being cut to feed the growing cypress mulch industry do not have these qualities. Please say NO to cypress mulch.</p>	<p>Ad Hoc Committee Addressing River/Wetland Protections – Citizens raised their concerns regarding impacts associated with development along the Waccamaw River to Horry County’s appointed/elected officials. As a result, we were asked to recommend actions to Horry County’s Infrastructure and Regulation Committee to address their concerns. Working with CCU’s Waccamaw Watershed Academy, we proposed an Ad Hoc Committee, formed of local stakeholders, who will discuss and recommend actions to provide for protections to our water quality and natural resources. Horry County’s Stormwater Manager and Stormwater Advisory Board (SWAB) have taken on this initiative. A Steering Committee has been established. Invitations to serve have been sent to form the full Committee whose purpose is to facilitate responsible growth by developing proactive, unified solutions that protect our rivers and wetlands.</p>	<p>Coal-Fired Power Plants and Mercury Contamination—We joined forces with the Carolina keepers to oppose permitting the expansion of an existing coal-fired power plant in NC and a proposed plant on the Great Pee Dee River in SC. The Carolinas are already suffering from the impacts of harmful levels of mercury in our states’ waters.</p> <p>D.C. CIRCUIT COURT DECLARES EPA’S MERCURY RULE ILLEGAL</p> <p>The U.S. Court of Appeals for DC has invalidated a pair of EPA rules that would have allowed coal-fired power plants to overwhelm waterways, fish and communities with harmful levels of mercury for decades to come. The Court found EPA’s 2005 rules removing power plants from the Clean Air Act’s list of toxic sources and creating an anemic “cap and trade” regulatory scheme to be in violation of the Act.</p>
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Two Founders Retire

By Valerie Moliterno

Joy Pinson, whose birthday is Christmas Day, is one of the founding "mothers" of Winyah Rivers Foundation. Her name reflects her approach to life. She is a Myrtle Beach native, graduated from Myrtle Beach High School and attended Queens College where she has just received an environmental award, but graduated from UNC, Chapel Hill. Joy Brown's grandfather was a strawberry farmer in Chadbourne, NC, instrumental in the establishment of Coastal Federal Bank. She has seen the vast increase from local tourism to international tourism and the growth of Myrtle Beach from a farming community to what it is today. Joy does not just see the environment from Myrtle Beach but from the west coast too. She lived in Santa Barbara, California for many years with her two sons. Joy is very interested in preserving our beautiful Waccamaw as well as the rest of the environment. She designed her house on the water in Murrells Inlet. The house incorporates "green" design with geothermal heating and air conditioning. Joy and Joe, a biologist, have been married for eight years. After serving the Foundation for nearly eight years, from an acorn of an idea to today, she is taking leave of the board but not leaving WRF.

By Joy Pinson

I met Barbara Postles through the Sierra Club during the time she was serving as the statewide Chair (1994-1996). Following that, Barb served as the Chair of Sierra Club’s Atlantic Coast Ecoregion Task Force for 7 years. During that time, Barb drove down from her home in Columbia to talk to the Executive Committee of the Winyah Group of Sierra Club about starting an effort to protect the Waccamaw River and its watershed. I was a member of the Winyah Group Executive Committee at that time, and the meeting took place around the dining table at my home “Buckeye” in Murrells Inlet. Barbara sparked our interest in protecting our river and, as Chair of the Task Force, she was largely responsible for the genesis of the Waccamaw River and Watershed Protection Campaign which eventually led to the formation of Winyah Rivers Foundation. We were most fortunate to have Barbara join us on the Board of Directors. Her depth of experience in grassroots organizational management has been invaluable.

By Christine Ellis

I want to express my sincere appreciation for the efforts of Bill Martin, Joy Pinson and Barb Postles who served as volunteers on the Board of Directors and have recently retired. Bill Martin, of Pawley’s Island, has been a strong supporter of the organization, both as a volunteer and as a Board member. He has taken leave of the Board but remains a steadfast supporter and, as an active outdoor enthusiast, he continues to patrol our local waterways on his kayak or powerboat. Joy Pinson, of Murrells Inlet, served as the Founding President and continued to serve on the Board and be intimately involved in its activities until recently. Joy is truly a “Guardian of the Environment” and remains committed to our mission. Barb Postles, of Columbia, served on the Board since the inception of Winyah Rivers Foundation and also has been intimately involved in its activities until recently. Both Joy and Barb have taken leave of the Board but their legacy remains. My heartfelt thanks to Bill, Joy and Barb for their contributions to Winyah Rivers Foundation and the Waccamaw Riverkeeper Program and especially for their support of my activities as Waccamaw Riverkeeper.

Winyah Rivers Foundation
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 Coastal Carolina University
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Winyah Rivers Foundation is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization.

Winyah Rivers Foundation

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 www.WinyahRivers.org

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Waccamaw Riverkeeper®

Christine Ellis

Assistant to Waccamaw Riverkeeper®

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