

Riverspeak

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

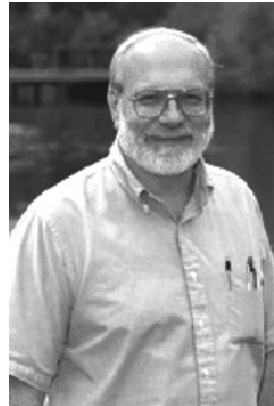
SPRING, 2007
VOLUME 7, NO. 1

Join us for the 2007 Waccamaw Conference

Co-hosted by Winyah Rivers Foundation and the Sierra Club, the 7th annual Waccamaw Conference will be held at the Waccamaw Higher Education Center in Pawleys Island on Saturday, March 24th.

We have planned a truly exciting morning agenda with meetings to be conducted by experts in their field on a variety of subjects vital to the preservation and protection of our wonderful Waccamaw! We will learn about the state of our river, its problems and solutions we will be working on. These meetings are a must for everyone concerned.

Please see the enclosed flyer for more information and registration.



Moore assumes WRF Presidency

The Board of the Foundation is pleased to announce the election of Richard Moore as 2007 President. Richard, along with Eddie Dyer as Vice-President and Valerie Moliterno as Secretary, and Peter MacIntyre as Treasurer were elected at the February 28 board meeting.

Moore is WRF's third President. Joy Pinson and Barb Postles held this office previously.

WRF Moves to Increase Activity in NC

We have recently joined two North Carolina based conservation groups; the Cape Fear Arch Conservation Collaboration and the North Carolina Conservation Network. We anticipate that increasing our visibility north of the border will help us recruit volunteers for WRF's goals.

Cape Fear Arch Conservation Collaboration: The geological region known as the Cape Fear Arch is an area slightly uplifted relative to the rest of the coastal plain in southeastern NC and northeastern SC. It is a region of particularly high biological diversity and supports nationally significant occurrences of animal and plant communities. The mission of this group is to "develop and implement a community conservation vision to build awareness, protection and stewardship of the region's important natural resources." The participating organizations represent a broad spectrum of land managers and land conservation advocates with differing missions but all dedicated to sustainable natural resource management, providing for human needs while retaining our natural heritage. Towards this end, the participating organizations will attempt to foresee potential conservation opportunities and resource issues and, within their authority and consonant with their missions, work to maintain and protect ecologically viable and significant areas.

NC Conservation Network: The NC Conservation Network supports, trains and coordinates diverse groups and directly advocates to achieve equitable and sustainable solutions for our environment. Launched in 1998 by a collaborative effort of more than 60 NC conservation, environmental justice, and community groups, it seeks to improve the community's communications and its capacity for effective advocacy. Services include providing updates and environmental news to NC environmental groups, training activists to become more effective advocates, fostering healthy patterns of communication and collaboration, and convening and facilitating coalitions to address significant environmental issues.

Why I Volunteer?

By George Schnellman*

I am a volunteer in the Waccamaw River Volunteer Monitoring Project. As a new resident of Horry County I wanted to familiarize myself with the area. After reading an article on the Volunteer Monitoring Project in *The Sun News*, this seemed like a perfect opportunity.

The time dedicated to this project is minimal, about two hours every two weeks, and gives me the opportunity to sit in the solitude of a fairly remote boat landing. At least it feels remote from our vantage point under the bridge, with traffic seeming to be a mile away. The usual interruptions are ducks and hawks. There is a definite payback in terms of the knowledge that someone is watching
(Continues on page 3.)

Wanting to Extend my Thanks

by Barb Postles, Past President

I'd like to take this opportunity to extend a hearty "Thanks" to all you who have supported WRF over the past 2 1/2 years during my tenure as President of the Foundation. I've done this job from Columbia with a semi-retired husband, so others have filled in when I couldn't be present for events. That is very much appreciated.

Thanks to our wonderful board--a remarkably diverse, dedicated and cohesive group.

Thanks to our two Riverkeepers. Hamp was, well, just great, at what he did and is largely responsible for our excellent reputation. Christine is doing a terrific job with the program. As David Scott, Director, has said, "Someone did a good days work when we hired Christine!"

Last, but certainly not least, our small army of volunteers, many taking multiple roles for us over the years, who are the lifeblood of the organization. Your dedication is awesome.

I am still a board member and will still do membership, the newsletter, and perhaps updating the website (after a huge learning curve!). I will support WRF well into the future. I hope you will join me.



Waccamaw Riverkeeper Program Issue Update

Volunteerism

The Waccamaw Riverkeeper Program had the honor of participating in a media opportunity with Step Up!, the local community volunteer network, and the Knight Foundation. The Step Up Program (www.stepup-grandstrand.org) is supported by a grant from the John S. & James L. Knight Foundation, a national foundation with local roots whose Knight Community Partners Program aims to improve the quality of life in 26 U.S. communities where the Knight brothers owned newspapers, including Myrtle Beach, SC. As a Step Up! partner, a film crew joined us on our river sweep in early February, photographing, filming and interviewing our volunteers. Go to www.knightfdn.org to see us featured in the Knight Foundation's 2006 annual report.

River Shacks

The Public Waters Nuisance Abatement Act, S. 447 (Senator Gregory) and companion bill, H. 3466 (Representative Umphlett) were introduced this session to address the growing problem of river shacks on our State public waterways. The proposed bill would prohibit new shacks, grandfather existing shacks for 5 years if permitted by SC Department of Natural Resources, and enable removal of unpermitted shacks by the SCDNR or their appointed agents as funding becomes available. The owner is responsible for all removal costs.

We have been involved in the fight against river shacks and were integral in documenting their proliferation in our watershed. We continue to work with the Coastal Conservation League to support the legislation to prevent their proliferation. Together with CCL and others, we will be working to identify owners and prevent abandonment of existing river shacks.

Water Supply Issues

The SC Water Withdrawal, Permitting, Use and Reporting Act, S. 428 (Senator Hayes), was recently introduced to establish a process for the allocation, withdrawal and use

of state waters. The Catawba Riverkeeper was involved in the drafting of this legislation.

Southern Evacuation

Lifeline (SELL)

The South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) conducted a series of public information meetings in Georgetown and Horry counties concerning the Southern Evacuation Lifeline (SELL) project, a project to study and recommend hurricane evacuation alternatives for the southern Grand Strand.

Comments received will be considered to further develop and evaluate the project's range of alternatives during the preparation of the environmental impact statement that will evaluate the alternatives and their benefits and impacts on the surrounding human and natural environments.

We are working with Craig Sasser, Refuge Manager for the Waccamaw National Wildlife Refuge, to better understand and educate the public on the impacts to the refuge and the Waccamaw River.

CCU's Celebration of Inquiry

The Celebration of Inquiry Conference is a university-wide academic conference open to the public and designed to unite learning communities in cross-disciplinary discussions of a common theme. This year's conference theme was "Think globally, Act locally: guiding our changing world". There were several "environmentally" themed topics this year, including: "Citizen Science – Can You Act Locally and Contribute Globally" in which Dr. Susan Libes, Davinder Randhawa and volunteer George Schnellman discussed the Volunteer Monitoring Project; and "The Waccamaw Riverkeeper Program – You Can Change the World from Your Own Backyard" in which Christine was joined by volunteers Joe Bennett, Steve Berkowitz and Cynthia Dyer to discuss our program.

Conway Water and

Drainage Commission

We continue to be involved with initiatives of the Commission, including the promotion of a Crabtree Canal paddle trail and a Keep Conway Beautiful program.

Horry County Solid

Waste Authority

South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC) met with the Solid Waste Authority in November to discuss the Notice of Alleged Violation issued to the Authority on October 27, 2006, concerning the use of treated wooden poles in the construction of a temporary road on SWA property along Highway 90 in Conway. SCDHEC determined that no further action was required to resolve this matter since the treated poles had been removed and therefore concluded their enforcement action. No fines were levied but SCDHEC strongly cautioned against the use of treated wood in low-lying areas of SWA's site.

Join our Email Alert System

Members: Please e-mail the Waccamaw Riverkeeper at wrk@coastal.edu. We'll add you to our e-mail alert list (or update your listing) and keep you apprised of breaking news and upcoming events.

Searching the Web Generates Funds for Riverkeeper Program

Search the internet and raise money for WRF at no cost to you. Go to www.goodsearch.com. Under "Who do you GoodSearch for?", type in Winyah Rivers Foundation. Every time you search using this site, we benefit.



Above, Elizabeth Marsh, WRF Director Bill Marsh and Nancy Purvis enjoy the November River Roast. Apologies from the editor for the mistaken identities published last issue.

Foundation Wins Award

The SC Litter Control Association presented the Winyah Rivers Foundation with an award at its 20th Annual South Carolina Litter Control Association Conference held February 21-23 in North Myrtle Beach.

WRF was awarded Civic Group of the Year "for your continuous hard work in helping clean up our planet." Mr. Hut Moody, WRF Director, and his wife, Betty, accepted the award on behalf of the Foundation.



RiverTalk

by Christine Ellis,
Waccamaw Riverkeeper

Your membership in and support of the Winyah Rivers Foundation is a testament to your deep appreciation for the environment and the natural resources upon which we rely.

Together we are the eyes and ears of our watershed, from its headwaters around Lake Waccamaw through the coastal plains of southeastern North Carolina and into northeastern South Carolina where the River and the Intracoastal Waterway merge before entering Winyah Bay near Georgetown. Our watershed drains over 1110 square miles and travels over 140 miles, through two states and many diverse communities whose interests and viewpoints may vary.

I serve these communities as the full-time public advocate for the Waccamaw River watershed. However, it is each of you who are the lifeblood of the organization.

Together we are the neighborhood environmental watch group, on the lookout for environmentally harmful activities all along the watershed.

You help me stay abreast of proposed changes in your communities that have the potential to threaten the watershed. Some of you are involved in river patrols, getting out on land or water to keep watch over our watershed, document changes and uncover potential pollution sources. Your knowledge of happenings in the local communities along the watershed is instrumental in this neighborhood environmental watch program.

Together, we track proposed activities to make sure that we can identify any negative environmental impacts and address them prior to implementation. We identify sources of pollution and ensure that there is effective oversight and enforcement of potential polluters.

Working with our local, state and federal agencies, we identify areas needing new and improved regulation to prevent pollution. To achieve this, we establish and maintain cooperative relationships with environmental groups, public officials and agencies.

We have the backing of our scientific partners, technical specialists working in academic institutions along the watershed who provide us with the technical knowledge to support our advocacy positions.

How do you help?

Let your family, friends, neighbors, business associates, etc. know about our mission and encourage them to join us. Let's share that message with the local groups in which you participate.

When you read or hear about a new project that has the potential to threaten our watershed, let me know about it and why you're concerned.

Help out in our education and outreach activities. Participate in the planning of the river-oriented activities that we sponsor. Join us at local festivals to spread our message of preservation and conservation.

You can be involved as little or as much as your time and energy will allow. Every little bit helps. Together we are empowered and motivated to achieve our mission.

With your support, we can effectively watch over our watershed. Let's let everyone know how serious we are about saving the Waccamaw!



Welcome to our New Business Members

Advocate \$250

Caldwell Banker Commercial
Chicora Real Estate
Myrtle Beach

Guardian \$100

River Memories, LLC
Conway
R. C. Metell Construction
Stamford, CT

Conservation Notes....

"Pick Your Poison"

Have you ever wondered which brand of gasoline you should buy in order to be as green as possible? Recently the national Sierra Club issued a report, *Pick Your Poison*, taking on this question. The article is well researched and concludes the best companies are BP and Sunoco, the worst ExxonMobil and ConocoPhillips. Judge for yourself; the report is at <http://www.sierraclub.org/sierra/pickyourpoison/index.asp>.

Why I Volunteer

(Continued from page 1.)

the river and keeping track of its current state.

The Waccamaw is a central part of the ecology of the area. Many new projects are planned for the area that government officials "guarantee" will not deteriorate water quality. We know they wouldn't mislead us, would they? I am usually skeptical of authority figures, agreeing with Bruce Springsteen's comment on one of his live albums. In order to assess deterioration of water quality, we need a baseline to establish the current state and a history to show the effects. In addition, regular monitoring helps us to detect illicit discharges into the River.

I believe strongly in volunteerism, having worked in a soup kitchen in New York State. Volunteer work is part of participatory democracy. Citizens can help in supplying the information needed to make decisions and plot strategies. All it takes is time and dedication.

**George is the Team Leader for the dedicated volunteers that sample at Reaves Ferry Landing semi-monthly.*

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2007 Calendar

March 24:

Waccamaw Conference
 (See article page 1 and flyer.)

March 31:

Kingston Swamp cleanup
 (tentative date)

April 21:

Pireway Riversweep

May 5:

Highway 9 Cleanup

May 19:

Pireway Paddlefest
 Information at www.lorissconline.com/pirewaypaddlefest

June 2:

Waccamaw Riverkeeper
 Rendezvous, Conway

November:

River Roast

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)

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 State _____ Zip _____
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 and Master Card.

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Your contributions are tax deductible.

Printed on recycled paper.

Winyah Rivers Foundation

(843)349-4007
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 www.WinyahRivers.org

The Board

- Richard Moore, President, Conway
- Eddie Dyer, Conway
- Valerie Moliterno, Secretary, Myrtle Beach
- Peter MacIntyre, Treasurer, Murrells Inlet
- Judy Ellis, Myrtle Beach
- Bill Marsh, Conway
- Bill Martin, Pawleys Island
- Hut Moody, Myrtle Beach
- Richard Moore, Conway
- Andrea Peterson, Murrells Inlet
- Joy Pinson, Murrells Inlet
- Barb Postles, Columbia
- David Scott, Lake Waccamaw, NC

Waccamaw Riverkeeper™

Christine Ellis

