

Winyah Rivers Foundation
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NEWS from the WINYAH RIVERS FOUNDATION
Sponsor of the Waccamaw Riverkeeper Program

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Emerging Water Resource Issues in SC:

Assuring Water Quality and Quantity for the Grand Strand's Future

Earlier this year, Winyah Rivers Foundation sponsored a presentation focused on emerging water resource issues in South Carolina. The presentation, by Mr. David Baize, Assistant Bureau Chief, Bureau of Water, SC Department of Health and Environmental Control

was issued in January 2004 and included the following recommendations:

- 1) Pursue an agreement with Georgia over the Savannah River since it is a shared resource, and
- 2) Establish bistate commissions to provide recommendations on management of the Yadkin/Pee Dee and Catawba/Wateree since the relationship with North Carolina is based on South Carolina being a downstream user
- 3) Establish a surface water permit system to ensure minimum in-stream flow of water to support all uses.

For the latter recommendation, the two acts that regulate surface water withdrawals, the Surface Water Withdrawal and Reporting Act and Interbasin Transfer of Water were reviewed. The Surface Water Withdrawal and Reporting Act was modified to incorporate the existing Interbasin Transfer of Water, and a permitting component was added for surface water withdrawals of three million gallons per month. Requirements were added which included the establishment of a minimum in-stream flow to maintain the biological, chemical and physical integrity of the stream and a safe yield (flow that is greater than the minimum in-stream flow). SB 428 was introduced and will be taken up again in the second half of this legislative session beginning January 2008.

Interstate water issues in North Carolina and Georgia

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission hydropower relicensing presents opportunities for South Carolina to improve stream flow rates and patterns to protect fish, wildlife, water quality standards, and public water supplies and to help ensure adequate stream flows during droughts. Progress Energy and Alcoa projects regulate flow from North to South Carolina in the Pee Dee Basin.

Legislation in both states established Bi-State Advisory Commissions for the Yadkin/Pee-Dee and Catawba/Wateree Basins. The Catawba/Wateree Commission has been active for two years, but the Yadkin/Pee-Dee has yet to be appointed. Recent actions in North Carolina point to the need for appoint-

ment of the Yadkin/Pee-Dee Commission. In January 2007, North Carolina approved a 10 million-gallon per day transfer from the Catawba/Wateree Basin and 10 mgd from the Yadkin/Pee-Dee Basin to the Cities of Concord and Kannapolis in the Rocky River Basin. Our state Attorney General has filed legal action against North Carolina in the US Supreme Court, and the case is awaiting review. Action is needed if we are to protect our valuable water resources.



The use of the water from the Savannah River is now an important issue for South Carolina and Georgia.

(DHEC), focused on groundwater management, surface water permitting and interstate water issues in North Carolina and Georgia.

Groundwater management

South Carolina, recognizing the resource that we have in groundwater, is working to achieve maximum beneficial use and sustainability of the resource. Currently, groundwater withdrawal of three million gallons per month requires a DHEC permit, annual reporting and management planning. A capacity use permit is required in the coastal plain. Groundwater provides for our water uses in periods of drought when surface waters are not as readily available; however, we want to avoid overuse conditions such as those in the Charleston area and in the North Carolina coastal plain.

Proposed surface water permitting The Governor's Water Law Review committee was established in June 2003 with a 19-member committee. Its final report

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Winyah Rivers Foundation

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Waccamaw Riverkeeper™

Christine Ellis



Upcoming Events

Winyah Bay Heritage Festival

WRF will participate in this annual event, now in its second year. Come visit us at our booth on January 19-20! We'll be unveiling our newest interactive display, created by Steve Hutchinson.



Waccamaw Conference and WRF Annual Meeting

Planning for the 2008 Waccamaw Conference is gearing up. This year's conference, hosted jointly by Winyah Rivers Foundation and the Sierra Club, Winyah Group, will again bring together scientists and interested citizens to learn about the current state of the River and to discuss actions to protect this valuable resource and its traditional beneficial uses.

In addition to the planned seminars, we will hold our annual meeting for Winyah Rivers Foundation. Following the annual meeting and the seminars, we'll hold a traditional lowcountry oyster roast. We're currently working on a date but, since this is a not to be missed event, please check our website (www.winyah-rivers.org) for up-to-date information.

Waccamaw River Cleanup

Mark your calendars for our first official 2008 Waccamaw River cleanup on March 29th. For more information, check our website (www.winyah-rivers.org).

Waccamaw Riverkeeper Issues Update

CoastMatters

This is a project that informs the citizens of Georgetown and Horry Counties about important conservation issues. It is funded by the Conservation Voters of South Carolina Education Fund and aims to engage local conservation organizations in a productive dialogue about managing growth and protecting natural resources. The Waccamaw Riverkeeper is a member of the Steering Committee and participates in regular meetings in Horry and Georgetown Counties to develop a common agenda of conservation issues and provides information for the website. More information is available at www.coastmatters.org.

Coal fired power plants

Concerned with the emissions of pollutants and their impact on our rivers, we have expressed our opposition to new coal-fired power plants in North and South Carolina. We participated in public hearings regarding the proposed Santee Cooper facility in the Kingsburg community on the banks of the Great Pee Dee River and asked the US Army Corps of Engineers to seriously address the impacts on water quality, recreational resources and wetlands associated with the proposed plant. We have questioned the decision of the SC Department of Health and En-

vironmental Control to issue a draft air permit for the proposed facility before the completion of the environmental impact statement; federal and state law requires this statement be completed prior to any permitting decisions. We have joined with other North Carolina Waterkeeper programs to oppose the proposed Duke Power facility at Cliffside, about 50 miles west of Charlotte. We have asked our local, state and federal regulators to consider alternative energy sources, as opposed to coal, and to seek out clean, renewable energy sources to support our rising electricity needs while protecting the natural and recreational resources that draw our growing population.

Muddy Water Watch®,

This is a project of the North Carolina Waterkeepers. Sediment carried by stormwater runoff is one of the leading sources of pollution in rivers and lakes throughout the country. It can cause severe water quality degradation in our waters, which we depend on not only for our drinking water, but also for recreation, wildlife habitat and fishing.

With development has come land clearing and the transportation of sediment into our waterways. North Carolina Waterkeepers have banded together to address this problem and its impacts on water quality through Muddy Water

Watch®. The program was created in response to citizen complaints about sediment runoff from construction sites. The Neuse River Foundation is leading this statewide program to reduce stormwater runoff from these sites to improve water quality.

The Waccamaw Riverkeeper has joined in this effort and plans to implement the program throughout the Waccamaw River watershed, focusing first on the North Carolina portions and bringing the program into South Carolina. The plan is to train citizens to properly identify and report sedimentation and erosion control violations from active construction sites, raise public awareness by bringing media attention to the lack of financial resources currently available for effective sediment and erosion control, and conduct an evaluation at construction sites of the effectiveness of current best management practices on controlling stormwater runoff.

You can join the Muddy Water Watch program as a participant in the citizen patrols to monitor sediment runoff and/or you can join this effort by providing your financial support. Working together, we can protect and keep our water clean and healthy for drinking and fish and wildlife.

RiverTalk

by Christine Ellis, Waccamaw Riverkeeper

According to the 2007 Cone Consumer Environmental Survey, 32% of Americans have a heightened interest in the environment as compared to a year ago (<http://www.coneinc.com/content69.html>). According to the survey, 93% of Americans believe companies have a responsibility to help preserve the environment. Even more significant, this survey indicates a large number of Americans are now environmental "doers" themselves, with about half purchasing environmentally-friendly products, more than one in five donating to an environmental organization, and almost that many advocating for environmental issues.

Advocacy for protection of our watershed was never so evident as when a group of citizens living along the Highway 905 corridor began to voice their concerns about development in the floodplain and the impacts on water quality and wetlands along the Waccamaw River. Spearheaded by local folks such as Ernestine Allen and Randy Pearce, and joined by many others in their communities, these citizens brought their concerns to the attention of the local officials. The result is the Ad Hoc Committee currently being formed to address river protections in Horry County. Working together with local

stakeholders, we hope to take a collective look at what's going on in our backyards and together decide on how best to protect the resources that we rely on.

Citizens who care about the environment in which they live, work and play are the impetus for our local, state and federal appointed and elected officials to provide for clean water and healthy watersheds. In the case of Winyah Rivers Foundation, your membership and involvement is critical to our mission to protect, preserve, monitor and revitalize the health of the lands and waters of the greater Winyah Bay watershed.

Thank you to each and every one of you who have supported our mission and advocated for the protection of the natural resources this beautiful area has to offer. If we won't watch over the Waccamaw River and the other rivers that drain into Winyah Bay, who will?



WRF Has Received Special Donations

In Honor of

Dean Berry

From J. L. Anderson

In Memory of

**Frank Spivey and
Walter Hyer**

From Joy and Joy Pinson

In Memory of

Gloria Llderton
from Leslie Wilson

Farewell to Two Active WRF members

Frank Spivey's practical wisdom was apparent in the earliest visioning process that led to the formation of Winyah Rivers Foundation. Frank and Virginia have been strong supporters of the Waccamaw Riverkeeper program.

Walt Hyer was also an active WRF member. Walt was an avid, accomplished kayaker. Well into his 80s, he was performing eight rolls in succession in the ocean near his home in Myrtle Beach. He and Mary Lee were steadfast supporters.

River Roast Silent Auction Bigger & Better This Year

Our biggest fund-raiser of the year proved to be another wonderful and profitable evening. On Saturday, November 10, our host sponsor, Ripley's Aquarium, provided a wonderful venue, complete with the superb Festival of Trees and a delicious assortment of appetizers and buffet foods for attendees' dining pleasure.



Peter MacIntyre, Ripley's director, enjoys food and fellowship with

Thank you Peter MacIntyre, General Manager of Ripley's Aquarium and Winyah Rivers Foundation Treasurer; Jan Connell, Event Planner; Tom Brummer, Food & Beverage Director; Lindsey Piper, Marketing; and others who helped us plan and execute the logistics.

Other wonderful businesses and individuals sponsored this year's event:

Guardians of the River (\$500 contribution)

Palmetto Chevrolet

Thanks to Bill Marsh, WRF Board Member and President of Palmetto Chevrolet

Hal and Alice Vivian

Active members of WRF



Protectors of the River

(\$250 contribution)

Centex Homes

Thanks to Richard Freedom, Director of Marketing

M. Robin Morris, RN, LLC,
Attorney and Counselor at Law

Thanks to Richard Moore, WRF President, for soliciting this sponsorship

Barb and Dave Postles

Barb is the former President of WRF

David and Donna Scott

Thanks to David Scott, WRF Board Member

We sincerely thank all of our sponsors for their support!

This year we had over 150 silent auction items donated by many generous individuals and businesses for our benefit. A complete list of donors is available on our website at www.winyahivers.org. We thank each and every one for their generosity and support!

And last but not least, a great big THANK YOU to our hardworking committee and volunteers. The organizing committee consisted of Judy Ellis, Valerie Moliterno, Reggie Daves and Christine Ellis. During the event, we had several other volunteers recruited to help out, including Sudie Daves, Sam Hodges, Frank Moliterno, Margaret and Bob Wolfe, Al Hosier, Carla Makela, Donald Pierman, and several of our Directors. You are very much appreciated!

As a result of the generosity of our sponsors, donors and attendees, we made over \$15,000 this year! Thank you all for your support! We couldn't do it without you!

Reduce Catalog Jams in Your Mailbox

Go to www.catalogchoice.org to find out how. This service was started by the Ecology Center with endorsements from the Natural Resources Defense Council and the National Wildlife Federation.

WRF is Concerned about Water Conservation

While most of the efforts of the Foundation have centered on maintaining the water quality of our local rivers, your organization also stresses the importance of insuring that the rivers contain a sufficient quantity of water to meet our needs. There has been a lot in the news lately about the current water shortage, and while the Waccamaw watershed has not been affected as much as other areas, we all still need to make the effort to conserve our water supply.

Our area is not yet under extreme water shortages, largely because of declines in usage since the peaks of the summer tourist season. However, as river flows drop, it increases the danger of salt water intrusion as salt water flows up the rivers from the Ocean. While neither the City of Myrtle Beach's water intake on the Intracoastal Canal nor Grand Strand Water and Sewer's intake on Bull Creek has yet to be affected, Georgetown County has had to stop drawing water from the Waccamaw River near Murrells Inlet because of salt water intrusion. If this continues until next summer, increased usage by visitor's will put a severe strain on Georgetown's water resources.

Here are some conservation tips from the Grand Strand Water and Sewer Authority:

Outdoors--avoid watering on windy days; irrigate morning or evening; lay mulch to reduce evaporation; plant drought-tolerant plants; make sure there are no leaks in the watering system; don't clean sidewalks with the hose; cover the pool when not in use.

Kitchen--install high efficiency, low-flow appliances; don't defrost food under water; rinse dishes (and vegetables) with a filled sink or pan of water; only run the dishwasher if fully loaded.

Bathroom--install high efficient, low-flow toilets and shower heads; turn off the faucet when brushing teeth; do not use your toilet as a wastebasket; regularly check for leaks; shorten time in the shower; use less water in the tub.

Laundry--install high efficiency, low-flow washing machines; only run the machine with full loads; make sure water level matches the size load.

Thank you to our Business Members

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The Riverkeeper Has a New Boat!

A great big thank you to the folks at Eastern Sales, particularly Jeanette Leiplein; Southern Metal Fabricators, particularly Barry Ray; and the Winyah Rivers Foundation's Board of Directors, particularly Reggie Daves, Hut Moody and Peter MacIntyre, for their help in securing a boat for the Waccamaw Riverkeeper!

The boat, a 15-foot runabout, has had its inaugural launch and will make a great working boat from which to conduct river patrols, cleanups, and education/awareness tours. See you on the River!

