

ACCOMPLISHMENTS REPORTED BY THE SATILLA RIVERKEEPER ®
August 2016 - July 2017

➤ ***Member of Georgia Water Coalition***

- Collaborated within an effective network of over 240 conservation groups across the state in Georgia Water Coalition, participating in both the Leadership & Legislative Teams to prioritize issues and engage legislators on critical legislation relevant to the quantity and quality of water in all Georgia Rivers, including the Satilla River. Examples include...
 - HR 513- Three bills were introduced to regulate the disposal of coal ash. None of the bills passed, but a Study Committee was formed to investigate coal ash disposal.
 - HB 208- Changes in hunting and fishing license fee structures to increase funding to DNR to effectively manage fish, game, and wildlife. This also brings the opportunity for millions of dollars in matching federal funds.
 - Freshwater Buffers- Continue to advocate for a sound method of measuring the buffer distance.
 - Trust Fund Honesty- Support legislation that ensures funds collected from fee-based programs, like the scrap tire fee, is actually dedicated to the intended programs, like tire recycling programs.
- Engaged in Capitol Conservation Day with several Satilla Riverkeeper members and met with legislators on issues which affect the Satilla River and watershed.

➤ ***Water Quality Monitoring Program***

- Co-hosted a coastal chemical water quality training workshop with DNR in Brunswick. We also assisted St. Mary's Riverkeeper with a chemical and bacterial water quality training workshop, which enabled the St. Mary's Riverkeepers' team to take over monthly monitoring near Harriet's Bluff on the Crooked River.
- Summer monitoring at nine bacterial water monitoring sites along the lower Satilla River at locations that are frequented by swimmers, adding two new locations since last year. Swimming water quality conditions posted online at the Swim Guide App.
- Continued monthly monitoring (year-round) in Woodbine and White Oak Creek, and added monthly monitoring site on the Little Satilla River in Camden County.
- Targeted water quality sampling is ongoing in Hoboken "Humpty Dumpty Hotel" due to bacteria concerns.

➤ ***Proposed Landfill, Brantley County***

- Engaged in community-led effort to speak out against proposed landfill sited on an environmentally sensitive property.
- Submitted comments at the first announced public hearings, and continued to participate in Brantley County Commissioners Meetings, as well as special called meetings.
- Provided input to revisions of the Brantley County Solid Waste Management Plan.
- Submitted comments in support of adopting the strong environmental protections in the revisions to the Solid Waste Management Plan, and in support of rezoning environmentally sensitive parcel, both of which were unanimously approved by the Board of Commissioners.

➤ ***Dover River Restoration, Satilla River Estuary, Camden County***

- Serving as a non-federal cosponsor of the US Army Corps of Engineers feasibility study for estuarine restoration at Noyes Cut, attending regular meetings, discussing plans and relaying progress on the project.
- Hosted Georgia legislators for informational lunch and site visit of Dover River.
- Presented informational session on the project to the Rural Caucus of the Georgia state legislature, and met with legislators and DNR Commissioners to discuss restoration project.

➤ ***Trash Reduction and Management***

- Continue to encourage solid waste management policies that reduce litter and dumping and prevent pollution in Pierce and Ware Counties, where only 50% of the residents subscribe to curbside waste pickup.
- Gathered pledge signatures for a trash reduction campaign to educate and encourage residents to dispose of trash properly, report illegal dumping and littering, and support good solid waste management policies.
- Ensured waste reduction via the Bandalong Trash Trap in Waycross. A significant amount of litter continues to be removed from a canal to the Satilla River. 56 cubic yards of debris has been trapped and removed in the last year, and almost 600 cubic yards of debris since 2010.
- Organized 120 volunteers for a Rivers Alive cleanup spanning the watershed from Douglas to Jekyll Island. We added 3 sites this year, for a total of 8 sites cleaned up.

➤ **Satilla River Water Trail**

- Officially launched the Satilla River Water Trail with ribbon cutting in September 2016.
- Continued to help raise and manage funds, and facilitate meetings for the Satilla River Water Trail partnership with over 50 team members including Georgia River Network, Pierce Chamber of Commerce, and Georgia Department of Natural Resources.
- Coordinated the completion of sign installation at all River Trail access sites and two informational kiosks, printed informational and promotional materials, a website and factsheets.
- Continued to lead Quarterly (4) Paddle Excursions with members and non-members alike, exploring and educating about the unique Satilla River waters and introducing it to many for the first time.
- Successfully coordinated Spring on the Satilla paddle in partnership with Georgia River Network in April 2017 with over 120 paddlers from across Georgia!
- Co-hosted Satilla River Water Trail events, including the A.J. Strickland “King of the River” Fishing Tournament in Blackshear.

➤ **Responded to complaints regarding...**

- Illegal dumping and littering (alerted local authorities, resulting in multiple citations from the Ware County Sheriff’s Department).
- Inspection of questionable construction and clearing on riverfront property in Brantley County (follow up by EPD, in compliance).
- Expiration of closed Smyrna landfill permit in Brantley County (investigation through EPD, in compliance under new Industrial Stormwater Permit.)
- Bacterial infection suspected to have been contracted from swimming (test water for bacteria at site, results showed no contamination).

➤ **Community Outreach and Education**

- Conducted educational presentations at over 15 civic clubs, events, festivals, meetings, etc. reaching over 1000 people. Attended numerous county and city council meetings, speaking on topics of interest including offshore drilling, groundwater protection, water trail, proposed landfill in Brantley County, Spaceport and others.
- Participated in outreach events in 7 counties including Brantley, Camden, Charlton, Glynn, Pierce, Ware, and Wayne Counties.
- Launched #SatillaNative social media campaign, showcasing native wildlife in our watershed.
- Attended multiple professional development workshops, including Environmental Education Alliance of Georgia and Georgia Teacher Conservation Workshop.
- Certified in Project WET, Project WILD, and Project Learning Tree curriculum.

➤ **Other activities...**

- Serving on the Environmental Subcommittee of the Spaceport Camden Steering Committee. Monitoring progress of the Environmental Impact Statement.
- Among inaugural honorees of the One Hundred Miles 100: Community Advocates.
- Signed on to multiple comment letters regarding federal regulations, including opposition to offshore drilling on the East Coast, and opposition to the repeal of the federal Clean Water Rule.
- Continue to investigate potential threats from coal ash to groundwater and surface water in our watershed via Broadhurst Landfill, Waycross Wastewater Treatment Facility, and others.
- Joined an amicus brief with other Georgia Riverkeepers to demonstrate that industrial discharges into rivers can interfere with legitimate uses of the river.
- Actively participated in the Pierce County and Camden County comprehensive plans, ensuring the Satilla River is promoted and protected in their plans.
- Participated in local coalition working with the City of Woodbine for the Woodbine Satilla Walk education project.
- Promoted success of and assisted with DNR’s Flathead Catfish Removal program – removing over 2,201 fish (4900+ lbs) this year alone. DNR is also removing blue catfish, another invasive species competing with native catfish.
- Promotion and support of Land Conservation along the Satilla River corridor and preservation of critical wildlife habitats with partners DNR, Georgia Conservancy, The Nature Conservancy, and NRCS.

Your donations help protect, restore, and educate about the Satilla River