



The mission of South River Watershed Alliance is to protect and restore the water quality and biodiversity of the South River watershed to the beneficial use of people and wildlife.

## September 2014

In This Issue

Nature, It's in Your Genes

South River Jamboree  
*Serenade By the River*

No Enforcement, No Protection  
(Take Action)

Upcoming Events

Intrenchment Creek  
*Yearlong Tribute to Tribs*

South River Photo Chosen for Calendar

SRWA Receives Conservation Award

Repeats and Reminders



Red Cockaded Woodpecker

## Nature, It's in Your Genes

It is not just walking but where you walk that can make you feel better. The office you covet because of the view of a park, your desire to live near a river or lake or retire to a cabin in the mountains, we now know that this attachment and attraction to nature is in our genes - it's called biophilia.

Below are excerpts from **"Milwaukee Sees the Light" *How one rust belt city found the key to its rebirth; bringing nature and people closer together***, Natural Resources Defense Council, July 17, 2014. [To read entire article click here.](#)

"Biophilia remains in each of us. More to the point [E.O.] Wilson's hypothesis says that satisfying these desires makes us physically and emotionally healthier. This hypothesis has been tested not just in labs but in offices, hospitals, school, slums, and suburbs; in Korea, throughout Europe, in the United States, and Japan."

Milwaukee Mayor Tom Barrett has used biophilia to transform his city. "When I was growing up, being an environmentalist was like, 'if you're going to San Francisco, be sure to wear some flowers in your hair.' It meant you were opposed to economic growth and anything having to do with money," Barrett said. "I don't think it is a fuzzy issue. It's real. You are hitting people where they live. There's not a lot of theory here. This is all real stuff."



Everett Property on Klondike Road at South River

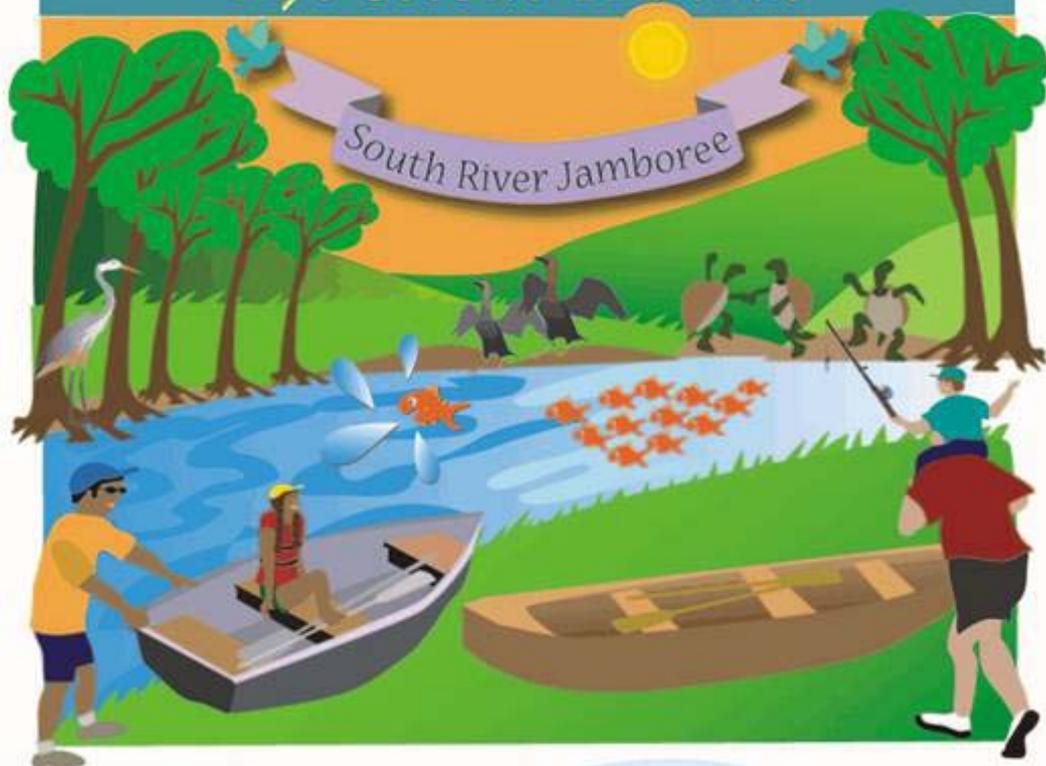
"Scientist initially assumed that biophilia would produce a rather vague and low-level psychological response having to do with reducing stress. Clearly that kind of benefit accrues. But something as precise and measurable as immune response? Yes, and more. School kids who go for a walk in a park before testing score higher than kids who walk a city street. Office workers get sick less often and are more productive if their work spaces have natural lighting and views of the outdoors, or access to it; . . . .In separate studies in the United States, the Netherlands, Denmark, Scotland, and Japan, scientist have found that people living close to forests, parks, beaches, and lakes have fewer health problems."

[To read entire article click here.](#)

---

**Only 4 weeks left. Don't wait, [purchase your tickets](#) today.**

# The Second Annual



## Serenade By the River 4 October

6:00 - 9:00 PM

5052 River Road, Ellenwood, GA

Architect Neil Campbell lives on the South River and has graciously offered to host this year's Jamboree.

*Enjoy an enchanting evening on the bank of the South River.*

*Serenade by the River will feature delicious catered hors d'oeuvres by Aziva by Kameel, tasty spirits, great mood music from*

## **No Enforcement, No Protection (Take Action)**

Failure to enforce any permit is a recipe for disaster. This is especially true for the Clean Water Act permit that is suppose to protect the South River from pollution discharged from Atlanta's combined sewer overflow system. The Georgia Environmental Protection Division (GA EPD) continues to allow the City of Atlanta to violate this permit.

In a small river such as the South River, compliance with all of the conditions of the Clean Water Act permit is pivotal to the river's health. Under the permit, Atlanta is required to ensure that there is adequate oxygen for aquatic life to breathe by limiting pollution that depletes oxygen in the water. Oxygen is depleted as bacteria feed on the pollutants from treated and untreated sewage from Atlanta's CSO system. Pollution occurs and oxygen is also used up when small dirt particles suspended in wastewater are not removed.

Enforcing Atlanta's CSO permit will improve water quality in the South River. The GA EPD acknowledges that it uses the permitting (issuance) process to manage the state's water resources. Consequently, Atlanta's CSO permit is the only protection the river is afforded. Without enforcement, the South River is at risk of having the progress that has been made over the last 15 years reversed.

Atlanta's permit violations deserve attention and resolution. Ultimately, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is responsible for enforcement of the Clean Water Act and its provisions. It is important that the community take proactive steps to ensure that Atlanta's CSO permit is enforced.

SRWA is working with Congressmen John Lewis and Hank Johnson to address this issue. Let them know that you also care and want action. Contact Thomas Dorney in Congressman Lewis' office at (202) 225-3801 or email [Thomas.dorney@mail.house.gov](mailto:Thomas.dorney@mail.house.gov) and Scott Goldstein in Congressman Johnson's office at (202) 225-1605 or email [Scott.goldstein@mail.house.gov](mailto:Scott.goldstein@mail.house.gov). Tell them to enforce Atlanta's permit and protect the South River.

---

## **Upcoming Events**

**South River Canoe Outing, Saturday, September 6, 9:00 a.m.- 3:00 p.m.**  
Don't miss our final outing of 2014. We will paddle the DeKalb County section of the river from Panola Shoals to Klondike Road, a distance of approximately 5.5 miles. Canoeing experience is not required but participants should be physically able to paddle for an extended period without tiring. The

cost is \$40 which includes canoe rental, insurance, and lunch. Space is limited. Contact Jackie (404) 285-3756 if you have questions. Kayakers are welcome and should contact Jackie for additional information. **Sold Out.**

**South River Jamboree, Serenade By the River, October 4, 6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m., 5052 River Road, Ellenwood, GA. \$40/person. [Purchase tickets.](#)**

**Rivers Alive Cleanup, Newton County section of South River, October 11, 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. Details to follow. To volunteer email [southerwaterwatershedalliance@gmail.com](mailto:southerwaterwatershedalliance@gmail.com).**

**Hands on Atlanta Day, Everett Property Roadside Beautification and Cleanup, October 18, 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. To volunteer email [southerwaterwatershedalliance@gmail.com](mailto:southerwaterwatershedalliance@gmail.com).**

### **Upcoming Events at Davidson-Arabia Mountain Nature Preserve**

**Moonlight Mountain Hike, September 6, 7:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.**

Join us for an enchanted evening as we hike to the mountaintop under the moon. We'll head out just before sunset and enjoy the stroll as the moon begins to rise. Bring flashlights, hiking boots and water. Meet at the Nature Center 15 minutes before each program. Participants must register and pay in advance. Call for more info 770-389-7801. Fee required.

**State Parks Day: Grassland Restoration Planting, September 27, 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. Alexander Lake at Panola Mountain State Park**

Join park staff and volunteers for the third year of native wildflower planting at a significant grassland restoration area in the park. Free.

---

## **Intrenchment Creek**

In a January 30, 2012, article titled "No fish means no help for 'exquisite' creek", Andrew Cauthen, reporter for the DeKalb Champion newspaper, writes "The water quality of DeKalb County's Intrenchment Creek is so bad that federal engineers won't try to fix the habitat there." This statement reflected the view of Brian Zettle, an Army Corps of Engineers biologist who surveyed the creek in 2005. They found no fish. "What should be good habitat and should support a large abundance and diverse group of fish species, we got zero fish" stated Zettle.

Intrenchment Creek is the site of the only remaining combined sewer overflow (CSO) facility on Atlanta's southeast side. The Custer Avenue CSO facility is located on the bank of Intrenchment Creek just off Boulevard

Avenue at Custer Avenue in the City of Atlanta. Most of the problems that impact the creek - degraded aquatic and riparian habitats, altered hydrology, invasive species, and impaired water quality can be directly linked to this facility.

Intrenchment Creek is approximately six miles from headwaters to the South River. The creek originates at Brownwood Park in the City of Atlanta, just southeast of the intersection of Glenwood Ave and Moreland Ave SE. (Coordinates: 33.736557°, -84.347015°, may vary based on map). The creek travels south-southeast and



Intrenchment Creek at Custer Avenue CSO facility (in background).. Photo (circa) 2003 courtesy of Jackie Echols.

intersects the South River just before it crosses I-285. (Coordinates: 33.681674°, -84.326664°). While land use along Intrenchment Creek starts out as residential, the majority of the creek is surrounded by industrial/commercial. The Intrenchment Creek Water Reclamation Facility and Combined Sewer Overflow Treatment Facility (City of Atlanta) is located along the creek at Key Road in DeKalb County. Additionally, land use towards the south of the stream includes the Georgia Dept of Corrections - Metro Transitional Center and a large industrial park and logistics center. Several small unnamed tributaries join it before ending in South River.

According to the Georgia Environmental Protection Division, the creek's designated use is fishing. The 2014 Draft 303(d) list indicates the creek is impaired for fecal coliform and impacted biota (both fish and macroinvertebrates) likely caused by combined sewer overflows and urban runoff.

---

## South River Photo Chosen for Calendar

The Metropolitan North Georgia  
Water Conservation District selected  
Canoeing the South River as a winner

in the 2014 Water Reflections Calendar Photo Contest. The contest is an opportunity for individuals and organizations to share their appreciation of our water resources. The photo will be featured for the month of June. SRWA also received a check for \$100. Be sure to pick up a copy when it becomes available later this year.



Winning Photo - *Canoeing the South River*

---

## SRWA Receives Conservation Award

This year's Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) Conservation Award goes to South River Watershed Alliance. This is the first year DAR has given the award which promotes volunteerism. "This is a great honor" states Jackie Echols, SRWA president. "We have worked really hard to raise awareness about the South River and its visibility. This award is proof that the word about this great resource is getting out to the larger community." To be eligible for the award, an organization's leadership must volunteer. The award will be presented Thursday, September 18th, 11:00 a.m. at Second Ponce de Leon Baptist Church (Fellowship Hall) on Peachtree Road in Buckhead.

---

## Repeats & Reminders

### DeKalb County BoC

Lee May, Interim DeKalb County CEO  
404-371-2881  
[Email](#)

Elaine Boyer, District 1  
404-371-2844  
[Email](#)

Jeff Rader, District 2  
404-371-2863  
[Email](#)

Larry Johnson, District 3

### Septic System Grants

The Upper Ocmulgee River Resource Conservation and Development Council has funds available for cost-share grants for installation of Best Management Practices (BMPs) that will help improve water quality in the South River basin. BMPs may include maintenance, repair, and/or replacement of failing septic system, trash and debris cleanup,

404-371-2425

[Email](#)

Sharon Barnes Sutton, District 4

404-371-4749

[Email](#)

Lee May, District 5

404-371-4745

[Email](#)

Kathie Gannon, District 6

404-371-4909

[Email](#)

Stan Watson, District 7

404-371-3681

[Email](#)

and the elimination of stream access to domestic animals.

Grant awards are reimbursement only (i.e., the property owner must pay for installation of the BMP and will be reimbursed for up to 50% of the cost). There will be a cap on the amount of money that can be reimbursed for any one project.

Areas eligible to receive these grants include any properties which drain to the South River or any of its tributaries. For additional information Bob Scott, Program Manager, 678-376-9518.



Albert Shoals



Rivercane