



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.

January 2014

In This Issue

River Cane Recovery - Nature at Work

Make 2014 Your Year to Volunteer

Upcoming Events

New "Where the Water Goes" Series

Repeats & Reminders



South River - Rockdale County

Happy New Year



River Cane

Photo Courtesy of St. Mary, LA Soil and Water Conservation District.

River Cane Recovery - Nature at Work

The negative effects of urban development in its various forms - stormwater mixed with fertilizer and weed killing chemicals that wash from yards; oil, antifreeze, grease and other polluted runoff from streets and roads, sediment from construction sites, and inadequately treated and untreated wastewater - are primarily responsible for the decline of water quality in the South River.

Across the southeast conservation organizations, education institutions, and Indian tribes are working to restore what many believe is one of nature's most effective lines of defense against water pollution - river cane. Their goal is to once again make this species of bamboo, the only one native to North America, a staple of landscapes along rivers and streams. Once widespread along waterways from North Carolina to Louisiana, river cane has experienced steep decline primarily due to farming, fire, and development.

Today, it covers only a very small part, about two percent, of its original area.

River cane is revered for its natural cleaning ability. Dense growths of the vegetation called canebrakes have been shown to be effective buffers along streams and rivers providing a natural line of defense against the damaging effects of stormwater runoff. [Read more about river cane.](#)

For Indian tribes, the cane holds significant cultural value as many of them depended on this plant for necessities such as food, medicine, weapons, and building material. Of particular interest to some tribes such as the Cherokee is the cultivation of cane in quantities sufficient to once again sustain basket weaving, which was an important part of their way of life.

The South River watershed is not likely to become any less urban in the future, meaning threats to the river's water quality will continue and the need to identify promising pollution reduction practices even more pressing. Restoring river cane to the South River corridor is at the top of SRWA's list of possibilities because it is natural, cost effective, and it works; these three factors alone make it worth considering. For more information about river cane or to learn how you or your organization can get involved in this very worthwhile project call Jackie Echols at 404-285-3756 or email southernriverwatershedalliance@gmail.com.

Make 2014 Your Year to Volunteer

Want to feel better, stress less, enhance your quality of life, and take better care of yourself - VOLUNTEER - so says research conducted by United Healthcare Group.

SRWA is looking for volunteers to help with programs and tasks needed to move the organization forward in 2014. Want to know how you can help? Just review the list below, select the activity you want to help with, then give us a call or send an email. It's just that easy and we would love to hear from you.



South River Cleanup

Volunteer opportunities:

1. Create membership database - enter names into database and update as needed
2. Update membership list - make contact with and follow up with members to renew their membership
3. Annual fundraiser - assist with securing sponsors, publicity, and other planning logistics for October 4, 2014 fundraiser
4. Outreach to area schools - help with arranging and coordinating SRWA activities with schools in the area
5. Water quality monitoring - conduct water sampling (requires Adopt-A-Stream certification)
6. Canoe outings - help with river put-in and take-out activities; pickup and serving lunch at end of outing; perform "sweep" and related duties during outing
7. River cleanups - participate in one or more trash and/or tire cleanups
8. Water trail planning - serve on initial working group and/or help to identify working group members
9. Monthly e-newsletter - write an article or suggest a topic of interest and help to develop article

Whether you volunteer to lend a hand to update the membership list, help out with canoe outings, or any of our other activities, SRWA could really use your support. To volunteer or if you have questions call Jackie at 404-285-3756 or email southernriverwatershedalliance@gmail.com.

Upcoming Events

SRWA is adding an Events calendar to the SRWA website homepage. Never miss an event again. Check it out February 2014.

Where the Water Goes - The Headwaters - Saturday, March 22 - 9:00 - 2:00 pm (BYO Lunch)

Location: East Point and Southeast Atlanta Neighborhoods

We will begin this very special outing at the headwaters of the South River in East Point, then follow its traces through neighborhoods and Atlanta's South Bend Park, with our final walk along the path and boardwalk at one of DeKalb County's hidden gems - Constitution Lakes, which was an old clay quarry that is now a rich network of lakes and wetlands adjacent to the South River corridor. We'll enjoy a picnic lunch at the lakes, and SRWA president Jackie Echols will join us to share the history and importance of this significant river. This outing will involve visiting several locations with light walking, not more than 1.5 miles total. Van transportation will be available from the meeting location or bring your own vehicle. [Click here](#) to register. Meet up directions will be sent to registered participants. [SRWA](#), [EcoAddendum](#) and [Keeping It Wild](#) partnership event.

Upcoming Events at Davidson-Arabia Mountain Nature Preserve

Ranger Rendezvous at Davidson Arabia Nature Preserve - January 18, 8:00 - 11:00 a.m. Join Ranger Robby for a rugged and adventurous hike through the Nature Preserve. This hike will be moderate to difficult and cover 4 to 5 miles. Registration by email to rlastrove@dekalbcountyga.gov is required to receive trailhead instructions and rendezvous location.

Panola Mountain Stewardship Saturday - February 1, 8:00-11:00 a.m. Join Panola Mountain rangers and volunteers for a once-a-month work day to help maintain this unique National Natural Landmark. Each month will be a different service project. Please call the Nature Center at 770-389-7801 to register and get your parking fees waived for the day of the event.

Arabia Mountain Heritage Area Alliance - Community Tire Roundup, February 8. The Arabia Mountain Heritage Area Alliance and Georgia Conservancy are sponsoring a Heritage Area Tire Roundup, Saturday, February 8. Community members can bring tires to the Arabia Mountain Nature Center, 3787 Klondike Road, to be recycled. This is a great time to throw that annoying tire you've noticed on your way to work or during your daily walk into your truck or car trunk and bring it to the Nature Center. If you are aware of an area where numerous tires have been dumped and there are too many for you to transport, a special pickup may be arranged. More details to come. In the meantime, if you have questions or need more information, contact Kimberly Estep, Arabia Mountain Heritage Area Alliance, Public Outreach Coordinator at (770) 542-7131.

New "Where the Water Goes" Series

[SRWA](#) in partnership with [EcoAddendum](#) and [Keeping It Wild](#) offer a special 6-part series of walks, canoe outings, and camping trips that trace the path of the only major river to be born in Atlanta--the South River--from its origins in Atlanta's Southside neighborhoods all the way to Georgia's Atlantic coast. We will explore the river trail and natural areas in what becomes Georgia's largest watershed, from creeks and springs in Atlanta and Decatur parks, through South DeKalb, past Panola Mountain, on to the Ocmulgee River, then to the mighty Altamaha River, which finally meets the ocean in a massive salt marsh delta near our final destination at Sapelo Island, one of Georgia's most beautiful and culturally significant barrier islands. Each outing features unique points of interest, including little-known natural gems in the Atlanta-metro area, beautiful canoeing opportunities, old growth trees and rare-species habitat, camping on a river sandbar, Gullah-Geechee cultural history and rich Georgia woodlands and coastal environments.

All activities are beginner-friendly. See Events section above for details about first outing March 22.

Repeats & Reminders

DeKalb County Elected Officials:

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
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](#)



Albert Shoal

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, 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.

Kroger Plus Card Earns SRWA Rewards

When you shop at Kroger and use your Kroger Plus card you can help SRWA earn rewards that turn into cash. Signing up is quick and easy www.krogercommunityrewards.com.

- Click on Sign In/Register
- Most participants are new online customers, so they must click on SIGN UP TODAY in the 'New Customer?' box.
- Sign up for a Kroger Rewards Account by entering Zip Code, clicking on favorite store, entering you email address and creating a password, agreeing to the terms and conditions
- You will then get a message to check your email inbox and click on the link within the body of the email.
- Click on My Account and use your email address and password to proceed to the next step.
- Click on Edit Kroger Community Rewards information and input your Kroger Plus card number.
- Update or confirm your information
- Enter NPO number (107512) or organization, select South River Watershed Alliance from the list and click to confirm.
- To verify you are enrolled correctly, you will see your organization's name on the right side of your information page.

Get regular updates on SRWA activities and learn more about what we do. Follow SRWA on Twitter and connect with us on Facebook. Links to our pages are just below.

Like us on Facebook 

Follow us on 



[BECOME A MEMBER](#)
