

In October, we established a six-member Advisory Board for the purpose of assisting CRBI staff in the Clean Coosa Campaign, the organization's major fundraising effort.

The organizational budget grew by 17 percent.

The membership grew to more than 450 households and over 800 total members.

The board of directors expanded and diversified, welcoming eight new members, including representatives from Cherokee County, Alabama and Paulding, Bartow, and Chattooga counties in Georgia.

Our Calhoun-based chapter, the **New Echota Rivers Alliance** conducted two successful fundraisers and a membership drive, more than doubling their membership during the year to approximately 100 supporters.

We conducted two successful fundraisers—the 5th Annual Canoe-a-thon, Race And Environmental Fair which involved about 100 paddlers and a total of nearly 500 participants and the 4th Annual Fish Fry which involved 32 volunteers serving more than 600 people.

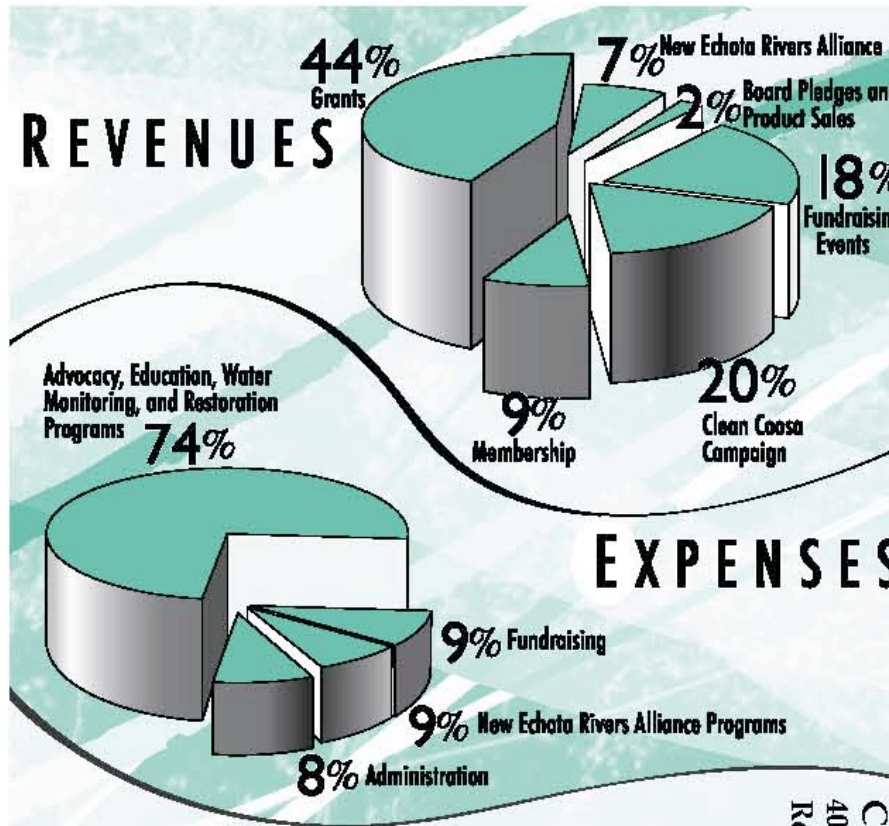
CRBI continued to earn the support of foundations, receiving major grants from the Sapelo Foundation, the Acorn Foundation, the Norcross Wildlife Foundation and the C.S. Mott Foundation through River Network and Netcorps.

CLEAN COOSA CAMPAIGN SUPPORTERS

State Mutual Insurance; R.H. Leibetter Family; Coosa Valley Chapter of Trout Unlimited; Upper Chattahoochee Riverkeeper; Merry Bee Gallery & Frame Shop; Dr. J. Maxwell Hulsey; Dr. Daniel & Pauline Goldfaden; Dr. Marc Wehington; Dr. Trammell Starr, III; Dr. & Mrs. Edwin Johnston, Jr.; Dr. James W. Moseley; Dr. Frederick & Judith Swiger; Dr. James & Brenda Crane; Dr. Christopher & Jennifer Kligor; Dr. & Mrs. Edward Brewster; Dr. Zachary B. Martin; Dr. Steven & Linda Horn; Dr. Timothy & Rene Comer; Dr. Gary & Linda Voccio; Dr. C Whitley Vick; Dr. Allan Stephenson; Dr. John & Christina Woods; Dr. Eric & Cheryl Chand; Dr. Seaborn & Karen Moss; Dr. Jeffrey & Shelly Peller; Dr. Raymond Young; Dr. Robert L. Harbin; Dr. Bill P. Harbin; Dr. George Hunter & Barbara Myers; Drs. Paul & Cindy Shumpert; Dr. George Goldin; Dr. Thomas & Patricia Ann Simpson; Dr. Stephen & Lynne Finn; Dr. Joseph & Patricia Magnan; Dr. Bannester Harbin; Dr. Buford Harbin; Dr. Randy Elkins; Dr. Joshua & Kristin Danner; Dr. Brian Kinder; Dr. David & Jennifer Kearns; Regina F. Wilson Davis; Clinton Agnew; Amy Ruth; Wade Sellers; Edward Gentle; John Cumming; William Dupre; Ed & Allison Watters

FISH FRY AND CANOE-A-THON SUPPORTERS

Profile Extrusion; SCANA Energy; Temple-Inland; Sam's Club; Mohawk Industries; AutoMax; Rome Ford Lincoln Mercury; Purple Mtn. Natural Foods; Greater Rome Bank; Tiltan Insurance; State Mutual Insurance; Suntrust Bank; U.S. Biofuels; North Georgia Distributing; Redmond Regional Medical Center; Vision Graphics; Gridlox Graphics; Pullens Plain Outdoors; Paddlers Paradise; The Groundhogs; Harvest Moon Cafe; Rome Braves; Dairy Queen; Bruster's Ice Cream; Ole Tyme Barbecue; Baskin Robbins; Kaleido-Sno; Southeastern Mills; Kroger; Piggly Wiggly; Pick O Deli; Schroeder's New Deli; Rome First United Methodist Church; Advanced Communications; Sara Lee Baking Group; Keown Real Estate; Clyde Collier Photography; Zartic; Vision Graphics; Bryan & Warren; Bohannon Bros. Glass; Just Sports & Tennis; Traditions of Rome; Owens Hardware; Brown & Brown Insurance; Caldwell Printing; Mark Law Studio; Dixon & Tate Real Estate; Riverbend Motors; Rome News-Tribune; Bojangles; West Rome Animal Clinic; United Community Bank; Citizen First Bank; Wachovia; Culbreth Carr & Watson Animal Clinic; Dr. Jeffrey Healy; Georgia Power Plant Hammond; Bob Williams Dodge; Hunt Oil Company; Bob's Cycle Shop; Heritage Honda; Rome Paper Company; Toles; Temple & Wright Real Estate; Cox, Byington, Corwin, Niedrach, Atkins, Smith & Perkins Attorneys; Watters & Associates Landscaping; Meeke Picture Frame House; Room Service; Auto Refinishers Supply; Reese & Smallwood Real Estate; Riddle Office Supply; Bert Brooks Tire; The Music Room; Christies Office Supply; Transmission Specialists; Wheeler's Building Materials; Davis & Davis Attorneys; Trim Ideas; Heritage Nissan; Rome Rehabilitation; Coosa Outfitters; AG Edwards; North Broad Animal Clinic; Spears Mattress Company; The Backyard Pet Boutique; Whitehead's Florist; Easy Living Yamaha; Lavender Mountain Hardware; Rhinehart Equipment; Raliff Coastal Downtown; Pinkard State Farm Insurance; Floyd Radiology; Hardy Realty; Kelly Wholesale Florist



Coosa River Basin Initiative
408 E. Broad Street
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COOSA RIVER BASIN INITIATIVE



ANNUAL REPORT

STATE OF THE BASIN

During 2005, state and federal agencies conducted extensive water quality studies on the Coosa to determine pollution limits, or Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs), for the Coosa River in western Floyd County and Weiss Lake in Alabama.

This study, expected to continue through 2006, will have far-reaching impacts on water quality and industrial uses of the river. It also underscores the importance of obtaining accurate water quality data on our streams, rivers and lakes. Without good data, we cannot identify pollution problems or develop strategies for improving water quality.

Knowing what is taking place in our streams is particularly important in the Upper Coosa River Basin which is renowned as North America's most biologically diverse aquatic system—with some 30 endemic species and 13 federally threatened or endangered species.

In 2005, we saw a continuing escalation of the threats to this special place.
continued inside...

On the Cover: Built 500 to 1000 years ago by the Upper Coosa River Basin's original inhabitants, one of the Etowah River's numerous Native American fish dams ripples the water on a spring day.

Population growth and land development are sending dirt and polluted stormwater runoff into tributary streams at an alarming rate. Meanwhile, non-point source pollution resulting from current agricultural practices and past industrial practices, and point source pollution from failing municipal sewage systems and municipal and industrial wastewater treatment facilities continue to plague water quality.



A muddy Etowah meets the Oostanaula in downtown Rome after a summer downpour. The Get the Dirt Out program addressed the root cause of this scene—stormwater runoff from construction sites.

With the failure of the Alabama-Coosa-Tallapoosa Water Compact between Alabama and Georgia, the dispute over water allocations is now in federal courts. This leaves the looming threat of interbasin water transfers that would negatively impact our basin's ecology and economy.

ADDRESSING THE ISSUES

As a Georgia Water Coalition (GWC) member, CRBI assisted in numerous lobbying efforts targeting the Georgia General Assembly, Georgia's Department of Natural Resources and local governments.

During the 2005 General Assembly session, we lobbied successfully to amend SB 190, a bill that would have removed the rights of citizens to appeal environmental permits. GWC also helped defeat a bill that would have greatly expanded a local government's ability to use eminent domain power, and a bill that would have cloaked economic development negotiations in secret.

Our other GWC activities included presenting comments before Georgia's Department of Natural Resources Board and Environmental Protection Division (EPD) on rules impacting stream buffers, wastewater treatment standards and mercury air emissions from power plants.

At the local level, we worked for the passage of resolutions by county and city commissions calling on the General Assembly and Governor to fully restore funding for Georgia's environmental trust funds.

CRBI ALSO . . .

- ▶ Assisted citizens in Bartow County in successfully fighting a landfill proposal in Emerson that threatened groundwater and the Etowah River
- ▶ Joined other Georgia Riverkeepers in appealing a state permit regulating stormwater discharges from industrial facilities.

- ▶ Participated in Get The Dirt Out: The Stormwater Project in which we trained 45 citizens to monitor construction sites for violations of Georgia's Erosion and Sedimentation Act. And, we helped landowners in Paulding, Bartow, Dawson and Floyd counties address erosion and sedimentation issues in their neighborhoods.

- ▶ Submitted comments and requested a public hearing on a 98-acre commercial development near Canton that threatens two federally protected fish species in the Etowah River Basin

- ▶ Monitored and informed citizens about Georgia and Alabama's continuing battle over water allocations as the talks shifted to federal courtrooms.

- ▶ Monitored the GE clean up in Rome

- ▶ Monitored Walker and Chattooga counties' efforts to develop Regal Spring as a drinking water source, advocating for the protection of this pristine spring and water flows in Armuchee Creek.

- ▶ Assisted the Rome Rotary Club in developing a water conservation project in Rome/Floyd County.

- ▶ Published 24 news articles or op-ed columns in local newspapers and participated in six different radio interviews.



Program Coordinator Katie Owens monitors the Coosa River from the CRBI/Upper Coosa Riverkeeper patrol boat.

EDUCATION

We reached more than 1,000 elementary school students in Floyd, Gordon, Polk and Cherokee counties with our non-point source pollution education program.

CRBI ALSO . . .

- ▶ Organized our first Environmental Fair. Attended by some 500 people, the Fair featured live music, exhibits from regional environmental groups and businesses, a raptor demonstration, an environmental scavenger hunt for children and an Environmental Quiz Bowl competition involving teams from five different elementary schools.

- ▶ Served on the Steering Committee for the 2nd Annual Celebrate Etowah, an 8-week, watershed-wide celebration of the Etowah River. CRBI sponsored stream clean ups, paddling trips and Get the Dirt Out workshops for the celebration which attracted more than 4,000 people to 35 scheduled events.

- ▶ Helped teach chemical and biological water monitoring to approximately 250

high school and college students in Floyd County.

- ▶ Presented educational programs highlighting CRBI's work to both civic organizations and school groups throughout the basin.

RESTORATION

Through four clean up days, CRBI organized more than 100 volunteers and removed more than 6,000 pounds of trash from the Etowah and Coosa rivers and from Silver Creek and Armuchee Creek.

In our ongoing efforts to restore Silver Creek, we teamed up with the City of Rome and Hands on Rome to begin establishing a recreational trail along the Etowah River and Silver Creek in South Rome. In October, some 32 volunteers removed trash, eliminated invasive species and planted 70 native trees along the creek and river.



Berry College students gather during a Silver Creek restoration day.

During August, we led 60 Berry College students in removing trash and restoring trails along Silver Creek.

WATER MONITORING

We continued to monitor the permits of 57 wastewater treatment facilities, documenting all spills and violations. We also submitted comments to EPD regarding five different facilities whose permits were renewed or modified. Our comments on the City of Ellijay's wastewater treatment facility resulted in EPD acknowledging that "narrative water quality standards" apply to all pollution control facilities.

We conducted extensive weekly water quality monitoring at eight sites on the Coosa between Ga. 100 and the Alabama state line, and we conducted monthly water monitoring at 25 sites throughout Floyd County, testing for dissolved oxygen, settleable solids, pH, air and water temperature, ammonia, phosphates, and nitrates.

Responding to complaints about potential bacterial contamination, we conducted fecal testing on Big Cedar Creek in Floyd County and on an unnamed Chattooga River tributary in Chattooga County.

Additionally, we certified 21 new Georgia Adopt-A-Stream citizen water monitors, through one group training and multiple individual trainings.

ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

CRBI established its first Advisory Board, expanded its budget, membership and Board of Directors and assisted in the continuing formation of the New Echota Rivers Alliance.