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2009 ANNUAL REPORT

COOSA RIVER BASIN INITIATIVE

A TIME FOR VIGILANCE AND ACTION

“We can act now or we can wait until a federal judge forces us to act.”

That prophetic message was delivered by pro-environment legislators and lobbyists, such as CRBI, at the Georgia State Capital two years ago in working to pass water conservation measures. 2009 will be remembered as the year this prophecy came true.

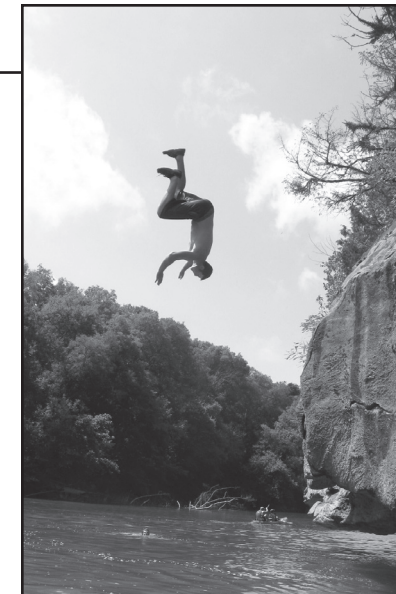
In July a federal court judge ruled that Metro Atlanta did not have the right to continue depleting Lake Lanier on the Chattahoochee for water supply. By December, Gov. Sonny Perdue's specially called water task force was recommending that Georgia adopt a series of water conservation measures. This landmark court ruling will continue to shape the future of the Coosa River for the fortunes of the Coosa, its tributaries and the communities that rely upon it will hinge on how Georgia's leaders respond to this directive.

The decision provides unprecedented opportunities to implement water conservation and efficiency programs that will prolong our water supplies and protect our communities, but it also poses a threat as Metro Atlanta communities may reach into the Coosa basin seeking additional water supplies through interbasin transfers.

As we reflect on and celebrate our accomplishments in 2009 and anticipate 2010, vigilance remains our watch word as we work to protect our drinking water and the future of our communities in North America's most biologically diverse river basin.

Advocacy

As a member of the Georgia Water Coalition, CRBI worked on the Coalition's communication and legislative committees, advocating for state water policies that promote water conservation and efficiency; decrease our dependence on inter-basin transfers and new reservoir construction; and provide stronger funding and enforcement of clean water laws.



During the 2009 Georgia General Assembly session, CRBI played roles in communication efforts that led to the passage of a bill protecting Georgia's well water by extending a prohibition on the practice of ground water injection. CRBI also worked to gain passage in the House of Representatives of a bill that will promote water conservation in new apartment and condominium complexes. CRBI and GWC members also successfully lobbied to defeat five other bills that would have weakened clean water protections.

As Georgia's Comprehensive State Water Plan moved to the regional water planning phase, CRBI attended all meetings of the Coosa-North Georgia Regional Water Planning Council to monitor this important process.



CRBI also...

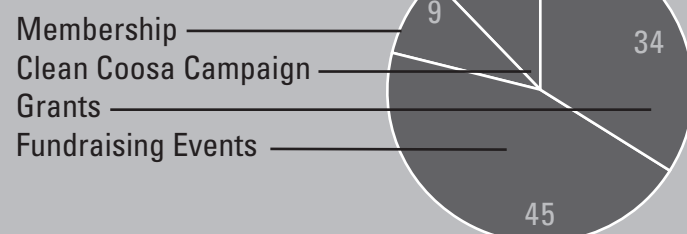
- Assisted other Georgia Riverkeepers in organizing a street demonstration outside the offices of the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District in Atlanta calling on the District to implement more aggressive water conservation measures. Jointly, the Riverkeepers also submitted comments to the District governing board. These efforts prompted the District to remove plans for dams on the Flint River and improve how it measures the effectiveness of its water conservation programs.



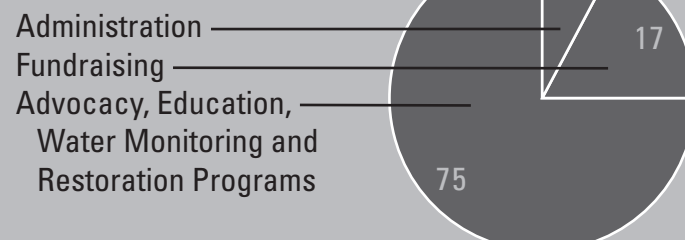
- Advocated for the preservation of Rome's "Central Park" by starting a petition opposing a proposed 60-acre shopping center at the city's Burwell Creek natural area and by hosting walking and paddling tours of the area's floodplain and wetlands during high water events. To date, more than 1000 residents have signed the petition.
- Stopped the diversion of federal grant funds designated for hazardous site assessments in Rome and Floyd County for use by developers of the Burwell Creek tract. EPA concurred with CRBI's arguments submitted to the regulatory agency and denied the developer's request for the use of these funds.
- Lobbied the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) to adopt the Etowah Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) in a

CRBI Financials

REVENUE



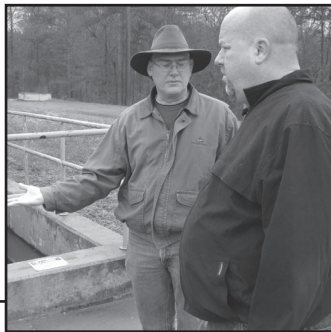
EXPENSES



form that would improve protections for streams and endangered fish species. CRBI hosted four town hall style meetings to educate local residents about the HCP and its benefits, lobbied against resolutions in the Georgia General Assembly intended to weaken the HCP and generated more than 500 letters to the USFWS from concerned citizens supporting a strong HCP.



- With assistance from GreenLaw, we took action against the City of Dallas for its failure to adequately maintain and upgrade its sewer system and sewage treatment facilities. The City is currently in the planning phase for a new wastewater treatment facility.
- Advocated for strong protections of Lake Allatoona by submitting comments to Georgia's Environmental Protection Division (EPD) on the agency's plan to eliminate high phosphorus levels in the lake.
- Reported sewage spills into Rome's Horseleg Creek to EPD. Attention to this ongoing pollution problem led the City of Rome to proceed with already planned upgrades to a failing pumping station at the creek.



- Opposed a plan to build a 2,000-acre water supply reservoir in the Dawson Forest Wildlife Management Area that would involve the transfer of up to 100 million gallons of water each day to Metro Atlanta communities. CRBI efforts prompted the cities of Canton, Cartersville and Rome to submit letters of concern to the City of Atlanta, the owner of the 10,000 acre Dawson Forest tract near Dawsonville.
- Participated in the Little River Stakeholders meetings to identify ways to protect this Outstanding National Resource Water atop Lookout Mountain through conservation easements and other measures.
- Supported the Weiss Lake Improvement Association in addressing failures on the part of state and local governments to properly regulate sewage disposal at "temporary residences" around Weiss Lake.
- Submitted comments to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers opposing projects that would negatively impact the Coosa and its tributaries in Floyd, Polk and Bartow.
- Monitored and investigated stream buffer variance requests submitted to Georgia EPD.
- Worked with landowners and the City of Euharlee to develop a plan to preserve riverfront property on the Etowah and improve public boat access at the site.

Education

We educated more than 3,000 elementary, middle and high school students in Floyd, Polk, Bartow, Gordon, Murray, Whitfield, Catoosa and Chattooga counties through our non-point source pollution, water conservation and water monitoring programs.



CRBI also...

- Continued our water conservation program at East Central Elementary and Berry Elementary schools. More than 40 families participated in the program with some families reducing their water use as much as 47 percent.
- Organized our 5th annual Environmental Fair during WATERFEST IX. Nearly 1000 people attended the two-day paddlesports extravaganza which featured reptile shows, exhibits, an environmental scavenger hunt, canoe and kayak tug-o-wars and our Environmental Quiz Bowl competition. Five area schools and some 50 students participated in the Quiz Bowl.
- Held CRBI's first-ever summer environmental camp in association with the Boys & Girls Club of Rome, reaching 44 students through two one-week sessions.
- With assistance from the City of Rome, Adventure Rome 'N Around and CRBI chapter organization New Echota Rivers Alliance, we organized 12 guided paddle trips allowing more than 600 people to experience our rivers.
- Presented water education programs to more than 1300 college students and adults.
- Hosted Walkin' Jim Stoltz in concert at Berry College and at area elementary schools to spread the message of wilderness preservation and protection to hundreds.
- Disseminated information to thousands of people about CRBI and local water issues through outreach programs at Rome's First Friday Concert Series, the Trout Unlimited Chili Cook Off, the Chiaha Harvest Fair, Ducks Unlimited and Wild Turkey Federation banquets, Christ the King Lutheran Church's Earth Day Festival, Rome-Floyd County Library Earth Day programs and at Keep Rome/Floyd Beautiful Community outreach programs.
- Published three issues of the Mainstream newsletter and regularly updated membership through e-mail,



website, CRBI Musselhead Blog and participation in the Georgia Environmental Action Network.

- Secured media coverage and published op-eds and letters to editors in multiple local, regional and national publications and broadcasts. More than 100 reports on CRBI issues or activities were published or broadcast, including at least 20 opinion pieces by CRBI staff.
- Assisted Southeast Elementary instructors with after-school environmental club programs that involved hands on activities at nearby Silver Creek.
- Assisted local Boy Scouts with water merit badge certification efforts.
- Trained partners with the Murray County 4-H program to conduct CRBI's non-point source pollution program in area schools.



Restoration

By organizing and assisting in five clean up events involving some 456 volunteers, CRBI cleared some 38,500 pounds of trash from our rivers and streams. Clean up sites included the Etowah, Oostanaula and Coosa rivers as well as Armuchee, Little Dry and Silver creeks.



Additionally, CRBI assisted The Nature Conservancy in research for a project on Raccoon Creek in Paulding County to improve habitat for rare and endangered fish and we continued to maintain a trail through the City of Rome's Burwell Creek natural area as part of the 7 Hills 3 Rivers Adventure Race.

Water Monitoring

CRBI continued to monitor the permits of wastewater treatment facilities discharging to the Coosa or its tributaries, documenting all spills and permit violations and periodically reviewing monitoring reports submitted to state regulators.



CRBI also...

- Trained and certified 32 new Georgia Adopt-A-Stream and Alabama Water Watch citizen water monitors.
- Collected regular monitoring data at 13 sites in the basin and submitted 185 stream health reports to the Georgia Adopt-A-Stream program.

- Conducted regular patrols and monitoring of the Coosa, Etowah and Oostanaula rivers, using *Arnemeta*, our Yamaha-powered G3 patrol boat.
- Facilitated a memorandum of understanding between Georgia Adopt-A-Stream and Alabama Water Watch that will promote the sharing of monitoring data between the two state agencies.

Organizational Development

Despite the ongoing economic downturn, for the fifth consecutive year, CRBI set fundraising records. The organizational budget grew by nearly 20 percent with more than 2500 dues-paying members supporting CRBI during the past year.



CRBI also...

- Generated more than \$65,000 for programs through four major fundraisers: WATERFEST IX with 1000 participants and visitors, River Revelry—A Biodiversity Bash attended by more than 300 supporters, the 7 Hills 3 Rivers Adventure Race with 125 racers from 50 teams and the 8th Annual CRBI-Northwest Georgia Credit Union Fish Fry involving more than 50 volunteers who served up over 700 plates of catfish.
- Continued to earn the support of foundations and organizations through grants totaling more than \$52,000.
- Continued "culinary outreach" at Rome First Friday Concerts and other community events through our Coosa River Ribbon Fries. Hundreds ate a 'tater' to save our rivers.
- Secured grant from the Lyndhurst Foundation to purchase canoes, kayaks, passenger van and associated equipment to expand our recreational outreach and education program.
- Organized second annual volunteer appreciation party at Rolater Park in Cave Spring with 27 attending.
- Staff and Board of Directors completed five-year strategic plan, mapping the organization's activities and growth through 2014.
- Board member Carolyn Landrem of the Weiss Lake Improvement Association was recognized at the Alabama Clean Water Partnership Conference for her efforts to keep Weiss Lake a viable water source for recreation and other uses.

