

MAINSTREAM

Official Quarterly Newsletter of the Coosa River Basin Initiative/Upper Coosa RIVERKEEPER®



Shoal Creek Reservoir, Plant Hammond Named to Georgia's Dirty Dozen

Two sites in the Coosa River Basin have earned the inauspicious distinction of being named to the Georgia Water Coalition's (GWC) first-ever Dirty Dozen, a list of the most egregious offenses to Georgia's water.

The proposed Shoal Creek reservoir in Dawson County, along with the Glades Reservoir in Hall County, checked in at No. 5 on the list while Georgia Power Company's Plant Hammond on the Coosa finished out the Dirty Dozen at No. 12.

The Shoal Creek project would create a 1200-acre reservoir in the Dawson Forest Wildlife Management Area that would supply water to Metro Atlanta through a 100 million gallon a day water transfer out of the Etowah River Basin. The project is expected to cost \$650 million, some of which could be funded with state tax dollars. The massive water transfer could significantly impact flows on the Etowah River to downstream communities and Lake Allatoona. The project would also kill a large population of the federally protected Etowah darters on a creek that has been called the "epicenter of biodiversity" in the Upper Etowah River Basin.

Plant Hammond on the Coosa made the list because of the facility's massive 590 million gallon a day (MGD) water withdrawal and warm water discharge. During periods of low flows, the total amount of water flowing down the Coosa can dip below 590 MGD. At such times the Coosa literally flows upstream at the coal-fired power plant's water intake. After being used to cool the plant's system, all 590 MGD is returned to the river at an elevated temperature, causing low oxygen levels downstream.

see *Dirty Dozen*, page 4



Paddlers explore the Etowah River in the Dawson Forest Wildlife Management Area during a recent CRBI-led canoe trip. The proposed Shoal Creek Reservoir in Dawson Forest could significantly impact water levels on the Etowah.

CRBI water audits of Trion and Summerville provide water conservation blueprint

The Chattooga County cities of Trion and Summerville could reduce their water use by 30 to 47 percent and save as much as 900,000 gallons a day if the communities implemented common sense water conservation practices, according to recent study by CRBI.

By achieving these savings, Trion could meet its water needs well beyond 2030, and Summerville could add some 4700 residents while using the same amount of water the city uses today. Currently, Summerville uses 2.34 million gallons per day; Trion uses 420,865 gallons a day.

Between June and September, CRBI staff and University Of Georgia intern Mac McCord reviewed water use statistics in Summerville and Trion and evaluated how conservation measures could extend water supplies.

CRBI undertook the study because state water planners have predicted that in the future, the Chattooga River will be unable to meet local water demands and still maintain healthy river flows. To address this problem, Chattooga County communities could in-



The Chattooga River (pictured here as it flows through Trion) and its tributaries provide drinking water and industrial water for much of Chattooga County's population and major employers. State water planners predict that the Chattooga will not be able to meet future water demands and still maintain healthy river flows.

vest in new water supply sources, reduce water demands or use a combination of both. State studies show that extending water supplies by reducing water demand is more cost effective than investing in reservoirs and other new sources.

In Trion, water use could be cut by 37 to 47 percent, primarily through the installation of residential water meters and through the replacement of the city's 100-year-old delivery pipes. Indoor water use in Trion is estimated at 148 gallons per day per person; a "water-efficient" household uses as little as 45 gallons per day per person.

Currently, Trion purchases its water from Mt. Vernon Mills and distributes the water to some 1800 residents, but no households have water meters. Each household

pays a flat \$15 per month rate regardless of how much water they use. This unusual billing system encourages water waste. And, because no homes have water meters, the City is unable to track how much water it loses to leaking pipes. Replacing the delivery pipes and installing water meters at each residence could reduce water use by 16-26 percent.

see *Water Audits*, page 7

Mainstream is published four times a year by Coosa River Basin Initiative.

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CRBI is a grassroots environmental organization that works to inform and empower citizens so that they may become involved in the process of creating a clean, healthy and more economically viable Coosa River Basin.

CRBI is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. All donations are tax-deductible.

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DIRECTOR'S REPORT Is it any wonder we're angry?

From Occupy Wall Street to the Tea Party, Americans are fed up with the "system." We're tired of the big government bureaucracy that doesn't deliver the services we expect; we're tired of powerful insiders getting the big piece of pie and the rest of us getting the crumbs—or worse, getting dirty water and air. These sentiments run the gamut of the political spectrum. Be ye liberal or conservative, now is the time of our discontent.



Joe Cook

In working with other members of the Georgia Water Coalition to develop our first Dirty Dozen—a list of the most egregious offenses to our state's water (*highlighted on page 1*)—I was struck by the number on this list that serve as perfect illustrations of our current national discontent:

In South Georgia, a pulp mill operated by Rayonier has been fouling the Altamaha River for more than a half a century, destroying fisheries and dramatically changing the character of the river. Meanwhile, the government bureaucracy charged with protecting us and our rivers makes feeble attempts to correct the problem.

Thus far in 2011, Rayonier reports net profits of \$220 million. But, the angler who lands a bass from the Altamaha can't eat it because its flesh reeks of the paper mill.

Here in the Coosa Basin, the proposed Shoal Creek Reservoir project is promoted by the local Etowah Water and Sewer Authority in partnership with the water utility giant, American Wa-

ter. The company had revenue of \$2.7 billion in 2010. Undoubtedly, Shoal Creek would be another revenue stream for the company, but at the expense of endangered fish and river flows for downstream communities.

On the Coosa, Georgia Power has harnessed the river at Plant Hammond since 1954 to generate electricity, but to the detriment of water quality. It still uses the same out-dated, water-hogging cooling system from the 1950s. In 2010, the company enjoyed net income of \$950 million.

Is it any wonder folks are mad? Why is it OK for citizens to get dirty water when companies responsible for the dirty water make millions?

CRBI's ongoing battle over a proposed 60-acre shopping center on environmentally-sensitive, citizen-owned land in Rome (see page 6) serves as yet another indictment of the "system."

Here, a federal agency inexplicably issued a permit for the project without a public notice or a public comment period. The system worked great for a private developer, but ordinary citizens got the shaft.

Making money is a good thing; at CRBI we celebrate every successful fundraiser. But making money at the expense of the very resources and the communities that provide that income? That's wrong. We need to right these wrongs and that starts with some well-placed anger.

COORDINATOR'S REPORT

Communication, cooperation key to solving problems

The ancient Greeks believed that there was an intimate relationship between humans and nature, and that in order for the human race to survive we must protect wild creatures and their habitats. The Greeks understood that we must be good stewards of the earth and all the creatures who live on our planet. How can this be accomplished in today's modern world?



David Promis

One the greatest obstacles to achieving this stewardship is the inability of stakeholders working in opposition to come together to solve our environmental problems. For example, too often the environmental community and the business community square off in their corners and can't meet in the middle. Lack of communication and a cooperative effort often keep a solution out of reach.

In the Coosa Basin, we're getting a great example of cooperation in the work of Carolyn Landrem, a CRBI board member and president of Weiss

Lake Improvement Association. For years, efforts to enforce laws that keep raw sewage out of Weiss Lake have been stymied by a lack of communication and cooperation between citizens, local officials and state agencies.

Landrem, however, has worked for the past decade to bring these groups together to develop a solution to an ongoing and serious water pollution problem on Weiss Lake. Her cooperative approach and persistence now has officials developing a solution. After many years of uncertainty, the Cherokee County Commission is preparing to adopt ordinances that keep sewage out of Weiss Lake.

Landrem's example should be copied elsewhere, whether the debate is over saving endangered fish, keeping cattle out of streams or solving our region's water needs. Cooperation and communication will help us find solutions faster than holding on to an "us vs. them" mentality.

River Revelry launches to new heights

With Cycle Therapy's **Trey Smith** launching himself and his bicycle 44 feet into the Coosa, River Revelry – A Biodiversity Bash reached new heights of excitement while setting attendance and fundraising records.



Trey Smith flies into the Coosa at River Revelry. Photo by Cooper Clotfelter

More than 400 CRBI supporters packed the River Revelry party grounds Aug. 20, helping generate more than \$26,000 to protect our drinking water and North America's most biologically diverse river basin!

In the Barbecue Battle competition, **Dub's High on The Hog Barbecue** in Calhoun took first place in the restaurant division; **Mark White's Plum Peachy** took first in the backyard barbecue category and **Lavender Mountain Smokin' Gun Barbecue** took first in the specialty item category.



The S.S. Rebel piloted by Clint and Kyle Patterson heads into the home stretch in the Blue Sky Outfitter Recycled Raft Race at River Revelry. The Pattersons took the "First Loser" prize as the second team to pass the finish line. Photo by Paul O'Mara

In the **Blue Sky Outfitter Recycled Raft Race**, winners in various categories included the S.S. Rebel captained by **Clint & Kyle Patterson**; Shred Heads captained by **Ben Levy**; Paper Pirates captained by **Austin Gattenby**; Re Re Rotarian Pirates of the Coosa captained by **Justin Norton**; Bad Dad's Barbecue captained by **Bogan Silvey**; Riff Raff Captained by

Katie Owens and Team Garbagio captained by **Mike McCarthy**.

John Quinlivan was the lucky \$500 winner in the Seven Hills Rotary Club Ducky Derby, and **Ben Ball** of Cave Spring took home a \$1200 Mad River Canoe in the Cedar Creek Park Canoe Raffle.

But Smith stole the show with his death-defying bicycle jump into the Coosa. Revelers watched in awe as he pedaled to the ramp at 35 miles per hour. At the peak of his jump he was at least 35 feet above the river. Smith suffered minor injuries.

Photos and video of the event can be accessed at www.coosa.org

Adventure Race

The 7 Hills 3 Rivers Adventure Race for the first year included a Family Challenge for children 14 and under and their parents which accompanied the 20-plus mile run-bike-paddle adult race through downtown Rome and the city's hidden woodlands and wetlands.



The Silver Creek Swamp forced racers to slog through chest deep muck during the 7 Hills 3 Rivers Adventure Race.



In the General Shale Brick Challenge, racers carried loads of bricks 100 yards on bamboo poles.

Nearly 130 participated in the Sept. 24 races, helping raise more than \$12,000 for CRBI. Winners included, in the three-person co-ed division: Will Race For Beer – **Tanya Watford, John Stanton** and **Frank Griffith**; three-person male: Team Gut Check – **Curt Cashion, Ty Austin** and **Matt Baker**; 7-9-year-old Family Challenge: The Wright Stuff – **Tripp Bagby, Jennifer Bagby** and **Will Bagby**; 10-14-year-old Family Challenge: Cristy, Curtis & Cole – **Cristy Rose, Curtis Chapman** and **Cole Irvin**.



In the OTR Wheel Challenge, racers rolled massive tires around the Clocktower with one team member riding inside.

Paddling Through History Raises Funds for Etowah River Water Trail

More than 60 people attended the 2nd annual Paddling Through History event at Valley View Farm near Euharlee on Oct. 16, helping generate more than \$5000 for the development of the Etowah River Water Trail – a 160-mile-long boating trail stretching from Dawsonville to Rome.

Patrons at the event toured historic Valley View, an antebellum plantation home overlooking the Etowah River valley and paddled six miles on the Etowah River. A dinner catered by CRBI supporters and board members **Ed Bostick, Chad Johnfroe** and **Nina Lovel** followed.

CRBI thanks **Star Provisions, Anheuser-Busch Brewery** in Cartersville, **Barefoot Wine, Cohutta Fishing Co., Cedar Creek Park, Euharlee Creek Outfitters, 7 Visuals** and **Fast Printing** for sponsoring the event and **Bob and Mary Norton** and **Jane Norton Finger** for serving as our hosts at Valley View.

Lyndhurst Foundation Grant Supports Etowah Water Trail Website & Maps

A \$10,000 grant from the Lyndhurst Foundation in Chattanooga is now being used to create a website and maps for the Etowah River Water Trail. CRBI is currently working with University of Tennessee at Chattanooga GIS specialist **Andy Carroll** to create a series of maps for the 160-mile-long trail. The maps and accompanying information will be available on a water trail website in the near future and will be utilized in a CRBI-produced guidebook to the Etowah that will be published by the University of Georgia Press in 2013.

Georgia Water Coalition fights for state funding for conservation projects

A governor-appointed task force charged with determining how Gov. Nathan Deal's \$46 million water supply funding will be distributed cancelled public meetings in July and September, but still plans to release a draft plan in November.

CRBI and other members of the Georgia Water Coalition (GWC) lobbied Task Force members in the spring and early summer urging them to make water conservation and efficiency projects eligible for funding under the Governor's new Water Supply Program. Task Force leaders have suggested that the funds will not be used for conservation projects, despite a charter that charges the Task Force with ensuring that state financial support goes toward "critical, cost-effective water supply projects."

The Task Force, which held three public meetings between April and June abruptly stopped its public meetings in July and has not



held a meeting since.

The Georgia Environmental Finance Authority (GEFA), the lead state agency on the task force, responded negatively to GWC requests to include water conservation projects among those eligible for funding, saying that such projects are already eligible for loans and grants and that local governments and water utilities are not taking advantage these programs.

However, GEFA documents show that locals have tapped into \$65 million in state and federal programs for conservation projects during the past five years.

A draft plan that will determine how the Governor's \$46 million will be spent is expected to be released for public comment by late November.

Dirty Dozen, continued from page 1

CRBI nominated the sites to bring attention to Shoal Creek's serious threat to flows on the Etowah River, and Plant Hammond's continued pollution of the Coosa—a problem that has gone unaddressed for far too long.

In the Dirty Dozen report, the GWC recommends four actions to address Georgia's water supply needs before building costly reservoir projects like Shoal Creek: state investment in water conservation and efficiency projects, better utilization of existing reservoirs such as Lanier and Allatoona, improvement of state laws governing interbasin transfers and requirements for environmental impact statements (EISs) on all dams and reservoirs to thoroughly evaluate the environmental, social and economic impacts.



The report also calls on Georgia's Environmental Protection Division to require Georgia Power Co. to install a modern cooling-water system at Plant Hammond. Built before passage of the Clean Water Act in 1972, the plant still uses the "once-through" cooling system constructed when the facility opened in 1954. Modern power plants use closed systems that require considerably less water.

Other sites making the Dirty Dozen are 1. King Finishing Co. on the Ogeechee River. 2. Rayonier Pulp Mill

on the Altamaha River 3. Savannah Harbor Deepening Project 4. Critical flows on the Chattahoochee River in Atlanta 6. Proposed coal-fired power plant in Washington County 7. Flint River Flow Issues 8. Destruction of Coastal Marshes 9. Wetlands Destruction in South Georgia 10. Land Disposal of Waste on the Broad River and 11. Kaolin Mine Discharges to Middle Georgia streams.

To view the complete GWC report, visit www.garivers.org/gawater/

1000 volunteer hours net 4,000 pounds of trash

More than 300 people volunteered in six CRBI-sponsored Rivers Alive clean ups this fall, helping remove more than 4,000 pounds of trash from our rivers and streams.

Clean up participants logged 1000 volunteer hours in efforts to clean up the Etowah River and Euharlee Creek in Euharlee; the Chattooga River in Trion and Summerville; Cedar Creek in Cedartown; Silver, Little Dry and Armuchee creeks in Rome; and the Coosa River in Rome. A total of 14 miles of streams and rivers were cleaned. CRBI also assisted in the Great Allatoona Clean Up in September.



Berry College and CRBI volunteers clear a flotilla of trash from the Coosa River during the Rome Rivers Alive Clean Up in October.

During these clean ups CRBI worked with numerous partners, including **Keep Polk Beautiful, Wells Fargo Bank, Chattooga County 4-H, Keep Rome/Floyd Beautiful, City of Rome, City of Euharlee, and the Boys & Girls Club of South Rome.**

At each event, CRBI provided canoes and kayaks for on-water clean ups. In many instances children and adults experienced paddling on an area river for the first time.

CRBI thanks these local businesses for providing support for the clean ups: **Johnny Mitchell's Smoke House of Euharlee, Rome's Chick-fil-A Dwarf House, McDonalds of Cedartown, Papa John's of Rome, Mount Vernon Mills of Trion, Cedar Creek Park in Cave Spring and Euharlee Creek Outfitters in Euharlee.**

Rivers Alive is Georgia's annual volunteer waterway cleanup event that targets all waterways in the State including streams, rivers, lakes, beaches, and wetlands. The mission of Rivers Alive is to create awareness of and involvement in the preservation of Georgia's water resources. Through the first of November, Rivers Alive clean ups across the state collected 396,255 pounds of garbage and cleaned up 1,312 miles of streams and rivers.

Property Owners: Use “Do Not Spray” signs to protect stream buffers

No state laws prevent utility companies from spraying herbicides within the state’s mandatory buffers along rivers and streams to prevent trees from disturbing power lines and other utilities, however property owners with streams crossed by utility lines can request that utility companies not spray areas on their property.



Vegetation along a tributary of Dykes Creek in Floyd County withers after spraying of herbicides by Georgia Power Co. contractors. State law does not prohibit the spraying of herbicides in the state’s 25-foot stream buffer beneath utility lines.

Responding to several complaints about utility crews spraying herbicides within the 25-foot state stream buffer, CRBI investigated sites near Dykes Creek in Rome and consulted with representatives from Georgia’s Environmental Protection Division (EPD) and Georgia Power Co.

A Georgia Power spokesperson explained that the company tries to keep all vegetation below 15 feet in height beneath its transmission lines – even at stream crossings, but landowners can place “Do Not Spray” signs on their property and call the company to request alternative maintenance methods. In such instances, the company will employ mechanized techniques to maintain the utility right of way.

Georgia’s stream buffer laws prevent the removal of vegetation within 25 feet of warm-water streams and within 50 feet of trout streams. These buffers protect the health of rivers and streams and provide important wildlife habitat.

Corps of Engineers, Georgia EPD fail to protect downstream property owners

A recent enforcement action taken by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) against a local property owner who illegally constructed a dam and small pond on a Coosa River tributary along Radio Springs Road in Floyd County fails to protect flows for downstream property owners and wildlife.

The enforcement action failed to require a minimum flow from the pond, leading to the strong likelihood that the stream will cease to flow during drought conditions. Property owners along Roslyn Drive called CRBI in Sept. 2010 complaining of a fish kill and dry creek bed caused by the construction of this dam. CRBI investigated and reported the problem to Georgia’s Department of Natural Resources (DNR). DNR investigated and concluded that the fish kill was a result of lack of oxygen due to reduced flows in the stream.

An EPD and Corps investigation followed. EPD fined the property owner, Ronny Baxter of Rome, \$1300 and the Corps allowed him to keep the dam, provided he ensure appropriate oxygen and temperature levels in the creek below the dam. However, the enforcement action does not require a minimum flow from the dam.

CRBI has contacted the Corps noting this deficiency in the enforcement action; the Corps is considering next steps.

Weiss Lake Sewage Ordinance on Hold

A Cherokee County Commission vote on an ordinance aimed at keeping sewage out of Weiss Lake was postponed in October after the commissioners expressed concerns about the first draft.

The Alabama Dept. of Health and the Commission is currently working to address those concerns and develop a new version of the ordinance. The law is expected to keep sewage out of Weiss Lake by ensuring that homes around the lake are connected to a proper sewage disposal system.

The Commission is expected to vote on the ordinance in the coming months, preceded by a public comment period and hearing.

Regulation of sewage disposal around the lake has languished in legal uncertainty for years, until last August when the Alabama Attorney General determined that Cherokee County was responsible for enforcing a state law that mandates that resorts and recreational areas around Weiss Lake must hook onto available sewage systems in the event that their private systems fail or become inadequate.

Weiss Lake Improvement Association (WLIA) and CRBI will review the ordinance to ensure that it fully protects Weiss Lake.

For the past year, WLIA has conducted comprehensive bacteria monitoring on the lake to identify pollution problems. The organization has tested 322 water samples at 27 different sites around the lake and plans to continue the work in 2012.

Public Tells Dawson County Commission “NO” on Shoal Creek Reservoir

Residents of Dawson County lined up Sept. 8 and 22 to tell the Dawson County Commission that they oppose the proposed Shoal Creek Reservoir in the Dawson Forest Wildlife Management Area.



Paddlers pass the mouth of Shoal Creek in the Dawson Forest Wildlife Management Area

At the public hearing on Sept. 22, 16 people made comments – only four supported the project and that included three members of organizations and businesses wanting to build the proposed \$650 million, 1,200-acre water supply reservoir.

CRBI and Georgia Conservancy representatives spoke at the meeting highlighting the disadvantages to county residents, the project’s financial and environmental costs and the possibility of identifying funding sources that would enable the county to preserve the entirety of the 10,000-acre Dawson Forest WMA. The Conservancy submitted a petition signed by more than 700 people – many CRBI members – opposing the project.

Following the hearings, the Commission decided against adopting a resolution in support of the reservoir proposal, preferring to take a wait-and-see approach. The City of Atlanta, which owns the 10,000-acre tract, will have the final say in what becomes of the property. The reservoir would destroy habitat for the federally protected Etowah darter and deplete flows on the Etowah through a water transfer of up to 100 million gallons per day.

Rome City Commission ignores CRBI request, gives nod to Burwell Creek project

The Rome City Commission on Oct. 17 voted to extend its memorandum of understanding (MOU) with Ledbetter Properties to allow the developer to continue to pursue plans to develop a 60-acre tract of floodplain and wetlands bisected by Burwell Creek.

CRBI requested that the Commission postpone the vote until the next Commission meeting so that the public would have the opportunity to comment prior to vote. The Commission did not take action on the request and voted 7-1 to extend the MOU though Dec. 31, 2012.

CRBI made the request because the public was excluded from commenting on the project during the federal environmental permitting process and to date, the City Commission has not taken action on the project that would require a public hearing.

Ledbetter Properties secured their federal environmental permit for the project from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) by way of what is called a "nationwide permit." Such permits do not require a public notice or comment period, and are generally issued only for projects that have minimal impacts to the environment.

The impacts involved in this project are not considered minimal; even by the Corps own standards, especially considering the land to be developed is public land owned by the City of Rome.

Thus, the key environmental permit for the project was issued



Floodwaters in early 2010 inundate the 60-acre site of a proposed shopping center along Riverside Parkway in Rome.

without anyone in Rome, including representatives with the City, ever having reviewed the permit application. Such applications contain critical information that enables citizens and citizen groups like CRBI to evaluate the merits of a project.

CRBI was only able to obtain the application after the permit was issued. After review, CRBI has determined that the project is not in the best interest of the local environment or the community.

For more information about this development visit the Issues & Actions section at www.coosa.org.

New EPD rules for Coosa sewer plants may be too weak

A proposed phosphorus limit for the City of Chatsworth's sewer treatment plant illustrates flaws in Georgia Environmental Protection Division's (EPD) one-size-fits-all discharge limits for Coosa River Basin that could lead to the state failing to reduce pollution flowing into Weiss Lake.

To meet water quality standards in the lake, Georgia must reduce the amount of phosphorus entering the lake from the Coosa River by 30 percent. To achieve this goal, EPD has for the first-time imposed phosphorus limits for all municipal and industrial wastewater treatment facilities in the Coosa River Basin. Excessive phosphorus in the lake can lead to algae growth which can then lead to fish kills.



An algae bloom on the Oostanaula River in summer 2008 provides evidence of high phosphorus levels in the Upper Coosa River Basin. Georgia must reduce phosphorus entering Weiss Lake in Alabama by 30 percent to keep Weiss Lake healthy.

Though the best facilities in the state can remove phosphorus to a .08 mg/L level, EPD choose a limit more than 10 times greater (1 mg/L limit for all large wastewater treatment facilities in the Coosa Basin). While this new limit will dramatically reduce phosphorus loads from some facilities, it can, in some cases, allow facilities to discharge more phosphorus. Such is the case at the City of Chatsworth's facility which discharges to Holly Creek, a tributary of the Conasauga River.

In August CRBI submitted comments to EPD highlighting these concerns prior to renewal of the state permit that allows the City to discharge treated sewage to the creek.

Currently, the facility discharges an average of 7.56 kg of phosphorus per day and a limit is not included in the city's permit. EPD's proposed new permit with the 1 mg/L limit would allow the city to discharge as much as 11.4 kg/day — a net increase over current conditions.

Thus, EPD's one-size-fits-all phosphorus limit fails to reduce phosphorus discharges from the facility. What's more, EPD has also suggested implementing a nutrient trading program in the Coosa Basin. Trading programs encourage wastewater treatment facilities to invest in projects that reduce phosphorus from other sources if those reductions can be made for less money than upgrading the treatment facility.

For instance, a city could pay a chicken farmer to reduce run off from chicken manure if such practices will eliminate more phosphorus at a lower cost. But, trading schemes work only if permit limits are set low enough to provide incentive for facilities to engage in trading. In the case of the Chatsworth facility, it appears no improvements to the facility will be required, thus, there is no trading incentive.

In its comments, CRBI encouraged EPD to impose stricter limits on the Chatsworth facility and re-evaluate their one-size-fits-all phosphorus limits for the Coosa.

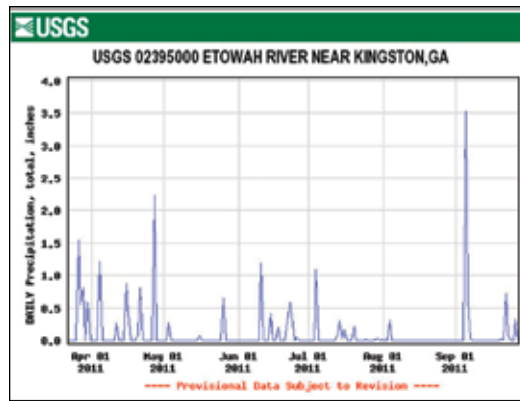
Etowah River study connects rain events, bacteria levels

The results of CRBI's six-month-long bacteria monitoring program on the Etowah River confirm the connection between rain events and bacteria levels and support the river's inclusion on the state's list of polluted streams.

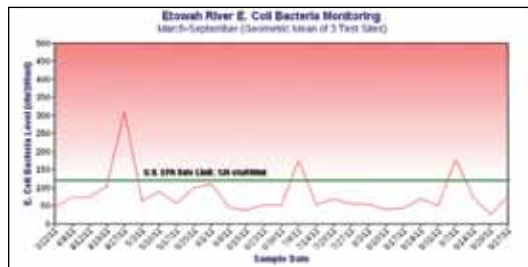
In what is the most comprehensive study of bacteria levels in the Etowah River in Floyd and Bartow counties to date, CRBI tested 81 water samples for e. coli bacteria between March and September. Each week, CRBI staff and **Berry College Bonner Scholars Alex Foshee and Dylan Munsey** collected and analyzed samples at the US 411 bridge near Kingston, at the Rome Bypass and at the 2nd Avenue Bridge in Rome.

Of the 27 sampling events, 24 showed the geometric mean e. coli bacteria level at the three sites below the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's "safe limit" of 126 cfu/100ml. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) considers e-coli levels below this limit safe for recreation, including swimming.

The three monitoring events that exceeded the safe limit were closely associated with rain events. The geometric mean exceeded the EPA standard on April 27 following a 2.5-inch rain; on July 6 after a one-inch rain and on Sept. 7 after a 3.5-inch rainfall. Bacte-



Rainfall



Bacteria Levels

ria levels in rivers usually increase following rainstorms as pollution washes off the surface of the land and into streams and rivers.

Georgia's Environmental Protection Division (EPD) has listed the Etowah as polluted based on its fecal bacteria standards—a bacteria standard similar to e. coli. EPD classifies a stream as polluted when it exceeds the fecal bacteria standard 10 percent of the time or more. CRBI's e. coli tests exceeded the federal e.coli standard for recreational water in more than 10 percent of the samples.

High bacteria levels in rivers can be attributed to manure from livestock, pets and wildlife, failing septic systems and leaking sewer lines, but the exact sources are often difficult to identify.

CRBI plans to continue the project next year during the Etowah River recreation season, and along with members of the Georgia Water Coalition has asked EPD to use the stronger "recreational" water quality standard for the Etowah rather

than the "fishing" standard. Such a change in classifications would increase protections for those that swim in the river.

For complete results of the Etowah River bacteria study visit our water monitoring page at www.coosa.org

Water Audits, continued from page 1

A water system study commissioned by the city earlier this year estimates the cost of these improvements at \$3.9 million.

Additional reductions in water demand could be realized through replacing water wasting toilets (4.5% savings), performing home water audits (8.8%) and enforcing the state's new outdoor watering ordinance (5%).

CRBI's analysis of Summerville water use shows that per capita indoor water use meets the standards of water conserving home, but the system could still reduce water demands on Raccoon Creek and Lowe Spring (which both feed the Chattooga River) by up to 30 percent.

The largest savings could be realized by repairing and replacing leaking delivery pipes. The City estimates that 22 percent of the water it pumps from its water sources is lost in leaks. A successful leak detection and repair program could reduce water use by 12 percent and save nearly 300,000 gallons per day.

Other savings could be realized by replacing old toilets (4.9% savings), performing residential and commercial water audits (7.2%) and implementing water conservation pricing (2.8%).

CRBI's complete water conservation reports for Trion and Summerville can be viewed at www.coosa.org The studies were made possible through a grant from the Tillitson-Menlo Foundation.

School groups explore area rivers

Local school groups are learning about our rivers by literally getting their feet wet, thanks to CRBI's recreational outreach program that enables students to paddle sections of area rivers and streams.

In the past several months, groups from Coosa and Pepperell high schools and Berry and Shorter colleges have all taken advantage of CRBI's fleet of canoes and kayaks.

During the trips CRBI staff teach students about issues impacting our rivers and communities and engage the students in hands on learning activities like collecting macro invertebrates.

CRBI can develop a paddle/learning experience for all age students. A small fee is charged for these paddle trips. Trips can be booked by contacting CRBI at 706-232-2724.



Marie Lewis' honors science class from Coosa High School readies for a paddle trip down the Etowah River. During the paddle, students learned about the river and collected macro invertebrates on Silver Creek.

CRBI celebrates 10th Annual Fish Fry with \$2500 in prizes for patrons

More than \$2500 in prizes will be up for grabs as the Coosa River Basin Initiative celebrates its 10th anniversary Fish Fry with a host of games, raffles and contests to thank its volunteers and supporters.

The CRBI-WLAQ-The Ridge 95.7 Fish Fry will be held Saturday, Nov. 12, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Rome First United Methodist Church in Downtown Rome. Tickets are \$9 and \$7 and can be purchased at www.coosa.org, Kroger in Rome, Cedar Creek Park in Cave Spring, Lavender Mountain Hardware in Armuchee and at CRBI in Downtown Rome. The meal includes fried U.S.-farm-raised catfish, hushpuppies, cole slaw and cheese grits.

This year's Fish Fry includes a ticket selling contest for CRBI supporters, a host of games and raffles to win prizes, a Green Expo featuring energy and water efficiency exhibits and a drug drop off event in conjunction with Floyd Medical Center and Floyd Against Drugs.

A weekend Panama City Beach getaway courtesy of Jason Free Realty will be awarded to one CRBI supporter who sells at least ten Fish Fry tickets. Every CRBI supporter who sells ten tickets receives a raffle ticket to win the getaway and only those who reach the ten ticket minimum will be eligible for the drawing. Those interested in selling tickets should contact CRBI at 706-232-2724.

In addition to the ticket contest, CRBI will award a second Panama City Beach getaway from Jason Free Realty in a "10th Anniversary Fish Fry Cake Raffle" and a Delta Airlines ticket courtesy of Travel Leaders in a contest in which patrons will guess how many plastic bottles are in a canoe. The bottles will be collected on the Coosa River during CRBI's Rivers Alive clean up on



CRBI's Fry Guys and Gals will fire up the fryers Nov. 12 at Rome First United Methodist Church

Oct. 29 and will be on display at the Fish Fry.

Patrons will also have the opportunity to purchase raffle tickets to win a new Wilderness Systems Canoe courtesy of Cedar Creek Park. Contest winners will be announced at the Fry.

The drug drop off event sponsored by Floyd Medical Center and Floyd Against Drugs will be held 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at

the Floyd Medical Center Corporate Support Center at 420 East Second Avenue, one block from the Fish Fry. Fish Fry patrons are encouraged to bring their unused and out-of-date prescription and over-the-counter medications in their original containers for drop off.

Pharmaceuticals have become an increasing public health concern, having been detected in fish and other aquatic wildlife and in municipal drinking water across the country. The chemicals in the medications arrive in water supplies when they are flushed down toilets or disposed of in landfills. The pill drop off event allows residents to properly dispose of these medications and keep them from entering the environment.

The Green Expo will feature exhibits and vendors highlighting "green living" and promoting water and energy efficiency.

WLAQ and The Ridge 95.7 join the Fish Fry as lead sponsors this year. Other supporters include Georgia Power Co., Paul's Oyster Bar, McRae, Stegall, Peek, Harman, Smith & Manning LLP, Dixie Homecrafters, Haynes & Moore CPAs, Cedar Creek Park, The Rain Barrel Company, Twice the Ice, Brown & Brown Insurance, Wells Fargo Advisors, Jason Free Realty and Travel Leaders.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Learn more on our calendar of events at www.coosa.org

Nov. 12
CRBI WLAQ-The Ridge 95.7 Fish Fry

Nov. 20
Georgia Adopt-A-Stream Workshop
in Rome

Jan. 7
Keep Rome Beautiful
Christmas Tree Recycling

Jan. 9
Georgia General Assembly
Session Begins

Jan. 14
Polar Bear Paddle on the Etowah

Jan. 30
CRBI Annual Membership Meeting

Fish Prints Teach Children About Coosa's Special Critters Through Art



At the Chaha Harvest Fair in Rome, CRBI volunteers Jake Bloodworth, right, and Alan Crawford assist children with making "fish prints," colorful block prints of some of the Coosa River Basin's special critters. Children choose from a variety of prints, including likenesses of the Cherokee darter, Conasauga logperch, Cave salamander, Fine-lined pocketbook mussel and more common river dwellers like catfish and striped bass. Students from Berry College's Green Team helped make the block prints and man the booth at the Fair. Several hundred children participated in the activity on Oct. 22-23.