



**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.**

## April 2016

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Photo by Brother Callistus (Monastery of the Holy Spirit)

South River Hidden Gem Paddle 2015

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## Georgia Senate resolution supports water trail

At a ceremony on Friday, March 11, 2016, the Georgia Senate presented South River

Watershed Alliance (SRWA) with a resolution in support of the South River Water Trail (SRWT). Senate Resolution 852 was sponsored by Senator Burt Jones (Butts County) who represents Jackson Lake, the official end of the South River. SRWA president, Jackie Echols, and several members of the SRWT planning committee, Jared Godin and Sandra Sutton, were on hand to receive the resolution.



(L-R) Jackie Echols, Sandra Sutton, Jared Godin, Sen. Burt Jones

"It is quite an honor for SRWA's work to develop the SRWT to be recognized in this way. Government at all levels provides important partnerships and plays an important role in the success of the SRWT and water trails statewide" states Echols. "This resolution" she continued, "confirms that water trails like the one proposed for the South River can strengthen connections that link downstream neighbors around a common goal - securing the future of our waterways by working together".

In 2012, there were about 600 water trails nationwide. According to a 2011 study by the Outdoor Industry Association, in Georgia alone, more than \$23 billion are spent on outdoor recreation, and the South River Water Trail and Georgia's 15 water trails will continue to contribute to the outdoor recreation industry that provides 6.1 million jobs in the United States, \$39.9 billion in federal tax revenue, and \$39.7 billion in state and local tax revenue.

In addition to the financial benefits, SRWA's president sees the SRWT as the river's future. "Every opportunity I get, I remind anyone listening that the South River Water Trail is the future of the South River. The water trail will provide various opportunities through recreation, canoeing and kayaking; environmental education; and scenic, cultural, and historic venues for people to connect to the river and appreciate its value. As more and more people are drawn to areas all along the river, prospects for economic development will increase as well". She concluded, "the water trail is a win-win any way you look at it".

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## Keep South River Water Trail momentum going

South River Water Trail (SRWT), the name has a great ring to it. The South River is a wonderful and beautiful river and the water trail designation will only increase its value and visibility. The SRWT will add value to the quality of life of citizens and communities. It will promote a clean river and environment through conservation and stewardship. The economic value of the SRWT could mean millions in local revenue. These are just some of benefits of the SRWT, and the best one of all is that it is right in our own backyard.

Achieving the water trail designation for the South River is at the heart of South River Watershed Alliance's (SRWA) years of work in support of the river

and it is our hope for the river's future. SRWA needs to raise \$100,000 to keep the SRWT momentum going as well as retain an offer of matching funds. To meet our \$100,000 goal, we only need five hundred supporters to give \$200. This is a significant amount but the water trail is such a worthy cause. Your generosity will make it possible to create safe and legal access at two sites along the river, completing the first 6.5 mile section of the SRWT. Lets keep the momentum going. [Click here to donate.](#)



2015 South River Hidden Gem Paddle highlights South River Water Trail work and potential

The South River is special for so many reasons. It is part of the Arabia Mountain National Heritage Area, one of only two national heritage sites in Georgia. It is protected by large expanses of protected greenspaces that make the river an active wildlife corridor where an abundance of birds, animals, insects, and aquatic life live. The river is great for recreation where canoeist and kayakers paddle for miles with only the sounds of nature to break the silence. South River's natural beauty is awe inspiring from its high bluffs, to native flora, to interesting granite outcroppings and shoals weathered by water and time. These and more await visitors to the SRWT.

With your help we can make the SRWT a reality. A generous donation of \$200 will help us reach our fundraising goal and complete the first section of the SRWT in the shortest amount of time. If this ask is to much at this time, any amount you can afford will confirm that you too share SRWA's heart and hope for the South River. Help SRWA keep the momentum going. [Click here to donate.](#) If you prefer to donate by check mail to: SRWA, PO Box 1341, Decatur, GA 30031.

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## Volunteers make the difference

The Everett Property and South River benefited from a much needed cleanup on March 26. Granite outcroppings and cascading water make Albert Shoals one of

many scenic sites along the South River. The Everett Property, a DeKalb County parks greenspace, provides a stunning view. During heavy rain, the flow of flood waters over the expansive shoals deposit huge amounts of trash on the riverbank. The work of volunteers makes the difference between a riverbank that is littered with trash and one that is almost litter free. The cleanup of the Everett Property continues on Saturday, April 23, 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. in recognition of Earth Day. Lend a hand, make a difference, volunteer. See Upcoming events section below for additional details.



(Before photo) Lend a hand



(After photo) Make a difference

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**DeKalb County partners for rivercane restoration**



Competition from invasive Chinese privet is the main threat to rivercane along the South River.



After privet is removed rivercane reestablishes itself on its own, without replanting.

On March 19, SRWA and DeKalb County Departments of Roads and Drainage, Parks and Recreation, and Watershed Management joined forces to launch the Rivercane Restoration project along South River at the Pole Bridge Wastewater Treatment Plant.

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## SRWA accepting applications for summer camp

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation grant that supports the restoration of rivercane along the South River also supports environmental education for youth in middle and high school. SRWA is offering *Discovering the South River: Land-Water Stewardship Camp* for youth ages 13-17 this summer. The South River and surrounding ecosystem provide an exciting and enjoyable learning environment for youth that contribute to the development of environmental stewardship and conservation awareness and skills. [Click here](#) then scroll to bottom of homepage for application. Also see Upcoming events section for additional information.

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## Upcoming events

**Rivercane Restoration, Saturday, April 16, 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.** Help restore rivercane along the South River by removing invasive privet. Volunteers will meet at Alexander Lake Trailhead, 4835 Flatbridge Road, SW, Stockbridge, GA. Groups and individuals welcome. To volunteer call Jackie (404) 285-3756 or [click here](#) to register through Georgia Outdoor Stewards. Bring water and snack.

**Join SRWA for an Earth Day Riverbank Cleanup at the Everett Property, Saturday, April 23, 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.** Grab a few friends and do something great for the river and park in recognition of Earth Day. Supplies provided. To volunteer call Jackie (404) 285-3756. The Everett Property is located on Klondike Road at South River bridge.

**Discovering the South River: Land/Water Stewardship Camp. Application available and posted at [www.southriverga.org](http://www.southriverga.org).** Discovering the South River