



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.

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"Education and action are the cornerstones of environmental protection".



Follow us on Twitter and keep up with what is going on with SRWA and South River between newsletters. Share this newsletter.

Choking trash from South River

A natural choke-point on the South River at Panola Shoals may hold the answer to reducing trash pollution in Jackson Lake

Trash is called "non-point source" pollution because it can't be tracked to one specific source. The absence of a single identifiable source fuels the idea that trash pollution is a "victimless" offense. It is not.



South River immediately upstream from Hwy 155 Bridge at Panola Shoals

When it rains, residents of Jackson Lake are inundated with household trash that flows into the lake from the South River. Most of the trash that washes into the river comes from streams such as Intrenchment Creek, Snapfinger Creek and others that drain parts of highly urbanized areas of Atlanta, Decatur, and south DeKalb County. The majority of trash that enters the lake flows over Panola Shoals, the large granite outcropping that spans the river at the Hwy 155 Bridge in south DeKalb County. There is very little development below the shoals.

The shape of the river at the Hwy 155 Bridge may hold a solution. On the upstream side of the bridge the river is much narrower



Jackson Lake after November 2015 rain

creating a natural choke-point. This site may afford a unique opportunity to corral trash before it flows over the shoals at which point the river becomes significantly wider and unmanageable at high flows.

With each heavy rain, the more than 500 families that call

Jackson Lake home find themselves literally swimming in trash. They spend countless hours each year removing dumpster after dumpster load of trash from their doorstep. The answer to this wrong could be as simple as installing currently available stormwater technology above Panola Shoals that would capture trash before it reaches the lake.

Trash pollution is not victimless. It has real victims and consequences. The South River ends in Jackson Lake, so there is no doubt where the trash that washes into the river will end up. It is time we stop ignoring the obvious and begin the conversation and work to solve this problem.

Rivercane Signage at Panola Shoals

Next time you visit Panola Shoals make sure to stop at the new rivercane interpretive

signage to learn why the restoration of this native vegetation is so important to restoring the South River ecosystem. Only about two percent of rivercane that existed a little more than a hundred years ago exists today. This endangered vegetation is more effective than any other plants, including trees, for protecting riverbanks from scouring and erosion caused by rushing stormwater. Through its ongoing rivercane



restoration project, SRWA is working to reestablish large healthy growths of rivercane called canebrakes along the South River. A second sign will be installed near the Lyons Bridge at Panola Mountain State Park by early spring. The rivercane project and interpretive signage was made possible by funding from National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and Georgia Power.

SRWA's "To Do List"

We all make lists of things that we want to get done. It is a way of keeping us on track and provides an opportunity to prioritize what matters most. This year, add an item from our "To Do List" to your "To Do List" and support your priority throughout the year. How? Simply select a priority from the list below and make tax deductible gifts anytime during the year via our website www.southernriverga.org or mail a check to: SRWA, PO Box 1341, Decatur, GA 30031.



Rivercane

1) Putting down roots. SRWA is seeking office space to further anchor the organization in the community. The ideal site will be close to the river, provide ideal visibility and access, and is centrally located to serve all river partners in surrounding counties. Have you ever wanted to

volunteer but would rather help with indoor tasks? Your contribution in support of securing office space will help SRWA grow by attracting a wider pool of volunteers. SRWA is working with Arabia Mountain Heritage Area Alliance and Georgia State Parks to identify suitable space.

2) **South River Water Trail (SRWT)**. The initial planning for the SRWT is done. Our focus now is on creating safe and legal launches that will enable canoeist and kayakers to safely enter and exit the river. The SRWT is the future of the South River providing recreation, economic, education, conservation, and social benefits to the community. If an up close and personal connection to the river thrills you, consider contributing to the SRWT.

3) **Raising cane**. Reestablishing rivercane along the South River has become an integral part of SRWA's river restoration mission. Rivercane is nature's amazing green infrastructure. Restoring large expanses (growths) of cane will help prevent riverbank erosion and scouring, sediment buildup in the river channel, and improve water quality and wildlife habitat. Your generous donation will help raise cane.

4) **Trash pollution**. A major problem for the South River and our downstream neighbors is trash. The section of the river immediately upstream from the Hwy 155 Bridge may hold a unique opportunity to address this problem. Less trash in the river is a goal we can all support but the solution will require funding. Help fund a solution.

Upcoming events

Rivercane Restoration Project dates, March 12 and 19 and April 9 and 16, 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m., Alexander Lakes@Panola Mountain State Park. Improve habitat of endangered rivercane by removing invasive privet from along the South River at Panola Mountain State Park. Volunteers meet at Alexander Lakes parking area, intersection of Flatbridge Road SW and Alexander Lake Road, Stockbridge, GA. Individuals and groups welcome. For questions and to volunteer call Jackie (404) 285-3756 or email www.southernriverwatershedalliance@gmail.com.

Coming Summer 2016: Discovering the South River: Land/Water Stewardship Camp. Discovering the South River Ecosystem: SRWA's Land/Water Stewardship Camp is a free three day adventure in land and aquatic stewardship for teens age 13-17. Participants will explore the South River watershed while learning about riparian (riverside), floodplain, and aquatic ecology and participating in water quality experiments. Have fun with peers while developing your paddling skills and learning the plants and animals that inhabit the South River corridor. Two camp dates are planned, June 15-17 and July 13-15. Application form available April 1 and will be posted on the SRWA website at www.southernriverga.org. Application must be received by April 30. Email completed form to southernriverwatershedalliance@gmail.com or mail to: SRWA, PO Box 1341, Decatur, GA 30031. Watch for additional details in SRWA's March newsletter. This program is made possible by funding from National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and Georgia Power. Cost: Free

Davidson-Arabia Mountain Nature Center

Big Views Hikes, January 23, 8:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m., Davidson-Arabia Nature Center, 3787 Klondike Road, Lithonia, GA. Less leaves mean bigger views! Come out to the highest points in the Davidson-Arabia Mountain Nature Preserve and see miles of stunning winter landscapes. The famous Ranger Robby will lead this hike and explore Arabia's peak, chestnut oak ridges, and an old stone ruin from long ago. FREE

Atlanta Audubon Society Bird Walk, February 12, 8:00 - 11:00 a.m., Alexander Lakes@Panola Mountain State Park, 4835 Flat Bridge Road SW, Stockbridge, GA. Bring your binoculars for this gentle hike through the park's Power of Flight area OR Vaughter's Farm Meadow Loop. Basic identification techniques and common birds will be discussed. FREE

[Find out more](#)

Meet South River Water Trail interns

During the spring semester, SRWA is fortunate to have the help of four (4) interns from Georgia State University (GSU). The interns will work on a variety of projects that support the South River Water Trail (SRWT).

Sandy does photography as a hobby and is really interested in the social media aspect of the project and taking pictures of the river and events on the river.

Brandon has a really strong interest in insects and other ecological things, and will work to research and catalog flora, fauna, and other important ecosystem and habitat facts.

Steve has a strong interest in blogging, so he's hoping to work on some of the historical facts and ecology fun facts for the websites.

Ayana is a little undecided about what she wants to do. She has a very strong interest in animals, so I suspect she'll want to work on the flora/ fauna/ ecological side of things as well.

Anyone having information related to any of the topics of interest or have contacts that can provide information or assistance to the interns email southernriverwatershedalliance@gmail.com or call Jackie at 404-285-3756. SRWA owes a debt of gratitude to volunteer Amy Horner, professor of biology at GSU, for making this opportunity possible.



Donate to South River Watershed Alliance via Paypal [Click here](#)
