



WWALS Watershed Coalition, Inc.
PO Box 88, Hahira, GA 31632

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WWALS Working Hard for Your Watershed

Opposition to the pipeline WWALS has jumped another hurdle. Thanks to the hard work of WWALS members, John and Gretchen Quarterman, Chris and Deanna Mericle, and Tom Edwards, we have succeeded in being granted an administrative hearing regarding our opposition to Florida DEP's intent to issue an environmental resource permit to Sabal Trail Transmissions to construct their natural gas pipeline through many counties in Florida, including Hamilton and Suwannee in WWALS's watershed: **October 19-22 in Jasper (or Live Oak)**. WWALS now needs **significant funds** for the legal costs including attorney's fees and expert witness fees. We have received many new memberships showing support of our efforts because many people are opposed to having their property, rivers, and water supply degraded by a pipeline that is not needed and of no benefit to those it affects. Any member willing to chip in, please do! We have created an easy way to show your support of this effort through [a crowdfunding campaign at this link](#). Please check it out and donate, or [become a member of WWALS](#), thank you!

Solar energy Members Chris and Deanna Mericle attended the Florida Congressional Delegation meeting in Jasper on Sept. 3rd held with State Representative Elizabeth Porter and State Senator Bill Montford. Chris requested that they support "a real solar initiative" that will "allow for financing and not restrict solar producers from selling their product." He stated that natural gas is not a necessary "bridge fuel" from coal and oil as has been suggested. Let's just go straight to solar. Senator Montford agreed that moving toward solar power will become necessary, but the primary obstacle is that the cost to convert is too high at this time. In fact, however, the cost of solar energy continues to come down. When pipeline and power companies are willing to spend \$3 billion on a pipeline, it makes solar energy seem a lot more cost efficient, not mention cleaner.

Wastewater spill At the same above-mentioned Congressional Delegation meeting, Hamilton County officials expressed their dismay at yet another spill of wastewater into the Withlacoochee River by the city of Valdosta in late August. WWALS immediately asked Valdosta and received an explanation of the spill and the updated timeline for the completion of the new Valdosta

Wastewater treatment plant and manhole improvements. Details:
<http://www.wwals.net/issues/vww/>.

Community Outreach and Education

WWALS ambassador, Dave Hetzel, spoke to the Tifton Garden Club on Sept. 10th about WWALS and the Alapaha River Water Trail. John S. Quarterman and Martin Register attended the Georgia River Network Weekend for Rivers in Roswell on September 19th. They were able to network with others from river organizations around the state, give updates about our projects and get ideas from others who love rivers. John S. Quarterman gave a presentation on September 22nd at the Valdosta-Lowndes Tourism Authority meeting, pointing out the benefits of water trails to increased tourism and local quality of life.

Outing News and Updates

In conjunction with Adopt-A-Stream, WWALS held an Alapaha River Clean Up on September 26th at the Highway 135 bridge in Atkinson County. It was a success and we thank all those that gave their time and energy to help keep our rivers and riverbanks clean. (photo credit: Bret Wagenhorst)



Water Trail News



On September 24th, WWALS Ambassador Dave Hetzel spoke about the economic benefits of Water Trails to local communities at the SGRC meeting in Pearson, GA.

According to WWALS member Patrick Kunes, Tifton-Tift County Tourism Association may be interested in becoming a sponsor of the Alapaha River Water Trail. Patrick has asked to be on their agenda for next month's meeting and will present them with information about the trail and the cost of the ARWT brochures. The Hamilton County, Florida Tourist Development Council has already allocated funds.

Opportunities

Please fill out our [Board Member Application](#) if you are a dedicated WWALS member who shares the ideals of our organization, supports our efforts to advocate for our watersheds, and are interested in taking an active part in WWALS activities.

Upcoming Outings

October 24 9AM	Withlacoochee River: Sullivan launch to Blue Spring, 10.2 miles
November 22 9AM	Suwannee River: Cypress Creek Launch to Cone Bridge boat ramp, 9 mi.
December 12 10AM	Hike and Picnic at Grand Bay

Check out the [WWALS Calendar](#) for more details.