

WWALS Watershed Coalition

Annual Report 2019-2020

For review and approval at the July 12, 2020, WWALS Annual Member Meeting

1. Overview

WWALS Vision: *A healthy watershed with clean, swimmable, fishable, drinkable water.*

WWALS Mission: *WWALS Watershed Coalition advocates for conservation and stewardship of the Withlacoochee, Willacoochee, Alapaha, Little, and Suwannee River watersheds in south Georgia and north Florida through education, awareness, environmental monitoring, and citizen activities.*

WWALS Watershed Coalition had many successes in its seventh year. We have much more earned media exposure on television and newspapers. We initiated a second paddle race, the Boomerang, in the fall and continued building on our annual spring event of the Big Little Paddle Race at Reed Bingham State Park, in conjunction with Friends of Reed Bingham (FORB) We changed our non-profit platform with Georgia Gives from clickandpledge.com to mightycause.com. Our information with networkforgood.org and guidestard.org is current and allows donors to verify our non-profit status. Our total income was just under \$20,000 and our total expenditures were \$23,443.38.

The group held four full board meetings (July, October, January, April). Many public meetings and events were held throughout the watershed. There were twenty four scheduled outings, including paddles, trash pick-ups, some awareness events, along with impromptu scouting trips and investigations.

WWALS published a monthly newsletter and numerous blog posts, wrote letters and press releases, spoke to several community groups at their regularly scheduled meetings, and had a booth at many community festival events in an effort to raise awareness about the watershed. The enviroscape that we received last year has been an excellent teaching tool at the festival booth.

2. Officers and Board

The board for 2019-2020 included:

John S. Quarterman, President, Chair of PR and Issues Committees, Suwannee Riverkeeper
Tom Potter, Senior Vice President,
Gretchen Quarterman, Treasurer, Chair of Membership and Grants Committees, acting Executive Director
Garry Gentry, Secretary,
Dave Hetzel, Ambassador,
Daniel Phillips, Chair of Water Trails Committee
Bobby McKenzie, Chair of Outings Committee
Tom H. Johnson Jr., Chair of Finance, Nominating, Songwriting Committees
Laura D'Alisera, Scribe of Songwriting Contest Committee
Shelby Miller (elected and appointed Assistant Treasurer April 2020)

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3. 2019-2020 Goals

The goals continue to reflect work done in 2016 to guide the organization.

WWALS [Goals adopted 2 October 2016](#) are overarching items which help us achieve our vision and mission.

1. Education of general public about conservation and stewardship of WWALS watershed.
 - a. Outreach to youth, teachers, community leaders through outings, art contests, etc.
 - b. One time per year hold workshop for educators and adults
 - c. One time per year hold workshop for youth
 - d. One time per year art project open to public, private, and home schoolers.
2. Act as a knowledge resource about physical, biological and natural resources to, and about, our community.
 - a. Maintain an Inventory of resources of health and science (geology, biology, hydrology) which support our educational activities.
 - b. The inventory will include native and invasive species information, maps, information about existing organizations (NRCS, University Extensions, Water Management Districts, etc)
 - c. Record what we see now and continue to record to see if things change (photos, water quality)
 - d. Develop a systematic way to store this inventory of information.
 - e. Commission WWALS Science Committee - Tom Potter to chair
3. Engage with local agencies on routine water quality testing
 - a. Find out what is happening now
 - b. Identify missing sampling (stormwater, others?)
 - c. Work with farm agencies (FSA, Farm Bureau, NRCS, Extension Offices) to learn what they do and present what we do and figure out how we can work together.
4. Develop and maintain documentation relevant to our watershed
 - a. Maps, water trails, brochures, photos, blog
 - b. (this somewhat overlaps with #2, however we develop documentation that is specific to WWALS projects, and views which will then be stored used by #2.)
5. Identify and address threats to the WWALS Watershed
6. Engage our community in outdoor activities. outings, water trails, fishing tournaments, geocaching, hiking, cleanups, etc.
 - a. Clean ups are stewardship in action.
7. Raise money to fund organization on an ongoing basis
 - a. develop a fundraising plan
 - b. finalize RIVERKEEPER® application (completed 2016; license signed December 2016)
 - c. approve budget

4. Financial Report by Treasurer

WWALS realigned its fiscal year from July to June to January to December. This will be the last report on a July to June cycle.

The beginning balance in all accounts on July 1, 2019 was \$13,786.11. The ending balance in all accounts as of June 30, 2020 was \$16,885.89. Our income still came primarily from membership and fundraisers. We again increased the amount paid to the staff position of Suwannee RIVERKEEPER®, but still do not pay a living wage. A variety of general bills and expenses were paid including Georgia and Florida corporate fees, liability insurance, Directors and Officers Insurance, water quality testing supplies purchases, website renewal, office supplies and postage, festival booths. We considered renting office space but that COVID-19 interrupted our plans. We applied for, and received, a Paycheck Protection Program loan for \$2083.00. Our total expenditures were \$26,882.28. We operated at a surplus of \$3,099.78. We continue to need to figure out a sustainable income stream.

The Big Little River Paddle Event scheduled for April, was postponed because of COVID-19. We had some successful on-line fundraisers around Earth Day in April and GeorgiaGivesNow in early May. The WWALS Boomerang paddle race in the fall, coordinated by board member Bobby McKenzie raised approximately \$500.00.

We are listed at GuideStar and fundraise on-line through gagives.org, Facebook, and others.

We continue using EventBrite to sell tickets as it streamlines the issuance of receipts and tickets and the fee is passed to the ticket buyer rather than being paid by WWALS.

Attached to the Annual Report are the following: Statement of Activity for January 2019 - December 2019, Statement of Activity January 2020 - June 2020 (1/2 the current year). In fiscal year 2020 we are on track for our amended, smaller budget.

5. Meetings

5.1. Meetings and Events Organized by WWALS

The board held three in-person meetings (July, October, January) and one on-line meeting (April) due to COVID-19. There were many committee meetings during the year both in-person, by teleconference and on-line video conferences. The committees meet on an as-needed basis or regularly and include Executive, Nominating, Advisory, Membership, Outings, Events, Public Relations, Water Trails, Songwriting, and Watershed Issues (formerly Pipeline). Committees are made up of WWALS board members and regular members who are interested in specific projects.

WWALS has been doing occasional on-line trivia events and photo identification quizzes to engage the membership during COVID-19.

5.2. Community Outreach

WWALS gave numerous presentations and had booths at several festivals including attending Pride Festival, Harvest Festival, Honey Bee Festival, Rivers Alive CleanUp, Alapaha Station Celebration, and the Florida Springs Festival. Members attended the Lowndes County Bird Supper with Legislators in February. WWALS held two Georgia Adopt-A-Stream Water Quality Trainings that yielded several new volunteers. Suwannee Riverkeeper John S. Quarterman and board member Tom H. Johnson Jr. attended Capitol Conservation Day in Atlanta to talk with legislators about potential legislation. The same day they also attended the Lowndes County Bird Supper for the same reason. In between, John S. Quarterman visited the Georgia Environmental Protection Division about the Valdosta wastewater situation and agricultural nonpoint sources of bacterial waterway contamination. Later, in Valdosta, he gave a presentation to Georgia Power Employees about WWALS events and outings. We live streamed a paddle on Banks Lake and an Earth Day Clean-Up at Knights Ferry Boat Ramp on the Withlacoochee River. We held multiple on-line Trivia events hosted by Shelby Miller and had on-line quizzes dubbed "Within these WWALS" with flora and fauna photo identifications coordinated by Bret Wagenhorst.

Most WWALS festival booths and speaking engagements, past and planned, are listed in the Outings and Events web page <http://wwals.net/events-2/outings-events/> and in the WWALS calendar, <http://wwals.net/calendar/>. COVID-19 completely eliminated festival events from March 10, 2020 onwards and has made in person meetings impractical. We are considering on-line webinars as a new outreach avenue.

The Public Relations Committee wrote and sent to members and friends a monthly newsletter. A reader favorite in each issue is the WWALS Biota, written by Bret Wagenhorst.

Suwannee Riverkeeper John S. Quarterman and several WWALS members have been interviewed by WALB and WCTV as well as being interviewed on Valdosta drive time radio with Steve Nichols, Charlie Walker and Scott James, plus Brian Blount based in Blackshear, GA. WWALS members were particularly active with the Florida twelve-county Rivers Task Force meetings.

6. Suwannee Riverkeeper Report, John S. Quarterman

- Waterkeeper Alliance approved formal addition of the Santa Fe River Basin as Suwannee Riverkeeper territory (we've been doing the work for years). The WWALS Board voted to insert "Santa Fe" into the WWALS Mission and logo. The WWALS Outings Committee scheduled and held several outings on the Santa Fe and Ichetucknee Rivers. We of course continue to work with Our Santa Fe River (OSFR) and other organizations in the Santa Fe River Basin, as we do with organizations throughout the Suwannee River Basin. For example, attended Bradford County, FL, BOCC meeting on a fifth Chemours titanium mine SE of Starke. BOCC voted 3:2 for it. See WWALS videos. <http://wwals.net/?p=50415>
- Suwannee River Water Management District (SRWMD).
 - a. Lobbied SRWMD to rein in Nestle at Ginnie Springs and at Madison Blue Spring. <http://wwals.net/?p=50838>
 - b. Reported on SRWMD lack of quorum and sudden re-appointment of some board members. <http://wwals.net/?p=50306>
 - c. Recommended Dennis J. Price and Merrilllee Malwitz-Jipson for the Upper Suwannee and Santa Fe board slots. Three SRWMD board slots remain vacant.



- After Valdosta's December 2019 record-largest raw sewage spill. See also Testing and Science Committees Reports.
 - a. Wrote letter to GA-EPD asking for action. <http://wwals.net/?p=50979> Visited GA-EPD in Atlanta.
 - b. Contacted Georgia and Florida statehouse delegations and members of Congress.
 - c. Interpreted WWALS testing data, compared to other sources, and posted frequently, including warnings.
 - d. Got FDEP to start sending us bacterial data when they have it instead of four months later. Thanks especially to tenacious James McBrayer. Finally, FDEP started posting that data online the same day they get it.
 - e. Persuaded Lowndes County to test weekly on the Withlacoochee River and Okapilco Creek in Brooks County, and to put up warning signs at Knights Ferry, Nankin, and State Line Boat Ramps.
 - f. Made WWALS yellow diamond Caution signs and posted them in the same locations.
 - g. Extracted data from Valdosta via open records requests, and Valdosta eventually commenced publishing its data on its own website, as well as testing three times a week on 40 river miles down to the state line plus Okapilco Creek.
 - h. Consolidated all of the above data, plus from SRWMD and FDOH; see wwals.net/issues/testing/
 - i. Valdosta says in Consent Order that it is doing DNA testing; nobody has seen it yet.
 - j. FDEP is doing human marker (e.g. sucralose) and DNA tests monthly; we have obtained those results.
 - k. Determined in conjunction with various parties, especially the WWALS Science Committee, that continuing waves of contamination after January 2020 starting at Knights Ferry Boat Ramp were probably coming down Okapilco Creek from cattle operations in Brooks County. Made contact with one or more possible sources. Discussed possible grants and fixes with GA DNR and SGRC; will apply this year.
 - l. Attended meetings of Madison BOCC (where three Commissioners and the County Manager spoke about our work), in Madison convened by FL state Sen. Montford with EPA and three Florida state agencies, and in Valdosta with the Florida Rivers Task Force.
 - m. Got complete 2013 Valdosta Consent Order from GA-EPD, including Sanitary Sewer Overflow Response Process. <http://wwals.net/?p=52183> Via open records request, got Valdosta's Pump Station Operating Procedures, all marked "Version: 1, Dec 2019" as in after the big spill. <http://wwals.net/?p=52353>
 - n. GA-EPD drafted Enforcement Order on Valdosta with record \$122,000 fine and numerous requirements. <http://wwals.net/?p=52429> Sent comment to GA-EPD during comment period.
 - o. Sent Valdosta offer of collaboration on eco-tourism marketing, plus project to track waterway contamination.
- Troupville River Camp at Little River Confluence with Withlacoochee River. Collaborated with Helen Tapp of Land Between the Rivers, the landowner of the 70+ acres at the Confluence. Got support letters from Valdosta, Lowndes County, GA, Madison and Hamilton Counties, FL, SRWMD, and others for Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Program grant pre-application for Troupville River Camp at Little River Confluence with Withlacoochee River. Did not get GOSP grant, but working on applying again; need matching funds. See also Grants Committee. <http://wwals.net/pictures/2019-10-31--wwals-gosp-trouville-river-camp/>
- Georgia Public Service Commission.
 - a. Wrote several letters for WWALS to Georgia PSC asking for gas detector equipment to be provided in further counties in settlement from AGL for Homerville pipeline coffeeshop explosion, plus special hazards of Pivotal LNG, owned by AGL, <http://wwals.net/?p=50202>

GA-PSC responded (both Commissioner Jason Shaw and staff); met with the Commissioner. PSC twice deferred voting for further research, <http://wwals.net/?p=50979> and finally came to a substantial agreement with AGL requiring AGL to fund detectors and training to any county or municipality with an AGL pipeline. <http://wwals.net/?p=51601>

- b. Georgia Power proposed rate hike: discussed with GA PSC Commissioner Jason Shaw and filed testimony opposing.
- Opposing a titanium mine proposed just SE of the Okefenokee Swamp, including numerous op-eds and radio, TV, and newspaper coverage; see PR Committee Report. Joined Okefenokee Protection Alliance (OPA) amid numerous teleconferences with them.
 - a. Helped organize two Southwings overflights, one including Georgia Statehouse John Corbett. Filed a series of comment letters with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. <http://wwals.net/blog/issues/titanium-mining/>
 - b. USACE made miners explain, at risk of civil and criminal penalties, what equipment was doing on mine site, after WWALS took aerials of that equipment 5 Oct 2019. <http://wwals.net/?p=51520>
 - c. Took pictures at mine site 2020-02-13 to show equipment still there after TPM withdrew initial application. <http://wwals.net/?p=51520>
 - d. Met with Sierra Club GA and Sierra Club FL NE Group in Jacksonville.
 - e. Sent USACE request for deadline extension and public hearings in Florida and Georgia. <http://wwals.net/?p=51943> USACE extended comment period and held "virtual public meeting". Sent another comment letter.
 - f. Requested U.S. EPA to require Florida to comment, per USACE Rule. <http://wwals.net/?p=52039> Waterkeepers Florida requested extension & asked EPA to require Florida comment. <http://wwals.net/?p=52164>
- Leveraged contacts with FWS Okefenokee NWR staff to regularize permit situation for WWALS activities in Banks Lake and Okefenokee NWRs: none needed in general; permit granted for Light Parade.
- Georgia Water Coalition (GWC).
 - a. Assisted in proposed process revisions on a committee for that purpose. Committee also voted itself into a standing committee for reviewing proposed GWC policy changes. Now sending in suggestions in implemented process.
 - b. Georgia Water Coalition legislative team weekly telecons and HB 545 telecons. HB 545, which would have made NC-style hog CAFOs easier in Georgia, did not pass! <http://wwals.net/?p=53002>
- Georgia trio of meetings, 26 Feb 2020. WWALS Board member Tom H. Johnson Jr. also at i and iii:
 - a. Capitol Conservation Day, spoke with many good contacts plus legislators. <http://wwals.net/?p=51509>
 - b. At GA-EPD got good tips on point-source (Valdosta) and non-point-source (cows) pollution.
 - c. At Lowndes County Bird Supper talked to more legislators and Valdosta and Lowndes Co. elected officials. <http://wwals.net/?p=51509>
- Southern Georgia Regional Commission (SGRC)
 - a. Attended numerous Georgia county Comprehensive Plan meetings (Cook, Echols, Clinch, Charlton) and got some river and water trail language into each.
 - b. Collaborated with SGRC on Seed Grant including funding for some WWALS water quality testing and on GOSP and other grant applications.
 - c. SGRC zoom meeting about evaluating waterways for impaired status.
- Attended Tallahassee Triennial Review Workshop, spoke, blogged, <http://wwals.net/?p=50596> voted for and blogged WKFL letter. <http://wwals.net/?p=50739>
- Waterkeepers Florida (WKFL): weekly telecons; numerous votes to support their activities. Sent materials for WKFL Annual Report and website. waterkeepersflorida.org/

- Proposed trio of toll roads, including Suncoast Connector to cross the Suwannee River heading to Thomasville, GA. Opposed them in collaboration with No Toll Roads to Ruin (NRTR) coalition. wwals.net/issues/no-toll-roads-to-ruin/
 - a. Spoke at Madison, FL, M-CORES meeting 2020-02-11. Ongoing series of video posts of speakers at that meeting. <http://wwals.net/?p=52051>
 - b. On suggestion of WWALS member Janet Mikulski Messcher, sent letter to FL Gov. asking to repurpose toll road funds to pandemic relief. <http://wwals.net/?p=52057> NRTR also sent letter. <http://wwals.net/?p=52865> Gov. cut FL budget \$1 billion due to virus pandemic yet kept the toll roads.
 - c. Spoke in first M-CORES Task Force webinar. <http://wwals.net/?p=52307> Boycotted rest, with NRTR.
- Signed several statewide Georgia and Florida letters such as one by Everglades Law Center letter asking FL Agriculture Commissioner Nikki Fried for an open process to selecting committee members for Best Management Practice (BMP) Manual Development.
- Waterkeeper Alliance.
 - a. Signed onto several Waterkeeper Alliance letters, including one opposing U.S. EPA rule changes.
 - b. Attended zoom meetings of Gulf and South Atlantic Waterkeepers. At least we have no office to pay for.
- Need Bill of Rights for Nature meeting. Maybe via zoom? wwals.net/2019/10/10/a-bill-of-rights-for-nature/

7. Committee Reports

7.1. Membership Committee Report, Gretchen Quarterman, Chair

In 2019 WWALS had 189 unique members and/or donors with an average donation of \$80.24. In 2020 so far we have 92 donors and/or members with an average of \$71.38. We are unable to account for the number of individuals that donate through Facebook as we cannot see who donated on the Network for Good website. We have 2407 likes on Facebook and 2553 Followers. These people are the most likely prospects to convert to members and donors.

Most memberships continue to be individual or family memberships, approximately 20% are supporting or sustaining members with a few giving at the \$500 and \$1000 levels. About 1/2 of our members renew each year. We continue to see a decline in renewals year after year, although we have new members join who keep our membership steady. We are significantly short of our goal of 100% renewals. We have stopped mailing paper renewals because of the cost of postage. We do e-mail renewal reminders. We must figure out some way to increase the percentage of renewals. Ideally, we would like to have all of our supporters become small monthly donors.

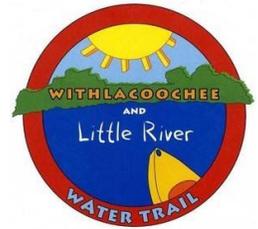
7.2. Outings Committee Report, Bobby McKenzie, Chair

All WWALS Outings, past and planned, are listed in the Outings and Events web page <http://wwals.net/events-2/outings-events/> and in the WWALS calendar, <http://wwals.net/calendar/>. There were several camping outings, many single day events and a monthly Full Moon paddles at Banks Lake near Lakeland, GA, to see the sun set and the moon rise. New in 2019 was a Solstice Light Parade, held at Banks Lake on the winter solstice. One particularly popular paddle this year was the "Valdosta Mayor's Paddle" on the Withlacoochee River in January 2020, with new Valdosta Mayor Scott James Matheson. All types of outings are well attended.

With Social Distancing changing the way we do outings for the foreseeable future, we have focused on out and back paddles and introduced a series of bike and paddles to avoid the need for shuttles. The full moon paddles have been very popular with June's paddle having 33 participants. Banks Lake Outdoors offering their free rentals for our Full Moon Paddles has been great. We are moving forward on getting ready for the Boomerang. Moody AFB Outdoor Rec has reached out and wants to join our outings.

7.3. Trails Committee Report, Dan Phillips, Chair

Suwannee Riverkeeper and the Trails Committee designed and printed metal water trail informational signs and Dan Phillips installed them [at the new Naylor Boat Ramp on the Alapaha River Water Trail](#), and at several locations on the Withlacoochee and Little River Water Trail. Both trails were considered completed by the Georgia River Network.



The [WWALS online maps](#) for both water trails, as well as for the Suwannee River Wilderness Trail, and a composite map of all public landings in the Suwannee River Basin, have all been updated with more landings and springs.

[Z-fold brochures for both water trails](#) await final funding for printing. See Grants Committee about a projected grant for printing brochures and more at-water signs plus road signs.



7.4. Science Committee Report, Tom Potter, Chair

See separate document.

7.5. Grant Writing Committee Report, Gretchen Quarterman, Chair

WWALS submitted grant proposals to several organizations, including Georgia Power Foundation, Georgia Department of Natural Resources Recreational Trails Program (RTP) Educational Grant, Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Program for a Troupville River Camp, and North Face Explore Fund. We are waiting on final paperwork for the RTP Educational Grant, which will pay for brochure printing, road signs, and kiosk signs at the waters. We are awaiting final funding on a water quality testing grant from Georgia Power Foundation. We plan on applying again, in conjunction with local governments, for the Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Program grant.

7.6. Watershed Issues Committee Report, John S. Quarterman, Chair

- Op-eds and news stories, including: *Gainesville Sun*. <http://wwals.net/?p=52881>, *Valdosta Daily Times*. <http://wwals.net/?p=52907>
- Moody AFB still not responding about dummy bombs, PFAS, or metals on Lanier County site.
- Wastewater. See Suwannee Riverkeeper Report and Science and Testing Committee Reports.
- Sabal Trail fracked methane pipeline request for deadline extension for Phase II, Albany, GA and Dunnellon, FL compressor stations.
 - a. Filed as intervenor with FERC. No other organization did. <http://wwals.net/?p=52080>
 - b. Moved to deny with penalties. Several WWALS members and others filed comments.
 - c. Sierra Club filed a very good comment and request to deny invoking environmental justice.
 - d. New Sierra Club Georgia Beyond Coal person is suddenly rustling up political opposition.
 - e. FERC rubberstamped Phase II on Earth Day, despite comment period still open. <http://wwals.net/?p=52265>
 - f. FERC [declared comment period moot](#) because of its own rubberstamp.
 - g. Sierra Club moved for stay and rehearing. FERC surprisingly [granted rehearing](#).
 - h. WWALS Issues Committee working up WWALS brief.
- LNG export; still need new expert witness.
 - a. PHMSA published final rule for LNG by railcar despite opposition by WWALS (thanks Cecile Scofield) and many others.
 - b. WWALS member Cecile Scofield had op-ed against fracked gas and LNG in TCPalm. <http://wwals.net/?p=51310>
 - c. Strom, Inc., April report showed up at DOE FE the day after Cecile Scofield requested it. Strom is aiming at China as principal market, even while northeast Asia LNG prices are lower than the decade low of January 2020. https://www.energy.gov/sites/prod/files/2020/06/f75/Strom_SAR_April_2020.pdf
 - d. Several Issues Committee members continue getting information out of agencies and industry, etc.
- FGT fracked methane pipeline spilled oil at its compressor station in Bradford County.
- AGL pipeline Homerville, GA explosion: see Suwannee Riverkeeper Report.
- Solar power.
 - a. Brooks County landowners legal challenge to NextEra 150 GW solar farm on wooded wetlands. <http://wwals.net/?p=50055> Jonathan P. Waters was also attorney for several landowner Sabal Trail eminent domain cases. He is apparently using WWALS video of the deciding Brooks Co. Commission meeting.
 - b. Filed in [FERC Docket EL20-42 against](#) FERC takeover of solar net metering proposed by New England Ratepayers Association (NERA). Thanks Maxine Connor. States and D.C. continue to weigh in.
- Phosphate mines.
 - a. Miners sued Union County. Still waiting for decision from judge.
 - b. Bradford County still hasn't scheduled its public hearings on the mine permit.
 - c. Alachua County has dedicated \$100,000 to fight the proposed HPS II phosphate mine.
- Chemours titanium mine expansion SE of Starke, FL approved Bradford BOCC; See SuwRK Report.
- Proposed titanium mine near Okefenokee Swamp; see Suwannee Riverkeeper Report.
- Corporate agriculture. Bill Gates sold much land to Grimmway of California Central Valley.
- Florida toll roads: see Suwannee Riverkeeper Report.
- Florida SpringsFest, the last festival WWALS attended this spring. WWALS member Janet Barrow assisted Suwannee Riverkeeper and Sara and Scotti Jay, and attendees were receptive about many issues, especially *E. coli*.

7.7. Public Relations Committee Report, John S. Quarterman, Chair

- a. Hundreds of blog posts (all also on facebook page and group, tweeted, and on Instagram).
- b. Numerous press releases, and quite a few news stories, on radio, TV, and in newspapers.
- c. Suwannee Riverkeeper on four different radio shows in Georgia, some several times, plus Georgia Public Broadcasting.
- d. Op-eds published in newspapers in Georgia and Florida.
- e. Monthly *Tannin Times* Newsletter sent to members and friends.
- f. WWALS page in monthly *South Georgia Connections* sent to local county newcomers by Moody AFB.

7.8. Events Committee Report, Eileen Box, Chair

In addition to planning for the big event, the Songwriting Contest, Events Chair Eileen Box spoke at various civic groups in Live Oak, including the Native Plant Society meeting, WWALS E.D. Gretchen Quarterman spoke to a class at Valwood High School, and Suwannee Riverkeeper John S. Quarterman spoke to the Georgia Power Employee volunteers.

7.9. Songwriting Contest Committee Report, Tom H. Johnson Jr., Chair

The Songwriting event was held on August 24, 2019 to allow more time between our fundraising events. The contest was held at the Salty Snapper and included a silent auction. There were seven finalists and the overall winner was Jay Jourden of Ponte Vedra, Florida, with "Save our Suwannee". Chris Beckham acted as Master of Ceremonies.

wwals.net/pictures/2019-08-24-suwannee-riverkeeper-songwriting-contest/

With its new Chair Tom H. Johnson Jr., the committee met periodically during the year, planning the 2020 event which is planned for August 22, 2020 at the Turner Center Art Park of the Turner Center for the Arts in Valdosta, with radio host Scott James as M.C. wwals.net/pictures/2020-08-22--songwriting/

7.10 Advisory Committee Report, Garry Gentry, Chair

The Advisory Committee met four times. WWALS Board delegate to the Advisory Committee Garry Gentry sent the Committee agendas, took notes, and followed up with minutes. The advisors collaborated on issues related to the NextEra Quitman II solar farm, and on hydrogeology related to the Okefenokee Swamp (and the proposed titanium mine).

The Committee published [an invitation letter for potential new advisors](#).

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1hwGGJ036vAgmJ6D-MJ1MR4R3QwosOeXdhD5DjY4bLWo/edit?usp=sharing>

Two Advisors retired from the Committee, but two new ones joined: Dr. Elizabeth McCarty and Dr. Joseph LaForest. Dr. LaForest also helped organize online WWALS Trivia events.

7.11 Testing Committee Report, Suzanne Hall, Chair

1. Testing.
 - a. Several new testers testing.
 - b. Have local testing trainers now and did trainings. Pandemic interrupted May training. Plan in place for mostly virtual testing training. Sign up for testing using [WWALS google form](#).
 - c. Got grant from Georgia Power Foundation; see Grants Committee Report.
 - d. Need to recruit students and teachers to assist.
 - e. Have 44 sites in Georgia Adopt a Stream, some sampled monthly, some weekly, some as needed.
2. Results. See mostly Suwannee Riverkeeper Report and Science Committee Report.
 - a. Composite spreadsheet of Georgia and Florida results, including WWALS testing: <http://wwals.net/issues/testing/>
 - b. Swim Guide is set up and being updated by WWALS: <https://www.theswimguide.org/search/?q=withlacochee>.
 - c. Maybe WWALS no longer needs to discover and post Valdosta Fats, Oils, and Grease (FOG) spills. <http://wwals.net/?p=52140> Because Valdosta has started posting those themselves. <http://wwals.net/?p=52825>
 - d. Finally found sign for Valdosta Country Club sewage spill, thanks to testers Scotti and Sara Jay, and got Valdosta Utilities and Stormwater talking to each other. <http://wwals.net/?p=50195> Asked GA-EPD to require latlongs in reports of such spills. See Suwannee Riverkeeper Report.

8. Conclusion

Focus continues on projects of conservation and stewardship (water trails and cleanups), education (outings and events), and advocacy (including opposition to pipelines, phosphate mines, coal ash, and fracking, and promotion of solar power), with fundraising to support those projects and to fully fund the Suwannee RIVERKEEPER® and an Executive Director.

