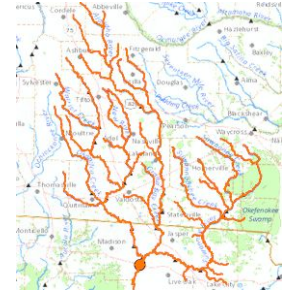


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August 2016 Tannin Times

Annual Meeting Report and Board Update

The Annual Membership meeting was Wednesday, July 13th at 7:00PM at the IHOP in Adel. Members reviewed and approved the annual report, and re-elected Bret Wagenhorst and Chris Mericle to the board, plus they added Phil Hubbard, who many of you know from our outings; he fills the unexpired term of Garry Gentry. The new board then met to elect officers as follows: President, John S. Quarterman; Ambassador and Secretary; Dave Hetzel; Treasurer, Gretchen Quarterman. Additionally, Ernest Browning was voted onto the Grants committee and Katherine VanScyoc to the PR committee.

The board also held a strategy meeting on Sunday, July 17th to continue work on goals, coordination of projects and voted to fill a vacancy on the board by appointing Ernest Browning from Adel, GA to the unexpired term of Karan Rawlins. Plus Ernest was added to the Events Committee, Amy Wiegenstein to the Outings Committee, and Katherine Vanscyoc to the Issues Committee. If you are interested in becoming more active, [please fill in this questionnaire](#) and we will find the right spot for you on a committee or even on the board!

WWALS Working Hard for Your Watershed

Valdosta Wastewater. John S. Quarterman attended the ribbon cutting for the new Force Main and Withlacoochee Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP), which they seem to have actually named the Withlacoochee Water Pollution Control Plant (WWPCP). Those two so far have prevented any new wastewater spills. Long may they do so!



SRWMD Meeting. The Suwannee River Water Management's Board of Directors meeting during which there was a presentation about the Falmouth Cathedral Cave System. Several WWALS members educated the SRWMD Board about the threats the Sabal Trail pipeline proposes to this world renowned underground springs conduit, by boring above the flowing cave system at US 90 and the CSX Railroad, bringing the pipe construction closer to the roof of the cave and possibly causing collapse. After discussion, and a warning from the board's attorney about a potential eminent domain lawsuit, nonetheless SRWMD granted permission for Sabal Trail to construct their pipeline through the SWRMD-owned Chinquapin Farm Conservation Easement near the Santa Fe River.

FL Environmental Regulation Commission. Eighty people spoke against, including WWALS president John S. Quarterman about a letter from eight Florida Waterkeepers, WWALS among them. Yet ERC voted on July 26, 2016 in Tallahassee to pass new water quality standards proposed by FL-DEP, based on complicated analyses, which raise the allowable levels of benzene and other carcinogenic chemicals in Florida's waters. The proposal also initiates the regulation of many other chemicals that have not been regulated before. It was a controversial decision and still has to be approved by the US EPA. Florida Senator Nelson and eight members of Congress wrote a letter to the US EPA asking them to allow an "appropriate public comment period" and to "carefully evaluate each human health criteria."

Sabal Trail Lake City Pipe Yard. Thanks to Southwings, WWALS sent pictures of 36-inch pipe north of Lake City, Florida to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, which first said that was not a jurisdictional

wetlands violation, but the next day added many qualifications. Sabal Trail in its Bi-weekly Report to FERC neglected to mention the qualifications, and got the place wrong, telling FERC Lakeland. So we wonder, is there another unregistered pipe yard in Lakeland, Florida or Georgia? Stay tuned.

Lowndes County Commission. Commissioners initially balked at a request for \$40,000 to match the City of Valdosta for a USGS grant for an interactive online flood map based on the LiDAR Valdosta already paid for. WWALS sent a letter suggesting expanding the map to all of Lowndes County, since many county roads were closed in the 2009 flood. County staff asked city staff who asked USGS who said their models couldn't handle that yet. And the County Commission voted for up to \$40,000!

Community Outreach and Education

Water Trails. WWALS is checking landing names and addresses with 911 centers in all counties on both of the Water Trails, preparing to order road signs.

Pipeline Opposition meeting in Gainesville, FL. There's still time to register to attend the Grassroots Summit to Stop the Sabal Trail Pipeline, 8:30 am to 5 pm August 6, 2016 at the Unitarian Universalist Church in Gainesville, Florida, organized by Gulf Restoration Network. WWALS members and many other groups and individuals will be brainstorming to block this ill-advised pipeline from the most karst sensitive areas of Florida.



Suwannee River State Park Advisory Group. WWALS Board member Chris Mericle was invited to participate in the SRSP Advisory Group meeting on July 27, 2016 to encourage community input on the proposed changes to the SRSP Management Plan which is updated every 10 years. There was discussion about impacts to the park and river from proposed increases in the number of campsites, impacts from the Sabal Trail Pipeline crossing of the river and Lime Run Spring conduit, and discussion about how to deal with invasive species, among other things. People can read the proposed management plan at http://www.dep.state.fl.us/parks/planning/files/SuwanneeRiver_draftplan.pdf and submit comments to FL_StateParkPlanning@dep.state.fl.us until August 10, 2016.

July Outing: Nankin to Madison Hwy

The July outing was well-attended and fun. Swimming, picnic, shoals and a delightful day on the Withlacoochee, including McIntyre Spring (fifteen feet deep and refreshingly cold) and Arnold Springs (all three of them). You won't want to miss the next outing on the Suwannee as we enjoy and explore our beautiful rivers.



Upcoming Outings and Events

August 13, 8AM	Suwannee River (Florida) Roline Launch to Cypress Creek Launch 7.5 miles
September 10, 4PM	Rivers Alive Cleanup at Berrien Beach
October 9, 10AM	Withlacoochee River - Madison Hwy to Sullivan launch 5.3 miles

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

