

RIVERWATCH NEWSLETTER

Caloosahatchee River Citizens Association (CRCA)

Volume 1, Number 2

September, 1995

Editor: John Capece

Let's Clean Up the Caloosahatchee

Keep Lee County Beautiful (KLCB) has invited CRCA to join the fifth annual Marine Clean-up Day (monofilament madness) and Barbecue. This year the cleanup focus is shorelines from the mouth of the Caloosahatchee east to the Ortona Lock. Clean-up begins at safe light on Sunday, October 22nd and culminates at Tarpon Point Marina in Cape Coral at 1:00 p.m. with the free barbecue provided by Sam Galloway Ford.

Riverwatch boat owners can collect trash and monofilament along the banks of the Caloosahatchee, from the river waters, and on the shores of river islands frequented by boaters. Filled trash bags can be deposited on the KLCB barge, as it cruises up the river, or they can be taken to Tarpon Point Marina.

Individuals who do not own a boat can pick up refuse along any of the creeks and other tributaries of the river, as well as the hundreds of canals throughout Southwest Florida. Helpers are also needed to set up the tent on Saturday at 9:00 a.m. at Tarpon Point Marina. On Sunday, between 9:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. tables and chairs will need to be set up, and at 1:00 p.m. servers for the barbecue are needed. There is a job for everyone, regardless of your situation or location.

Please become an active Riverwatch member by participating in this worthwhile river cleanup project. To sign up for one of the three cleanup zones or to help at the Tarpon Bay Marina site, you may call the Info Network at 433-4636. When asked to enter the number you desire, press 2722 (CRCA), then press #4 to leave a message with the Projects & Events Committee. If you do not have a touchtone telephone, you may call Pam Bowman at 332-8266, Laura Church at 772-2072, or Don Skiba at 995-8075.

PROGRESS REPORT FROM THE PRESIDENT

For a young (just over six months old), privately supported, volunteer organization, I'm proud of the progress we're making:

* Our representatives have spoken to approximately a dozen service clubs, trade associations and community groups. If you're a member of a group that would be interested in learning more about us call me at 466-6694.

* We appeared at the South Florida Water Management District's (SFWMD) budget hearing in Ft. Myers to support proposals which would increase knowledge and concern about the River.

* We appeared at the Ft. Myers public hearing on the proposed Ecosystem Management strategy of the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). The Caloosahatchee River watershed has been identified as a DEP-target ecosystem, and we will closely monitor the development of the management plan.

* CRCA has won a seat on the Environmental Advisory Committee of the SFWMD, where we intend to be active advocates for the River.

* Our first project -- *storm drain stenciling* -- is a success, and we've got several others on the drawing board.

* Our activities are receiving excellent coverage from the media, particularly the "News Press".

Thank you for your continuing contributions to Riverwatch.

Jim Haggart
CRCA President

TREASURER WANTED!

Riverwatch needs a volunteer to handle its finances. If you have experience and access to a computer, please contact Jim Haggart at 466-6694.

Oil in the river? Paint? Debris?

While you may not dump these pollutants in the river, but other people do all the time without knowing it. How? By dumping it down storm drains!

Most storm drains in our community drain directly to the Caloosahatchee river. So, if someone disposes of trash or hazardous waste by throwing it down a storm drain, it ends up in our river. It can kill marine life, plant life, and harm us. Whether we fish, boat, or water-ski, this nasty pollution affects all of us.

What can we do? Remind people not to pollute. How? By labeling storm drains that flow to the river and educating them on what should not go into these drains. CRCA has worked in conjunction with the Private Industry Council and school children of Lee County to label almost 300 drains. But there are many more to label.

If you would like to help, or if you are involved with another organization (example: Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, church group, athletic group, or service organization, etc.) and your whole group wants to help, let us know. This is a great project! You will be promoting a cleaner river and a healthier environment for all to enjoy! Call us at 433-INFO. Dial CRCA, and leave a message for the Projects & Events Committee (Option #4).

Clean Water and Florida are #1!

In the August issue, Money Magazine reports that clean water is more important to people than low crime rates when it comes to selecting a place live. Money's research shows clean water and air are the two most important factors people cite in evaluating a community. The finding is based on the average ranking of forty-one different community characteristics (hospitals, taxes, jobs, etc.). This is the first time clean water has topped the list!

The same report ranks Ft. Myers/Cape Coral as the 34th best place to live among 300 U.S. cities. Eleven other Florida cities outperformed Ft. Myers, with five of those placing in the top ten.

The Money report highlights the importance of the Caloosahatchee River Citizen's Association (Riverwatch) to the Ft. Myers community and region. Riverwatch has established itself as the chief advocate in the Ft. Myers area on the one issue people say is most important in selecting a place to live. That's a big responsibility, one which is critical to both our quality of life and our economy! Riverwatch members should be proud to be among those who are stepping up to the challenge.

Riverwatch Takes a Stand

The Executive Committee adopted a resolution drafted by the Technical Committee, expressing support for all proposed Caloosahatchee research projects. Riverwatch President Jim Haggart presented the resolution to Chip Merriam of the South Florida Water Management District at the August 1st public forum in Ft. Myers. Also speaking in support of the resolution at the public forum were members Harry Green, Charles Foster, Russell Rehm, Bill McGrath, Vance Storter and Lyle Daniels.

RESOLUTION

Adopted July 31, 1995 by the Executive Committee

Whereas, the Caloosahatchee River Citizen's Association (Riverwatch) is a grass-roots, non-profit organization with over 100 members striving to increase public knowledge and involvement in issues of the Caloosahatchee watershed, and

Whereas, the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) has proposed three major projects to address important estuary research and management topics, listed as:

- a. Caloosahatchee Estuary and Watershed Research
- b. Caloosahatchee Basin Plan
- c. Caloosahatchee Watershed Modeling/Monitoring

Whereas, Riverwatch seeks to develop greater interaction and cooperation with SFWMD, and

Whereas, the August 1st Fort Myers public forum provides an opportunity for public input to programs of the SFWMD,

Be It Resolved that Riverwatch requests the following actions of the South Florida Water Management District:

1. The SFWMD fully fund and implement these three Caloosahatchee projects during the 1996 fiscal year;
2. The office of the SFWMD Executive Director keep Riverwatch informed of progress on these three project proposals through prompt and regular updates delivered to the Riverwatch President;
3. The SFWMD provides opportunities for participation of Riverwatch in implementing these research projects and provide quarterly presentations to Riverwatch on progress and findings of the research;
4. The SFWMD provides Riverwatch a special grant of \$15,000 to retain an organizing assistant to be supervised and managed by Riverwatch.
5. The SFWMD continues to assist Riverwatch in efforts to assemble a comprehensive collection of documents and databases related to Caloosahatchee Basin water management, with this collection to be managed and maintained by the Florida Gulf Coast University.

Please Join Riverwatch!

This newsletter is being sent to everyone who attended the original Edison Community College/News Press public forum last year. Approximately a third of those attendees have already joined Riverwatch. We ask that everyone concerned with the Caloosahatchee complete the attached membership form and send it in with a check. If you have any questions regarding membership, please call our Info Net box at 433-4636 (x2722) and leave a message.

Riverwatch Membership Roster (Dues Paid)

	First Name	Last Name		First Name	Last Name		First Name	Last Name
1	Nicki	Altieri	36	Jim	Haggart	71	Russell	Rehm
2	Kristie	Anders	37	Sam	Halverson	72	Stuart	Reynolds
3	Rob	Andrys	38	William	Hammond	73	Ruth	Rigby
4	Neil	Ayers	39	Daniel	Hauert	74	Deanna	Rogers
5	Craig	Bair	40	Ken	Hauptvogel	75	Peter	Sarkisian
6	David	Bartz	41	Robert	Haverkate	76	Rae Ann	Scholle
7	Roy	Bazire	42	Connie	Holsinger	77	Phil	Schwartz
8	Dale	Bennett	43	Marty	Horn	78	Joanne	Schweinfurth
9	Virginia	Bissell	44	Tom	Jacques	79	Michael	Simonik
10	Pamela	Bowman	45	Rufus	Jennings	80	Donald	Skiba
11	Albert	Bridell	46	Janet	Johnson	81	Robert	Slayton
12	John & Frida	Burke	47	Butch	Jones	82	Geordie	Smith
13	René	Bush	48	Charlene	Jones	83	Henry	Spang
14	Beverly	Calguire	49	Bill	Joyce	84	Bob	Steele
15	Mike	Calinski	50	Joan	Kain	85	Norman	Steirgin
16	John	Capece	51	Mary Linda	Kinnaman	86	Donna	Storter
17	John	Cassani	52	Greg	LeBlanc	87	Vance	Storter
18	Laura	Church	53	Phillip	Lefton	88	George	Stout
19	Ron	Costa	54	Mildred	Leonard	89	Jerry	Swallow
20	Phil	Croke	55	Ronald	Leppert	90	Steve	Thompson
21	Ruby	Daniels	56	Erick	Lindblad	91	Chet	Townsend
22	Lyle	Danielson	57	Edwin	Long	92	Rick	Tully
23	Dianne	DeBoest	58	David	Long	93	Hans	Ulander
24	Connie	Dennis	59	Daniel	Mattos	94	Michael	Verwest
25	Ruth	Deuber	60	Harold	Maupin	95	Eric	Vierling
26	Michael	Dove	61	Michael	McCartney	96	Kathy	Walsh
27	John	Durkin	62	Bill	McGrath	97	Robert	Wells
28	Jim	English	63	Family of	Newcomb-Jones	98	Sharon Page	West
29	Charles	Foster	64	Bob	Nicoletti	99	Dave	Westra
30	Douglas	French	65	Linda	Nordling	100	Laura	Wewerka
31	Jack	Gaddy	66	Hassel	Perrel	101	Fred	Whitehouse
32	James	Garrett	67	Ellen	Peterson	102	William	Wigdale
33	Lillian	Gerdes	68	T.C.	Porter	103	Max	Wolff
34	Harry	Green	69	Lawrence	Price	104	Rita	Zimmer
35	Frank	Grieco	70	Robert	Rader			

CALOOSAHATCHEE RIVER CITIZENS ASSOCIATION

Box 08004

Fort Myers, FL 33908-0004

MEMBERSHIP FORM

Name _____ Address _____

City _____ County _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Telephone: Home _____ Work _____ Fax _____

MEMBERSHIP LEVEL:

Student \$5. _____ Other \$ _____ Individual \$10 _____ Family \$20 _____

RIVER Friend \$50. _____ RIVER Guardian \$100. _____ RIVER Sponsor/Corporate \$250. _____

RIVER PROTECTOR \$500. _____ RIVER CHAMPION \$1000. _____

INTEREST: Technical _____ Education _____ Projects/Events _____

Membership/Fund Raising _____ Public Relations _____

Please mail to: Box-08004, Fort Myers, FL- 33908-0004 --- If you have any questions or want additional information, you can call 941-433-INFO (4636) and CRCA (2722). Thanks for your interest.

The CALOOSAHATCHEE RIVER Citizens Association is a nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting the integrity of the River and its watershed, through education and promotion of their responsible use and enjoyment by all of the people.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

To strive to improve the River from its source to its mouth, including its impacts on riparian and estuarine systems, wildlife habitat, fisheries and marine life.

To promote public education concerning the historical significance, present condition and future of the River and its watershed.

To increase public awareness of the importance of the River to our quality of life.

To study the effect of domestic, commercial and agricultural uses of the River's resources.

To monitor and work to improve the River's water quality, quantity and flow characteristics.

To observe and participate in the activities of public bodies responsible for the management of the River and its watershed.

Tek Notes

Riverwatch Technical Committee Reports

Wastewater and the River

Harry Green is conducting a detailed investigation of wastewater releases into the Caloosahatchee. Green found there are five water treatment plants discharging into the river (see table). These plants take wastewater from homes, businesses, etc. then clean the water prior to it being released into the river or it being reused for lawns. Perhaps most surprising and encouraging is the fact that 28% of all wastewater generated by the plants is reused by the community rather than being dumped into the Caloosahatchee. The water reuse system in Cape Coral accounts for almost all of this recycling.

Plant Name	River MGD	Reuse MGD	BOD5 lbs/day	Fecal Coliform
Ft. Myers Central	5.8	0.4	195	0
Ft. Myers South	6.3	0	114	0
Cape Coral	0	4.8	18	0
Fiesta Village	1.8	0.5	17	0
Waterway Estates	1.1	0	15	10
TOTALS	15	5.7	-	-

MGD = million gallons per day

BOD5 (5-day Biochemical Oxygen Demand) and the fecal coliform count (bacteria) are important measures of the purity of wastewater after it has been treated.

The BOD5 is a measure of how much oxygen bacteria will use in the process of consuming organic matter in water. Thus, it is an indicator of how much pollution remains in the wastewater after treatment. Only the Waterways Estates plant (Florida Cities Water Company) had significant bacteria in their discharge water. The average count was 10 and the highest count was 133. To put this into perspective, the federal rule for drinking water is that fecal coliform counts should average less than 20 and the maximum should be less than 100. Thus, even Waterways Estates quality is acceptable... not to suggest that anyone should drink from wastewater plant effluent. Waterways is the only plant using ultraviolet disinfecting treatment; the others use chlorine. Waterways plans to begin partial use of chlorine soon.

\$15,000 Grant Requested

Technical Committee members Geordie Smith, John Capece, and Rae Ann Scholle submitted a grant request and project proposal to the National Environmental Education and Training Foundation. The proposal requests \$15,000 to pay 50% of salary and expenses for an employee to assist with various Caloosahatchee research and education projects. This proposal is being submitted under the name of University of Florida at the request of the Riverwatch Executive Committee. The grant authors are already working on sources to raise the \$15,000 matching funds required by the grant. Possible sources include the South Florida Water Management District and the Department of Environmental Protection. Let's keep our fingers crossed!

SFWMD Budget Items

The July 27th Tech meeting included a discussion of the pending South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) budget proposal as it affects the Caloosahatchee. Included in this \$25 Million proposal are three research projects related to the Caloosahatchee. The three projects have a combined budget of \$683,000 of which about 10% (\$65,000) is targeted for a University of Florida computer mapping project of the river. As part of this project, SFWMD would assign one of their Ph.D. researchers from West Palm Beach to work with John Capece at the UF Research and Education Center in Immokalee. Together the two would focus on Caloosahatchee research.

Marine Trades Association

Representing Riverwatch, John Capece attended the August 8 meeting of the Southwest Florida Marine Trades Association, a group composed of boat sellers, dock builders, and similar professions. Capece's presentation to the group of approximately 60 people focused on the mission and structure of Riverwatch. Like Riverwatch members, Marine Trades members have a long list of concerns regarding the Caloosahatchee. The group expressed particular concern over heat pollution caused by the FPL power plant.

Active Technical Committee Members

CRCA members attending meetings of the committee include: Harry Green, Steve Franks, Jolie Kaytes, Bill McGrath, Vance Storter, Russell Rehm, Rufus Jennings, John Cassani, John Gardner, Geordie Smith, Jerry Swallow, Rhoda Spang, Peter Sarkisian, Jeff Haines, Skip Stringer, Henry Spang, Laura Wewerka, John Capece, and Rae Ann Scholle. Thanks!

HELP WANTED!

The Project and Events Committee has been very busy and we need your help. We have worked on many projects including labeling storm drains (300 to date); assisting with the organization of a Marine Clean-Up Day to clean up our beautiful river; planning a historical cruise on the river for fun and education; and discussion of restoring the oxbows in the eastern part of the river. Can you help?

If you are interested in organizing, planning, and coordinating projects and events for our Caloosahatchee river, please attend our meetings. They are held on the 2nd Tuesday of every month at the Calusa Nature Center on Ortiz Road. Meetings begin at 6:30 p.m. If you have any questions, please call co-chairs Pamela Bowman at 332-8266 or Laura Church at 772-2072. Please come- we would love to have you!

Idea?

If you have an idea for a project or an event that you would like Riverwatch to work on, please let us know. We treasure your terrific ideas! All you need to do is call the CRCA hotline at 433-INFO, press 2722 (CRCA) and leave a message for the Projects & Events Committee (Option #4). Easy, isn't it?! We would love to hear from you!

Officers

President: Jim Haggart
Vice-President: Laura Church
Secretary/Treasurer: Connie Holsinger

Committees

Education Chair: Bob Nicoletti

Membership & Fundraising
Chair: Connie Holsinger

Projects & Events
Co-Chairs: Laura Church
Pamela Bowman

Public Relations
Co-Chairs: Jim English
Don Skiba

Technical
Co-Chairs: Rae Ann Scholle
John Capece

RIVERWATCH Caloosahatchee River Citizens Association
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