



► Neil Armingeon provides an update on St. Johns River issues.

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○ VOLUME 3 | ○ WINTER | ○ 2006

THE Kingfisher

Keeping watch over your river



RIVERKEEPER UPDATE

This past year was a whirlwind! We made significant progress on many of the problems impacting the health of the river and continued to successfully raise awareness in the community.

In 2006, Riverkeeper gave presentations to nearly 50 organizations and groups, received press coverage over 120 times, and received over 30,000 visits to our website. In the spring, we released the extremely successful River Friendly Yards program and The Green Monster documentary that was nominated for three Emmy Awards. In April and October, we took a total of 173 travelers on our Eco-Heritage Boat Trips. In the fall, we had our most successful Oyster Roast to date. Over 500 people joined us at the Garden Club for an evening of great food, fellowship, and boat trips on the river. The Roast was one of the largest gatherings to celebrate the River in recent history. This past year was a good one for our river. Riverkeeper’s message is resonating with citizens throughout northeast Florida, and our efforts are paying off. The New Year

brings hope that the St. Johns River will continue to experience revitalization and increased recognition as the true jewel of the First Coast. Here is a quick update on some of the most critical issues.

Freedom Commerce Centre

Two years ago I noted, “We continue our fight to save 140 acres of mature, forested wetlands and the headwaters of Julington and Pottsburg Creeks.” This year’s message is that we are getting closer to achieving our goal of saving all the wetlands at the Freedom Commerce Centre site, but we still have a ways to go. Recently, the St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD) unanimously voted to allow the destruction of 29 acres of high-quality wetlands on the Freedom Commerce Centre (FCC) site. In addition to the permit to destroy a part of Pottsburg Creek’s headwaters, they rewarded the applicant, the Goodman Company, with a sweetheart land swap. The swap provides the company with nearly 360 acres of publicly-owned land for approximately 90 acres of wetlands that,

according to the Army Corps of Engineers, could not be developed. The proposed exchange of part of the FCC parcel for part of the Twelve Mile Swamp acreage both blesses the destruction of valuable wetlands and bestows significant additional financial benefit to the developer. We believe that if the applicant is to receive public lands as fair and equitable compensation for the FCC land, then all of the wetlands at the FCC site must be protected. Our battle to save FCC continues.

Nutrient TMDL for Lower St. Johns River

St. Johns Riverkeeper and Clean Water Network of Florida filed suit in July against the U.S Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for approving the plan by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to reduce oxygen levels in the lower St. Johns River. We are being represented by the Mid-Atlantic Environmental Law Center. The suit is just the latest effort by Riverkeeper to require the State of Florida and the EPA to establish meaningful pollution reduction targets for the lower river.

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Why is the St. Johns River important to you?

○ | RICHARD HULL

All great cities build along rivers. I see rivers as a dimension of god calling us to community. To neglect the river is to destroy the community and reject the call.

○ | BRUCE BULLOCK

I have been a Duval County 'river rat' for over 60 years (since WWII.)

○ | JUDY & PATRICK HINTON

The St. Johns River is an integral part of the beauty of northeast Florida and I hope I live to see the day that it is declared a truly clean river.

○ | ROY & SANDY WALTERS

The St. Johns River represents our shared past, our present and our bright future.

○ | JOSEPH & LISA GAITHER

Over the past 10 years, we have seen tremendous growth around us. It is both heartwarming and refreshing to see manatees, alligators, otters and all of the other precious marine life thriving in this fast growing environment.

RIVERKEEPER UPDATE, CONTINUED

The DEP has put pressure on numerous polluters and state agencies to intervene in our lawsuit and oppose our efforts to uphold water quality standards. Thanks to our attorney's hard work, citizen support, and assistance from the Clean Water Network, we will win our fight to protect water quality and to develop a meaningful pollution reduction plan.

Responding to Citizen Complaints

The success we have achieved in 2006 is largely due to the assistance, support and diligence of people like you. Since our inception, we have responded to countless calls for help. We've helped citizens with overflowing lift

stations, illegal discharges into storm drains, illegal filling of marshes and wetlands, sediment-leaving road projects and construction sites, and proposed development projects threatening local waterways. We have been successful in the vast majority of these instances. Thanks also to staff from the regulatory agencies that helped us find a remedy or a solution. With your ongoing support, we can continue our success and progress. If you see pollution or harm being done to your creek or river, please report it to the appropriate agency. If you don't know who to call or how to report an incident, call me. By working together, we will one day be able to proudly say that our St. Johns River is clean and healthy.

Stay informed at the St. Johns Riverkeeper's new and improved web site. Thank you to DiscoverTec for hosting and redesigning the site.

ST. JOHNS RIVERKEEPER
ST. JOHNS RIVERKEEPER 2800 UNIVERSITY BLVD. N | JACKSONVILLE, FL 32211 | PHONE: 904-256-7591

HOME | THE RIVER | OUR WORK | HOW YOU CAN HELP | NEWSLETTERS | CALENDAR | CONTACT US

Our Mission
is to work on behalf of the community for clean and healthy waters in the St. Johns River, its tributaries and its wetlands, through citizen-based advocacy.

We Believe
that the unique natural beauty and ecological integrity of the St. Johns River System must be preserved and remain accessible for the enjoyment and benefit of current and future generations.

We Promise
to advocate for policies and restoration actions based on sound science and responsible economics, and to speak on behalf of the river with an independent voice that citizens can trust.

DID YOU KNOW?
St. Johns Riverkeeper
...does not receive government funding.
...is privately-funded by citizens, businesses, and foundations.
...is a membership organization.
...is an independent voice for the river.

For more information about St. Johns Riverkeeper, visit Our Work page. Become a member of the Riverkeeper team!

JOIN TODAY

www.stjohnsriverkeeper.org

Thanks!

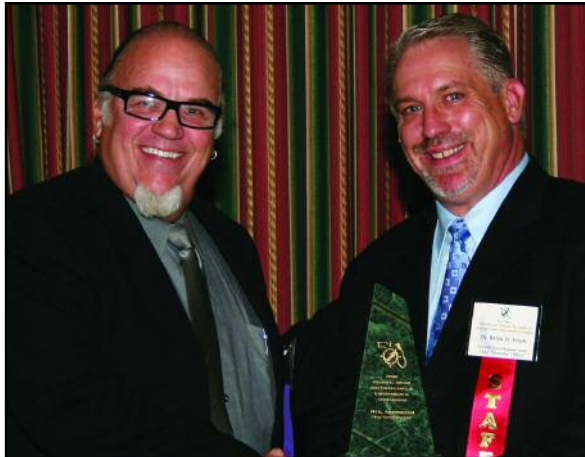
Tammy Gregg, Linda McKinsey, Linda and Jim Orth, Robert and Ann Hutchins, Scott and Julie Hamilton, Genora Crain-Orth, Emily and Paul Heeg, J.P. and Lisa Gaither, Bill and Annie Kirill, Nan Jobson, Jennifer Newman, Benita Boyd, Sonya Pettit, Paula Skitsko, Robin Robinson, Kathy Swindell, Lane Welch, Dorothy Dobbs, Maria Calindo, Max and Lance Moore

Got E-mail?

Give us your e-mail address and receive monthly updates about events and important issues affecting the St. Johns River. Contact Jimmy Orth at jorth@ju.edu.

RIVERKEEPER RECEIVES AWARD

Recently, Brian Teeple, CEO of the Northeast Florida Regional Council, presented *The 2006 Regional Award for Excellence in Environmental Stewardship* to Riverkeeper's Neil Armingeon for his outstanding efforts to protect and preserve the St. Johns River and its watershed. Neil has previously received the Congressman Charles Bennett Champion for the Environment Award and was named "2004's Person of the Year" by Folio Weekly. Congratulations, Neil!



Riverkeeper's Neil Armingeon (left) receives award from Brian Teeple, CEO of the NE Florida Regional Council.

Riverkeeper Board member Brooks Busey and his business, Sadler Point Marina, also deserve recognition for being recognized by Florida Department of Environmental Protection as both a *Clean Marina* and a *Clean Boatyard*. Brooks and Sadler Point also must be commended for their donation of dry dock storage for the Riverkeeper boat.

VOLUNTEERS HELP AND HAVE FUN

Riverkeeper Board member and Boat Patrol Coordinator Bill Kirill and his wife, Annie, did a fantastic job decorating the Riverkeeper boat and their own boat for the Jacksonville Light Parade.

Thanks also to Boat Patrol member, J.P. Gaither, for piloting the Riverkeeper boat and all of the other Riverkeeper "deck hands" who participated in the event. The parade and fireworks were spectacular, and everyone had a wonderful time, as we proudly displayed our Riverkeeper colors.



WAYS TO HELP

There are plenty of opportunities to help out. Come join us.

○ | VOLUNTEER

Volunteer at an upcoming event. Call 256-7591 for more information.

○ | RIVERKEEPER GIFTS

Give someone a gift membership, a Riverkeeper t-shirt or hat, or passage on our three-day Eco-Heritage boat trips.

○ | JOIN THE BOAT PATROL

Help Riverkeeper patrol the river and its tributaries. Contact Bill Kirill for more information at 707-1511.

○ | INVITE RK TO SPEAK

Invite Neil to speak to your civic group or homeowners association.

○ | JOIN, TODAY!

If you are not a member, return the enclosed envelope with your check or credit card number.

★ New members will receive a coupon for an organic cotton tote and 10% off at Black Creek Outfitters.

Is it time to renew your annual membership? If so, please renew today.

Our mission is to work on behalf of the community for clean and healthy waters in the St. Johns River, its tributaries and its wetlands, through citizen-based advocacy.

WWW.STJOHNSRIVERKEEPER.ORG

REFLECTIONS OF THE ST. JOHNS

St. Johns Riverkeeper and Fogle Fine Arts & Accessories are partnering to offer an exciting exhibition of art inspired by the St. Johns River. The exhibit will feature artists from a variety of disciplines including fine art, music and spoken word.

Fogle
Fine Art & Accessories

3312 Beach Blvd, Jacksonville
January 25-February 16

January 25 – Opening Night

January 27 – Lunch and Learn with artist Allison Watson

February 1 – Writers Night featuring Bill Belleville and
spoken word artist Al Letson

February 3 – Lunch and Learn with Photographer Will Dickey

February 8 – Artifacts of the St. Johns

Thursday evening events: FREE for Riverkeeper members and a \$15 donation for non-members.

Lunch and Learn events: \$20 donation

View the exhibition at www.foglefineart.com/exhibitions.

For more information and to RSVP for events, visit the riverkeeper website at www.stjohnsriverkeeper.org.



Cruising the flats by Hope Barton is one of the fine artworks that will be on display at the Fogle exhibition.

CONTACT US ANYTIME

phone 904-256-7591

fax 904-256-7573

RK CALENDAR OF EVENTS

○ | Reflections of the St. Johns, Fogle Fine Arts & Accessories

For more information or to register for events, visit the RK website.

○ | Water Education Festival, February 3, 10 a.m.– 4 p.m., Museum of Science and History, Jacksonville.

○ | St. Johns River Cleanup, March 17, 8 a.m.– noon

Visit www.coj.net or call 904-630-3420 for more information.

○ | Riverkeeper TV Show. Every Friday at 5:30 p.m. on Comcast Cable Ch. 29.

○ | This newsletter was made possible by a generous donation from an anonymous donor.




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Jacksonville, FL 32211

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