

# THE KINGFISHER

KEEPING WATCH OVER OUR RIVER



Vol. 11 Summer 2014

## Riverkeeper Update



As I began writing, I found myself saying many of the same things that I have said in the past. Was this writer's block or has nothing really changed since the last time I wrote this column? The St. Johns still suffers from excess nitrate pollution, our springs are ailing, plans still exist to remove massive quantities of water from the river, and we continue our wasteful use of our dwindling water supplies.

At the same time, growth and development are ramping up, again. This means that more fragile wetlands may be destroyed, more polluted stormwater will flow to our river, and more people will require more water and generate more pollution, creating more challenges and potential threats.

I tell you this not to depress or discourage you, but to remind you (and me) that this work requires vigilance, commitment, and a long-term perspective and vision. We are not engaged in a foot race but a marathon. Our inspiration and motivation must often come from small victories, and we must recognize that progress is sometimes measured in simply holding the line.

For instance, due to public pressure, the Central Florida Water Initiative has postponed the adoption of the Water Supply Plan for another year. This gives us more time to reduce the threat of water withdrawals and advocate for more aggressive water conservation. After we objected, the St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD) has tentatively agreed to back off plans to strip protective water quality language from the permitting rules. Also, we joined numerous groups in challenging the SJRWMD's attempt to redefine the statutory definition of Alternate Water Supply. A judge recently ruled in our favor, allowing our case to proceed.

While it remains a major threat to the health of Silver Springs, Sleepy Creek Lands (formerly known as Adena Springs Ranch) has significantly reduced the amount of water it is requesting to withdraw from the aquifer. Finally, due to our push for a more thorough evaluation of the proposed dredging of the St. Johns, Mayor Alvin Brown formed the Port Task Force, a group of community leaders who are asking good questions and taking a hard look at the economic viability and environmental impacts of this project.

With your help, the public's concerns are being heard, the river does have a voice, and we are making a difference. I shudder to think of the extensive damage that would occur to our river and springs if St. Johns Riverkeeper did not exist. Every day, I see just how critical this advocacy work is for our St. Johns. Based on the widespread public support for the river and our combined efforts to protect her, I also know that we are on the right path. Thank you for continuing to march with us as we make progress toward our goal of a clean and healthy St. Johns River.

For the River,

*Lisa*

Lisa Rinaman – Your St. Johns Riverkeeper



# Save Silver

We recently filed a petition for an administrative hearing to challenge the permits for Sleepy Creek Lands (formerly Adena Springs Ranch), a massive beef operation located in the springshed of Salt and Silver Springs and the watershed of the Silver and Ocklawaha Rivers. All are critical components of the St. Johns River System.

In Phase 1 (of 3), Sleepy Creek Lands is seeking to withdraw 1.46 million gallons of water per day (mgd) from an already over-tapped aquifer. This 30,000 acre farm eventually plans to withdraw 5.3 mgd.

Unfortunately, the St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD) has not provided reasonable assurances that water resources would not be significantly affected, as required by law. The pumping will further decrease spring flows and the massive quantities of fertilizer and manure from 9,500 head of cattle will make existing pollution problems much worse.

We need your help to protect Salt and Silver Springs and the Silver, Ocklawaha, and St. Johns Rivers!

**Donate online or mail your check to:** St. Johns Riverkeeper, c/o St. Johns River Legal and Awareness Fund, 2800 University Blvd. N., Jacksonville, FL 32211. Learn more at [stjohnsriverkeeper.org](http://stjohnsriverkeeper.org).

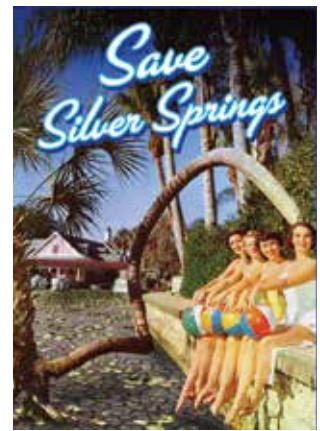


Image credit: Rick Kilby

## News & Notes

### River Friendly Month

- We had another successful St. Johns River Month, selling nearly 200 rain barrels and 40 composters from Rain Water Solutions.
- The Cummer Museum of Art & Gardens, Trad's Garden Center, and Native Plant Consulting offered workshops on River Friendly landscaping practices. Philips Garden Store, Plant Place Nursery, Native and Uncommon Plants, Trad's and Earth Works all provided native plants and featured River Friendly products.
- The River Friendly Zoo Tour included a boat trip and behind the scenes tour. The zoo showed us how it maintains beautiful gardens in Florida year round with minimal chemicals and maintenance.
- Congratulations to Chris Berg, Joel & Camille Garrison, and Jason Mehta, winners of a GoPro Hero 3+ donated by Black Creek Outfitters during the Community First Saturday "River Friendly" scavenger hunt.



### Awards

Rising Tides, our young professionals group, received the 2013 Environmental Achievement Award from the Jacksonville Environmental Protection Board for its efforts to clean up McCoys Creek.



St. Johns Riverkeeper won the Keep Jacksonville Beautiful Award for an Organization.

The Cummer Museum of Art & Gardens recognized St. Johns Riverkeeper with the 2014 Ninah May Holden Cummer Award "for building artful connections between people and the environment."

### Cleanups

Nearly 70 cleanup sites and more than 1,100 people participated in the annual St. Johns River Cleanup. Over 12 tons of trash and debris were removed from our river and the streets that lead to its waters. Rising Tides



# The River Needs You – Don't Flounder Around

We have launched a membership campaign, and we need your help.

As you know, our members are the lifeblood of our organization. You help sustain us financially and provide us with the clout, credibility, and influence that are needed to effectively address the many threats to our river's health.

Now, we need you to help us grow our ranks, by recruiting your friends, family, and co-workers to join you in this cause. Ask them to become members or purchase a gift membership. Host a social event where we can educate your guests about our important work. You are also our ambassadors, helping to spread the word throughout the community.

Contact [Jimmy@stjohnsriverkeeper.org](mailto:Jimmy@stjohnsriverkeeper.org) for membership materials and more information.

**Together, we can  
protect the St. Johns River.  
Help recruit a member today!**



continues their work on McCoy's Creek with monthly cleanups. Over the last three months, volunteers have removed an 18 foot boat, a coke machine, and more than 200 tires. Thanks to REI, the group just received a grant of \$3,000 to do a planting and recreational enhancement project on the creek. Join the group for Summer fun cleanups!



## Fundraising/Partnerships



Throughout April, Aveda salons throughout the watershed raised funds totaling over \$35,000 for St. Johns Riverkeeper through cut-a-thons, fashion shows, cleanup events and socials. We want to extend a heartfelt thanks to all of the salons that sacrificed their

time, tips and services to protect our river. We also want to recognize Aveda for their commitment to sustainability and giving back to the community. Thank You!

In March, the Inshore Xtreme Kayak Fishing Tournament took place at Browns Creek Fish Camp. This catch and

release event raised \$2,000 for our advocacy work. Thanks Yak Outlaws!

We helped hand out water and keep our storm drains litter free for nearly 25,000 runners during the annual Gate River Run.

We held a screening of Water Blues, Green Solutions and an expert panel discussion that was attended by close to 200 people. Thanks to WJCT for hosting the event.



Nearly 1,000 people visited the yard of Jimmy and Genora Crain-Orth to learn about their Outstanding River Friendly Yard during Riverside Avondale Preservation's annual Home & Garden Tour.

Kayak Amelia led a wonderful guided paddle of the St. Johns River estuary, raising nearly \$1,100 for the cause!

We were one of the featured groups at Jack Johnson's recent sold out concert in St. Augustine. Each group received a \$500 donation, a pair of tickets to the show to help raise additional funds, and the chance for a matching grant of up to \$2,500. We also collected over 200 petitions opposed to water withdrawals! We applaud Jack for his commitment to clean water and local activism.

## Calendar

- July 5  
River Ruckus
- July 4-Sept 7  
SweetWater Save our  
Water Campaign
- July 13 Save Our  
Water Pub Crawl
- July 20,  
Powers Park  
Cleanup and Picnic
- August 13  
McCoys Creek Cleanup  
Intuition Ale Works
- August 17  
Save the Ferry  
Bike Ride
- October 9-10, 11-12  
Eco-Heritage Boat Trips



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## Raise a Ruckus for the River!

**River Ruckus**  
**Riverside Arts Market (RAM)**  
**715 Riverside Drive, Jacksonville**  
**10 a.m. – 9 p.m.**

Join us for the second annual River Ruckus, a family-friendly event to celebrate recreation on the St. Johns River. The event features Standup Paddleboard lessons, kids fishing clinic and craft tent, boat trips, a kayak flotilla and a Celebrity Jump. Also enjoy live music and craft beer during this extended-hour event. Thanks to our partners and sponsors: RAM, JaxMetro Credit Union, First Coast Outfitters, Freedom Boat Club, Hook the Future, All Wet Sports, Jumping Fish, and SweetWater Brewing.

*More events and info available on  
our website and on Facebook.*



*Become a member or donate online at [www.stjohnsriverkeeper.org](http://www.stjohnsriverkeeper.org).*