

# THE KINGFISHER

KEEPING WATCH OVER OUR RIVER



Vol. 9 Spring 2012

## Riverkeeper Update

I am deeply honored to have this opportunity to represent all of you, the members of St. Johns Riverkeeper, and our greatest natural resource, the St. Johns River. As a personal fan of Neil Armingeon and someone who values the great work he has done for the St. Johns, I am saddened to see him stepping down as the St. Johns Riverkeeper. Neil has obviously been a courageous and unwavering voice for our river and will be deeply missed by all of us.

The good news is that Neil is leaving us in such great shape, with the resources and solid foundation that will allow us to build upon his work and continue the progress that has been made during his successful tenure. We are fortunate to have an extremely talented and dedicated staff and a strong network of committed volunteers, members, donors, partners, and technical experts throughout the watershed. I am thrilled about the opportunity to be a part of this outstanding team, as we move forward in our campaign for a clean and healthy St. Johns River.

I am committed to carrying on the St. Johns Riverkeeper tradition of being an outspoken advocate and strong voice for our St. Johns River. What is best for the river and the citizens to whom it belongs will continue to serve as my compass, as it did for Neil Armingeon and our first St. Johns Riverkeeper, Mike Hollingsworth. I certainly bring

a different style and approach to the position, but I will no doubt say and do what is necessary to protect the river.

We must continue our efforts to protect our river from nutrient pollution, potential water withdrawals, the Georgia-Pacific pipeline and the weakening of environmental regulations. We must also advocate for the solutions that will move us towards restoration and our goal of a clean and healthy St. Johns River.

As a policy director for the City of Jacksonville, my strength was taking complex issues, breaking them down, and developing the necessary action plans to create positive change. I have had the opportunity to use this skill as a volunteer on the St. Johns Riverkeeper Water Policy Group for the past two years. I am thrilled to now focus all of my energy, passion, and expertise solely on our river, as your St. Johns Riverkeeper. I look forward to the challenges ahead and to working with each of you in the years to come to defend and restore the mighty St. Johns River.

For the River,

Lisa Rinaman

Your St. Johns Riverkeeper





Photo: Walter Coker

## Fond Farewell

Nine years ago, I was named your St. Johns Riverkeeper. My time here has ended.

There is so much I want to say to the community and so many people to thank.

First, I want to thank all of you who have supported St. Johns Riverkeeper – financially, philosophically, and spiritually – through the years. Your belief in our work has sustained us in every sense of the word.

It is difficult to express how much your support has meant to me personally. Serving as your St. Johns Riverkeeper has been one of the greatest honors of my life.

When I interviewed for this position in 2003, I told the committee I believed Jacksonville was on the cusp of embracing the St. Johns River as our greatest natural resource. I wanted to be part of the reawakening. Building on the good work of my predecessor, Mike Hollingsworth, and with your help, Riverkeeper has become the public’s voice for the St. Johns River.

## News & Notes

### Lasalle Street Bioswale

St. Johns Riverkeeper, San Marco Preservation Society, and our numerous partners collaborated to install the City of Jacksonville’s first bioswale along Lasalle Street in front of the San Marco Library. A bioswale collects stormwater runoff from roads, rooftops, and parking lots and uses soil and plants to remove pollution before the water reaches the St. Johns River.

Funded by a grant from Coca-Cola, the bioswale was installed to demonstrate how Low Impact Development (LID) or Green Infrastructure strategies can be effectively utilized as alternatives



to traditional stormwater practices. A portion of the runoff from Lasalle Street and the surrounding area will now be diverted into the bioswale, helping to clean the stormwater before it enters our river.

Previously, this water was diverted into storm drains and went straight to the river untreated, carrying with it fertilizers, chemicals, and other pollutants.



This project was made possible by the generous contributions of numerous partners, including San Marco Preservation Society, Greenscape, Jacksonville Zoo & Gardens, enVision Design + Engineering, Coca-Cola, MetroVerde, Content Design Group, Petticoat-Schmidt, Media Works, PMB Constructors, Superior Trees, City of Jacksonville, Council Member Lori Boyer, and Jacksonville Public Library.

The project will soon get even better when Florida Roads installs a pervious concrete walkway at the site. See a great video of the project at [www.youtube.com/stjohnsriverkeeper](http://www.youtube.com/stjohnsriverkeeper).

Today, our river is the centerpiece of Northeast Florida. Protecting and restoring its health has become an important part of this community's dialogue. But, the threats to the St. Johns River are greater today than when I started.

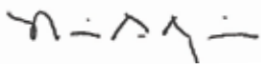
Political forces seek to weaken environmental safeguards, threaten our public trust rights, dismantle regulatory agencies, and sell-off our public lands. Some industry groups spread misinformation, seeking to pit us against one another. Environmental protections are portrayed as "job killers" and draconian. However, nothing could be further from the truth. A healthy St. Johns is our greatest asset, and what's good for the River, is good for our community and our economy.

Our new St. Johns Riverkeeper, Lisa Rinaman, faces many challenges. She has my complete confidence, and I ask you to give her the same support and assistance you've afforded me during my tenure. With your help, she will successfully carry on this important work.

When I accepted this job, I took an oath to do everything in my power to protect and defend the St. Johns River. With your support, I did the best I could to honor that pledge.

Thank you for nine great years.

For the River,



Neil A. Armingeon

To read a tribute to Neil written by Bill Belleville, author of "River of Lakes," go to our Blog: [www.stjohnsriverkeeper.org/blog](http://www.stjohnsriverkeeper.org/blog)

### March is River Awareness Month

Here's how you can get involved:

1. If you have a local business, you can help St. Johns Riverkeeper by spreading the word and collecting donations during St. Johns River Awareness Month in March. Look for and support local restaurants and shops that will be using Riverkeeper coasters and displays to raise awareness.
2. March is a great month to get out and explore the St. Johns. Visit our website and take a Virtual Tour of the river or get a copy of our Get Your Feet Wet guide.



3. Celebrate the St. Johns River by attending the exciting events planned for March.

March 3	St. Johns River 2-Hour Boat Trip
March 17	River Day at RAM (Riverside Arts Market)
March 17	Annual St. Johns River Cleanup and Celebration
March 17	96.9 the Eagle and All Wet Sports Kegs n' Eggs Cleanup After Party
March 24	Family River Day at The Jacksonville Landing

4. Be River Friendly. March is a time of the year when we start working in the yard again. Remember to use water, fertilizers and chemicals sparingly, and certainly no more than is needed. Consider planting native and drought-tolerant plants that require little maintenance. Do your part for the river!

Visit our website to learn more about places to explore, business participating in River Month, upcoming events, and River Friendly tips. [www.stjohnsriverkeeper.org](http://www.stjohnsriverkeeper.org).



## Calendar

- February 18  
Rally for the Rivers  
Rodman Dam, food,  
displays, free boat trips  
[www.pececweb.org](http://www.pececweb.org)
- March 3  
River Awareness Month  
Boat Trip
- March 17  
River Day at RAM
- March 17  
Annual River Cleanup
- April 7  
Boat Trip

For more info:  
[stjohnsriverkeeper.org](http://stjohnsriverkeeper.org)

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## 2-Day Eco-Heritage Boat Trips

ALL ABOARD! Spend two days traveling and exploring the majestic St. Johns River!

April 12-13  
(Palatka to Sanford)

April 14-15  
(Sanford to Palatka)

Trip includes:  
Historical re-enactors, fascinating speakers  
(including author Bill Belleville), stops at Blue Springs and  
Hontoon Island, wonderful wildlife-viewing opportunities,  
lodging, delicious lunches, and chartered bus transportation.

Cost: \$325 per passenger.

Reservation forms are available on our website or  
call 904-256-7591.



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