

Agenda

WWALS Quarterly Board Meeting

2:00-4:00 PM, Sunday, 18 April 2021

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89308028204?pwd=VmwyMzVTMVR6WGJxbUFUSIFXWFRWQT09>

ZOOM Meeting ID: 893 0802 8204 **Password:** 392346

One tap mobile: +19294362866,,89308028204#,,,,,0#,,392346#

Dial In: +1 929 436 2866 **Meeting ID:** 893 0802 8204 **Meeting Password:** 392346

Participation, pandemic, paddle races, outings, cleanups, water quality testing, opposition to mines, water withdrawals, coal ash, and pellet plants, promotion of solar power, and of course finances: the WWALS board will be discussing all those in its Quarterly Board meeting. The public is invited. We will be meeting online by zoom, so you don't even have to go anywhere.

Invited to attend: WWALS members, especially committee members, and the general public.

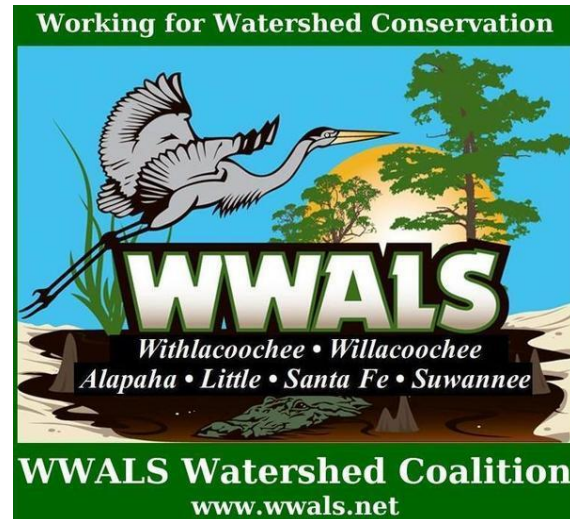
All WWALS Board Members are expected to attend.

The more done on the board list, the less time we have to spend in this meeting.

Board Members: for bios, terms, etc. see <http://wwals.net/about/board/>

- Tom H. Johnson Jr. (Chair of Nominating and Songwriting Committees)*
- Tom Potter (Senior Vice President and Chair of Science Committee)*
- Garry Gentry (Secretary and Board delegate to Advisory Committee)*
- Shelby Miller (Treasurer and Chair of Personnel Committee)*
- Dave Hetzel (WWALS Ambassador and Chair of Advisory Committee)
- Dan Phillips (Chair of Water Trails Committee)
- Laura D'Alisera (Scribe of Songwriting Contest Committee)
- Bret Wagenhorst
- Trudy Cole

* Executive Committee.



Staff: see also <http://wwals.net/about/board/#staff>

- Gretchen Quarterman, Executive Director (Chair of Membership, Finance, and Grant-Writing Committees)
- John S. Quarterman, Suwannee Riverkeeper® (Chair of PR and Watershed Issues Committees)

Committees: see also wwals.net/about/committees/ and [Committee items](#) below.

- Eileen Box (Chair of Events Committee)
- Suzanne Hall (Chair of Testing Committee)
- Vacant (Chair of Outings Committee)

Agenda:

1. Call to Order including welcoming guests and explaining how this meeting is conducted (anyone can speak; only board members vote; try to stick to the topic at hand). We will be using the zoom waiting room to avoid trolls, so the host will approve you after you join the meeting.
2. Secretary
 - a. Agenda Review: Additions and Changes
 - b. Approve Minutes
 - i. Vote: Approve Minutes of 17 January 2021 WWALS Quarterly Board Meeting
 - ii. Vote: Record in minutes of this WWALS board meeting the Email votes by WWALS Board or Executive Committee since last WWALS Quarterly Board Meeting (see [Secretary Report](#)).
 - c. Next Meetings:
 - i. Review schedule: 2PM Sunday Jul 18 (preceded by Annual Meeting), Oct 17, 2021.
 - ii. Later in the agenda, we will also see Outings Committee and Events Committee.
3. Treasurer. See [Treasurer Report](#).
 - a. Financial Report:
https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/1riJpyVXUG7_WCDsA0sMjVAwwMFLyiIV
 - b. Review Vision Budget
https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1BYbeKTGTnmFXEuBjPVI1-qHCp5v21k45_vKIMj2Rq_g/edit?usp=sharing
 - c. Define meanings of membership levels and organizational memberships or sponsorships.
4. President. See [President Report](#).
 - a. **Promoting participation.**
5. Executive Director (business). See [Report](#).
 - a. COVID-19 response
 - b. **Projects and Programs.** Survey - first for board, then for members.
 - c. See also [Grants Committee Report](#).
6. Suwannee Riverkeeper (advocacy); see [Report](#).
 - a. Trash traps, single-use plastics, trust funds, LNG, pipelines, FERC, Phosphogypsum, Nestle, Coal Ash, against protest criminalization, offshore oil drilling, Port pre-emption, etc.
 - b. How you can help with advocacy.
7. **Committee items for discussion or vote are in agenda; see also appended reports.**
8. Advisory Committee: Chair Ambassador Dave Hetzel, Board Delegate Garry Gentry. See [Report](#).
9. Events Committee: Chair Eileen Box; see [Report](#)
 - a. Festival Booth reappeared at Azalea Festival in Valdosta.
 - b. Booth online: <http://wwals.net/2020/03/24/videos-wwals-booth-2020-03-21/>
 - c. On-Line events (facebook live, etc)
 - d. Organize event, Natural History of the Suwannee River Basin, With Rights of Nature? Online?
10. Executive Committee: Chair ex officio Tom H. Johnson Jr.; see [Report](#)



11. Finance Committee: Chair Gretchen Quarterman; see [Report](#)
12. Grant-writing Committee: Chair Gretchen Quarterman; see [Report](#)
 - a. DNR RTP water trail sign and brochure grant - should we reapply for more things?
 - b. Georgia Power water quality testing grant.
 - c. **We need to apply for grants to get money.**
 - d. Would someone else like to chair this committee?
13. Membership Committee: Chair Gretchen Quarterman; see [Report](#)
14. Nominating Committee: Chair Tom H. Johnson Jr.; see [Report](#)
15. Outings Committee: Chair Vacant; see [Report](#).
 - a. Vote on additional Outings Committee members or new committee chair?
 - b. BLRPR 2021 --Bret Wagenhorst
 - c. Review [Outings Checklist](#).
16. Personnel Committee: Chair Shelby Miller; see [Personnel Committee Report](#)
17. Public Relations Committee: Chair John S. Quarterman; see [Report](#).
 - a. **Review WWALS internal googlegroup email lists and public social media.**
 - b. Need pinned WWALS blog landing page.
 - c. Suwannee bass graphic donated by artist Hank Hershey for fundraising.
 - d. What about a WWALS library of water-related books? Who will be librarian?
 - e. Please add to *Tannin Times* Newsletter before end of month.
 - f. SoGaConnections, quarterly.
18. Science Committee: Chair Tom Potter; See [Science Committee Report](#).
19. Songwriting Contest Committee: Chair Tom H. Johnson Jr.; see [Report](#).
 - a. Progress of 2021 Suwannee Riverkeeper Songwriting Contest Committee. See Report.
20. Testing Committee: Chair Suzy Hall; See [Testing Committee Report](#).
 - a. GIS mapping project.
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1shms0UJWsdakaJkZgPb07oHQKufK-2vJqbHHeACGM3o/edit?usp=sharing>
 - b. Georgia testing training schedule.
 - c. Get data into Georgia Adopt-A-Stream.
 - d. Florida testing training needed again.
21. Trails Committee: Chair Dan Phillips; see [Trails Committee Report](#)
22. Watershed Issues Committee: Chair John S. Quarterman. See [Issues Report](#).
23. How busy everybody is and how many technical difficulties.
24. Executive Session to discuss external organizations.
25. Reconvene from Executive Session and vote on any resulting items.
26. Adjourn

Reports: *Send them in by Saturday, 10 April 2021.*

Updated reports: Events, Executive Director, Finance, Grants, Issues, Membership, Outings, President, Public Relations, Science, Secretary, Songwriting, Suwannee Riverkeeper, Testing, Trails, Treasurer

Not updated: Advisory, Executive Committee, Nominating, Personnel.

1. Committee system; see [purpose, dos, and don'ts](#)
2. Secretary Report [Updated 2021-04-16](#).

WWALS Board motions passed via email, 17 January 2021 to 18 April 2021

We have [a spreadsheet on the google drive](#) to record these email motions as they are passed.

Two in the past quarter were to sign on to external petitions, and three were to add committee members.

Date Passed	Moved by	Seconded by	Ratio
2021-02-01	Tom Potter	Laura D'Alisera	6:0
That WWALS enter as a petitioner into the petition for rulemaking about phosphogypsum started by Center for Biological Diversity, with the understanding that WWALS will not make any financial contribution to lawsuits and other legal actions should they arise.			
2021-02-08	Laura D'Alisera	Tom Potter	6:0
That WWALS sign on to an Amicus Brief in support of the Petition for Review by Earthjustice, Sierra Club, et al, filed with the U. S. Department of Transportation for review of the final rule issued by PHMSA entitled, "Hazardous Materials: Liquefied Natural Gas by Rail."			
2021-03-09	Tom Potter	Tom H. Johnson Jr.	8:0
To add Elizabeth Brunner, Valerie Folsom, and Anthony Folsom to the WWALS Testing Committee.			
2021-03-12	Tom H. Johnson Jr.	Laura D'Alisera	6:0
To add Dale Everett of Lanier County become a member of the Songwriting Committee.			
2021-03-16	Tom H. Johnson Jr.	Laura D'Alisera	6:0
To add JJ Rolle to the Songwriting Contest Committee.			

3. Treasurer Report [Updated 2021-04-07](#)

- a. Please ask if you have any questions.

Balances as of March 31, 2021

Checking	\$5,850.70
Savings	\$5,850.50
Paypal	\$4,683.96
Total Balance	\$16,385.16

Outstanding Commitments:

3000.00	Riverkeeper Salary (Apr-Jun)
600.00	Legal (FERC)
About 1,200	Water Quality Grant Project

Completed Commitments this quarter: See Complete Financial Report

Expenditures: See Quick Books Report for details [2021-03-31--Financials](#)

Summary: Our income this past quarter has come primarily from membership and the donations made on Georgia Gives through Facebook in December. We continue to make money on \$10.00 donations at outings, especially moonlight paddles. As far as expenditures go, our main ones were these: The Riverkeeper Salary, Water Quality Supplies, and subcontractors for the Mayor's paddle. Our expenditures for the past quarter totaled \$6,453.30. We had a net operating loss of -2,821.01.

4. President Report, Tom H. Johnson, Jr. [Updated 2021-04-17](#)

- a. When appointing officers or committee chairs, candidate first needs to agree that if they decide not to do it anymore, part of their duty is to help find a replacement.
- b. Bi-weekly mid-week zoom meetings of Executive Committee with open committee attendance seem useful.
- c. What do members get for different membership levels? See separate writeup on [Sponsors and Members](#).
- d. See [Finance Committee Report](#) about Budget Vision.

The Suwannee River Basin continues to have threats from within and without. New crops using dangerous pesticides are being introduced in the region, the permit for the proposed Twin Pines titanium mine now rests on approval from the state of Georgia, and the proposed superhighway across the lower end of the Suwannee threatens the aquifer, not just by roadwork construction but also with commercial and residential development.

Participation with WWALS volunteer efforts have good, and attendance with outing events have tended to be well above average, weather permitting. Board member participation and response to emails and board motions has been down or quite slow this quarter, perhaps due to spring and vaccinations.

Water testing by volunteers has shown that much of the biological pollution in the Withlacoochee and Suwannee has not been due to sewage treatment plant spills, though there have been municipal spills, but a good percentage of biological pollution is from other sources. No spills at all should be the goal of municipal systems, and now that sources have begun to be identified mitigation and grants for mitigation can begin.

5. Executive Director Report (business) **Updated 2021-04-17**
 - a. WWALS applied for and received a PPP Loan for 2083.00. Next step is to apply for forgiveness. This step has been vastly simplified for awards under 50K. It is now two pages instead of 44. Still need to do this
 - b. I'd like to work on the survey but simply don't have the inclination. I am still thinking about it.
 - c. Water Trail brochures distributed so far to SRWMD, Berrien County Commission and Tourism, Valdosta-Lowndes County Tourism Authority, Lowndes County, Valdosta, etc. See spreadsheet: <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1JZkAwro0NXJiXdX8KrUCD68ecCr9Vvk3Zolgye9Gyiqs/edit#gid=0>
 - d. Festival Booth debut after hiatus: Azalea Festival, Valdosta, 13-14 March <https://wwals.net/?p=54985>
 - e. We need to have Outings scheduled in advance so they can be announced in the newsletter and South Georgia Connections PLEASE.
 - f. Next South Georgia Connections will be due end of May for July, August, September.
 - g. Have been paying various memberships, dues, and government registrations.
 - h. Vote: None

6. Suwannee Riverkeeper Report (advocacy) **Updated 2021-04-18.**
 - a. Summaries:
 - i. Most advocacy is in the February, March, and April *Tannin Times* WWALS monthly newsletters.
 - ii. See also spreadsheet of External letters or actions signed on to by WWALS after review by WWALS board. <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1cm0ysy48m5kdN0qA9IplvtULwY1eQmHYr8h0tD4aY/edit#gid=0>
 - b. Leveraging WWALS Earth Day cleanup at Joree Millpond and Sugar Creek in Valdosta <https://wwals.net/?p=55293>
 - i. to pitch trash traps. <https://wwals.net/2021/04/12/trash-traps/>
 - ii. which also fits with Plastic Free America <https://wwals.net/2020/12/09/plastic-free-2020-12-08/>
 - c. FERC: LNG, pipelines, etc.; see [Watershed Issues Committee Report](#).
 - i. Signed on to Amicus Brief by Earthjustice, et al. asking U.S. DOT to reverse PHMSA LNG by Rail. <https://earthjustice.org/news/press/2020/groups-file-legal-challenge-to-stop-bomb-trains>
 - d. Georgia Triennial Review of Water Quality Standards: asking each relevant county commission for letters of support and water trail resolutions, as well as letters from NPDES-permitted local governments and companies. <https://wwals.net/?p=48582>
 - e. Suwannee-Satilla Regional Water Planning Council
 - i. Attended 15 April 2021 meeting in Valdosta: Suwannee Riverkeeper (in person) and WWALS Science Committee Chair Dr. Tom Potter (via zoom). <https://wwals.net/?p=55160>
 - ii. Latest predictions show population growth in almost all counties except Lowndes (opposite of previous predictions). Yet more water use per capita in Lowndes; probably due to industry; EPD promised to investigate.
 - iii. Energy predictions failed to mention solar power and thus were useless.
 - iv. Asked if source water protection was on the agenda, considering agricultural contamination issues revealed by massive water quality testing on and near Withlacoochee River. Answer: yes, due to previous concern about contamination of Alapaha River, since decreased due to Best Management Practices (BMPs). But Council needs funding to do anything.
 - v. Georgia governor is doing appointments to WPCs, starting with reappointments. There are also vacancies, partly due to incumbents dying of natural causes.
 - vi. How to lobby for specific appointments or funding for WPCs: contact state legislative delegation.
 - f. Proposed titanium mine near Okefenokee Swamp. <http://wwals.net/issues/titanium-mining/>
 - i. Organized shuttle vehicle parking in Dixie County for four paddlers traversing the Swamp and the entire Suwannee River: <https://wwals.net/?p=54641>
 - ii. 2021-01-25: On talk radio about Okefenokee <https://wwals.net/?p=54653>
 - iii. 2021-01-25: Walter Parks, bard of Okefenokee Swamp Hollers <https://wwals.net/?p=54645>
 - iv. 2021-01-26: Nominating Okefenokee NWR for UNESCO World Heritage List <https://wwals.net/?p=54828>

- v. 2021-02-08: Contacted new GA-EPD Vice Director John Eunice (former Valdosta City Council) to clarify GA-EPD permit process for Twin Pines strip mine too near Okefenokee Swamp <https://wwals.net/?p=55074>
- vi. 2021-03-18: **Waterkeeper Alliance alert: Help Suwannee Riverkeeper Save Okefenokee Swamp** <https://wwals.net/?p=55092>
- vii. 2021-04-04: Okefenokee Swamp south drains west to Suwannee River <https://wwals.net/?p=55258>
- viii. 2021-04-07: Georgia Recorder article: Alligator snapping turtle threatened status: another reason to protect the Okefenokee Swamp <https://wwals.net/?p=55288>
- ix. WWALS President Tom H. Johnson Jr. continues to represent WWALS on the Okefenokee Protection Alliance (OPA). protectokefenokee.org
- g. Wood pellet plant in Adel, GA:
 - i. Invited to Earth Day April 24, 2021, afternoon event in Adel.
- h. Georgia Water Coalition (GWC):
 - i. GA HB 511 passed unanimously by GA House and Senate, awaiting governor's signature, to implement GA Amendment 1 for fees and taxes to go to their stated purpose. <https://legiscan.com/GA/bill/HB511/2021>
 - ii. Participating in GWC Silviculture Committee spinoff of a proposed (not by us) GWC policy about biomass and wood pellet plants, including writing review of section 3 groundwater and section 5 interchange between groundwater and surface waters of A-EPD year 2000 Source Water Assessment Implementation Plan <https://epd.georgia.gov/document/document/swap-source-water-assessment-and-protection-implementation-plan-final-revised-mar/download>
 - iii. WWALS sponsored and Suwannee Riverkeeper participated in Capitol Conservation Day <https://wwals.net/?p=54944>
 - iv. Continued participation in GWC Committee about the Okefenokee Swamp
 - v. Proceeding with starting GWC Committee on Bill of Rights for Nature wwals.net/2019/10/10/a-bill-of-rights-for-nature/
- i. Nestle
 - i. Suwannee Riverkeeper advised SRWMD board that they could vote against the Nestle permit, Nestle and SRWMD attorneys told them they had to, and they did. <https://wwals.net/?p=54905>
 - ii. SRWMD is appealing its own permit approval decision, after SRWMD attorneys filed after other orgs (presumably including OSFR) said they were filing. <https://wwals.net/?p=55265>
- j. Proposed FL trio of toll roads, including Suncoast Connector to cross the Suwannee River heading to Thomasville, GA.
 - i. FL HB 6059 would remove Jefferson County as termination of Suncoast Connector, and FL SB 100 would eliminate that toll road, but both would leave the possibility of expanding US 19, possibly with tolls, to sneak it in later. <https://wusfnews.wusf.usf.edu/transportation/2021-04-07/florida-toll-road-project-could-see-change-for-suncoast-parkway>
- k. Weekly telecons with Waterkeepers Florida (WKFL); various votes to support their activities.
 - i. Voted for WKFL to sign on to (*and signed Suwannee Riverkeeper on individually):
 1. opposition FL HB1/SB484 protest criminalization bill.
 2. opposition to any future offshore oil drilling in Bahamian waters.*
 3. oppose Florida port pre-emption in FL SB 426.
 4. request for Congressional hearing on phosphogypsum stacks and mines. *
- l. Attended zoom meetings of Gulf and South Atlantic Waterkeepers.
- m. SGRC 419 grant proposal:: See [Science Committee Report](#).
- n. See also [Watershed Issues Committee Report](#), [Public Relations Committee Report](#), and [Trails Committee Report](#).

7. Committee Reports

- a. Each Committee chair please send report to board list (or insert directly into this agenda) by the first day of the month of the board meeting, or at the latest one week before the board meeting..
 - b. Include: a main report (previous events or outings, recent additions to the committee, other things already voted on by the etc.), plus these types of items for the main agenda above as committee sub-items:
 - i. Items needing discussion by the Board.
 - ii. Items needing a vote by the Board.
8. Advisory Committee Report: Chair Ambassador Dave Hetzel. **Updated 2020-04-18.**
- a. Need more committee members.
 - b. See invitation letter the Committee is sending to potential new Advisors. <http://wwals.net/?p=49367>
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1hwGGJ036vAqmJ6D-MJ1MR4R3QwosOeXdhD5DjY4bLWo/edit?usp=sharing>
9. Events Committee Report: Chair Eileen Box **Updated 2021-04-11 by gretchen**
- a. Had Booth at Azalea Festival (Valdosta).
 - b. Have signed up for HoneyBee Festival in Hahira in October
 - c. Many festivals are still cancelled.
 - d. Need someone to lead proposed event, Natural History of the Suwannee River Basin
 - e. Or do another version of Water, Forestry, and Agriculture
10. Executive Committee Report: Chair ex officio Tom H. Johnson Jr.
- a. Held one zoom meeting open to board and committee chairs; no decisions were made.
11. Finance Committee Report: Chair Gretchen Quarterman **Updated 2021-04-07**
- a. See: <https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/1GMsOUgXVjpKCPiAIM09vblfdV3xYRRXV>
12. Grant-writing Committee Report: Chair Gretchen Quarterman **Updated 2021-04-11**
- a. **We need to find and apply for grants because we need money.**
 - b. <https://groups.google.com/forum/#!forum/wwals-grants> If you want to join, just say so.
 - c. GA-EPD Seed Grant that SGRC got: **We were expecting water quality testing supplies for WWALS but now SGRC seems to be going it alone, training volunteers and assigning locations.**
 - d. Applied for Georgia Power Foundation non profit grant like last year. Have received notice that we will receive \$5000.00 this year.
 - e. GA-EPD 319 (EPA Healthy Watersheds Initiative) grant proposal: **will apply in 2021**
 - f. Items needing a vote by the Board: none.

13. Membership Committee Report: Chair Gretchen Quarterman Updated 2021-04-07

- a. Our renewals are better but not as good as I would like. We need people becoming regular donors and inviting their friends to do the same. **We need monthly donors.** We currently have four.

Month	Year	New	Renew	Comp	Month Total	Running Year Total
	2015					90
	2016					119
	2017					148
	2018					163
	2019					186
1	2020	8	14		22	22
2	2020	2	10		12	34
3	2020	3	7		10	44
4	2020	7	9		16	60
5	2020	14	7		21	81
6	2020	8	3		11	92
7	2020	4	2		6	98
8	2020	10	2	10	22	120
9	2020	11	1		12	132
10	2020	8	1		9	141
11	2020	4	15		19	160
12	2020	9	12		21	181
1	2021	5	12		17	17
2	2021	6	12		18	35
3	2021	7	6		13	48

- b. Discussion: Every one invite your friends to join/ donate
 c. Vote: none

14. Nominating Committee Report Updated 2020-?.

The WWALS Board at its Quarterly Board Meeting 12 July 2020 via zoom reappointed a standing Nominating Committee to recommend board members, officers, etc., consisting of the following current WWALS board members and staff:
Tom H. Johnson Jr., Chair, Laura D'Alisera, and John S. Quarterman.

*The Nominating Committee recommends for Advisory Committee, per WWALS ByLaws, Article V, Section 7:
Who?*

Please also note the

WWALS Committee Participation Policy,

Policy # 2016-10-12:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ij6efQFSeF8QWMCw3rxKqggQV1TzPdHMF16FFLOaq0/edit>

Policy Purpose:

To ensure that all committee members are WWALS members and that all Board Members are familiar with WWALS committee structures and procedures.

Policy Details:

1. All members of WWALS committees must be WWALS members.
2. WWALS Committee Chairs are not required to be board members, however they must sign the WWALS Gift Disclosure, WWALS Conflict of Interest Disclosure and WWALS Employee Whistleblower Policies. Additionally, they must also abide by the WWALS Insurance / Driver's License Policy # 2015-07-05
3. To be considered for WWALS Board membership, a person must first be a member of and regularly participate on a WWALS committee.

15. Outings Committee Report; Chair vacant; Updated 2021-04-16.

Full Moon Tour flyer for Banks Lake Outpost.

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1o5_cFwGLzTJAHAffiMAGTafVYMfpKh7EvscWBKSaoik/edit?ts=6011721c

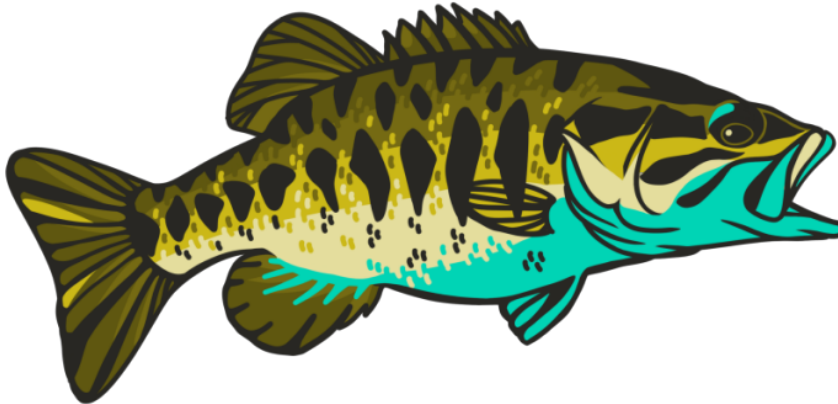
We had to work around COVID for the New Year Paddle on the Ichetucknee and modify our paddle to an upstream and back. The full moon paddles continue to be successful with a record turnout in February nearly 40 people from WWALS with another group on the lake and VSU CORE tried to muster up an event for that same paddle. We had to manage around increased flooding and inclement weather which led to the rescheduling of the Mayor Paddle twice as well as the Adams Tract camping trip which rained on us the full 10 mile paddle the second day but all paddlers were happy. Half a dozen people paddled the Mayor's Paddle route at the original February time, and it was good for experienced paddlers, with the Mayor posing next to the sign at the WWTP, the only thing visible above the river water. Its worth mentioning that VSU CORE joined WWALS on the Mayor Paddle bringing 9 college students. The dual paddling cleanup went well yesterday at Joree Millpond and on the Withlacoochee River from Sugar Creek to Troupville Boat Ramp.

Seats are filling up for the BIG Little River Paddle Race on April 24th, and the April 26th Full Pink Moon Paddle is scheduled.

- a. Adams Tract Rivercamp- Bobby McKenzie
- b. BLRPR- Bret Wagenhorst
- c. [Outings Checklist](#).
- d. For previous and upcoming outings, see: <http://wwals.net/events-2/outings-events/>

16. Personnel Committee Report: Chair Shelby Miller Updated 2020-10-?

17. Public Relations Committee Report: Chair John S. Quarterman Updated 2021-04-18.
- a. Need pinned WWALS blog landing page.
 - b. Suwannee bass graphic donated by artist Hank Hershey for fundraising.



- c. What about a WWALS library of water-related books? Who will be librarian?
- d. Press Releases: <https://wwals.net/about/news/press-releases/> Earth Day cleanups, BLRPR, Mayor's Paddle (three times), Gypstack petition to EPA, FL toll roads boondoggle repeal bill.
 - i. Apparently we should do more PR about outings.
- e. News Coverage: <https://wwals.net/about/news/> Suwannee alligator snapping turtle U.S. FWS proposed endangered status, Mayor's Paddle (8 times), Banks Lake Full Wolf Moon Paddle, advance notice of meetings, Gypstack petition to EPA,
 - i. Radio: Scott James, Brain Blount; need to add to news web page.
 - ii. Waterkeeper Alliance: about Okefenokee, Songwriting Contest; need to add to news page.
 - iii. Much social media. Probably other coverage; behind on cataloging; could use help.
- f. Apparently we need to do more posts about aspects of the Suwannee River Basin:
 - i. The post that got the most likes on Instagram: Suwannee River Basin is bigger than several states, less populous than any <https://wwals.net/?p=55021>
 - ii. Widely shared on facebook: Okefenokee Swamp south drains west to Suwannee River <https://wwals.net/?p=55258>
 - iii. Advocacy posts may be well liked, especially if about the Okefenokee Swamp.
 - iv. And reports with pictures about outings play well.
- g. Presentations: Suwannee Riverkeeper John S. Quarterman spoke via zoom to Tifton Rotary Club, thanks to invitation via WWALS Board Member Bret Wagenhorst.
- h. Songwriting2020 videos: ongoing series. <https://wwals.net/?p=54533>
- i. Outings pictures slow being posted, but members posting many on facebook
- j. Too many posts about E. coli and sewage spills to count. See <http://wwals.net/issues/testing/#results>
- k. Continuing to distribute WWALS sheet through SGA Connect at Moody AFB in their monthly and quarterly distributions to new people moving into the area, per lead from Garry Gentry. https://docs.google.com/document/d/1TjkMbCFk6gWSs_fx9xaiStaAKMsiddUlvpVqGcOHLCO/edit?usp=sharing
- l. Selling notecards, stickers, hats, and memberships, for donations in new online store. <http://wwals.net/?p=52018>
- m. Did three issues of *Tannin Times* newsletter, which also contains some other PR.
- n. Need to start work on newsletter earlier and need input from committees.
- o. Numerous announcements of events and writeups, some including video, on WWALS blog, distributed via facebook, InstaGram, and twitter, and sometimes via email to relevant parties.
- p. Need more people sharing (facebook, twitter, Instagram), distributing flyers, contacting reporters, etc.

18. Science Committee Report: Chair Tom Potter **Updated 2021-04-16**

The WWALS Science committee continued to follow water quality testing on the Withlacoochee River and Okapilco Creek conducted by the WWALS testing committee, FDEP, the City of Valdosta, and other parties. It was noted that on several occasions during the quarter E. coli bacteria exceeded levels that are acceptable for water contact recreation and that health alerts were posted. As observed previously, the highest E. coli levels typically followed precipitation exceeding 2.5 cm within the watershed. Data also indicated that a primary source of the bacterial contamination is runoff from dairy and other cattle farming operations in the watershed. This was supported by ongoing DNA testing of water samples collected by FDEP at the GA31 Bridge (state line). This site is part of the FDEP trends network which includes 78 surface collection sites on rivers, canals, and lakes that are spread across the state.

(<https://floridadep.gov/dear/watershed-monitoring-section/content/trend-network>). Samples are collected quarterly and comprehensively analyzed for human and animal waste biomarkers (DNA), residues of pharmaceuticals, and other chemicals that are indicators of human waste discharges (both treated and untreated), indicator bacteria, and a variety of pesticides and selected pesticide degradates. In the most recent sample collected on 1/4/2021, DNA biomarkers that were an indicator of ruminant waste were detected. E Coli bacteria tests also exceeded health alert levels. Results indicate that ruminants continue to be a primary source of bacterial contamination of the river. On April 12, the Science committee organized and conducted a ZOOM meeting with the Lowndes and Brooks County's Agricultural Extension Agents to discuss findings and explore solutions. The agents indicated their interest and availability to participate in education and outreach within the watershed related to management of animal wastes.

DNA testing of selected surface water samples was also conducted by the WWALS testing committee. The laboratory that performed these tests, was able to provide results specific for both ruminants and swine. The addition of swine DNA to the testing protocol was enlightening since it indicated that swine, in particular feral hogs living near the river, may also be a source of E. coli bacteria. There is an ongoing federally funded feral swine eradication program in wetlands near the Flint River.

(<http://flintriverswcd.org/news/2019/11/21/usda-nrcs-announces-flint-river-soil-and-water-conservation-district-as-pilot-project-partner-for-feral-swine-eradication-and-control-pilot-program>). The program is being conducted in part to address high levels of E. coli bacteria in river water samples. A similar effort is ongoing at the Tall Timbers research station in northern Leon County (<https://talltimbers.org/grant-received-to-control-feral-swine/>). It appears that a project of this type may be needed within the Withlacoochee watershed.

To further mitigation efforts, the Science committee continued to work with the South Georgia Regional Commission (SGRC) to develop a 319 grant proposal. This included several online meetings. There was consensus that a project that combines implementation of Best Management Practices (BMP) for dairy and beef cattle operations combined with monitoring to assess efficacy would be beneficial. It is anticipated that WWALS will be able to make a substantial contribution due to ongoing water quality monitoring by the Testing Committee. Science Committee Chair Potter and Suwannee Riverkeeper Quarterman have also participated in the weekly Waterkeepers Florida meetings via ZOOM Topics covered a wide range often focusing on critical Florida water policy issues. Technical assistance was provided in drafting comments regarding proposed rulemaking for Biosolids application to farmland and programs that are designed to treat wastewater for use as potable water supplies. Another ongoing Science Committee effort was monitoring the Twin Pines Minerals, LLC, application to construct a titanium mine in Charlton County, GA. Changes in Federal Laws have shifted all responsibility for permits for the mine to the State of Georgia Environmental Protection (GAEPD) Division. Letters alerting both GAEPD and elected officials to the threat that the mine presents to the Okefenokee Swamp were sent. Further efforts are planned.

Finally Committee chair Potter and Suwannee Riverkeeper Quarterman attended the SUWANNEE-SATILLA REGIONAL WATER PLANNING COUNCIL MEETING on April 15. <https://wwals.net/?p=55160> The meeting was organized by Georgia EPD. Speakers provided detailed assessments of water use and population growth within the region. Agriculture is the dominant user of water accounting for 75% of all consumptive use. The primary source is the Floridan aquifer.

19. Songwriting Committee Report: Chair, Tom H. Johnson, Jr. [Updated 2021-04-17.](#)

The first quarter is off to a good start for 2021. With new members, and a revised set of rules, the songwriting contest is further ahead than at this time last year, especially as the venue at the Turner Art Park in Valdosta is reserved/secured. John Quarterman was able to post the revised rules, revised application form, and announcements for the contest just before April 1 when the contest application period opened.

<https://wwals.net/?p=55214>

Still to be resolved and under consideration is the slate of judges, the search for SPONSORS, who should be the master of ceremonies (MC), the amount of time for the contest, the headliner bands, how to make the contest event itself be more attractive to a younger audience, and food for the event, AND, the best time for the committee itself to meet by ZOOM.

Thank you to all committee members!

Respectfully submitted,

Tom H. Johnson, Jr.

Members: Tom Johnson Jr., John S. Quarterman (JSQ), Scotti Jay, Sarah Jones, Laura D'Alisera, Dave Rodock, Josh Duncan, Angela Duncan,

Next Committee meeting: **Meets weekly via Zoom Conference Call, Tuesday at Noon**

20. Testing Committee Report: Chair Suzy Hall [Updated 2021-04-16.](#)

Organize regular, frequent water quality monitoring, beginning upstream and down of the main problem areas (Valdosta, Tifton, Quitman, Pilgrim's Pride) and expanding to upstream and down of the other known point sources of pollution, plus every landing, spring, and swimming hole. See <https://wwals.net/issues/testing/>

With more testers since the latest training, on the Thursday before the Mayor's Paddle WWALS tested sixty river miles from GA 122 on the Alapaha, Little, and Withlacoochee Rivers, down the Withlacoochee River almost to the Suwannee, when there were no recent results from Valdosta or Madison Health. Fortunately, all results were clean.

Weekly downstream tests continue, with others monthly.

21. Trails Committee Report: Chair Dan Phillips Updated 2021-04-16.

- a. After two zoom meetings attended by Suwannee Riverkeeper, WWALS Vision for Lowndes County Waterways incorporated into VLPRA Master Plan revisions. <https://wwals.net/?p=54946>
- b. ARWT and WLRWT Brochures are printed, using GA-DNR grant.
 - i. Please record who got what brochures and signs here: <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1JZkAwro0NXJiXdX8KrUCD68ecCr9Vv3Zolgye9Gviqs/edit#gid=0>
 - ii. Gretchen dropped off two boxes of each at VL Tourism Authority.
- c. Signs:
 - i. We have all the road signs, signposts, and hardware. <https://wwals.net/?p=54281>
 - ii. We have all the at-water signs: <https://wwals.net/?p=54270>
 - iii. After a delay due to high water we can start planting at water signs again. Planning on installing signs at Reed Bingham State Park before the BLRPR, along with road signs at Red Roberts Landing.
- d. Talk to SRWMD or the state of Florida about designating WLRWT and ARWT as Florida water trails?
- e. Georgia River Network (GRN)
 - i. Updates are ongoing to the online maps and web pages in preparation of a new smartphone app that Georgia River Network is doing. You can help: <https://forms.gle/ugtwJE5uzR7N8Zcx8>
 - ii. ARWT and WLRWT are finally in Georgia River Network lists of established water trails and GRN map <https://garivers.org/established-trails/>
 - iii. GRN is adding Suwannee River in Georgia as a developing water trail because of a consortium already meeting about that: Suwannee Headwaters Project, <http://wwals.net/?p=49532>.

22. Watershed Issues Committee Report: Chair John S. Quarterman Updated 2021-04-18

- a. For Sabal Trail pipeline, Florida toll roads, and Georgia and Florida legislatures, see [Suwannee Riverkeeper Report](#).
- b. For water quality testing, see [Testing Committee Report](#).
- c. LNG export lawsuit fundraising stalled, and still need new expert witness.
 - i. FERC is forming an Office of Public Participation, preceded by a bunch of “Listening Sessions” and a panel discussion. They got an earful at each. Suwannee Riverkeeper spoke at the first; report forthcoming. <https://wwals.net/?p=55083>
 - ii. 2021-03-18: FERC gets inland LNG half right, for Puerto Rico, and maybe more soon <https://wwals.net/?p=55234>
 - iii. 2021-04-04: Strom LNG is late again in reporting to FE: <https://wwals.net/?p=55252> Thanks to WWALS member Maxine Connor for the reminder.
 - iv. Issues Committee has a strategy for following up on FERC’s LNG admission.
 - v. Several Issues Committee members continue getting information out of agencies and industry, etc.
- d. Maxine Connor has been following FL leg. Bills.
- e. Cecile Scofield got an article, LNG Nightmare, posted in Friends & Neighbors, Martin County, Florida: <https://friendsandneighborsofmartincounty.com/friends-neighbors-feb-14-2021/>