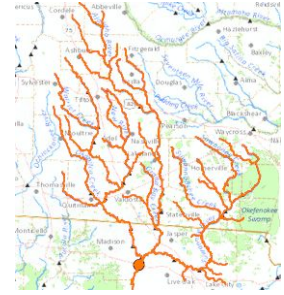


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## September 2016 Tannin Times

**WWALS Biota.** The [WWALS August outing on the upper Suwannee River from Roline to Cypress Creek](#) in north Florida started with a glimpse of two common inhabitants of the coastal plain: the anole and buttonbush.

Green anole (*Anolis carolinensis*) is also known as the American chameleon, due to its ability to change its color based on its environment. What a marvel of nature to be able to change skin color from green to brown! The anole is widespread in the coastal plain and feeds on insects and spiders. The male can be distinguished from the female by the presence of a pink dewlap under the throat of the male, which gets displayed during territorial disputes and to attract females. Males can sometimes be observed bobbing their heads, displaying their dewlaps, and doing "push-ups". The anole shown here had just eaten a pollinator bug on the buttonbush flower.



Buttonbush (*Cephalanthus occidentalis*) is a native wetland shrub that can be found throughout WWALS watersheds. Blooming from June into August, the plant has flowers that look like spiked balls and that attract bees and other pollinating insects. The flowers are followed by brown ball like fruit eaten by wild duck. Poisonous to humans, buttonbush nevertheless serves an important role in the coastal plain wetlands food chain. *By Bret Wagenhorst.*

### **WWALS Working Hard for Your Watershed**

**Sabal Trail Lake City Pipe Yard.** Thanks to Southwings, WWALS sent pictures of [36-inch pipe north of Lake City, Florida](#) to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), which first said that was not a jurisdictional wetlands violation, but the next day added many qualifications. Sabal Trail in its Bi-weekly Report to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) neglected to mention the qualifications, and got the place wrong, telling FERC Lakeland. So we wonder, is there another unregistered pipe yard in Lakeland, Florida or Georgia?



**SRWMD Meeting.** WWALS president John S. Quarterman and board member Chris Mericle spoke against Sabal Trail at the [Suwannee River Water Management's Board of Directors meeting](#) in Live Oak, FL, as did many other people speaking for themselves or for other organizations; many of them are also WWALS members. The SRWMD Chairman volunteered halfway through the morning's speakers that SRWMD would send a letter to USACE. Yet a few days later SRWMD instead referred WWALS back to USACE and DEP.



**Sabal Trail River Lawsuits.** Despite [the historic March 128 to 34 Georgia House vote](#), Sabal Trail sued the state in Lowndes County Superior Court, the state declined to defend, and [a judge granted Sabal](#)

[Trail an easement under the Withlacoochee River](#), for \$5,000 or \$166666.66/acre. The same thing happened in Dougherty County Superior Court about the Flint River.

**Sierra Club Pipe Yard Protests.** New Sierra Club Campaign Organizer Merrilee Malwitz-Jipson took the pipe yard ball and ran with it, holding two protests at the site. Both were covered by WCJB TV Gainesville, the second also by the Lake City Reporter and local radio. Even better, the second demonstration was also a press conference announcing a lawsuit by Sierra Club, Flint Riverkeeper, Chattahoochee Riverkeeper, Greenlaw, Gulf Restoration Network, and others against the USACE Sabal Trail permit. That same July 18th WWALS members including Bobby C. Billie and Shannon Larsen who drove many hours from south Florida, protested Sabal Trail at the historic Lowndes County Courthouse in Valdosta. Nonetheless, FERC a few days later gave Sabal Trail a green light to start construction, which has further inflamed the opposition. There is more you can do to help: <http://www.wwals.net/issues/stt/>



**City of Valdosta.** The City Council of Valdosta voted unanimously to expend \$40,000 for an interactive online flood map based on the LiDAR they had already paid for. This matches \$40,000 that Lowndes County has allocated for the project and will be supplemented with \$55,000 supplied by the U.S. Geological Survey.

### ***Board and Committee Updates***

The WWALS Board of Directors has held several strategy sessions this summer to clarify our goals, discuss fundraising, and work together to strengthen our organization. The ideas and strategies being discussed will help the organization focus on the top priorities for supporting our mission. If you are interested in becoming more active and having a bigger voice in our activities, [please fill in this questionnaire](#) and we will find the right spot for you on a committee or even on the board!

### ***Community Outreach and Education***

**Pipeline Opposition meeting in Gainesville, FL.** The Grassroots Summit to Stop Sabal Trail in Gainesville FL was fun, educational, and inspiring. Many organizations were represented and many concerned citizens attended.

**Water Trails.** WWALS is making progress on identifying unique landing names and addresses with 911 centers in all counties on both of the Water Trails, preparing to order road signs.



**Joining the Chamber of Commerce:** WWALS has been a member of the Valdosta-Lowndes County Chamber of Commerce for a year, and this month joined the Tift Area Chamber and the Adel-Cook County Chamber as we work to build community partnerships.

### ***Upcoming Outings and Events***

September 3, 10AM	Suwannee River (FL) Roline Launch to Cypress Creek Launch 7.5 miles
September 10, 4PM	Alapaha River: (GA) Rivers Alive Cleanup at Berrien Beach
October 9, 10AM	Withlacoochee River: (FL) Madison Hwy to Sullivan launch 5.3 miles
November 6, 10AM	Alapaha River: (FL) Dead River Sink Hike

Check out the [WWALS Calendar](#) for more details.



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