

WWALS Watershed Coalition
Annual Report - Final
2012 - 2013

1. Overview

The WWALS Watershed Coalition had a successful first year, raising over \$2400.00 which was used for incorporation, financial and legal guidance. The group held 16 meetings which included speakers, two trainings, and six outings which included river races and leisurely river trips.

2. Officers and Board

The board for 2012-2013 included

Dave Hetzel, President,
John S. Quarterman, Senior Vice President,
Brittney Hull, Treasurer,
Nathan Wilkins, Secretary (replaced by Gretchen Quarterman in April),
Al Browning,
Garry Gentry,
Gretchen Quarterman,
Karan Rawlins,
Bret Wagenhorst,
Heather Brasell (replacing Nathan Wilkins in April).

3. Financial Report

The group began the year with donations from board members and friends, and raised money to pay lawyer Paul Alvarado to complete the incorporation documents and advertising requirements. WWALS held two major fund raisers.

One was in March and was held in conjunction with the Friends of Reed Bingham Parks. Coordinated by WWALS Board Member Bret Wagenhorst, the race was well attended and attracted attention to the need for watershed advocacy.

The other was in May 2013 with South Georgia Author Janisse Ray and raised over \$1200 through donations, memberships and a silent auction.

As of June 30, 2013, cash on hand was \$1617.00

4. Meetings

The board held 16 board meetings during the year. Many meetings included not only business but also special speakers. Speakers included: Emily Davenport, City of Valdosta, Angela Bray, SGRC, Richard Lowrance, USDA-ARS Joe Lewis, ARS Burt Earley, Georgia Forestry, Tom Baird, River Historian, Janet McMahon, concerned citizen, Gordon Rogers, Flint Riverkeeper, Tim Carroll, Valdosta City Councilman, Dr. George Vellidis, UGA, and George Page, Valdosta Lowndes Parks and Recreation.

WWALS, in conjunction with the SGRC, sponsored and attended a Water Quality Training Seminar in August which included classroom time and an outing in Drexel Park

in Valdosta for hands on water quality testing.

WWALS had one special half-day event at NESPAL in Tifton, with approximately 30 attendees and speakers of Dave Hetzel, WWALS President, Neil Herring, Political Activist, Jesslyn Shields, Georgia River Network, and Karan Rawlins, UGA.

5. Outings

WWALS held five river outings which included November - Little River at Reed Bingham, January - Alapaha River at Willacoochee, February - Alapaha at Old State Road (cancelled due to flooding) March - Big Little River Paddle Race, Red Roberts Landing to Reed Bingham Lake, April - Withlacoochee from GA-122 to Franklinville, June - Withlacoochee from Nankin Road to GA-31.

The outings were well attended with over 40 different individuals participating.

6. Raising Awareness

WWALS Board members helped to raise awareness of the watershed by attending and giving presentations at state wide conferences. President Dave Hetzel attended the Georgia Water Matters meetings in November and May and Senior Vice President John S. Quarterman gave a presentation about WWALS at the Georgia River Network conference in April. Letters were written on behalf of the organization to the Lowndes County Board of Commissioners, opposing the closing of Old State Road (the only public boat ramp in Lowndes County on the Alapaha) and to the Georgia PSC regarding water usage and power generation. Both letters were signed and mailed by President Dave Hetzel and additionally delivered in person by WWALS Board Members who attended the relevant meetings.

7. Conclusion

While still in its formative state, the WWALS Watershed Coalition is actively taking part in and leading community events which raise awareness of the importance of our watershed and to act as an advocate on issues of watershed importance.