

2008 Major Accomplishments

In 2008 Upper Chattahoochee Riverkeeper was successful in expanding on existing programs and embarking on new initiatives that will go far in protecting and restoring the Chattahoochee River. These successes would not have been possible without the generous support of our volunteers, members, major donors, corporate sponsors, and foundation grantors.

- Created *"Tapped Out: The Drying Up of Atlanta"*, a PowerPoint outlining the causes of the water crisis in north Georgia and offering practical, cost-effective solutions for a sustainable future; presented to more than 2,000 elected officials, citizens, students and business leaders.
- Celebrated Atlanta's completion of a **massive sewer tunnel project**, a component of the federal consent decree that settled UCR's 1995 lawsuit; honored Mayor Shirley Franklin for her critical role in delivering this result—cleaner water in the river and its tributaries—on time and within budget.
- Secured **important new provisions that will help keep muddy water out of our waterways** while serving as an appointed stakeholder in negotiations on the renewal of the 2008 General Stormwater Permits for Construction Activities; helped defeat state legislation that would have exempted the GA DOT from fines for erosion violations.
- Created a **new state-approved workshop** for engineers, developers, consultants and local officials to become certified in erosion and sediment control and held inaugural training session.
- Provided **scholarships for hundreds of inner city and disadvantaged youth** to participate in our floating classroom program on Lake Lanier, offered since 2000 with Elachee Nature Science Center.
- Opposed a proposed **discharge of treated sewage into pristine trout waters** within the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area because of inadequate pollution limits; helped ensure that an **environmental assessment** is conducted prior to any approval of the discharge.
- Brought a **successful legal action** against a developer who dammed a stream for an amenity lake and damaged thousands of feet of stream in violation of erosion control/buffer laws; the dam will be removed, the **stream restored** and several environmental projects funded.
- Initiated the only **on-the-river water quality monitoring program** downstream of Atlanta; opposed state requests to lower flows in the river at Peachtree Creek, noting the state's failure to provide real-time flow monitoring for compliance with state regulations.
- Participated actively in the mandated updates to the **long-term water plans approved by the Metro Water Planning District** in 2003; provided detailed comments on the inadequacies in the proposed updates and offered recommendations for improvement; helped lead media campaign to expose flaws in the Metro water plans.
- Initiated our new *River Discovery Series* with nine paddle trips for more than 150 river enthusiasts, focusing on the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area.
- Performed **routine river patrols of countless river miles** in our river patrol jet boat, taking visual surveys of the river for suspicious spills, smells, garbage and fish kills; responded to over 300 citizen Hotline calls.
- Mobilized more than **350 volunteers to remove more than 70 tons of trash** from Lake Lanier and the river.
- Worked with the National Park Service and state DNR to complete a **feasibility study of a potential canoe trail** on the Chattahoochee from Sautee Creek to Lake Lanier, linking existing state park land.