

CHATTAHOOCHEE-CHIPOLA AND CHOCTAWHATCEE-PEA-YELLOW RIVERS CLEAN WATER PARTNERSHIP
JOINT STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING
AUGUST 14, 2012
HUGGIN MOLLY'S
ABBEVILLE, ALABAMA
MEETING SUMMARY

In attendance were the following partners:

William Kent, Columbus Water Works
Leslie Hatcher, Chattahoochee River Warden
David Boozer, Alabama Forestry Commission
Brad Moore, Friends of Lake Eufaula
Katie Dylewski, Auburn University- Mill Creek Project
Allison Jenkins, Alabama Clean Water Partnership
Billy Houston, Chattahoochee-Chipola CWP
Carol Threatt, Chattahoochee-Chipola CWP
William Smallwood, Corps of Engineers
Greg Elmore-Southern Company
Necie Tarrant- Farley Nuclear Plant
Ryan Peek-Alabama Forestry Commission
Justin Rigdon-ADEM
Alex Vaughn – NRCS
Joe Wilson – NRCS
Jack Mills
Michael Mullen – Riverkeeper
Nancy Carnley – MaChi Lover Creek Indian Tribe
Chris Metcalf – USF&W
Pam Ward – City of Abbeville
Randy Morris – City of Dothan
Bill Smallwood
Demetris Johnson – NRCS
Josh Elliott – NRCS
Lisa Harris - CPYRCWP

The Chattahoochee-Chipola and Choctawhatchee –Pea Clean Water Partnership meeting was held on August 14, 2012 in Abbeville, Alabama at Huggin Molly's. Randy Morris, Chairman of Choctawhatchee-Pea called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone. He introduced Pam Ward, City Clerk and Mayor Pro-tem Lucky Armstrong. Mrs. Armstrong thanked the partnerships for choosing Huggin Molly's and Abbeville. She encouraged everyone to walk around and tour the downtown area.

Allison Jenkins gave the following update:

- ADEM funding is stable at this point, but partnerships need to be thinking of ways to supplement budgets.
- Encouraged everyone to mark their calendar and save the date for the ACWP Watershed Conference scheduled for December 5th.
- Report from Alabama Water Agencies Working Group to Governor Bentley entitled Water Management Issues in Alabama can be found on ADEM's website at <http://adem.alabama.gov>

Carol Threatt gave the following update for the Chattahoochee-Chipola CWP:

- Assisted with Wiregrass RC&D grants.
- Attended kick-off planning meeting for the 2013 Barbour County Groundwater Festival where she serves on the committee and is responsible for securing funding.
- Plans are underway for Rain Barrel Workshop in Phenix City on August 25th; partnering with Tri-Rivers Waterway and Mill Creek Watershed Project.
- Asked to serve on ACES Grass Roots Committee for Barbour County.
- Assisted Tri-Rivers with registering attendees for their 2012 annual meeting.
- Billy Houston participated in the Friends of Lake Eufaula Cleanup and attended their annual meeting.

Brad Moore, who retired from Farley Nuclear plant after 28 years, spoke to the group about measures in place at Farley to protect the environment and wildlife. He informed everyone that Farley or any Southern Nuclear Plant has never had a significant release. Samples are taken from the water, soil, grass, fish, sediment and goats milk to monitor levels of contamination. The plant site includes 1850 acres, with Farley situated on 400 of those acres. There are longleaf pine plantations, a fishing pond stocked with catfish and brim and blue bird houses on the site. The bluebird program is extended to 10 area schools. He closed by inviting everyone to visit the plant's Visitor's Center stating that one of the biggest problems with nuclear power is misunderstanding which creates fear, so he encouraged everyone to go out and see the plant first hand.

Katie Dylewski, Auburn University Project Coordinator for the Mill Creek Project gave the following report:

- Meeting scheduled in the Chattahoochee Room at Columbus Water Works on August 17th to discuss five sites selected for BMPs.
- Roger Martin, Chattahoochee River Warden, is working with volunteers to sample several sites on a monthly basis.
- Working with schools to get children involved because they are the future of water quality.
- Sponsored a June cleanup in Smiths Station.

Lisa Harris gave the following basin report:

- Received the Alabama Association of RC&D Councils Outstanding Supporting Organization award at the RC&D State Meeting held May 4-6 in Selma.
- Conducted four make and take rain barrel workshops with 79 people attending and 89 barrels constructed.
- Four Rain Barrel displays held from January to August.
- Held four conservation workshops for fourth graders.
- Attended Crenshaw County Groundwater Festival.
- Participated in Classroom in the Forest.
- Attended ACWP Facilitator Workshop July 9-11th.
- Attended NARCD Annual Meeting June 10-12 in Madison, WI.
- Toured the watershed in Dale County with partners to identify a potential stream restoration Project.

Partner Updates:

William Kent with Columbus Water Works discussed sustainable flows. They are involved in discussion with EPD and are pushing for 1350 as the flow. They expect the governor to come to Columbus and try to persuade them to go with a lower number. They are waiting for the USCOE to come up with operating plan. He also discussed the Georgia proposed nutrient criteria. This will affect folks south of Columbus. He will email a copy of the report to Carol and Lisa to distribute to stakeholders.

Mike Mullen, Choctawhatchee Riverkeeper, stated that he is doing chemical monitoring every other month throughout the Choctawhatchee. He has done 5 or 6 rounds for bacterial contamination. He found several sites on Dowling Branch with issues. Most issues are livestock related.

Bill Smallwood with USCOE discussed recent water levels. He stated that the lake is up 6 inches, but still in drought operation. The USCOE is resuming the Shoreline Management Plan that was started two years ago, but put on hold. They are resuming effort for public meetings. Next year will be the 50th Anniversary of Lake Eufaula. Dr. Jack Mills asked if there are any limitations on drawing water from lakes and streams for irrigation purposes and he answered by saying there is no straight answer, but it will be addressed in the Water Control Manual.

James Dixon from Geneva County Water Authority discussed the recent issue with wells running dry in Geneva County. He stated that this was the result of farmers pulling water from creeks and that he would like to see flow meters required. He also mentioned that farmers do not have to have permits for irrigation.

Chris Metcalf with USFWS mentioned that he has been working hard for 3-4 years to identify threats in the basin. He came up with a location map pinpointing location of threats. He is working with Florida to do repairs south of Mariana. He reminded everyone that what goes in here flows down there. He is working to get additional funds for Alabama and wants to get the CWP more involved. He would like to focus on restoration. He mentioned that FWS completed a restoration project on Uchee Creek several years back. USGS is doing study on some of the streams in the Chipola. FWS is providing assessments.

Alex Vaughn, NRCS District Conservationist, informed everyone about a 319 project they are partnering with on Dowling Branch in the Hurricane Creek Watershed. These sites were selected because of conditions of Dowling Branch. He stated that landowners and users are very receptive of 319 projects because of participation in previous projects. Approximately 100,00.00 is available to be obligated for owners and users to install BMPs on their farms. They have signed up several strip till practices.

Justin Rigdon with ADEM informed everyone that the TMDL's are published on ADEM's website and that the 303d list should be receiving EPA approval. Mill Creek was pushed back to 2015.

Leslie Hatcher, Chattahoochee River Warden, stated that Roger Martin is the Southwest Coordinator for Georgia Adopt-a-Stream and that they have trained over 50 people. They are working on a Small Fry to go grant. This is the number one science program in the US. She mentioned that tours are available for the Whitewater Project on Tuesday's and Thursday's. If anyone is interested, they will arrange tours. The project is on target with half opening next year.

Brad Moore with Friends of Lake Eufaula discussed the Lake Cleanup set for September 29th in Georgetown. It is sponsored by the Rotary Club. He mentioned that they have three people signed up for water quality monitoring.

In closing, Billy Houston discussed Barbour, Henry and Russell counties being designated as part of the Alabama Scenic River Trail. Eufaula Chamber of Commerce, Tri-Rivers and Friends of Lake Eufaula have been working together to promote this. Glen Kasper is taking a leadership role. The first meeting is August 20th in Eufaula. He thanked everyone for their hard work and the meeting was adjourned.