

Georgia River Network Conference 2009 “Maximize Your Impact, Protect Your River” Session Descriptions

February 20, 2009

The Classic Center, Athens, Georgia

Concurrent Workshops

Parthenon Room 1

Communication for Impact—Eric Eckl

- *Water Words That Work*

Make a splash with your communications! Relearn the language that everyday citizens use and you'll become more confident and successful whenever you set out to inform and persuade the undecided to take action on behalf of our rivers.

- *Combat Communications for Conservationists*

Conservation and controversy go hand in hand. Sooner or later, the mud will fly and your work and your reputation will be on the line. In this hands-on workshop, you'll learn the dos and don'ts of managing controversial situations: deflecting their accusations, making yours stick. You'll develop confidence and skills to set the record straight and come out on top.

Parthenon Room 2

Get the Dirt Out Training for Trainers—Jason Ulseth & Juliet Cohen

Teach people how to spot sedimentation and erosion control problems on construction sites, to report them to local authorities, and to follow up.

- Learn to train people in your watershed to understand:
 - Why Dirt Is Harmful To Our Waterways
 - The Federal Clean Water Act
 - The Georgia Construction General Permit
 - Erosion and Sediment Control Best Management Practices (BMPs)
 - Permit Enforcement
- Tour BMPs in the Athens area!

February 21, 2009

The Classic Center, Athens, Georgia

Opening Plenary

Olympia Room

Overview of the Oconee Watershed--Ben Emanuel, Georgia River Survey

Session Description coming right up!

Water Efficiency and Climate Change...Connecting the Dots: Mary Ann Dickinson

Climate change is the topic of the day. Everyone understands the role that energy plays in our carbon footprint, but what about water? This presentation will connect the water and energy issues and discuss how water efficiency can help mitigate the effects causing climate change as well as save water utilities and consumers money.

Afternoon Plenary

Olympia Room

Taking Public Support to the Next Level: Fundraising Secrets for Grassroots Movements—Ezra Milchman

We all share a passion for protecting rivers and watersheds across this country, and the only thing limiting our success is resources. In normal times, the local focus and on-the-ground nature of our work might be more than enough to win the needed level of support. But these are not normal times. As the economy craters all around us, local non-profits find themselves needing to employ new strategies to secure resources in an increasingly constrained and competitive fundraising environment. By expanding our vision beyond the programs of today to embrace the biggest issues facing our country tomorrow, we can attract levels of interest and investment beyond our wildest dreams. Imagine if your organization could successfully appeal to nationally focused donors passionate about issues like global climate change, food security and hunger, and environmental justice. Taking lessons learned from how the land trust community mobilized on a national level, this address will explore how the grassroots river and watershed movement can stand side by side with national and even international non-profit organizations in the pursuit of big investments for a big grassroots vision.

Closing Plenary

Olympia Room

Making Good Decisions in Illusionary Times—Ron Carroll

Our delusion that good times are normal and bad times are abnormal tempts us to use bad information and make poor decisions.

Track 1

Olympia Room

Keeping Water in Our Rivers—Jenny Hoffner, Shana Udvardy & Laura Hartt

Our rivers are sources of water for everything from agriculture to drinking water and all the uses in between. Our river systems are stressed and, more and more often, lacking the water needed to sustain healthy ecosystem and communities. In this session, we will learn about the opportunities provided through the Georgia State Water Plan to develop policy that can ensure healthy ecological flows in our rivers. We will then share a Florida example of a proven, effective instream flow policy and program for keeping water in rivers that could be applied here in Georgia. Lastly, we will demonstrate how water efficiency can effectively get water back into the rivers and opportunities to do this through the Georgia Water Conservation Implementation Plan.

How Efficient is your Utility?--Mary Ann Dickinson & Buzz Williams

Conserving water in the pipes is an important first step. Your community may be losing a lot of water that is not accounted for. This session will explore how to identify that problem, what to do about it, and how one particular community is grappling with it. The session will include time for open discussion of local issues.

Retrofitting to Eliminate Waste--Jenny Hoffner & Jeff Rader

Water efficiency projects have tremendous potential to save water, energy and resources in our communities. As much as 35% of household water use can be saved by retrofitting with water efficient fixtures alone. Investing in voluntary incentive programs that provide rebates, swap outs, or direct installations to retrofit wasteful water fixtures and appliances are all proven and effective ways to secure water savings. In this session, we will examine the potential for retrofit programs, the various types of programs, and some examples of these programs in action. In particular, we will learn about DeKalb County, Georgia's progressive 'Retrofit on Reconnect' program which requires that anyone establishing a new account with the water utility first upgrade their plumbing fixtures to water efficient varieties. This policy has the potential to secure 9 million gallons a day of new capacity or nearly 10% of DeKalb's daily consumption.

Is Your Utility Pricing Water Right?—Shana Udvardy, Kathy Hoard & Jessica Sterling

In conjunction with other water conservation efforts, changes in water pricing can help communities save water. In this session, we discuss how tiered water conservation rate pricing can be used to encourage water conservation and enable water providers to obtain adequate revenue. We present a case study from Athens-Clarke County, where a 4-tier water pricing system was recently adopted for both residential and commercial users.

Track 2

Parthenon Room 1

Tapped Out: The Drying Up of Atlanta—Sally Bethea

Rain alone won't end our water crisis in north Georgia. The Chattahoochee Watershed upstream of Atlanta is the smallest in the nation to serve a major metropolitan area – and 3.5 million people depend on it for water supply, a number that is growing every day. *This* presentation examines the causes of the water crisis in the Chattahoochee River watershed and offers practical solutions for citizens, business people, and policy-makers. Other major cities have actually decreased their water demand while population increased. We can do it too. After the PowerPoint, there will be a Q&A session and a discussion of ways that watershed groups can raise awareness about water supply and efficiency issues in their communities.

Stream Buffer Sitcoms—Joe Cook & James Holland

Join Riverkeepers James Holland and Joe Cook for a discussion of stream buffer advocacy. Holland and Cook will share their experiences analyzing stream buffer variance applications and taking action to stop development plans that fail to protect our state's streams. Through this workshop, you'll gain an understanding of Georgia's stream buffer laws, the stream buffer variance process and the process by which watershed groups can take action to appeal stream buffer variances issued by EPD. Holland, the Altamaha Riverkeeper, will provide a South Georgia perspective, and Cook, the Upper Coosa Riverkeeper, will provide a North Georgia perspective.

Fundraising Best Practices Open Forum—Julie Stuart

This is a session for staff and board members to share their best ideas on fundraising and also talk about some of the challenges they face. In the past year and a half GRN has done extensive work to create a fundraising plan, put our board and staff through fundraising training,

design a board fundraising menu, set the expectation for fundraising with incoming board members, and generally walk our board up the fundraising ladder. We'll share with you what we've learned to create a culture of fundraising on our board and some of the crazy ideas we've thought of too, like auctioning off Port-a-Potties at the annual conference.

How your Organization Can Stay Afloat in Today's Economy—Ellen Johnson

Session Description coming right up!

Track 3 (Sponsored by Georgia Adopt-A-Stream)

Parthenon Room 2

Mussels in Georgia: A Role for Volunteers—Jason Wisniewski

Find out how volunteer monitoring can help the conservation of freshwater mussels and learn identification techniques. (20 minutes)

Georgia's Aquatic Invasive Species: Will the Last One in Please Shut the Door?—Ted Hendrickx

Invasive species are a threat to Georgia's ecosystems. Learn about some "most wanted invaders" and what you can do to prevent the introduction and spread of these species. (20 minutes)

Amphibian Monitoring Opportunities with Georgia Adopt-A-Stream and NAAMP—Tara Muenz & Linda May

Learn how to become engaged in salamander and frog monitoring through two statewide and national programs. (45 minutes)

Updates to the 305(b) and 303(d) Listing Process—Susan Salter

Learn the difference between the 305(b) and the 303(d) list of waters and about the major formatting changes made to the 2008 305(b)/303(d) list of waters.

Local Government and Volunteer Efforts--Collecting Regulatory Water Quality Data—Chris Faulkner & Angela Wall

After a year of monitoring, come hear some of our lessons learned and what has come of monitoring in South GA. We will also talk about bacteria monitoring and how it has worked in the field.

Monitoring Equipment and Methods that Work—Duncan Hughes, David Wenner & Harold Harbert

Join our group as we discuss commonly used stream monitoring techniques and present other new ideas and options for learning about your waterways.