

SAVANNAH RIVER AT RISK

Public Forum

Southeastern Natural Sciences Academy

Tuesday, June 21, 2005

Savannah Rapids Pavilion, Augusta, Georgia

Southeastern Natural Sciences Academy will host a public forum on Savannah River water resource issues facing Georgia and South Carolina. The forum will offer stakeholders an opportunity to meet and hear key state officials outline challenges and strategies to managing Savannah River water in a comprehensive manner. Stakeholder representatives from the upper, middle, and lower Savannah River reaches will provide their regional perspective on the economic, regulatory, and ecological issues associated with management of Savannah River water. A brief overview of ongoing Savannah River research by Southeastern Natural Sciences Academy and The Nature Conservancy of Georgia will be included.

Agenda

9:00 Welcome

Braye Boardman, Moderator
Mayor Bob Young, Augusta, Georgia
Ron Cross, Columbia County, Georgia, Commission Chairman

9:30 Keynote Address

Introduction, Braye Boardman, Southeastern Natural Sciences Academy
Governor Sonny Perdue, *Georgia Water Resources*

10:05 Forum Overview

Gene Eidson, President/CEO, Southeastern Natural Sciences Academy,
Water Resource Issues Facing Stakeholders of Savannah River Basin

10:20-10:30 Break

10:30-12:40 Policy Issues

Carol Couch, Director, Georgia EPD, *Creating Georgia's Sustainable Water Future*

Earl Hunter, Commissioner, South Carolina DHEC and
Michael McShane, South Carolina DNR, *South Carolina's Water Policy*

Major Vance C. Williams, Savannah District Deputy Commander, U.S. Army COE,
Savannah River Basin Water Usage

11:30 – 11:40 Break

Bob Waldrep, Chairman, Savannah River Basin Coalition,
Planning for Water Uses in Savannah

William L. Cox, Director, EPA Region 4 Watershed Management Office,
Environmental Results at a Watershed Level

Laurie Fowler, Co-Director, River Basin Center, UGA Institute of Ecology,
Success Stories from the Trenches

12:45 – 1:15 Lunch

1:15 – 4:00

Economic, Regulatory, and Ecological Issues Facing Savannah River Stakeholders

Upper Savannah: Mike Gray, Hartwell Lake Chamber Coalition
Jeff Allen, Strom Thurmond Institute, Clemson University

Middle Savannah: Mayor Bob Young, Augusta, Georgia
Mayor Lark Jones, North Augusta, South Carolina

Lower Savannah: Bob Scanlon, City of Savannah/Savannah Harbor Committee
Dean Moss, G.M., Beaufort-Jasper Water & Sewer Authority

2:45 -2:55 Break

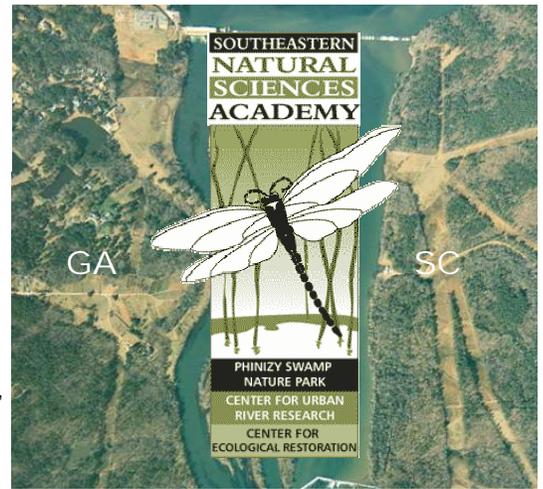
Paul Lamarre, Georgia EPD, *TMDL Based Wasteload Allocations*

Amanda Wrona, The Nature Conservancy of Georgia, *Ecological Flow Prescription*

Gene Eidson, Southeastern Natural Sciences Academy, *SRAR Urban Corridor Research*

4:00 – 4:30 Question & Answer Session

Adjourn



Participants

Georgia Governor Sonny Perdue

Dr. Carol Couch, Director, Georgia EPD

Earl Hunter, Commissioner, South Carolina DHEC

Michael McShane, Chairman, South Carolina DNR

Major Vance C. Williams, Savannah District
Deputy Commander, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

William L. Cox, Director, EPA Region 4
Watershed Management Office

Jeff Allen, Clemson University's
Strom Thurmond Institute

Ron Cross, Columbia County, Georgia
Commission Chairman

Dr. Gene Eidson, President/CEO
Southeastern Natural Sciences Academy

Laurie Fowler, J.D., Co-Director, River Basin Center
University of Georgia Institute of Ecology

Mike Gray, Hartwell Lake Chamber Coalition

Mayor Lark Jones, North Augusta, South Carolina

Paul Lamarre, Georgia EPD

Dean Moss, G.M., Beaufort-Jasper Water & Sewer Authority

Bob Scanlon, City of Savannah
Savannah Harbor Committee

Bob Waldrep, Chairman Savannah River Basin Coalition

Dr. Amanda Wrona, Director, Savannah River Basin
The Nature Conservancy of Georgia

Mayor Bob Young, Augusta, Georgia

RSVP required.

Visit Savannah River at Risk Public Forum Link at
www.naturalsciencesacademy.org

or mail in completed form by 6/16/05.

Call 706-828-2109 for more information.

Thanks to our event sponsors:



Southeastern Natural Sciences Academy, a community based non-profit 501(c)(3) organization, was established in 1996 with a mission of promoting environmental stewardship through education, research, and public outreach. The Academy's work focuses on creating **innovative partnerships** among government, industry, community members, and the environment to preserve valuable river resources. Gene W. Eidson, Ph.D. founded the Academy as a response to the need in the Augusta urban-river community for leadership in natural resources management and environmental education. **The Academy is dedicated to the conservation of natural resources throughout the Savannah River watershed and serves a wide academic community through its education, research and outreach programs.**

The Academy has established a **distinguished reputation** for advocating environmental education and natural resources protection. The Academy holds a renowned **record of restoring endangered Savannah River floodplain habitats and improving the condition of the Savannah River**. In 2004, the Academy was recognized for its regional contributions with the North American Association for Environmental Education Outstanding Service Award to add to its repertoire of **prestigious awards** from state and national entities including the Conservation Fund & International Paper Company, Georgia Wildlife Federation, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, and U.S. Department of the Interior.

The Academy's contributions are characterized by the innovative partnerships utilized in effectively addressing natural resources concerns. The Academy was born of such a partnership. The Academy's 1,150-acre Phinizy Swamp Nature Park was formed through a public-private partnership with Augusta-Richmond County. For 150 years, Phinizy Swamp and the Savannah River suffered the impacts of wastewater discharge. To solve the City's long-standing violation of wastewater discharge permit limits and to rescue this valuable swamp, Dr. Eidson initiated an **ambitious restoration project and participated with local government in developing a wetlands complex and a nature park**. This wetlands complex provides tertiary treatment of municipal wastewater before it is released into the Savannah River. Additionally, because several acres of natural wetlands were impacted during construction of the complex, Dr. Eidson proposed founding the Academy to provide environmental education as mitigation. This marked the first time in the history of the Southeast that the Corps of Engineers accepted education as a form of mitigation. **The Academy's profound contribution to Augusta's environmental image through this project was recognized with the 1999 Monsanto Global Award.**

Today, the park serves as a platform for Academy programs through the Phinizy Swamp Campus with Education, Research, and Visitor facilities. The Academy provides award-winning education programs for area K-12 students, and hosts more than 40,000 visitors annually through outreach programs at the park. The Academy's **Center for Urban River Research provides an ideal laboratory for studying water quality, watershed ecology, and urban river impacts** in order to recommend approaches to watershed management and sustainability of river resources. Through significant research the Academy has conducted terrestrial and aquatic-based ecological restoration, a fish tissue study in conjunction with the University of Georgia, and contributed to the protection of the endangered Rocky Shoals spider lily.

With more than \$4 million already spent in support of the Academy's work, the Academy is making ever-increasing contributions to the **sustainability of our river resources**. There is a growing concern among stakeholders of the Savannah River that river resources are at risk. Expanding population and development, and rapidly shrinking water resources compromise the economic future of all municipalities and stakeholders and the ecological health of our river. Allocations of water withdrawal and wastewater discharge will thwart economic growth. The cost of water and its treatment may significantly increase for community residents. In essence, **water quality and quantity will determine the quality of life and future patterns of economic growth in the communities of all Savannah River stakeholders.**

The Academy recognizes the importance of river resources issues to all river stakeholders and is expanding the breadth of its activities to address these concerns through the **Savannah River at Risk Initiatives**, a \$1.8 million research and education effort. Over the next three years, the Academy will focus its efforts on **leadership, research, and education to improve stakeholder understanding of a healthy river system, develop science-based sustainable management practices that will support economic growth, and encourage stakeholder participation in shaping water policy.**

The Academy is committed to taking a leadership role in addressing **natural resources management**. The Savannah River at Risk Initiatives signifies the culmination of this overall vision for the Academy. **Through innovative integration of river research, environmental restoration, and education and outreach programs, the Academy is guiding the development of a common vision for a sustainable Savannah River.** With tenacity and dedication, the Academy has traveled the entire Savannah River corridor to develop partnerships for collaboration in this vital project. The Academy is collaborating with Savannah River Basin Coalition of which Dr. Eidson serves as science and technical advisor, the Nature Conservancy, the Georgia Conservancy, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Savannah River Site, surrounding municipalities, politicians, and stakeholders in this grand effort to preserve the natural resources of our river.