#### MARCH 2025 Soque Watershed Association Newsletter





2025 UPCOMING EVENTS

**Annual Spring Soiree** 

Saturday,

**April 12th, 2025** 

www.soque.org

PRESERVING, RESTORING, AND ENJOYING THE SOQUE WATERSHED SINCE 1998

### SRWA News Articles!

- Danny's Blog
- New SRWA Riverbank Restoration Projects
- SRWA: Honoring our Stewardship Commitment
- New Executive Business Manager



#### 2nd Annual SRWA Golf Tournament, Tuesday, June 17th, 2025



2025 SRWA SPRING SOIREE
ALL COMMUNITY EVENT
SATURDAY, APRIL 12TH, 2025
PLEASE VISIT SRWA.ORG FOR TICKET
INFORMATION.





Are you aware that the typical age for volunteers in a nonprofit is fifty-five years old? What does this mean for nonprofits?

It is indicative of the total lack of diversity in the volunteer workforce. This lack of diversity, in both the private and nonprofit sectors, can result in stagnancy, lack of creativity, and loss of energy and enthusiasm. It can also lead to a breakdown in innovation. The lack of diversity in a workforce is widely acknowledged in all business sectors as one of the leading causes of business decline.

The volunteer workforce in most nonprofits consists of older or retired individuals who either look for activities to occupy their time or who have developed a passion for a particular nonprofit issue or cause and sincerely want to make a difference. There is nothing wrong with either of these motives and thank goodness for this older generation; however, where are the younger generations of volunteers? Why do these younger generations fail to see the benefits of affiliation with a nonprofit? What can we do to change this?

In answer to these questions, I believe there are steps we can take to remedy this problem and to help bring a younger group into the organization:

- 1. Assign someone in the organization to be in charge of recruitment.
- 2. Establish outreach programs to reach out to high schools and universities for volunteers.
- 3. Ask the parents of the older volunteers to reach out to their children and grandchildren, encouraging them to get involved.
- 4. Impress on all volunteers the joy of community service.
- 5. Host events that appeal to a younger group.
- 6. Create a sense of belonging in young recruits.
- 7. Mentor teens and young adults, encouraging them to get involved.
- 8. Recognize, appreciate, and encourage young adults. Recognition is important to all volunteers.

Help us recruit a new generation of volunteers. It is critical to our perpetuation. Recruiting a younger base of volunteers is critical to the health of all nonprofits. We are all created with unique individual gifts. The greatest tragedy in life is to waste those talents instead of using them in service to your community.

"We must know that diversity makes a rich tapestry and we must understand that all of the threads, not the tapestry, are equal in value no matter what the color." - Maya Angelou

"The meaning of life is to find your gift. The purpose of life is to give it away." - Pablo Picasso

Join SRWA today and help us create the diversity we need to sustain and perpetuate this vital organization.

# 2025 Annual SRWA Soiree

In the picturesque backdrop of Habersham County, the Soque River Watershed Association (SRWA) stands as a formidable guardian of the region's natural resources. For over 26 years, this dedicated volunteer organization has worked tirelessly to provide clean drinking water, protect natural habitats, and preserve the integrity of the Soque River banks. On Saturday, April 12, the SRWA will host its highly anticipated annual Soiree at the North Georgia Technical College Industrial Technology Event Center in Clarkesville, GA. This gala evening, which runs from 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., promises an array of appetizers, an elegant dinner, a keynote address by guest speaker Mike Watts, and an impressive collection of over \$12,000 in raffle prizes, including a live auction.

The Spring Soiree is the SRWA's largest fundraising event of the year, and the proceeds play a crucial role in supporting essential river conservation initiatives. Funds raised during this gala are allocated to various projects, including a rigorous water contamination testing program, educational outreach efforts targeting local schools, internships for college students, and critical operational costs that keep the organization running. Importantly, every dollar raised goes directly to these initiatives.

In light of dwindling federal and state grant funding, the SRWA is relying more than ever on community support to maintain the cleanliness and protection of the Soque River. The annual Soiree, along with other fundraising events such as a fly-fishing auction, summer golf tournament, and fall plant and tree sale, are essential for financing the organization's vital projects. Each of these events provides an opportunity for community members to engage, support, and contribute to the preservation of this invaluable waterway.

Local businesses are invited to become sponsors of the SRWA's fundraising events, and residents are encouraged to participate as members and volunteers. The motto "it truly takes a village" rings true, as the SRWA seeks to unite the community in its mission to safeguard the river. Every effort, whether through financial support or volunteering time, helps fortify the association's impact on the environment and the health of the local ecosystem.

The Habersham County community is urged not to take its precious water resources for granted. Supporting the Soque River Watershed Association is a proactive step towards ensuring a sustainable future for the region's waterways. For those interested in contributing to this vital cause, tickets for the Soiree are available online, and donations can be made through the SRWA's website, www.soque.org

Join the movement to protect the Soque River and its surrounding habitats by supporting the SRWA and participating in this important event.

"No man ever steps in the same river twice, for it is not the same river and he is not the same man." - Heraclitus





We are excited to announce the appointment of Callie Clough as the new Executive Business Manager for the SRWA. With a degree in Horticulture from North Georgia Technical College, Callie brings a unique blend of experience and passion to our team. Her love for the outdoors and commitment to making a difference resonates through her desire to work closely with the SRWA, enhancing our mission and amplifying our impact in the community.

In her role as Executive Business Manager, Callie will be instrumental in ensuring the operational efficiency of our organization. She will oversee the coordination of board members, administrative volunteers, SRWA members, and our business partners and donors. Callie will also oversee our educational outreach program. In addition, Callie will liaise with essential third-party resources to maintain organization-wide operations. Her approach to brand management will also contribute to the SRWA's strategic efforts and outreach initiatives.

As Callie embarks on this new journey with the SRWA, we look forward to seeing the positive changes she will implement and the differences she will make in our community!



Ready to roll up your sleeves and make a tangible impact? The Soque River Watershed Association invites you to volunteer with us for our exciting riverbank restoration projects planned throughout 2025! We have a variety of projects aimed at revitalizing our local environment and need enthusiastic individuals like you to help us achieve our goals. Whether you're a seasoned environmentalist or just starting to explore ways to give back, we welcome all levels of experience. Join our team and be a part of creating a healthier, more vibrant ecosystem for our community. To embark on this rewarding journey, simply email Callie at callie@soque.org and sign up today!

Participate in this very important restoration-based project. The community thanks you!

## SPW) A's Educational Outreach Program Puspires Future Environmental Stewards

The SRWA is thrilled about our Educational Outreach program as we are continuing partnerships with Tallulah Falls School and Trinity Classical School. Over the coming months before the end of the school year, SRWA representatives will conduct engaging classroom presentations at both schools, sparking an interest in environmental stewardship among students. Following the presentations, students will participate in hands-on service projects designed to make a tangible difference in their community and local waterways.

At Tallulah Falls School, students recently embarked on an ongoing pond cleanup and restoration project directly on their campus. This initiative allows students to take ownership and pride in revitalizing a local ecosystem. Trinity Classical School students will focus on a special cleanup project along the Soque Greenway Trail. This project will emphasize the importance of maintaining the Greenway for the health of the Soque River and the benefit of the entire community.

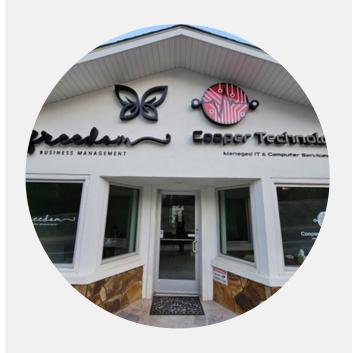
Beyond these partnerships, SRWA is extending its reach to the homeschool community, with a classroom presentation scheduled for a local group in April. The organization hopes to establish more collaborations with homeschool groups, engaging them in future service projects.

Furthermore, William NeSmith, a student at Tallulah Falls School, is contributing his talents as SRWA's high school intern. William recently filmed a video aimed at increasing engagement with his peers and will also participate in an upcoming river cleanup project.

The SRWA views its Educational Outreach program as a cornerstone of its mission. By inspiring and empowering the next generation, SRWA aims to cultivate future leaders who will champion environmental protection and drive positive change in both their community and the wider world.

"Rivers never go reverse. So try to live like a river. Forget your past and focus on your future. Always be positive."





Thank you

The Soque River Watershed Association is bursting with pride and excitement for two of our exceptional volunteers, Vicki Sanders of Freedom Business Management and Jeremy Cooper of Cooper Technologies! They've recently opened their brand new office space in Demorest, marking a significant milestone in their professional journeys. Both Vicki and Jeremy are deeply committed to the SRWA, generously donating their time, expertise, and resources to help us achieve our mission. Their support is truly invaluable, and we encourage everyone in the community to show them some love and support in return. Let's celebrate their success and recognize their dedication to both their businesses and the SRWA!

https://freedombusinessmanagement.com/

https://www.cooper-technologies.com/

