

What's new in the

Newsletter



www.soque.org

**PRESERVING, RESTORING, AND ENJOYING THE SOQUE
WATERSHED SINCE 1998**

Highlighted SRWA Articles!

- **2nd Annual Golf Tournament Recap**
- **Leadership Transition**
- **New SRWA Grant Writing Restoration Projects**



Stay IN THE KNOW!

2025 UPCOMING EVENTS

Save the Hemlocks Class
July 24
(Read included article for details)

Fly-Fishing Auction
September 16
(Details to follow)

Fall Plant Sale
Morning of October 18
SRWA Office

ADDITIONAL ARTICLES

- BOARD MEETING RECAP
- DANNY'S BLOG
- GREENWAY TRAIL UPDATE
- SAVE GEORGIA'S HEMLOCKS
- SRWA SUPPORTER WCHM
- INTRODUCING LEAH HOLTZCLAW
- MEET BROOKE TERILLI



2nd Annual SRWA Golf Tournament

Our 2nd Annual Golf Tournament was an overwhelming triumph! We welcomed a record-breaking 69 golfers to the green, resulting in \$10,400 raised for the SRWA.

Our winners were:

1st Place (Gross Score): Mark Sharitz, Chad Streetman, Conrad Lauten

1st Place (Net Score): Kevin Bryan, David Enscoe, Rob Carreno

2nd Place: John Davidson, David Lang, Ken Gary, Tom Borbone

3rd Place: Jesse Tuggle, David Biscan, Jack Bennison, William Finley

This success wouldn't have been possible without the incredible dedication of our sponsors, whose generosity fueled our efforts. We extend a heartfelt thank you to our tireless volunteers who kept everything running smoothly, and of course, to our amazing golfers, whose enthusiasm and participation made the day truly special. We certainly owe the success of the tournament to SRWA Board Members Rob Bennison and Janine Pajek who planned an amazing event!

We'd also like to give special thanks to The Orchard Golf & Country Club who worked tirelessly to make this event wonderful.

We are deeply grateful for the collective support that allowed us to surpass our goals and further our organization's mission of protecting and restoring the Soque River and its watershed!



SRWA Board Meeting Recap & Spring Successes!

Last month's SRWA board meeting was a resounding success, filled with productive discussions and forward-thinking planning. We're thrilled to share a glimpse into some recent projects that showcase the tangible impact of our collective efforts.

Partnering with Piedmont University, our team witnessed students planting 40 shrubs on the campus wetland on April 17th, contributing to habitat restoration and ecological education.

Just two days later, on April 19th, we orchestrated the planting of 75 trees and 50 shrubs along a Goshen Creek property, further enhancing the riparian zone and improving water quality. Additionally, we collaborated with local freshwater fly-fishing property owners who generously invested in planting over 50 trees to establish a new buffer on their land, demonstrating a shared commitment to environmental stewardship.

We extend our deepest gratitude to our members and supporters, whose unwavering dedication fuels our ability to make a real difference in the watershed. It is through your contributions and belief in our mission that we can implement these impactful projects, fostering a healthier and more vibrant environment for all.



A Fond Farewell and a Warm Welcome: Leadership Transition at the SRWA



BRAD COPPEDGE

The Soque River Watershed Association (SRWA) is entering an exciting new chapter! As we look back on the past few years, we extend our deepest gratitude to Brad Coppedge for his outstanding leadership as Board President since 2021. Brad's tenure has been marked by significant progress, most notably the successful implementation of a working board structure. His dedication has laid a strong foundation, ensuring a bright future for the SRWA and its vital mission.

As Brad's term concludes at the end of July, we are thrilled to announce that Scott Schuler, our current Board Vice President, will be stepping into the role of Board President. Scott brings a wealth of experience in community development and a genuine passion for the health and well-being of the Soque River watershed. His commitment to our cause is infectious, and we are confident that his leadership will inspire even greater community involvement.



SCOTT SCHULER

We invite all our members, supporters, and community members to join us in welcoming Scott and getting to know him better. Let his enthusiasm motivate you to get involved with the SRWA and contribute to protecting our precious Soque River! Stay tuned for upcoming opportunities to meet Scott and learn more about his vision for the SRWA's future.

"We must begin thinking like a river if we are to leave a legacy of beauty and life for future generations."



Danny Taylor Blog



As is the case with all nonprofits, those who support them come from all walks of life and serve in many capacities. From volunteer work to financial support, it truly ‘takes a village’ for a nonprofit to survive and serve the public effectively. SRWA is so very thankful for all of our donors and volunteers.

In this issue and in light of our recent golf tournament, we want to focus on the golfing community. My “dear old Daddy” used to say “ Never hire a golfer or a pipe smoker because they already have a job.” I do not ascribe to this saying but it is true to a certain degree. If you have ever tried to keep a pipe lit, you know it takes lots of time, and we all know the hours of work and the tremendous dedication it requires to become a good golfer.

Are you aware that PGA Golfers and the PGA Tour contributed over four billion dollars to various charities in 2024? As amazing as this is, it does not take into consideration the millions of dollars given by amateur golfers in support of churches, charities, nonprofits and various other institutions across the world. Golfers in general are a very generous group and our local golfers are very much appreciated for their support of SRWA.

Golf is the only sport I am aware of where the players call their own fouls. This requires each player to demonstrate tremendous integrity. Golf builds character. This same character exhibits itself in these men and women when they show up regularly for golf fundraisers across the world.

We at SRWA salute our local golfing community and wish to thank each of them for their support during our recent golf tournament at The Orchard Golf & Country Club. We also want to thank our hole sponsors, volunteers, and those who donated gift items. Without the help of these groups, we could not service our community effectively as we work to preserve our beloved Soque River.

‘To find a man's true character, play golf with him.’ - PG Woodhouse

“The most important shot in golf is the next one.” - Ben Hogan



Soque Greenway Trail Thriving Thanks to Community Effort!

The Soque Greenway Trail is looking its absolute best, and it's all thanks to a fantastic collaborative effort! The recent rain has brought lush growth, requiring some much-needed attention. We recently dedicated two days to clearing and maintenance, and we're immensely grateful to the City of Clarkesville for their crucial support. A huge thank you to City Manager Keith Dickerson and the hardworking ESG Team, led by Joe Deputy, for their dedication in trimming back the trees along the trail – their efforts made a real difference!

We also want to give a special shout-out to William NeSmith, our dedicated high school intern from Tallulah Falls School. William consistently brings a positive attitude and unwavering commitment to every task.

Now that the trail is in top-notch condition, we encourage everyone to come and experience the natural beauty and tranquility of the Soque Greenway Trail. It's the perfect spot to escape and enjoy the outdoors!





SAVE GEORGIA'S HEMLOCKS

By Buz Stone



Did you know that the hemlock woolly adelgid, a tiny and nearly invisible insect that kills your hemlocks, is active all winter long? They are there right now on the needles, sucking the life out of your trees. For those of you that have treated your hemlocks, it should be comforting to know that the adelgids on your tree will die and you will not see those white egg sacks next spring.

Interested in learning more about saving your hemlocks? The SRWA is partnering with Save Georgia's Hemlocks and will be offering a free class for Clarkesville residents on July 24 at the Clarkesville Community House located on Mary Street at 6:30pm. Come join us to learn more about the woolly adelgid and about how to best treat your hemlocks. To register, please visit:

<https://forms.gle/fjzfyTuKMcJL7MbC6>



To learn more about the insect and what is being to stop it, please visit this link: **[SGH_Hemlock_FAQs_8-26-22.pdf](#)**

For help treating your hemlocks please call the Hemlock Helpline at 706-429-8010 or email our Executive Director, Heidi Hunter, at heidi@savegeorgiashemlocks.org.

Thank you for helping us Save Georgia's hemlocks!



*Rivers are easily wounded, but given a chance they
heal themselves with remarkable speed"*



Valued SRWA Supporter: 94.3 WCHM FM

The SRWA is proud to share with our members, supporters, and volunteers an article about one of our most committed partners, Habersham County’s local radio station, 94.3 WCHM FM. Non-profit organizations like the SRWA, need the strong voice of media provided by WCHM to keep the public informed of our river work projects, water testing program, community events, and most importantly, our fundraisers. If you are a fan of local market radio and care about what is going on in your community, please take the time to have 94.3FM on your car or phone listening schedule. More importantly, county businesses that are looking to drive growth and build brand awareness, please call the radio station at 706-839-1490 and ask for Cole Cleiman (owner) or fellow Mountain Morning Show personality, Darrell Everidge. They will be more than happy to talk with you about their many advertising programs and a special 10% discount for SRWA business supporters.

The New 94.3 WCHM FM radio station in Clarkesville, Georgia hosts numerous Nationally Syndicated radio shows such as Brian Kilmeade, Erick Erickson, Sean Hannity, Mark Levin and many others. The station is also Northeast Georgia’s home of the Georgia Bulldogs, an assortment of great weekend shows and the newly established local hit, “The Mountain Morning Show” with Cole Cleiman and Darrell Everidge.

Cole Cleiman and his mother, Catherine, purchased WCHM in the Fall of 2024. WCHM was in desperate need of a revamp and the Cleiman family saw the perfect opportunity to give back to their community.

Cole, a Clarkesville native and former talk show co-host, had the dream of creating a locally focused, positive, uplifting morning show. Darrell Everidge, a well-known award-winning radio producer and broadcast specialist, returned to WCHM to embark on this new endeavor. Cole and Darrell quickly gained traction with “The Mountain Morning Show” by hosting a variety of unique guests, political leaders (both National and hometown politicians) local business owners, the animal shelter and local non-profit groups.

Cleiman, being an avid outdoorsman as well, created a strong connection with the Soque River Watershed Association (SRWA) by hosting them regularly on the show. WCHM has contributed to the SRWA through fund raising and donated air-time to educate the community of their importance.

Along with the SRWA, WCHM also supports the local veteran’s organizations, the VFW, DAV and American Legion through a show called, “Veteran’s Voices”, which airs every weekend.

Cleiman and Everidge both plan to keep growing and contribute to the community by delivering a positive, light-hearted place to stay informed with news and information. “We want WCHM to be Northeast Georgia’s radio home! We hope everyone will download the WCHM app and visit our website, wchmradio.com and join in on the fun!” Says Cleiman. 94.3 WCHM FM can also be found on Facebook and Instagram.





SRWA Grant Writing: The Ultimate Experience

As the SRWA Team continues to evolve as a working board, the learning curve has resembled a 90-degree angle...and that challenge involves grant writing! Like most non-profits, fundraisers have their limitations in driving adequate funding for major river work and water testing projects, so grant writing efforts are a must. Recently, the SRWA completed several new grant submissions involving an application for a 2024 regional seed grant and a 2025 EPA 319 grant request. Since these were our first grant writing efforts the organization's expectations were low - but to our surprise we did have some initial success.

As of the first week of June, the SRWA will have access to 319 grant funding in the amount of \$75,000 that will be partially utilized to re-write the original 2008 and revised 2017 Soque River Watershed Protection Plans (WPP) and new water quality testing projects. The river and watershed have gone through so many changes over the last eight to seventeen years that a full re-write project was fully warranted. The key element missing was how the SRWA would be able to pay for it! That question has now been answered.

Beginning in July 2025, a third-party environmental firm, Resource Environmental Solutions (RES) with a satellite office based in Athens, Georgia will be updating our current WPP with an end of September 2025 completion date.

As Board President, I would like to personally thank several volunteers and board members that have played a key role in delivering this monumental achievement.

Let me thank our supporters within the Habersham County Management/Financial Team (Tim Sims, Sara Burke, and Kiana Holden), Mary Gazaway with the Georgia EPD Watershed Protection Branch, grant writers Nora Almazan and Rick Coulon, former SRWA ED, Duncan Hughes, and board member, Mike Watts. Projects of this type are total team efforts...thanks everyone!

At this point, the SRWA will have a new watershed vision for the future as early as September, but the funding for new projects will require a continued grant writing effort. We welcome anyone's willingness to help...just let us know by sending an email to srwa@soque.org with attention to the Board President.



LEAH HOLTZCLAW

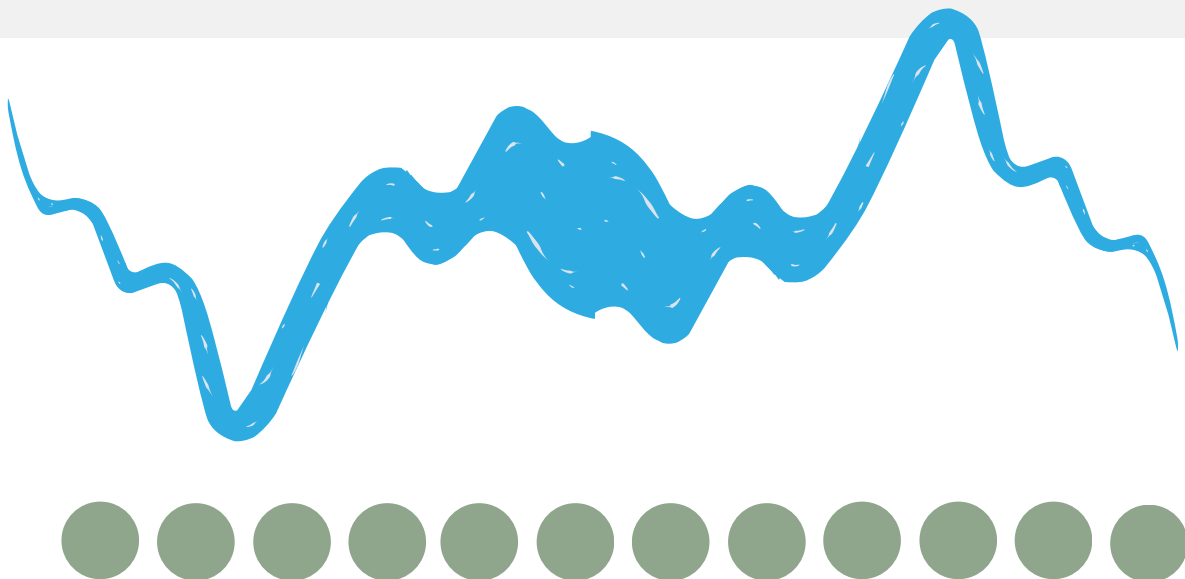
Meet Leah Holtzclaw: Our SRWA Student Intern Making Waves!

We're thrilled to introduce Leah Holtzclaw, a bright and talented Environmental Science student from Piedmont University, to our incredible SRWA community! Leah has been a vital part of our team since January, diligently managing our water testing program. Now, we're excited to announce that she's officially joined us as a student intern, bringing her passion and technological expertise to the forefront.

Being from the area, Leah has a deep appreciation for our local ecosystem and all it has to offer. For this reason, she is grateful for the opportunity to work with an organization focused on preserving and protecting the Soque River.

Leah is already proving to be a game-changer for the SRWA, particularly in the realm of technology. She has assisted with the implementation of a brand new mapping and QR code system, a project that promises to revolutionize how the public accesses vital water quality information. Thanks to Leah's hard work, anyone will soon be able to easily access up-to-date data and learn more about the health of our waterways.

Please join us in extending a warm welcome to Leah! We are incredibly grateful for her dedication and eagerly anticipate the valuable contributions she will continue to make to our organization and the health of our rivers.





BROOKE TERILLI

Introducing Brooke Terilli - Age Fit Physical Therapy

The SRWA believes in the power of community collaboration, and as such, we strongly believe in partnering with local businesses. By joining forces with like-minded organizations, the SRWA can extend its reach and provide valuable resources to a greater number of individuals in the area. Recently, the SRWA had the distinct pleasure of meeting with Brooke Terilli of Age Fit Physical Therapy, a promising connection that could lead to exciting new opportunities for community members seeking specialized care and wellness support.

Age Fit Physical Therapy and Wellness was founded on the premise that everyone should be able to do what they need to do and what they love to do at every age. Dr. Brooke Terilli is a Board Certified Geriatric Clinical Specialist who particularly enjoys treating balance and dizziness, though she sees everything from simple ankle sprains, to chronic joint pain, to strokes/TBIs and most things between. At Age Fit, we believe in long term health and wellness and strive for individualized and personalized care to each client and offer an array of services to meet each person's needs, whether that's through our Physical Therapy services, group fitness classes, or community education opportunities. We have enjoyed being a part of this community and working with other like minded businesses and practitioners who have the same vision we do!

"The river is calling and I must go."

