



## Summary of 2016 Accomplishments

### Monitor

- ◆ Certified volunteers monitored 55 sites across the 4-county area, with a total of 284 sampling events completed. This was 90 more sampling events than in 2015! (View graphs of data at: [www.georgiaadoptastream.org](http://www.georgiaadoptastream.org))
- ◆ Data (including *E. coli*) was collected monthly at six locations on the Hiwassee River: two in Towns County, three in Clay County and one in Cherokee County.
- ◆ Continued a bi-monthly water chemistry monitoring program in the Fires Creek watershed begun in 2013 in partnership with the Unaka Chapter Trout Unlimited.
- ◆ With the help of a senior environmental science student at Young Harris College, collected a total of 80 *E. coli* samples at four locations along Butternut Creek in Union County, GA. [On a quarterly basis, we collected five samples within a 30-day period to evaluate whether or not each site was meeting the bacterial water quality standards in each season.]
- ◆ Water chemistry and bacterial certification workshops were held, training 16 new volunteers! Several other smaller recertification workshops for existing volunteers were also conducted by our AAS coordinator.
- ◆ Won the Georgia Adopt-A-Stream Nonprofit Organization Award for our program expansion efforts!

### Restore

- ◆ Completed riparian buffer planting associated with the 2015 stream restoration project at Morgan Creek and two tributaries in Marble, NC. Funded by the NC Section 319 program, an estimated 218 tons (14 dump truck loads) of sediment per year was removed from the Valley River as a result of this project!
- ◆ Conducted shoreline enhancement work and installed an educational kiosk on Lake Chatuge in Towns County in partnership with the Hiwassee-Lake Chatuge Rotary Club.
- ◆ Completed a habitat improvement project along a portion of Wolf Creek in Union County in partnership with the Chattahoochee-Nantahala Chapter of Trout Unlimited.
- ◆ Worked with the Student Government Association at Young Harris College to begin restoration efforts along Corn Creek, which flows through the center of campus.
- ◆ Continued working in partnership with the Riverwalk to eradicate invasive plants from riparian areas along Hiwassee and Valley Rivers along the trails in downtown Murphy.
- ◆ Completed a riparian enhancement project along Brasstown Creek at The Gardens Apartments in Young Harris.
- ◆ Continued planning the next Valley River restoration project at the mouth of Taylor Creek.
- ◆ Developed a plan for protecting and enhancing the Lake Chatuge shoreline associated with the new Mayor's Park in Towns County.
- ◆ Assisted Hamilton (Rhododendron) Gardens with nonnative invasive plant eradication efforts.
- ◆ Secured a \$40,000 grant from the Southeast Aquatic Resources Partnership (SARP) for aquatic and riparian habitat improvements in the Valley River watershed.
- ◆ Responded to 13 calls for technical assistance mostly related to aftermath from the extensive 2015 flooding.

## Educate

- ◆ Launched a new web site with a more user-friendly design and more powerful tools for providing educational materials for landowners and the public!
- ◆ Co-hosted “Kids in the Creek” events for 8<sup>th</sup> graders from Hayesville Middle School and 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> graders from Ranger Elementary.
- ◆ Participated in the GA Mountain Research & Education Center’s environmental education days, providing the interactive activity, “Everyone Lives Upstream!” for 350 middle school students from five counties in two states!
- ◆ Conducted Earth Day environmental education presentations at the Andrews Library and Peachtree Elementary School.
- ◆ Provided in-class presentations and activities at Murphy & Hayesville Middle Schools.
- ◆ Hosted a hands-on program about macroinvertebrates for Cub Scouts along the Valley River.
- ◆ Participated in the Clay County Soil & Water Conservation District Field Day.
- ◆ Provided 12 community presentations for partner organizations and other civic groups. [Four were held in Towns County, three in Union, two in Cherokee and three in Clay.]
- ◆ Convened a committee and developed guidelines and an application for the Carson Conservation Scholarship!

## Connect

- ◆ Coordinated the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Lake Chatuge Shoreline Cleanup with 71 volunteers and more than 1.25 tons of trash collected, bringing the 6-year total to 6.75 tons!
- ◆ Helped publicize the Hiwassee Lake shoreline cleanup and the Lake Nottely Improvement Association’s events and clean-ups.
- ◆ Hosted 34 Alternative Spring Break volunteers from Saginaw Valley State Univ. and Grand Valley State Univ. in Michigan and Bowling Green State Univ. in Ohio. This work generated nearly \$22,823 in matching funds for grants while completing needed restoration project stewardship in all four counties in the watershed!
- ◆ Led native/invasive plant walks on the River Walk in Murphy.
- ◆ Continued participation in the Nantahala-Pisgah Forest Partnership which is working collaboratively with diverse interests to help the US Forest Service revise its 15-year management plan.
- ◆ We hiked, watched birds, paddled canoes and kayaks, and photographed waterfalls this year during seven outings throughout the watershed and along the Hiwassee River in Tennessee.

## Organizational Development

- ◆ Installed a new marquee sign on Tennessee Street!
- ◆ Bought new computers and software and provided new administrative and outreach coordinator, Raleigh Keagan with a QuickBooks training course.
- ◆ Updated our Facebook page regularly and brought the number of “Likes” up from 840 to 991, an 18% increase.
- ◆ Created a YouTube channel and began adding videos.
- ◆ Prepared and circulated our calendar early and established annual dates for major fundraisers.
- ◆ Added a very successful outdoor gear sale fundraiser!

Please visit our web site for current events and accomplishments: [www.hrwc.net](http://www.hrwc.net)

Our Facebook is completely public, but if you are Facebook user, please engage with us there!

[www.facebook.com/hiwasseeiver](http://www.facebook.com/hiwasseeiver)