



Partnership Established to Promote Restoration of the St. Johns River

Our Mission:

To restore, preserve and protect the waters of the St. Johns River and its tributaries for current and future generations.

After decades of discussion, a unified effort has been established to promote restoration of the St. Johns River and provide protection for the 310 mile long St. Johns River. The establishment of the St. Johns River Alliance, a nonprofit public-private partnership, is one of the major developments taking place this year. Government and private groups are organizing to protect the health and future of the St. Johns River.

The unification effort to protect the river calls for the Alliance's board to be comprised of the chairs of the two regional planning councils, the Mayor of Jacksonville and the chairs in the river basin. This group will also include nine additional board members from the upper, middle and lower basins. These board seats may include representatives from the environmental community, industry, agriculture and other interested parties. The Stewards of the St. Johns River Inc. are represented on the Alliance's board of directors.

Brevard County Commissioner Sue Carlson is the Chair of the SJRA (St. Johns River Alliance) Board of Directors. Mayor John Peyton will serve as Vice-Chair of the SJRA. The management strategy creates the

basis framework to launch new restoration efforts and provides a permanent management structure for restoration activities such as setting annual funding priorities, developing a comprehensive plan and organizing legislative initiatives and seeking public input on environmental issues.

A total of more than 290 projects totaling \$2.4 billion have been identified by the river community. According to the SJRA strategic plan, a detailed restoration plan will be developed by July 2004. The restoration plan will outline specific, quantifiable targets or objectives for river restoration as well as further refine the projects, costs, and responsibilities for achieving the SJRA mission.

The new organization will be, in some ways, a continuation (and expansion) of the five year River Agenda restoration work that began after the first River Summit in December 1997. Under the leadership of Mayor John Delaney, the initiative developed projects over a 5 year period aimed at reducing point and nonpoint pollution, restoring degraded habitat, reducing bacteria in tributaries and improving water quality compliance and enforcement.

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**Stewards
Executive Director**

Water Wars

by **DON LOOP**

water “poor” areas. This is a flawed concept. The Stewards feel that any such plan would simply allow developers to continue to develop already over-developed areas which currently have inadequate water supplies.

Citizens and local governments are uniformly against any such type of “water transfer plans”.

Water resources in North Florida are already seriously taxed and we will need all existing water resources to meet future water demands. Our “fragile” Florida is already seriously over-developed in many areas and any mechanism to transfer water resources to allow continued development is not in the best interest of the citizens of North Florida.

The Stewards of the St. Johns River take a dim view of all the discussion about sweeping changes in water management policy generated by the Florida Council of 100, a group that provides policy advise to the Governor.

Basically, these discussions would involve transporting water resources for water “rich” areas to



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Donald LoopExecutive Director..... 284-7378

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Noble Enge
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www.Stewardsonline.org

RiverWatch

P.O. Box 8670, Fleming Island, FL 32006

RiverWatch is a publication by the Stewards of the St. Johns River, Inc., a not-for-profit corporation dedicated to serving as a voice for the St. Johns River and its tributaries since 1990. The newsletter is published quarterly.

We welcome comments from our readers. Please share our message with your friends. Invite them to become a Steward.

**NEWSPAPER
STAFF**

**Carol Matthews
Don Loop**

Member of River Network
National Environmental Group

Dean Norman's Cartoons

Did you ever wonder how the Stewards were lucky enough to have great cartoons in each issue? We were granted special permission by nationally renowned cartoonist who began exploring nature in the woods at the edge of his home in Cedar Rapids, Iowa at age 5. His parents called the police to look for their lost child, but that was only the first of many adventures.

Dean Norman grew up in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. He graduated from the University of Iowa in 1956 with a B.A. in Political Science. Following this, he studied ecology at the University of Missouri and University of North Dakota from 1962 to 1965.



WALLY'S WOODS • by Dean Norman



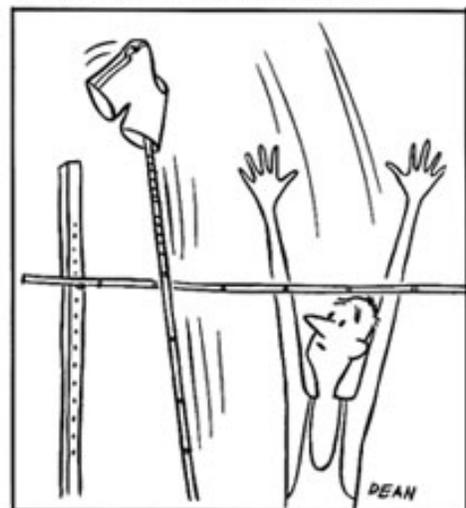
"LET'S MOVE OUR NEST. THIS TREE IS TOO CLOSE TO THE SKI TRAIL."

Dean draws on canoeing, kayaking, hiking, camping and cross-country skiing adventures for Wally's Woods story ideas. He lives in Cleveland, Ohio, with his wife, Maureen. A son, David, is an electronic repairman for the U.S. Post Office, and daughter, Susan is a river recreation manager for the U.S. Forest Service.

We appreciate his generosity in allowing us to use his cartoons for RiverWatch. Norman has two volumes for purchase at <http://www.geocities.com/wallyswoods/>

After graduation, he got a job as a cartoonist with Hallmark Cards in Kansas City. He bought a canoe that took him to the Ozark rivers, and from there paddled and hiked all over the United States while studying ecology and drawing cartoons for American Greetings, Mad Magazine, American Whitewater, American Canoe Association, and many others.

Norman created Wally's Woods comic strip as an online feature that appeared on the American Greetings web site in 1999-2000, and continues today at Wally's Woods.





JEA is the largest community-owned utility in Florida and the eighth largest in the United States.

Buckman Wastewater Facility occupies nearly 40 acres off of Talleyrand Avenue northeast of downtown Jacksonville.

The JEA Buckman Street Wastewater Reclamation Facility was originally constructed in 1961 as a primary treatment facility to remove suspended solid material and organic matter and was permitted to discharge 17.5 million gallons per day to the St. Johns River.

With the passage of the Clean Water Act, the facility was upgraded and expanded to secondary level of treatment with a capacity of 35.0 million gallons per day in the early 1970's.

In the mid-1980's, further improvements were made to the facility by adding chlorine disinfection and increasing capacity to 52.5 million gallons per day. To reduce the toxic effect of chlorine on the aquatic environment, dechlorination facilities were added to the facility in November 1990.

The Buckman plant presently treats 36 million gallons per day of wastewater which

is a combination of domestic sewage and industrial wastes. The majority of the industries in Jacksonville discharge to the Buckman WRF which serves 158,800 customers with 133 pump stations that flow to this facility.

Since taking over operation of the water and sewer division from the City of Jacksonville in June 1997, JEA has implemented numerous improvements that collectively represent the second major upgrade of the plant in terms of improving overall treatment efficiency since its original construction. These improvements have played a big role in changing the plant from an poor performer to a national and state award winning facility.

Since 2002, JEA has virtually eliminated the permit non-compliances that resulted in 141 separate NPDES violations in 1998! Because of this remarkable turnaround, the JEA Buckman WRF has been the recipient of several prestigious awards.

Receives National Awards for Improvements

The JEA Buckman Water Reclamation Facility (WRF) was recognized by EPA at the annual National Clean Water Act Recognition Awards Ceremony for achievements and excellence in operations and maintenance practices as a first-place national recipient in the Large Secondary Plant category. This is EPA's highest award for operations and maintenance excellence. Buckman has also received the equivalent FDEP Northeast District award for 2003 and the Association of Metropolitan Sewerage Agencies Gold Award for zero permit violations in 2003.

JEA's industrial pretreatment program has worked intensively with regulated industrial users that have historically contributed pollutants to the Buckman WRF. JEA has found that by employing a collaborative approach with these regulated users, in all instances, these users have worked to significantly reduce pollutant loadings to their processes and consequently to the Buckman WRF.

JEA's innovative biosolids project co-located at the Buckman site produced the first pellets on Oct. 3, 2002. It involves turning the residual biosolids from the waste water treatment process into a marketable, granular fertilizer product called

GreenEdge, using a process known as anaerobic digestion.

This milestone is significant as it marks the end of operation of the incinerator at Buckman and represents a significant reduction in actual air pollutant emissions.

Wastewater treatment plants themselves can also have a high need for water use for periodic hose down of various areas, and for continuous washing of certain process equipment such as filter presses and clarifiers. By investing in an on-site wastewater reuse system, JEA has eliminated the need to draw potable water from the aquifer for these process wash water uses. On site reclaimed water is approximately 5 to 6 million gallons per day.

Congratulations to JEA for their environmental efforts in building community.



Fine Bubble Diffusers installed in 2001



*By James Maher
Northeast FL Department of
Environmental Protection*

TMDL Set for River

A nutrient TMDL for the Lower St. Johns River Basin has been set and incorporated into rule. TMDL stands for is Total Maximum Daily Load and it identifies the

maximum amount of any substance, (nutrient) the river can safely absorb without impairment, often referred to as “assimilative capacity”.

The St. Johns River has a nutrient enrichment problem. We’ve all suffered through the warm, dry weather driven greenish filamentous blooms that look like long ropes of slime. Nutrients are required for all living things. But when there are too many nutrients available, it causes the natural balance of an ecosystem to be upset. Pollution tolerant species can dominate over more delicate and diverse species indicative of a healthy balanced ecosystem. Blooms can cause navigational hazards as well as rob the water column of oxygen, even lead to fish kills. Further, blooms block light either in the water column or as epiphytes on sea grass fronds, further interfering with photosynthesis. Clearly this is impairment, and nutrients need to be limited.

Until now, we haven’t had strong tools to legally limit the nutrients from either point source dischargers or non-point runoff.

Because the TMDL was going to require many stakeholders to spend a lot of money implementing the reductions in nutrients required to protect the

river, we knew the only way it would survive was if the process was driven by community consensus. For two years now DEP has been holding monthly TMDL stakeholder meeting, followed by monthly Executive Committee meetings, briefing the public on how the TMDL was being developed and soliciting input as to how to make it stronger and more sound.

Don Loop regularly represented the Stewards, and other Stewards made frequent contributions including Mike Hartman and the late Tom Fortson. Other environmental activist groups also were a part of the effort, as were industrial groups, utilities, other governmental agencies, agricultural interests and stormwater permittees.

The end result indicated that there needs to be a 30% reduction in nitrogen and phosphorus in the fresh water section of the basin, roughly south of Green Cove Springs, and a 22% reduction in nitrogen in the marine section north of GCS over current levels. We will begin the process of allocation to fairly portion out the reductions required between all activities that contribute to nutrient discharges.

The TMDL as written isn’t perfect, but represents a first attempt with the best science available. Some of the most critical breakthroughs came late in the process. We can and will continue to improve that science and the TMDL may change if gains in scientific understanding so support it.

We will continue to rely o the Stewards for your first hand knowledge, your passion and your common sense as we proceed with the allocation step and in making the supporting model and scientific approach more robust.



Governor appoints Susan N. Hughes to Water Management District Board



Ms. Hughes



Governor Jeb Bush on Friday appointed Susan N. Hughes of Jacksonville to a three-year term on the St. Johns River Water Management District's Governing Board.

Hughes is vice president of environmental services for JEA, a Jacksonville-based water, electric and sewer utility. A native of Pennsylvania, Hughes has lived in the Jacksonville area and been employed by JEA for 18 years. She has a bachelors degree in civil

engineering from the University of Pittsburgh and a masters in public administration from the University of North Florida. Hughes is also a registered professional engineer.

Hughes succeeds Catherine A. Walker and will serve until March 1, 2006. The District's other Board members are Duane L. Ottenstroer of Jacksonville, Ann T. Moore of Bunnell, W. Michael Branch of Fernandina Beach, William W.

Kerr of Melbourne Beach, David Graham of Jacksonville, Robert "Clay" Albright of Ocala, Ometrius Deon Long of Apopka, and John Sowinski of Orlando. Governing Board members serve without pay and set the District's policies and priorities.

The Stewards have enjoyed an extremely positive working relationship with Ms. Hughes and her environmental services organization and applaud her appointment to this key position.

YES! I want to join the Stewards of the St. Johns River and serve as a "voice for the river". Enclosed is my tax-deductible contribution of:

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$50 Steward | <input type="checkbox"/> \$100 Captain | <input type="checkbox"/> \$250 Commander |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$250 Small Business | <input type="checkbox"/> \$500 Admiral | <input type="checkbox"/> \$1,000 Corporate |

My area of interest is in _____
Print Name _____
Address _____
City/State _____ Zip _____
Phone (h) _____ (w) _____ FAX _____

Office Use:

Date _____
Check # _____

Membership: New
 Renewal

MAIL TO:
P.O. Box 8670,
Fleming Island, FL 32006

DIAL 800-EDU-SSJR

RiverWatch Hotline

800-338-7757

For all communication, such as reporting spilled fuel, sewage discharge, illegal dumping or any hazards. Call to volunteer or request meeting times and date. A Steward will provide information, or direct your call to the proper authority and follow up.



STEWARDS OF THE ST. JOHNS RIVER, INC.
P.O. Box 8670
Fleming Island, FL 32006
www.stewardsonline.org