Voice of the Haw

The Haw River Assembly December 2018



P.O. Box 187 · Bynum, NC 27228 · (919) 542-5790 email: info@hawriver.org · www.hawriver.org

Fighting Water Pollution Together!

We've had successes and opportunities in our work for the Haw in the past few months that are worth mentioning – and celebrating! The challenges our watershed faces are many, but we will continue fighting for safe drinking water, clean streams and wildlife habitat, and stronger environmental protections. This year was a big wakeup call on climate change, including the storms and flooding in our watershed. The most vulnerable and poor are hit the hardest by these disasters. We will look at how global warming and environmental justice impact the issues we are working on, including fossil fuel pipelines, contaminated drinking water, and development that replaces forests.

Stopping Mountain Valley Pipeline Southgate

Emily Sutton has led a fast-moving campaign to organize against MVP Southgate, the fracked gas pipeline proposed for Alamance and Rockingham counties. She brought together

many landowners and citizens to strategize and take action, and there is now real hope for stopping it! The love of place that people and communities threatened by pipelines have is key to standing up to the corporations profiting from them. We can fight intimidation and misinformation much more effectively when we stand together.

Chatham Park Intervention

We have urged Pittsboro for many years to require much greater protections for water quality as Chatham Park is built. On November 15, Southern Environmental Law Center filed a motion on behalf of HRA to intervene with the Office of Administrative Hearings in proceedings over whether the Town of Pittsboro will honor its commitments to protect the Haw River and Jordan Lake from the impacts of this massive new development. Our goal is to support and significantly strengthen the Department of Environmental Quality's efforts to implement and enforce these mitigation measures.

In Praise of the Learning Celebration

The joy and energy of this wonderful program for 4th-graders in our watershed is still going strong after 29 years, and over 47,000 children have joined us to discover the wonders of the Haw River. We set up the program in the aftermath of Tropical Storm Florence, and kept it going, rain or shine, until Tropical Storm Michael chased us out of Camp Guilrock in the last two days of the final week. Students still had a wonderful experience, and volunteers were re-charged by spending time by the river and with each other. Our staff, Erin Jobe, Lawrence Peterson, and Rufus King, were a fantastic team, and we successfully weathered the storms!

There's much more inside about these issues and the work we are doing. Please know that the support that you give as members, donors and volunteers is what makes our work possible. You are our most valuable resource!



This grand old oak tree is threatened by the Southgate pipeline. Photo by Kim Hawks.

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Thanks to **Jan Burger** for art throughout this newsletter: HRF Heron, Boy with Butterfly, River Watch Heron, and Clean-Up-A-Thon logo.

To join the Haw River Assembly or renew your membership, send a check to HRA, P.O. Box 187, Bynum, NC 27228; or go online at http://hawriver.org/join-hra/.

All contributions are tax-deductible.

Thank you!

Individual: \$25 Family: \$40
Sustaining: \$50 Heron Circle: \$100 & above

Low Income: \$10

The Haw River Assembly is a nonprofit grassroots organization founded in 1982. Our mission is to protect and restore the Haw River, its tributaries, and Jordan Lake; and to build a community that shares this vision.

(919) 542-5790 www.hawriver.org

Notes from the Haw

We had a great annual HRA membership meeting on November 3 at David Naylor's beautiful farm in Alamance County. His property is on the Haw River, just downstream from Alamance Community College, and right in the target area of the proposed Mountain Valley Pipeline Southgate extension that could be built through Alamance and Rockingham counties.

We truly appreciate David's generosity in hosting us, so that we could see for ourselves what is at stake if



hoto by Fred Tutman

the pipeline is built. Standing under the huge oak tree in the pasture, and imagining a 100-foot-wide swath being bulldozed through it, gave us renewed energy to fight this pipeline. Emily Sutton, Haw Riverkeeper, and David led us on a hike to the river on a gorgeous autumn day; then we headed back to the barn for our meeting. We heard updates on HRA work and a panel discussion led by Emily of community leaders, landowners, and activists who have been working to stop the pipeline, including Tony Hayes (Tribal Chief of the Ocaneechi Band of Saponi Nation), David Naylor, John Wagner, and Patsy Madren.

We held elections for our 2019 Board of Directors, and gave a big thanks to our returning members: Chris Carter, Gerald Lynn Featherstone, Ruth Lucier, Melvin DuBose, Sharon Garbutt, and Janet MacFall. We also elected a new Board member, Nicole Spivey, whom we met through the organizing campaign against Mountain Valley Pipeline. Nicole is the Chair of the Piedmont Plateau Group of the Sierra Club, teaches at Guilford Technical Community College, and is on the City of Greensboro Community Sustainability Council. We are very happy that she is joining our Board, and strengthening our connection to Guilford County, an important part of our watershed. We were sorry to say goodbye to Jim Hood, Bernadette Howell, Gloria White-James, and Cristina Moreira, who retired from our Board this year. We thank each of them for putting in their talents, time and effort to help us keep this work going strong!

We hope you'll stop by our office in December, when we will be selling our new and vintage T-shirts during our annual holiday sale (see page 7 for details). We always enjoy getting to chat with HRA members!



Above: Welcome Nicole Spivey to the HRA Board! At right: Tony Hayes, Tribal Chief of the Ocaneechi Band of Saponi Nation, speaks at

the HRA Annual Meeting.

Wishing very Happy Holidays to all of you, Elaine Chiosso, Executive Director





HAW RIVERKEEPER® Issues in the Watershed

from Emily Sutton, HAW RIVERKEEPER®

Chatham Park Intervention

On behalf of the Haw River Assembly, the Southern Environmental Law Center filed a motion on November 15 to intervene with the Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH) in proceedings over whether the small Town of Pittsboro will honor its commitments to protect the Haw River and Jordan Lake from the impacts of Chatham Park. Chatham Park investors and the Town of Pittsboro filed contested cases against the N.C. Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) in the OAH after the agency notified the town of failures to fulfill commitments made in Pittsboro's 2010 permit application to expand its wastewater treatment plant to accommodate new development. In its permit application, Pittsboro committed to conservation measures and stormwater mitigation strategies that would help offset the dramatic increase in paved surface areas from the addition of 23 million square feet of commercial space and 27,570 residential dwelling units on the banks of the Haw River. We are intervening to support and significantly strengthen DEQ's efforts to implement and enforce these mitigation measures that will protect the Haw River, Robeson Creek, and Jordan Lake. We were very disappointed that the Pittsboro Town Board voted 3-2 to approve the Stormwater Element for Chatham Park on October 8, despite the ongoing discussions with the state. We do not believe that this measure would be effective in protecting our waters. Visit www.hawriver.org, River Issues: Chatham Park, to learn more.

Mountain Valley Pipeline (MVP) Southgate

MVP Southgate has officially filed with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) docket. However, the proposed route has not been finalized, and landowners have refused to allow surveyors on their property. N.C. Department of Environmental Quality wrote a very critical letter to FERC, stating that there is no demonstrated need for this pipeline, and that North Carolinians will not benefit from the additional gas. Alamance County Commissioners voted unanimously in September to approve a resolution opposing the pipeline, thanks to the strong outpouring of written and vocal comments by Alamance residents.

We joined with Sierra Club and Appalachian Voices to host a Strategy Summit on November 17, where over 50 landowners and community members came together to strengthen organizing and advocacy skills. As this project moves forward, every permit application will provide an opportunity for community members to educate elected officials and local and state agencies about the risks and lack of need for this project. We will need voices from not only communities impacted along the proposed route, but all communities who would be impacted by threatened waterways. Visit www.hawriver.org, River Issues: MVP Southgate, to read DEQ's letter and learn how to get involved!

Industrial Contaminants

We continue to monitor for PFAS and 1,4 Dioxane below suspected discharge locations. Levels of 1,4 Dioxane are high in times of low water in tributaries below Greensboro and Reidsville's wastewater treatment plants, due to industrial chemical wastes collected in municipal waste streams. In October, we learned that a closed textile facility was emptying sludge from abandoned holding ponds to be land-applied on fields in Guilford County. We have urged state agencies to require testing of that sludge, which likely contains high levels of PFAS. We've identified the fields where sludge would be applied, and will monitor the potentially impacted creeks if the application is approved.

We have presented our monitoring data for PFAS and 1,4 Dioxane to the Town of Pittsboro to urge them to protect impacted communities from the high levels of contamination in the Haw River, the town's drinking water supply. We urge them to use the interconnect with Chatham County to supply town residents with drinking water from Jordan Lake. We will be hosting a film screening of "The Devil We Know" at the Pittsboro Roadhouse on December 4 from 6 - 9 pm. The film shows how a West Virginia community was contaminated by PFAS from DuPont, followed by the GenX pollution in Wilmington. After the film, we will discuss our monitoring data and how Pittsboro's drinking water has been impacted by industrial pollution.

Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations - Public Comments Sought

The state is seeking stakeholder input and public comments on their general permit, which will determine how most of the 9.5 billion gallons of waste from North Carolina's nearly 10 million hogs is handled for the next 5 years. The public comment period is until February 28.

The current permit allows waste to be kept in unlined open cesspools, and sprayed on nearby cropland. These are at risk of flooding, hazardous air emissions, and groundwater and surface water contamination. Industrial swine operations are concentrated in communities of color. Corporations that contract with North Carolina swine operations should have responsibility for managing the waste produced by the animals they own. Last year, the NC legislature limited the property rights and legal remedies for neighbors harmed by swine operations. There are only six industrial swine operations in the Haw; however, we are hopeful that this permit will lay the foundation for stronger requirements for poultry operations. We need a groundswell of public comments and input from communities throughout the state, through comments to the state, letters to the editor, and spreading the word on social media. For more information and talking points, visit www.hawriver.org, River continued on page 6 Issues: CAFO Campaign.

A Wild & Wonderful Year of

Erin Jobe, Learning Celebration Coordinator, with Safety & Logistics Coordinator Lawrence Peterson.

Photo by Cynhia Crossen

from Erin Jobe, Outreach & Event Coordinator (919) 542-5790; erin@hawriver.org

The 29th Annual Haw River Learning Celebration (LC) was a wild and wonderful year of bringing children to the river! Congrats to this year's heroic LC crew for connecting over 1,000 children to the river and giving them memories that will last a lifetime at "THE BEST FIELD TRIP EVER!" We are looking forward to seeing everyone for an extra special 30th Anniversary Learning Celebration in 2019!

Just one week before the kickoff of this year's LC, our beautiful river sites in Bynum and Saxapahaw were under water from the Hurricane Florence flooding. We found ourselves anxiously waiting for the water to subside to survey the condition of the sites. When we were finally able to walk the trails in Bynum, we were relieved to find the trails passable and intact. New sand deposits on the trail added an interesting beach-like feel to the site, and we marked the high-water line to show the kids just how much water had come in — it was several feet above everyone's head! Our first days in Bynum were full of excitement, with well-attended trainings and lots of volunteers joining us for the first time. We had a large crew of experienced volunteers and highly capable new volunteers, and as usual by the end of the week the whole crew seemed like family. Highlights of the week

included hosting our first bilingual school and doing portions of the program and concert in Spanish, and getting caught on the trails in an unexpected heavy rain and continuing with the program in the rain. Thanks to the support and flexibility of teachers, chaperones, and volunteers (and our supply of 100 kids' rain ponchos!), the children had the time of their lives being out on the trails in the rain!

For the second week of the LC, Lea Clayton and Donovan Zimmerman, along with many neighbors, graciously hosted us at their property along the river in Saxapahaw, as they have now for many years. We quickly realized on our first walk down to the river that we would be sharing the trails with an unprecedented number of hungry mosquitoes, due to large hatchings



across the state after Hurricane Florence. For many children that attend the LC, it's their first time spending several hours in nature, and our goal is always to make that experience as memorable and positive as possible. It was no surprise that the positive energy of our volunteers and their passionate love of the river thwarted the discomforts of humidity and mosquitoes. The children were engaged, full of energy, and in awe of the river and the natural world! We had a large crew of campers, and we all enjoyed delicious meals and relaxing afternoons. As is tradition, we ended each night circled together around a campfire, sharing stories of our day.

For week three we moved upstream to Camp Guilrock in Reidsville! We had a tiny but oh so mighty crew, and in just a few hours from arrival we were settled into camp and ready for our final week. The first days of the program started smoothly, but weather became a hot topic of conversation as Thursday approached – yet another hurricane was headed our way! Our committed volunteers

were willing to do whatever we could do to make the program happen, including bringing our program to the school! Unfortunately, the storm forecast worsened, and the school decided to cancel altogether. Instead we spent Thursday morning getting items off the trail, and most volunteers headed home to ride out the storm. A small crew decided stayed at Camp Guilrock, and it was a wild day of high winds, tornado warnings, flooding of the roads leading into camp, downed powerlines on the property, and power outages. By the afternoon, it was clear that the program would be canceled on Friday as well. Despite the conditions, the positive and calm mood of our small Guilrock crew did not waver. Instead they focused on eating the quickly melting ice cream and mopping up water that had rushed in under the door of our camp building during the heaviest rains. The storm passed by the time we went to bed, and Friday was a surreal day of packing up camp instead of hosting children. We were grateful for a crew of volunteers that drove back up to Guilrock to help us load up



oto by Milada Vachudova

our supplies. It was a strange ending to our LC, but we are grateful that everyone stayed safe in the storm!

Bringing Children to the River!

We would like to thank the following people and organizations that make the LC possible!

- * All of our dedicated volunteers that generously share their time, energy, and passion with the children at the LC
- * Martha Pentecost for lots of help setting up and training new volunteers, photography, puppet show leadership, and maple syrup
- * John Wagner for three incredible weeks of dedication to the program and assistance with setup and breakdowns
- * Sutton King for her leadership and positive energy during all three weeks of the LC
- * CC and Tim King for their dedication to bringing their family to the LC
- * Whole Foods for donating delicious bread for our crew
- * Executive Director Elaine Chiosso for her leadership and continued dedication to doing whatever is needed to make the LC a success
- * Safety and Logistics Coordinator Lawrence Peterson for his hard work and his calm and gentle approach
- * Assistant Coordinator Rufus King for his incredible work, leadership and dedication to all aspects of the program
- * Audrey Schwankl for leading our efforts to add Spanish language to the program in Bynum
- * The teachers, chaperones, and bus drivers who juggle the many details of getting hundreds of children out to the river
- * Our crowdfunder donors who helped us reach our goal of raising \$5,000 to support the Learning Celebration
- * Cynthia Crossen for her leadership and role in bringing together our LC community through song and tradition
- * Ken Crossen for his hard work as executive chef at Camp Guilrock
- * Chris Carter for his instrumental role in all aspects of the Learning Celebration including setup, breakfast and kitchen duties, and puppet show organization; and for the energy he puts into the program each day
- * Sam Berryhill and Nancy Strong for hauling trash and recycling for us
- * Our puppeteers and musicians for their incredible performances
- * NC State Parks for hosting us at the Lower Haw River State Natural Area
- * Clyde Jones for years of support and for helping with site prep in Bynum
- * Shakori Hills Grassroots Festival for loan and set up of the big top tent in Bynum
- * Haw River Canoe & Kayak Co. for loaning out canoes in Saxapahaw
- * Maja Kricker for many early mornings of critter catching, and continued dedication to the success of the LC and the stream watch station
- * Emily Sutton for last minute assistance and weekly support
- * Kevin Meehan for DONATING 3 brand new Use-Yer-Foots to HRA this year
- * Jason Boggs of Camp Guilrock for being an excellent and welcoming host, and for his assistance during the hurricane
- * Wanda Sundermann for hosting our volunteer thank you party
- * Libby Searles-Bohs for creating beautiful frames for our volunteer thank you gifts
- * Milada Vachudova for capturing incredible moments in her photography
- * The kids and young adults on crew that take on more leadership each year, especial-
- ly those that spent at least a whole week with us this year including AJ, Quinn, Dominik, Lukas, Braedyn, Cosmo, Corwin & Molly
- * Lenore Yarger for so much assistance in Saxapahaw with critter catching, puppeteering, privy duties, and kitchen help
- * Lynn Featherstone for lending his time and truck to help us get our supplies to and from Camp Guilrock
- * Landowners Lea Clayton, Donovan Zimmerman, Elizabeth England and Yolanda Lujan, the Burke family, and Janet and James MacFall for giving our program a home in Saxapahaw
- * All of the generous people that donated meals to our hungry crew.
- * Our brave hurricane survival crew at Camp Guilrock: Molly and Kelly Peak, Jo Sanders, and John Wagner!



Photo by Milada Vachudova

Photo by Elaine Chiosso



Standing in the Stream

Project News from Emily Sutton, HAW RIVERKEEPER® (919) 542-5790; emily@hawriver.org



CREEK WEEKS

in the Haw watershed

Durham: March 16 - 23 Forsyth: March 23 - 30 Guilford: March 23 - 30 Alamance: April 6 - 13

Join us for events and workshops throughout the watershed

River Watch

We have added a total of 6 River Watch teams to our program this year! This brings our total of active teams to 35. We have had

so many teams in the past year that we are running low on equipment, which is a nice problem to have. If you have unused River Watch equipment, let us know! We'd like to keep our costs to volunteers as low as possible to encourage people from all walks of life to get out on the water and investigate their streams.

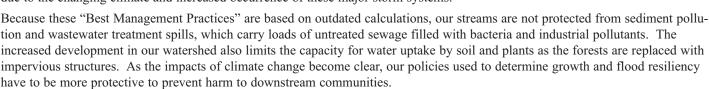
We are still piloting the Department of Water Resources' new smartphone application for River Watch surveying. We have provided them with a lot of valuable feedback, and they will continue to improve the program, which is initially based on our River Watch program and the data collected by our fabulous volunteer teams. If you'd like to join us, contact emily@hawriver.org.

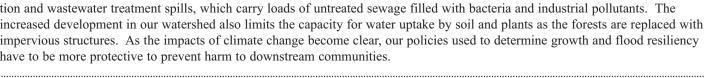
Flooding

The rain we have had this fall has led to serious flooding events in our watershed. First, Hurricane Florence raised the river level to 17.62' in Bynum, in September, where the levels are typically between 5 and 7 feet. On November 13, the land was so saturated that heavy rains pushed the river level to 17.71' in Bynum.

These storms are becoming more and more frequent, and more roofs and pavement mean that stormwater is not dispersed in a way that our natural systems can absorb. Climate change will only increase these storms of high volume and velocity. We are seeing these effects now throughout the country, as coastal communities recover from repeated hurricanes, and areas that have historically been out of the floodplain become inundated. Construction projects and water infrastructure systems are designed to be resilient in hydrologic events, which are calculated in terms of 'x'- year storms, which could be anywhere from one to 500 years. We now know this calculation method is outdated and inaccurate,

due to the changing climate and increased occurrence of these major storm systems.





Issues in the Watershed continued from page 3 Industrial Agriculture takes a huge toll on water quality. By choosing to support small scale, sustainable farms rather than the conventional agriculture industry this holiday season, you are supporting better practices that protect our streams. Sign the pledge at our website, www.hawriver.org, under River Issues: CAFO Campaign, and find a list of sustainable meat producers in our area.

Clean Water Act Rollback

North Carolina is preparing to rollback the Clean Water Rule, which would eliminate protections in the U.S. Clean Water Act for ephemeral streams and wetlands. We are working with Southern Environmental Law Center to show our state agencies and elected officials how critical these small streams are to protecting water quality and sensitive aquatic habitat. We need your help to write letters, submit comments, and spread this information to other communities throughout the state. Visit www.hawriver.org, River Issues: Clean Water Rule, to find out more.

Photo by Elaine Chiosso

Upcoming River Clean-up Saturday, March 16, 2019



Join volunteers cleaning up trash from the banks of the Haw River, the creeks, and Jordan Lake on Saturday, March 16, 2019, for the Haw River Assembly's 28th Haw River Clean-Up-A-Thon.

Teams will be getting out trash in the river that's harmful to water and wildlife, from Guilford County down to Jordan Lake. Other teams will be working along creeks in Greensboro, Burlington, Durham, Chapel Hill, Carrboro, and Pittsboro. Join a team or start your own – youth groups with adult supervision are welcome to join. We provide the bags and gloves, you provide the people power!

Since 1991, 5,413 volunteers have cleaned up 9,637 bags of trash, 1,777 tires, and many tons of car parts, appliances, furniture and other big junk from our waterways! Some of our weirdest finds have been rubber sharks, chickens, and turtles; a fake eyeball; balls from every sport imaginable; and even a kitchen sink! Be part of the solution and help us get the trash out! Local businesses have supported this event for many years, and we welcome new sponsors. For more information and to sign up, contact HRA at (919) 542-5790, or email us at info@hawriver.org.

* HRA Holiday T-Shirt Sale *

Monday - Friday, 10 am to 4 pm, Monday Dec. 3 through Friday Dec. 21, at the Haw River Assembly office.

Call ahead (919-542-5790). We are in and out during the weekdays, so call before you come to make sure someone is in

Saturdays December 8 and 15, from 10 am to 2 pm

Come by the HRA office at 143 Bynum Church Road through Dec. 21 for our Holiday T-shirt and Book



Sale! We have the newest 2019 Turtle design as well as lots of vintage designs (at sale prices) to choose from.

Our 2019 "Turtle" T-Shirt is Here!

Designed by Clyde Jones, our world famous Bynum folk artist! The shirt is soft dove gray with a multi-color turtle (and Haw River map on the back). It is 100% organic cotton, featuring non-toxic inks. Custom printed by makers of sustainable T-shirts in



Burlington-T.S. Designs. Available at our office, the Saxapahaw General Store, and Townsend Bertram & Company in Carrboro.

\$25 (adult) S, M, L, XL, XXL \$25 (ladies style) S, M, L, XL \$20 (youth) S, M, L To order from HRA, send check to HRA, P.O. Box 187, Bynum NC, 27228. Add \$4 per shirt for postage and transaction fee.

A Huge Thank You to Our 2018 Wild & Scenic Sponsors!

This September we hosted the Wild & Scenic Film Festival in Carrboro! It was a successful night of environmental films that inspire us all to protect the places we love! Thank you to our sponsors for their support: Fifth Season, Frog Hollow Outdoors, Great Outdoor Provision Co., Haw River Canoe & Kayak Co., Theye Electric, Inc., Town of Carrboro, Townsend Bertram & Co., Vimala's Curryblossom Cafe, Weaver Street Realty.



Upcoming 2018-19 HRA Events

Tuesday, December 4, 2018, 6 - 9 pm, at the Pittsboro Roadhouse, Film showing of "The Devil We Know). See details on page 3.

December 3 - 21, 2018, Annual HRA Holiday Sale at the HRA office in Bynum with T-shirts galore — and books! See details on page 7.

December 15-16, *2018*, Haw River Watch Monitoring weekend. Contact Emily at emily@hawriver.org or 919-542-5790 for more info.

Sunday, January 6, 2019, New Year's Hike along Lower Haw River State Natural Area. For information, contact info@hawriver.org or (919) 542-5790.

Saturday, March 16, 2019, Haw River Assembly Annual River Cleanup (Clean-Up-A-Thon). See details on page 7.

March 16 - April 13, 2019, Creek Week Activities in the Watershed. See details on page 6.

March 23-24, 2019, Haw River Watch Monitoring weekend. Contact Emily at emily@hawriver.org or 919-542-5790 for more info.

Updates and details can be found at www.hawriver.org, on our Haw River Assembly Facebook page, and from our weekly E-newsletters which you can sign up for at info@hawriver.org.



Kayaking fun at the Learning Celebration in Saxapahaw. Photo by Milada Vachudova

Haw River Clean-Up-A-Thon Sat. March 16, 2019

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