

Our Mission

As Friends of the Locust Fork River, we join together to actively preserve the natural integrity of the river in its free-flowing state, and to that end, the lifestyle of the community that surrounds it.

OUTINGS & EVENTS

ALABAMA CUP

Sat & Sun Feb. 5-6

Locust Fork Invitational Canoe & Kayak races opening races of the 2011 Alabama Cup Race season. King's Bend 9-5. Volunteer with us. www.alabamacupraces.com or Sam@flfr.com

Sat & Sun March 5-6

Mulberry Fork Canoe & Kayak races volunteer! www.alabamacupraces.com or Sam@flfr.com

Sat & Sun March 26-27

Locust Fork Whitewater Classic Canoe & Kayak races King's Bend, 9-5. Last chance to volunteer: www.alabamacupraces.com or Sam@flfr.com

(Outings & Events continued on page 2)

2011 Alabama Cup Whitewater Slalom ... Be There!! ~ Sam Howell

It starts in the chill of winter and ends at the door of springtime: it's the **2011 Alabama Cup canoe/kayak slalom racing season.** You can join the fun — as a racer or a volunteer at the:

Locust Fork Invitational 02/05-06; (note: Sat & Sun)

Mulberry Races 03/05-06

Locust Fork Whitewater Classic 03/26-27; (ditto)

NEW, IMPROVED!!

This year both Locust Fork races will adopt the two-day racing schedule used for so many years on the Mulberry.

Scheduling races for Saturday *and* Sunday makes for shorter race days, more time for the spectators to enjoy the scenery and, best of all, a *spectacular and exclusive* camping opportunity.

The Locust race location, King's Bend, in particular, is private property and not accessible without permission from the owner. NOW, even *you* can enjoy races both weekend days, and have plenty of time to savor the beauty of the river and these environs.

Overnight camp spots will be available. More often

(continued on page 2)



Photos by Nelson Brooke, Black Warrior Riverkeeper

OUTINGS & EVENTS

CONTINUED

Sat. Jan. 29:

Winter fossil hunt
with Ashley Allen

Cedar Creek Reservoir

(low water) near

Russellville, AL

Call Joe Still 205-965-4565

to sign up.

Hayden/Corner I-65 Park &
Ride carpool

TBA:

Eagle watch at
Lake Guntersville
with David Pylant
Jan-Feb

2011 Alabama Cup Whitewater Slalom (continued from page one)

than not, there is music around the campfire,
and there is always good cheer.

These improvements are coming from
the ongoing efforts of the Alabama Cup
Racing Association (ACRA), working hard
to make the races run more smoothly and
become more spectator-friendly.



IN MEMORY

This year's Alabama Cup Series
will be dedicated to Brad Hinds
who passed away December 2,
2011. His love for and many
years of support and partici-
pation at the Alabama Cup
Whitewater Slalom Racing
Series will be missed.

We hope to see you
at this year's racing series.
For more information go to
www.alabamacupraces.com
or Sam@flfr.com

Photos by Nelson Brooke, Black Warrior Riverkeeper



Photos by Rena Clark

Bradley Ray Hinds (Brad) 39, of Hoover, Alabama,
passed away Thursday, December 2, 2010. He was a loving husband
and father, a devoted son, and a true and thoughtful friend. Brad is
survived by his adoring wife, Emily Ford-Hinds; son, Bradley Walker
Hinds, age 10; daughter, Lily Grace Hinds, age 4; mother, Dean
Campbell; father and step-mother, Billy Ray and Heide Hinds;
brother, Brent Hinds; step-sister, Traci Perry; grandmother, BB
Snyder; and many beloved friends.

Brad was employed at Allcomm
Wireless, his family's business, as
director of sales. He was proudly serving as president
of the S.E.M.S.S. Association for 2011, and was
founder and president of the Stone Creek Hunting
Club. Brad loved and lived life to the fullest.
He was an avid outdoorsman, a committed member
of the kayak community, and a lifelong hunter.

For all who loved him and were touched by his life, his broad smile
and kind heart will be sorely missed and remembered forever.



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The River's Reach: Education Committee Report

~ Debra Gordon-Hellman, NEW FLFR board member, and Education SUPERintendent

The great poet William Wordsworth said, "Come forth into the light of things, let nature be your teacher". Nature is illuminating and not only enhances the school curriculum but our lives.

Thus today one finds across America, and indeed across Alabama, a movement in education to get children reconnected to the natural world and disconnected, at least some of the time, from the internet and computers.

FLFR and the members of its Education Committee are working diligently towards Mr. Wordsworth's recommendation.



In the last newsletter, in county newspapers, and through the schools the committee advertised for young people to join our new teen board (YA FLFR). Read about its growing success in a separate article.

Similarly was our publicity for the River of Words watershed education contest. We've received more entries this year than ever before.

Now the Committee is undertaking an ambitious project to create an 8th grade county-wide program that brings young people to the Locust Fork River for a field trip with hands on activities that integrate learning about the watershed with math, science, and language arts.

Other new projects are also being considered.

If you have an interest in the outdoors and education, please join the Education Committee. Who are we? We are elementary and high school teachers, a principal, retired educators, a businessperson, a college instructor and college student.

To join the committee, please e-mail me at debragh1@gmail.com or call 429-3960.

Debra Gordon-Hellman is an "old" river rat, now card-carrier. She has been working on educational efforts with FLFR for years. We are delighted to have her now officially a board member.

RSA Mine Update ~ Eleanor Wright



WWW.ROSAMINE.ORG

Introducing our new board member, Eleanor Wright, so you'll recognize her on the street. Here she is helping with rosamine.org, but she's really helping FLFR on all fronts. Welcome "a-board", Eleanor.



"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."

Margaret Mead

The Rosa coal mine was the livelihood of many Blount County families half a century ago, but has been dormant for the last three or four decades. However, two years ago, some Canadian natural resource investors took a closer look at the Appalachian coal fields and thought they could make good money by re-opening and operating old coal mines. Their goal is to exhaust remaining untapped coal seams in Alabama, Tennessee, Kentucky and Georgia by using new technology

such as coal augers, enormous drills that bore horizontally into abandoned high walls.

Coal Washing

The newly organized MCoal Corporation is moving full steam ahead. It has recently acquired funding for a coal washing operation that is due to start up any day. MCoal expects to be operational in Blount County for the next 12 to 15 years.

Though MCoal has been operational less than one year, a small

group of citizens are already monitoring MCoal's compliance with federal and state strip mining regulations. The Rosa mine watchdogs are keeping an eye on several fronts — and would welcome more volunteers of like mind.

Hydrology

Trained water watchers regularly collect samples at key locations in the perimeter of Rosa mine.

Bonding

Volunteers are studying bond release requirements to make sure no releases or portions thereof are granted prematurely.

Permits and Revisions

With magnifying glass in hand, volunteers read submissions by MCoal to the Alabama Surface Mining Commission, the state regulatory agency with jurisdiction over strip mining.

If you care about our precious rivers and streams around Cornelius Mountain and Berry Mountain, take a look at our web site and join us: rosamine.org.

.....
Meanwhile back at court, a coalition of groups concerned with the lack of environmental protection in Alabama continues to support the Southern Environmental Law Center in what is expected to be lengthy legal action. The effort is to demonstrate to federal authorities the inadequacies of the Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM), specifically in protecting Alabama's waters. Stay longtime tuned on that one.

FLFR Supports Reauthorization of Forever Wild

~ Eleanor Wright

Forever Wild, a state-run program protecting Alabama's natural heritage, became possible when **83% of Alabamians** voted in favor of the land trust in 1992.

That vote was an *amazing* demonstration of just how much most Alabamians treasure our unusually rich, beautiful and biodiverse environment, and want the state to protect it.

POPULAR

As of 2009, Forever Wild had acquired over 200,000 acres of wildlife habitat in 74 tracts of wild lands and water areas, 72 of which are open to the public. Sadly, this popular program could heartbreakingly end in 2012 unless the Alabama Legislature protects and reauthorizes the program *as is*. Otherwise, funding ceases in 2012.

NOT TAXES

Forever Wild funding does not come from our tax dollars — it comes from earnings on offshore oil and gas revenues paid to Alabama. Forever Wild takes a portion of these dollars and invests them back into natural resources in our state for the benefit of all residents, wildlife and wildlife habitat.

PREVENT HEARTBREAK

FLFR urges you to contact your state senator and state representative and let them know that you support protecting and reauthorizing Forever Wild — as is. Your legislators will pay attention to your letters and phone calls. To find

your legislators by zip code search, go to <http://www.legislature.state.al.us/misc/zipsearch.html>
**Protect and Reauthorize
Forever Wild AS-IS.**

FLFR urges you to contact your state senator and state representative and let them know that you support protecting and reauthorizing Forever Wild — AS IS.

**Protect and
Reauthorize
Forever Wild
as-is.**

**Protect Forever Wild
Coalition**

**You can
help.**

Contact your local legislator and get their commitment to Protect and Reauthorize the Forever Wild Program as-is in the upcoming legislative session.

**Find your local legislator here:
www.legislature.state.al.us/**

Why we should Protect and Reauthorize Forever Wild funding as-is:

- Alabama has the lowest amount of public access lands of any state in the southeast.
- Forever Wild buys land from willing sellers only.
- Forever Wild provides Alabama citizens with public access to lands for hunting, fishing, hiking, birdwatching, canoeing, camping, and other forms of outdoor recreation.
- Forever Wild is the primary source for buying Wildlife Management Area lands for public hunting.
- Alabama voters approved Forever Wild by an 83% vote in 1992.
- Even in this difficult economy, 85% of the public thinks Forever Wild should continue.
- Forever Wild funding does not come from our tax dollars – it comes from earnings on offshore oil and gas revenues paid to Alabama.
- Forever Wild takes a portion of dollars earned from the use of natural resources and invests them back into natural resources for the benefit of our citizens, wildlife, and wildlife habitat.

LET YOUR LOCAL SENATOR AND REPRESENTATIVE KNOW THAT YOU WANT THEIR FULL SUPPORT

FLFR recognizes that the future of this river and the community surrounding it relies on future generations.

YA FLFR

Youth Activists of Friends of the Locust Fork River

~ Martha Hunter

As one of the adult advisors to this new group, I think it is great to be getting a younger perspective on our river and its health. I personally am really enjoying connecting with the kids, bringing them into involvement with our river, and sharing my love of the river, FLFR and protection of the environment.

YA FLFR was the brainchild of Debra Gordon-Helman (head of FLFR's Education Committee). She sent out the call for 8–12th graders in Blount County who were interested in computers, rivers, nature, and socializing. In starting this younger addition to FLFR we recognize that the future of this river and the community surrounding it relies on future generations.

PROJECTS

In our first meeting, the kids chose the name YA FLFR. Then we came up with projects that they'd like to work on. Recycling was of great interest and the

first project we are starting with. Other interests/concerns included sedimentation in our rivers and lakes and water quality issues in general.

THE THREE R's

With their strong interest in recycling and getting a recycling center for Blount County, we've spent some time discussing the 3 legs of the recycling symbol – Reduce, Reuse and Recycle. Recycling is actually our last call to action. If we want to recycle, we need to look strongly at the other two legs – how can we most importantly Reduce? How can we Reuse or Repurpose (find a new or different use for something)? We had some fun with this and some crazy ideas – my favorite!

We talked about their school lunchroom waste: where does it go? Schools are now using disposable utensils, plates and trays. What better solution could we imagine? Could the lunchroom garbage be vermi-composted?

Some of us showed up at the meeting with our travel-cups. We talked about using those more and disposables less. It was a great opportunity for them to begin thinking along these lines.

Is there a Recycling Center in our future? In early January Michael Churchman of the Alabama Environmental Council is scheduled to talk with our group about what is involved with setting up a recycling program. There is a lot involved, including money, but this long term project is much needed by our county and community. If you have suggestions or can help in any way, please contact me.

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ACCENT ON ACTION

YA FLFRs are enthusiastic about being in and on the river, so when they showed up for a hike to Horton Mill we had a great time and picked up lots of trash which we of course recycled. We talked about how trash, not disposed of properly, often ends up in the river – because everything flows downhill....

They're interested in helping with a river cleanup project next spring/summer. A few came to help with the little kids' mural project at the Covered Bridge Festival. Who knows??? maybe some will want to get involved in the 2011 Alabama Cup races at King's Bend in February and March.

This group is only a couple of months old. We've starting small, but hope to grow and have a broader mix of students from schools countywide. This group has a huge potential. I'm really excited about it. If you

know of any 8th – 12th grade Blount County students that you think would be interested, please tell them to contact us.

Nancy Caffee and I are the two primary adult advisors for this group and are both a part of the FLFR Education Committee.

Joining Debra on FLFR's Education Committee are high school teachers, a principal, other retired educators, a businessperson, a college instructor and college student.

WHO'S TEACHING?

Though we old fogies are bringing in new media such as iPhones and computer apps, I'll bet the youth of YA FLFR will be teaching us a thing or two about communicating our love for the river to the next generation.

*The youth of
YA FLFR will
be teaching us
a thing or two
about communi-
cating a love for
the river to the
next generation.*

(cut form here to mail back in) -----

membership form

Yes, I want to help the Friends of the Locust Fork River preserve our local treasure:

I am a new member or a renewing member (check expiration date on label) **please check one**

Individual — \$20

Family — \$30

Friend — \$50

Patron — \$100

Donor — \$250 and above

Please include me in the FLFR e-mail network for outings and Locust Fork river alerts

Call me to help with FLFR activities

Please dedicate this contribution of _____ to the RosaMine.org Watch Dog Committee

Name _____

(if mailing label is correct you just need to enter your name)

Address _____

City, State and Zip _____

Phone number _____ e-mail address _____

All contributions are tax deductible and gratefully appreciated! Please return this form to:
The Friends Of The Locust Fork, P.O. Box 245, Hayden, Alabama 35079

*The Locust Fork has
been compared to the
Yellowstone and the
Gallatin in Montana.
Unlike those rivers, the
Locust Fork doesn't enjoy the
protection of flowing through a
national park. It flows through
Alabama. It is our treasure, and
only the people of Alabama
can save it. As a member of
Friends of the Locust Fork
River, your contribution
will help in the fight to
preserve and protect one
of our state's rarest and most
beautiful natural treasures.*



ALABAMA CUP

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Locust Fork Invitational
Canoe & Kayak races

Sat & Sun March 5-6

Mulberry Fork
Canoe & Kayak races

Sat & Sun March 26-27

Locust Fork Whitewater
Classic Canoe & Kayak races

Volunteer at

www.alabamacupraces.com
or Sam@flfr.com



The Friends of
the Locust Fork River
P.O. Box 245
Hayden, Alabama 35079

Check out the
website at www.FLFR.org

EVERGREEN-ER



Our newsletter is
printed on 100%
recycled paper
with soy-based ink.

River Recipes

From the pages of *Locust Fork Yacht Club's Creek Bankin' Recipes*

Grilled Potato Wedges

- 4 large baking potatoes
- 2 Tbsp olive oil
- 2 tsp smoked paprika
- 1 tsp sea salt
- 1 tsp black pepper, fresh ground
- 1/2 tsp garlic powder
- 1/2 tsp onion powder
- 1/2 tsp chili powder

Mix seasonings in container. Cut each potato into 10-12 wedges and put in baggie with oil to coat. Drain and spread potatoes on sheet pan and sprinkle liberally with seasonings. Roast over medium heat charcoal for 20-30 minutes until done. Yes, wedges could be broiled in an oven.

Serve with juicy hamburger or steak of your choice.