



RRC continues in its efforts to protect the Rainbow River and its environment through conservation, education, advocacy, and stewardship. Following is an update since our last newsletter.

Annual Meeting and Membership Renewal

RRC will hold its annual meeting the morning of November 5th starting at 9 AM at the Rainbow Rivers Club (for map and directions, refer to our website www.rainbowriverconservation.com). All members and the public are encouraged to attend. Our keynote speaker will be Pete Colverson whose topic will be “Rainbow River Restoration Plan – A Call to Action”. Also speaking will be Becky Ayeach whose topic will be “Keep Toxic Slime out of Florida Waters”. President Burt Eno will also provide an overview of RRC activities and accomplishments of the past year.

This is *membership renewal time*. Enclosed are a 2012 membership form and a return envelope. Please send your membership fee and mail the completed form as soon as possible.

Rainbow River Ranch Litigation

The hearing pertaining to the developer’s motion for summary judgment on the settlement agreement between the City of Dunnellon and the developer was held September 8th. Attorneys for the city and developer, as well as the attorneys for the Department of Community Affairs and the interveners, presented their arguments. Circuit Judge Frances King ruled against the summary judgment which is a victory for the interveners. Now it would appear that a trial of facts concerning the merits (and demerits) of the settlement agreement is in store for us. Please keep in mind that none of this would have been necessary if the City had not capitulated to the developer. The only way now to protect the Rainbow River and its environment from the harmful effects of the proposed development, and to shield the citizens from the enormous impact and cost of this development, is to fight it out in the legal arena. To appreciate this point of view you should read the settlement agreement as published on RRC’s website under Litigation.

Springs Challenge

September 21st the Southwest Florida Water Management District and the Florida Springs Institute sponsored an event called “Springs Challenge” at the Rainbow Rivers Club. In the morning Harley Means presented an overview of North Florida’s geology that is responsible for our many natural springs while Dr. Bob Knight described the condition of our springs and spring runs, including the Rainbow River. President Burt Eno gave an overview of RRC’s activities and accomplishments as well as the threats to the Rainbow River. In the afternoon educational games were played and short trips on the river were offered. There were approximately 70 attendees from Marion and Citrus Counties.

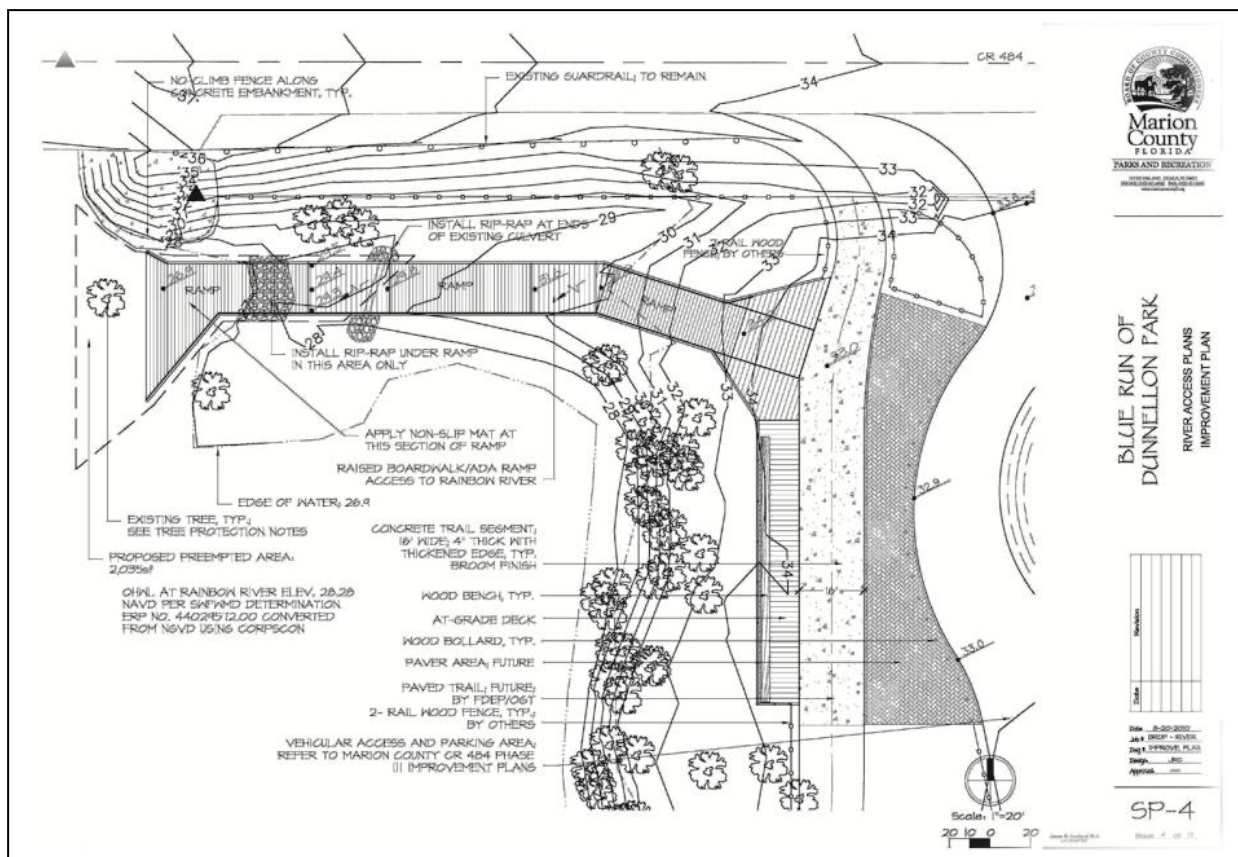
River Conditions

We remain concerned with the elevated level of nitrates entering the river. Whether or not there will be a means to continue the restoration plan which had been supported by the Department of Environmental

Protection is not known at this time. This past summer we saw an enormous increase in tuber activity on the river with a commensurate destructive impact on the native vegetation and aquatic wildlife. Clearly, there needs to be an enforceable management plan for the river if it is to remain a viable part of nature.

Blue Run of Dunnellon Park

In our last newsletter we expressed concern that the Dunnellon City Council was considering a change in the name of the park. Fortunately, they did not change the name and the sign was re-erected. However, the ‘partners’ sign that was damaged during parking lot construction has not yet been replaced. The second phase of the stormwater project that will improve the river access will start soon. The engineering plan for the access ramp and shuttle pickup lane is shown below. During this construction access to the park will only be available from the parking lot on San Jose Blvd. With cooler weather approaching, hikes on the trails of the park should be very pleasurable.



Challenging Times

These are challenging times for those who care about the environment. The elimination of the Department of Community Affairs and cutbacks in the Department of Environmental Protection and the Southwest Florida Water Management District have reduced environmental regulation and protections. We must be activists and take every opportunity to educate and impress our points of view on our elected officials.