

Rainbow River Conservation, Inc. Spring Newsletter 2013

RRC continues to advocate for protection of the Rainbow River and its environment.

Withlacoochee State Trail

Construction has finally started on the trail which will bridge the Withlacoochee River. This section of the trail will run from a trail head at the Dunnellon Little League Complex, west along the southern edge of the Blue Run Park, south along the old railroad right-of-way, across a new bridge spanning the river, and south to a trail head on CR 39 in Citrus County. This three mile section of the trail, including the bridge, is expected to be completed in about six months.

Future site of new trail bridge
across Withlacoochee River



Upcoming Events

RRC will have its information and education booth at Boomtown Days April 20th and 21st in Dunnellon. Also, the RRC Annual River Cleanup and picnic will be held May 18th at the Rio Vista Park starting at 9 AM.

For a location map please see the RRC website at www.RainbowRiverConservation.com. Those who participated last year will be called. New volunteers should call Jerry Rogers at 352-489-4648. Come out and enjoy a fun event.



Cleaning the Rainbow River by kayak

Rainbow River Ranch

In our last newsletter we appealed for contributions to our legal fund in order to support our intervention in the Rainbow River Ranch settlement agreement. This matter will soon be going to trial and we feel that we have no choice but to oppose the egregious conditions presently contained in the agreement. We have engaged an expert to address the lawsuit claims of vested rights and it is likely that we will have to engage an expert to address the impacts of the proposed development on the Rainbow River, its environment, and its wildlife. We encourage you to make tax deductible contributions to our legal fund at the PO Box 729, Dunnellon, FL 34430. Make your check out to *Rainbow River Conservation* with a memo note *Legal Fund*.

Cost Share - RRC President Burt Eno has committed to personally match every two dollars contributed with one dollar of his own up to \$10,000.

Rainbow River Conservation Inc., P.O. 729, Dunnellon FL 34430

River Conditions

The final TMDL report for the Rainbow Springs and upper Rainbow River was produced in January and is posted on our website in the Education Section. As expected, the target level for nitrates is .35 mg/l which will require an 82% reduction in present nitrate levels. Recently, Marion County signed an agreement with FDEP to begin a BMAP (Basin Management Action Plan) for the Rainbow to identify major sources of the nitrate pollution and seek ways to meet the TMDL goal. The BMAP effort will be facilitated by Dr. Evan (Shane) Williams of the Marion County Storm Water Division. Stakeholders will be welcome to participate and RRC will pass along meeting announcements.

River Protection Ordinance Repealed

On April 8th the Dunnellon City Council voted to repeal Ordinance 2008-01 River Corridor Protection Ordinance.

This repeal was driven by the special interests of Councilman Dennis Evans who persistently misrepresented the content and purpose of the ordinance. Without this ordinance there are no upland restrictions on land use within the jurisdictional limits of Dunnellon that would protect the Rainbow and Withlacoochee Rivers and associated wetlands. Elimination of this ordinance removes water body protection requirements of building setbacks, vegetated buffers, and wildlife habitat preservation. Voting for repeal were Evans, Lynne McAndrew, and Eric Collop. Voting against the repeal were Mayor Nathan Whitt and Penny Fleeger.

Special Notice

Please note that long standing RRC board member and past president Jack Dennis is recovering from back surgery at Life Care of Ocala Rehab Center. Jack might appreciate visits or cards of encouragement. Also, please note that long time RRC board member and past president Harry Cunningham passed away this past January.

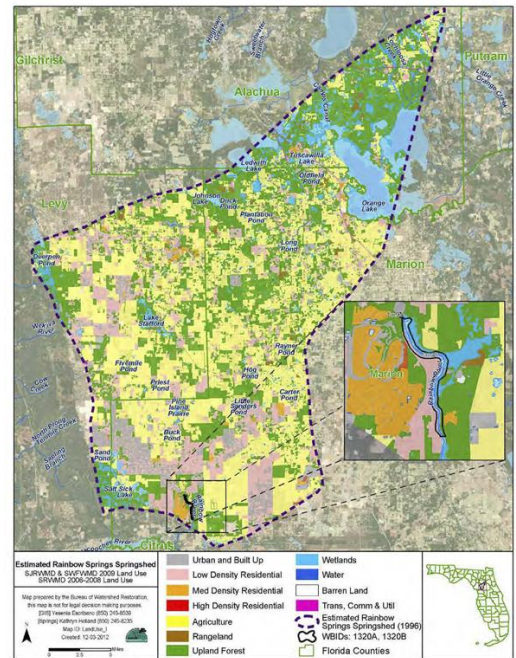
Springs Eternal

A special exhibit Springs Eternal: Florida's Fragile Fountains of Youth will be shown at the Florida Museum of Natural History from March through December 15th 2013. This exhibit features photos by John Moran, world renown nature photographer, which show "liquid bowls of light." The exhibit displays how beautiful the springs are, but also how much deterioration has taken place over the three decades that John has been documenting these springs.

There will be a companion Springs Eternal website that will feature information about springs and have special sections on eight local springs including Rainbow Springs. A preview of a video on this site called Observing Birds and Wildlife in Rainbow Springs can be seen by using the following web address

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=toncLYLMO0>

or typing *Observing Birds in Rainbow Springs* in a YouTube search window.



Rainbow Springs Recharge Area

