



Committed to a Clean and Full Lake Lanier

Lanier Outlook

Newsletter for the Lake Lanier Association
February 2016

Calendar of events:

**Annual Membership Meeting – Saturday, March 19th, 2016
4:00 - 7:00 PM
at Port Royale Marina**



Shore Sweep – Saturday, September 24th, 2016

Lake Lanier Association

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Gainesville, GA 30501
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lakeinfo@lakelanier.org

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Message from the Board of Directors

Happy New Year to all LLA members!

We hope all of you have had an enjoyable holiday season. 2015 has concluded with outstanding success! The Lake has maintained one of the highest water levels for a full year in memory. In the past 2 months, Lanier has experienced 1076 feet above sea level (highest in over 20 years) without finding major problems while protecting the downstream areas from flooding. In the past few weeks Lanier has been at 1073 feet above sea level with minimal stress to the Lake. This demonstrates that with the ever growing demands for water, Lanier can provide substantial water supply into the future.

Reflecting on 2015, your association had one of its best years!

- 1) Membership grew for the 3rd straight year. Our new programs are beginning to result in an increased number of new members. A bright future is ahead as 2016 evolves. The Atlanta Boat Show resulted in the best attendance at our booth with over 75 new members (a Boat Show record) signing up at the event!
- 2) Our standard water testing program (Adopt-A-Lake) continued with 25 tests every month. Results show that the Lake maintains a healthy balance with Chlorophyll A levels consistent year to year.
- 3) Shore Sweep collected over 50 tons of trash including several "extra" events needed in the fall to manage areas not collected in September. The abnormally high water levels in December and January have resulted in more trash floating in the Lake. A special spring cleanup is being considered.
- 4) The Solar Lights project resumed with installations bringing the total approaching 200 lights. The 2016 plans call for 120 more lights to be placed, mostly north of Browns Bridge.



2016 continued Progress & Programs

- 5) The new Abandoned and Derelict Vessels and Docks program concluded its first year of operation. More than 14 boats and docks have been removed from the Lake. This program, developed in partnership with the DNR and the Corps of Engineers has brought focus to these environmentally and safety hazardous items. This program will continue its strong start into 2016.
- 6) The Rip Rap coverage of islands in Lanier is moving forward with three more islands planned for installation this year. We continue to solicit funding for the effort.
- 7) As the LLA strives to protect Lanier, we have analyzed the Corps of Engineers Water Control Plan, and have submitted our detailed response to the Corps outlining the areas where the Lake could suffer when the plan is implemented. Our response can be found in the Resources | Library section of our web site.

2016 promises to be another outstanding year for your association. Please continue to support the LLA as we continue to fulfill our mission of keeping Lanier Clean, Full and Safe.

Boat Show 2016 Update

We had such a fun time meeting so many of you at the recent Atlanta Boat Show in January. We signed up a record number of new members and everyone involved had a great time interacting with boat show attendees. Thank you to everyone that came out said hello!

As part of the show, we developed a 2015 Story Board of projects and initiatives the LLA was involved in during calendar 2015. We have posted that story board on our website at:

http://lakelanier.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/2015_LLA_PhotoStory.pdf

We are giving away a 2016 Nautical Club membership to Lanier Islands resort to one lucky person from the show that either joined or renewed their LLA membership at the show. We will announce that winner at our Annual Member Meeting coming up on Saturday, March 19th at Port Royale Marina.



December 2015 Lake Lanier Index

Our Lake temperature averaged 56.7. This was four degrees cooler than last month and four degrees warmer than 2014. Secchi readings averaged 6.6 feet. 0.7 feet lower than November and 0.3 feet higher than 2014. Section "A" averaged 3.3 feet, "B" 8.1 feet, and "C" 11.1 feet. Our chlorophyll a averaged 5.8 micrograms/liter a bit better than November and very close to 2014. We had two readings above 10 in Wahoo Creek and near River Forks Park. We will leave our *Lake Lanier Index 6.0* with

slightly lower Secchi readings and better chlorophyll a. The Lake levels were 1070.58 on the 1st, 1070.24 the 15th, and up to 1075.21 on the 30th.

Adopt-A-Lake divides Lake Lanier into three sections "A" north of Brown's Bridge, "B" the center region south of the Bridge to a line from Six Mile Creek east to Aqualand Marina, and "C" south of this line to Buford Dam. We have 25 stations that volunteers test the first week every month. Secchi readings are taken by lowering

a weighted disk into the water and measuring the distance it can be seen thus giving a gauge of clarity. Chlorophyll a is used to determine nutrients in the Lake. The Lake Lanier Index is only a measure of nutrients and clarity and not of water safety.

Thanks to our wonderful Adopt-A-Lake volunteers, Gwinnett Water Lab for our chlorophyll a analysis, and the support of all Lake Lanier Association members.



Attendees at the 2015 Annual Member Membership Meeting

Annual Meeting Update

Were you one of the 350 people that attended our 2015 Annual Membership Meeting and Fish Fry at Port Royale? If so, do you remember how much fun we had? Because it was so successful, we plan to hold our 2016 Annual Meeting/Fish Fry in the same location.

Due to the overwhelming success of the last meeting, we are requiring registration for this event. We will have an online advance registration system for speedy check-in as well as registration available at the event.

Date: March 19th
Time: 4 p.m. – 7 p.m.
Where: Port Royale Marina
Come by boat or drive

Cost for LLA members – free to attend, but registration is required

This event is a service for our members. Non-members are welcome to attend and

encouraged to join the LLA at the event.

Check your emails and our Facebook site for further information and to get the registration details. Also, we need volunteers to help us staff the check in lines, assist with food service and in general just help out. If you are willing, please let us know as we are all volunteers. Please email us at: lakeinfo@lakelanier.org if you are available to volunteer for this event.



Glades Reservoir Comments

The Lake Lanier Association takes the view that more stored water that can be used during a drought is a benefit to the lake and to our members. In reality, withdrawals from Lake Lanier will be governed by population and business growth in our area which is projected to continue. Both Hall County and Forsyth County can possibly see more than a doubling of population in 20 years. Gwinnett County will continue its growth. All three are dependent on Lake Lanier for all water supply to their residents and businesses. So having more stored water whether in Glades or Lake Lanier is a positive contribution.

In our comments we urged that Lake Lanier should be protected and that the best way to achieve that is to carefully manage how Glades is filled and re-filled. The USACE DEIS for Glades stipulates that water can be diverted to Glades only when the flow in the river is above a certain amount. However LLA has made the point that in addition to a flow level criteria, filling and re-filling should only be done when Lake Lanier is above a level that is protective of the recreation values for residents and visitors.

Comments are due by February 15, 2016. You can see more details and submit your own comment at: <http://www.gladesreservoir.com/>

Rip Rap Update

The Lake Lanier Association has been awarded a grant from the US Army Corps of Engineers to help fund the installation of rip rap on the shoreline of an island in the Six Mile Creek area. We anticipate installing approximately 500 lineal feet of rip rap to protect the severely eroding shoreline of this island. We hope to complete this project during the first half of this year.

Shoreline erosion is a serious problem for the lake. Boat wakes and waves driven by the wind eat away at unprotected shoreline and cause banks to collapse. This leads to increased siltation. As silt builds up on the bottom of the lake, it reduces the water storage capacity and also impacts water quality. Lake Lanier provides drinking water for over 4 million residents in North Georgia. Any reduction in the amount of water available for drinking supplies is a serious concern.

Many of you have seen the results on our first island rip rap project which was completed in January of 2015. The island is located at the south end of the Three Sisters Island. This project involved the installation of over



Before

1,000 tons of stone covering approximately 600 lineal feet. 100% of the cost of this project was funded through contribution from Corporate Partners. Tommy Bagwell, President of American Protein Corporation in Cumming provided the bulk of the funding. Marine Specialties Inc. completed the installation work. Blue Grass Materials in Cumming provided the stone and Grizzle Trucking provided hauling services. Each of these partners provided a significant discount for their services performed on this project.

We have tentatively identified three major rip rap projects in the south lake that we hope to complete this year. If we are able to secure sufficient funding, we plan to install and additional 3,500 lineal feet of rip rap. These projects would require approximately 6,500 tons



After

of stone to be installed on these eroding shorelines. These projects are estimated to cost of over \$400,000.

We are continuing to develop our partnership with Hall County. They are providing support of our rip rap projects through the use of recently approved SPLOST Funds. Gwinnett County has also expressed interest in helping us with these projects.

We are also working with prospective vendors to seek preferential pricing to accomplish these important public service projects. We are doing all we can to stretch the available funding to reducing shoreline erosion which helps protect the future of Lake Lanier for all of its stakeholders. We welcome any businesses or individuals who would like to contribute funding for these efforts.

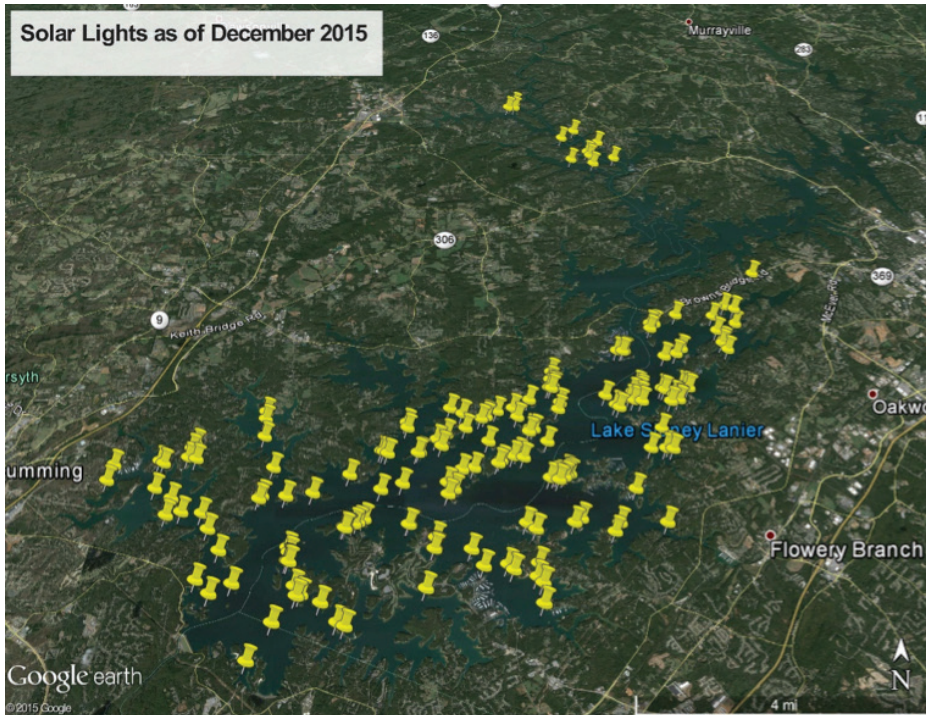
Irrigation Update

As detailed in the email blast we sent out and in the local media, the Corps of Engineers has reversed its policy decision of disallowing future irrigation permits. Thank you to Congressman Doug Collins for intervening specifically on behalf

of Lake Lanier and Lake Hartwell stakeholders. The policy is currently to resume the same style of operations as has been done in the past with irrigation permits. The Corps has left the door open to revisit this policy in the future, but, if they do, we have been

assured that they will go through a more standard procedure of seeking public comments on such a policy change. If that occurs, of course the LLA will notify our membership and will submit comments as an organization.

Solar Lights Update



Last year we finished installing solar lights on the south side of Browns Bridge. We moved into Dawson County and installed eleven solar lights in the area before ending our install for the year. We now have 185 lights installed. We plan to

finish installing solar lights on the Chestatee River down to Bolding Bridge. We will then install solar lights north of Browns Bridge on the Forsyth side up to Bolding Bridge then begin installing on the Hall County side up to the

Gainesville Marina. We have set an ambitious goal for 2016 but with good weather we should be able to meet our goal. We are using our new mounting bracket which has help speed up installing the lights. We are also installing yellow reflective tape around the bottom of the hazard markers to help provide added safety to night time boating.

Our monthly light monitoring group has reported no solar light outages for the last two months. We are very pleased with that performance!

We appreciate all of the positive feedback we have received from boaters and thank all of you who have contributed to our solar light program. We were pleased to hear from boaters during the Atlanta boat show concerning all of the Lake Lanier Association programs.

Lake Clean Up and Shore Sweep Boaters needed!

We welcome a full lake but the extreme rainfall has raised the lake to heights not seen in years and has sent lots of trash and debris into the lake. Once the lake drops to more normal levels and we are able to get out and get a good idea where the trash has landed, LLA will be assessing the need for some targeted cleanups. We will need lots of help from the lake community for these targeted events and for our annual Shore Sweep this September 24th. We



especially need boaters who are willing to get dirty and help us move some of the heavier

trash like encapsulated foam to specific areas for removal. We have found we need a lot more boaters to be effective during Shore Sweep especially in the Bald Ridge Marina area. We will have a couple socials this spring and summer to get to know you and figure out how everyone can help. If you want to be part please email us at: lakeinfo@lakelanier.org.

Thank you and keep it clean out there!

Abandoned Vessels and Derelict Docks

The ADV&D Project Team, consisting of representatives from the Corps of Engineers, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, and the Lake Lanier Association, has been meeting quarterly for exactly one year to identify the individual abandoned vessels and derelict docks on Lake Lanier. The number of issues currently stands at 23 (14 vessels/9 docks). Of these, 7 have been identified as a high risk to resolve because we are struggling to find the owners. The removal of these eyesores and safety hazards will require a significant expenditure.

We continue to put action plans together to resolve what we can. We are petitioning all stakeholder agencies, i.e. USACE, GA DNR, County Commissioners, State and Federal Legislators and our commercial partners to participate in finding the long term, sustainable process to eradicate this problem. We have achieved a modicum of success. We have successfully



removed a handful of abandoned vessels. We have gently pressured several dock owners to repair their derelict docks and have gotten support from US

Representative Doug Collins (*see letter below*) to ask the Corps to revisit their policies.

We are hopeful that 2016 will be the break-through year to gain agreement on a sustainable process and a funding mechanism to address this ongoing issue. In the meantime, we ask stakeholders to continue to report abandoned vessels and derelict issues to us. We will investigate, track and develop action plans to deal with these issues until a final resolution can be achieved. We are working diligently to honor our commitment, supporting a **“Clean, Full, Safe” Lake Lanier.**





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January 12, 2016

Brigadier General David Turner
Commander
South Atlantic Division
United States Army Corps of Engineers
60 Forsyth St SW, Room 10M15
Atlanta, GA 30303-8801

Dear General Turner,

One of the most common concerns that I hear about from constituents around the 9th Congressional District surrounds the issue of abandoned vessels. Abandoned vessels are not only unsightly, but also a serious health and safety risk to residents and boaters alike. With the fluctuating water levels on these lakes, abandoned vessels may be below water level and not visible, but they can create a serious navigational risk for boaters. Fluids from abandoned vessels pose a threat to the millions of people who get their drinking water from these lakes.

A recent incident on Lake Lanier demonstrates the problem. A gentleman who was living on a houseboat died. He was estranged from next of kin and nobody took responsibility for the boat after his death. After weeks of waiting for someone to take the boat, it began to sink. Employees at the Lake Lanier Project have said that they saw no evidence of contaminants leaking from the vessel, however the inaction in removing the boat and instead allowing it to sink has turned an approximately \$500 tow into an approximately \$10,000 tow. I fully understand that the process is complicated when dealing with the court system, however finding a streamlined system to keep our lakes free of hazards is imperative.

Based on the example above and persistent similar issues at other Corps lakes in Northeast Georgia, please provide the following information:

- What is the USACE policy on abandoned boats, both floating and sunk?
- What steps do USACE staff take to ensure that a sinking or sunken vessel will pose neither a navigational risk nor a health risk?
- How much money is allocated to each Project Office for removal of abandoned vessels?
- Are USACE staff discussing better and more efficient ways to handle this problem in the future and ways to address the backlog of already sunken vessels?

I appreciate your attention to this matter. Thank you for your service, and I look forward to your timely response.

Sincerely,

Doug Collins
Member of Congress

COUNTIES INCLUDE: BANKS, CLARKE, DAWSON, ELBERT, FANNIN, FORSYTH, FRANKLIN, GILMER, HABERSHAM, HALL, HART, JACKSON, LUMPKIN, MADISON, PICKENS, RABUN, STEPHENS, TOWNS, UNION AND WHITE

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Water Control Manual News

The Lake Lanier Association submitted a lengthy comment to the USACE for the Water Control Manual update. It can be seen on our website:

http://lakelanier.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/WCM-Comments_01282016.pdf

Our primary comments were focused on:

- > *The impact of downstream navigation on reservoir storage levels*
- > *Questions as to why the USACE changed the recreation season for Lake Lanier to May – July.*
- > *The need to develop predictive drought triggers so that adequate time for planning and water conservation programs could be effective.*
- > *The negative impact of the current policy of applying ramp down rate limits as water flow rates change thereby reducing the water stored in reservoirs during the ramp down time period.*
- > *The need to study the use of basin inflow and composite storage levels in the entire ACF as the basic parameters used for reservoir management decisions. We believe there are better ways that would be more protective of all of the reservoirs.*
- > *The need to study the impact of raising the full pool level of Lake Lanier to 1073, thereby increasing the amount of water that can be used for water supply and other downstream requirements by 26 Billion gallons.*

Thank you to all of our members that responded to our call for action in the email blast and social media posts we sent out asking for public comments to be submitted. Even though the comment period is over, we encourage all of our members to stay engaged on this topic since it is very important to the future of Lake Lanier.





MEMBERSHIP FORM

615 F Oak Street, #100 Gainesville, GA 30501
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www.lakelanier.org

Please enter your name and address information below / New Address? Please write below

Name:

Address:

City, State, Zip:

Phone Number:

Email Address*:

• Please be sure your email address is correct. We are moving toward email based communications for several of our membership services.

PERSONAL MEMBERSHIPS:

Family Levels: Bronze \$50 Silver \$100 Gold \$150

- Captain's Club, \$200-\$499
- Admiral's Club, \$500-\$999
- President's Club, \$1000 and up

_____ Please send me my free Lake Lanier Association hat for my gift of \$200 or more. For online payments, email lakeinfo@lakelanier.org to request a hat be mailed to you.

BUSINESS MEMBERSHIPS:

- Business Membership, \$250 Name listing on LLA website
- Business Membership, \$500 Name listing plus logo on LLA website
- Business Membership, \$1,000 Name listing, logo, plus brief company description on LLA website

My check is enclosed.

Credit Card Payment

Please charge my VISA MasterCard American Express Amount _____

Name as it appears on card _____

Account Number _____

Expiration Date _____ Security Code _____

Signature _____

YOU MAY ALSO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP BY PAYPAL VIA OUR WEBSITE, WWW.LAKELANIER.ORG. IF YOU HAVE A PAYPAL ACCOUNT, YOU MAY SET UP YOUR PAYPAL ACCOUNT TO AUTOMATICALLY ANNUALLY BILL

All dues and donations are tax-deductible under IRS 501 (c)3 Not for Profit tax code, as permitted by law



Lake Lanier Association
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Committed to a clean, full, and safe Lake Lanier to enhance its economic value in Georgia.

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Kroger Community Rewards



Don't forget to update your Kroger Community Rewards designation for the Lake Lanier Association nonprofit organization as your beneficiary. Kroger requires individuals to update their beneficiary organization annually. So far in 2014, the Lake Lanier Association has received over \$230 in income from Kroger to support lake programs and services

though our members shopping at Kroger and designating us as the beneficiary!

If you haven't already signed up, you need a Kroger Plus Card to participate. You can get a Plus Card at the customer service desk at any Kroger store. Once you have a Kroger Plus Card, go to the Kroger website:

<https://www.kroger.com/communityrewards> and register your Plus Card. As part of that registration process, you will be asked to designate a beneficiary organization. Please choose the Lake Lanier Association, organization #37224.

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