



## 30 Years in Retrospect

- 1980 ~ The *Neuse River Foundation* is founded in New Bern, NC
- 1990 ~ The first NRF office opens in Bridgeton in a one-room trailer so the organization can become a more active agent for the River through investigation and public involvement
- 1993 ~ Rick Dove is hired as the first Neuse **RIVERKEEPER**® for the organization  
~ The *Creekkeeper* Program, an all-volunteer monitoring effort, is created  
~ NCSU's Dr. Joann Burkholder identifies *Pfiesteria*, the "cell from hell" as a problem in the Neuse River  
~ The *Neuse River Volunteer Air Force* is formed ... today we have 14 pilots that help monitor and document activities on the basin's CAFOs
- 1994 ~ The NRF sues the Wilmar facility for violations of hog waste discharges  
~ NRF hosts the first annual *Neuse River Day*  
~ The NRF sues the Town of Cary & forces control of discharge of nitrogen
- 1995 ~ The NRF sues the State of North Carolina & the U.S. EPA to force the development of a Total Maximum Daily Load to regulate how much nitrogen can be discharged into the Neuse  
~ The Neuse River is listed as one of the *10 Most Endangered Rivers* in the U.S. (also listed in 1996, 1997 & 2007)  
~ NRF actions force closure of the Peachtree Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) in Kinston, resulting in the construction of a new, less polluting facility
- 1996 ~ The NRF is recognized by the National Wildlife Federation as *Conservation Organization of the Year*  
~ The NC General Assembly passes the first set of rules to control discharges from hog farms
- 1997 ~ 2 year state-wide moratorium on the creation of new hog facilities is enacted  
~ Due to the hurricanes and increased impact, the NRF focuses on the cleanup of five junk yards between Goldsboro & New Bern
- 1998 ~ The NRF sues Smithfield Foods & enters into an agreement to develop alternative technologies to replace lagoons & sprayfields
- 1999 ~ Moratorium preventing state-wide construction of new hog facilities is extended to 2004



## 30 Years in Retrospect, continued

- 2001 ~ Upper Neuse **RIVERKEEPER**<sup>®</sup> program is licensed by **WATERKEEPER**<sup>®</sup> Alliance and the work of the NRF significantly expands in the Triangle area
- ~ Neuse **RIVERKEEPER**<sup>®</sup> program becomes Lower Neuse **RIVERKEEPER**<sup>®</sup>
  - ~ Duke Marine Lab in Beaufort hosts the first annual *Riverkeeper Sprint Triathlon*, naming NRF as the beneficiary
- 2003 ~ Working with a whistle-blower from inside the Public Utilities Department, the Upper Neuse exposes violations within the Raleigh WWTP
- ~ Riverkeepers challenge 25 “NPDES” permits for pollution in order to enforce compliance with the Clean Water Act
  - ~ NRF hosts the first annual *Neuse River Cleanup*, the largest single-river cleanup in North Carolina
- 2004 ~ NRF Riverkeepers defeat the largest pollution trade ever proposed for U.S. waters
- ~ NRF hosts the first annual *Taste of New Bern*, which would later become the *Taste of Coastal Carolina*
  - ~ NRF coordinates the formation of the *Upper Neuse Non-Point Source Team*
  - ~ The first annual *Neuse River Back Water Open* fishing tournament names the NRF as the benefactor
  - ~ The *Kids in Canoes* program for disadvantaged youth begins in New Bern; today the program continues as a partnership with the local CIVITAN group
- 2005 ~ *RiverKids* is developed as an educational program for 8th grade students
- ~ NRF hosts the first annual *Riverkeeper Film Festival* to draw different groups in the community in to learn about water and the issues that affect it
- 2006 ~ The NRF is again awarded *Conservation Organization of the Year* by the National Wildlife Federation
- ~ Riverkeepers lead the first *Tour de Neuse* paddle trip from the headwaters of the Neuse to the Pamlico Sound
  - ~ Lower Neuse **RIVERKEEPER**<sup>®</sup> & **WATERKEEPER**<sup>®</sup> Alliance reach a settlement agreement with Smithfield Foods\Murphy Brown requiring more stringent waste disposal practices on 275 hog farms in NC
- 2007 ~ NRF hosts the first of two 51–Hour Hog Vigils outside the NC State Legislative offices in Raleigh (2nd in 2008)
- ~ *Muddy Water Watch*, a volunteer-based program to reduce the impact of construction stormwater on our waterways, begins in the Upper Neuse
  - ~ The New Bern office moves into the *Timothy A. Harrison Memorial Building*



## 30 Years in Retrospect, continued

- 2008 ~ Riverkeepers challenge 11 “NPDES” permits for pollution to enforce compliance with the Clean Water Act
- ~ The *Neuse River Foundation* was renamed the Neuse **RIVERKEEPER**® Foundation to reflect the leadership and significance of the Riverkeepers
  - ~ *RiverWatch*, a volunteer-based community watch program to find and correct water quality problems, begins in the Lower Neuse
  - ~ The GlaxoSmithKline Foundation recognizes NRF for their positive impact on the lives of NC citizens
- 2009 ~ The NRF begins hosting an educational film contest for 8<sup>th</sup> graders as part of the *Riverkeeper Film Festival*; the Festival now visits six locations, including multiple sold-out locations
- ~ Upper Neuse **RIVERKEEPER**® & the NRF educate the public and legislators on Falls Lake, resulting in the adoption of S1020, *Improve Upper Neuse Basin Water Quality*
  - ~ Riverkeepers conduct the second *Tour de Neuse* to introduce the public to the river through canoeing, kayaking, and social media
  - ~ The NRF reaches an agreement with the City of Raleigh regarding groundwater cleanup at their Neuse River Wastewater Plant and requires removal of approximately 40,000 lbs of nitrogen annually
- 2010 ~ The annual *Neuse River Cleanup* now covers over 50 miles of river and attracts more than 300 volunteers of all ages
- ~ Little River, tributary of the Neuse River, is listed as the 4<sup>th</sup> *Most Endangered River* in the U.S.
  - ~ The NRF creates the Phytoplankton Monitoring Network (PMN) program in cooperation with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)
  - ~ In cooperation with the City of Wilson, the NRF kicks off a two-year restoration and public awareness project on Contentnea Creek
  - ~ NRF supporters submit more than 100 comments to the state in favor of adopting rules to protect and restore Falls Lake, helping have the most stringent water pollution cleanup rules in the state adopted inside the Neuse basin