

# APALACHICOLA RIVERKEEPER®

December 13, 2021

Dear Friends,

**Water connects us.** For over two decades, Apalachicola Riverkeeper has been devoted to protecting Florida's mighty Apalachicola River, its vast forested floodplain, and the ecologically dynamic Apalachicola Bay that nourishes the eastern Gulf of Mexico. Simply put, our work happens because of our combined care and commitment to a healthy Apalachicola River and Bay system. We are grateful for your unwavering support for a river that links us. In fact, your support continues to inspire us. Volunteers, members, staff, and supporters all contribute to Apalachicola Riverkeeper's on-going work.

***Your steadfast support makes a genuine difference, and we hope you will renew your commitment to the work of Apalachicola Riverkeeper in 2022.*** This year, 2021, has been a whirlwind year and I am eager to share some highlights of our efforts that are possible because of you.

**Established the Katie Herzog Scholarship Fund** for eligible Franklin County high school students. Earlier this year, we dedicated a memorial bench at Riverfront Park in Apalachicola in remembrance of long-time volunteer Katie Herzog. Tom Herzog gathered with board members, staff and friends and we shared "Katie stories." Katie was an extraordinary person who inspired us at every turn. She continually put her care into action. This is core to our mission. During the gathering, Tom, also a long-time volunteer and former board president, announced the new scholarship fund to be overseen by Apalachicola Riverkeeper in Katie Herzog's memory.



**Continued our multi-year Slough Restoration Project** with initial steps in clearing three significant sloughs of sediment and debris. This will restore freshwater flow to the floodplain and bay during times of low river flows.



**Furthered our Water Quality Monitoring Program** including microplastics sampling thanks to dedicated volunteers and college students.



**Removed tons of trash and debris** from the shores and water of the Apalachicola River and Bay during the annual Coastal Clean-Up and ongoing public boat ramp and park clean ups. Volunteer "Trash Bashers" are preventing pollution of the soil and water.

**Expanded Eco-educational Outings** throughout the

Apalachicola River Basin with emphasis on ecology and regional history. Volunteers are vital to trip leadership.



**Boosted our River Patrol efforts** and visual survey monitoring with drone images.

**Strengthened advocacy partnership with 14 other Florida Waterkeepers** by working collaboratively to improve state water quality policies. Environmental allies are active in the legislature seeking to protect Florida's water and landscape from pollution. Waterkeepers Florida seeks to ensure drinkable, fishable, swimmable water for all Floridians.



**Continued our legal challenge to the Army Corps of Engineers' water control manual** which is used to manage the freshwater flow from upstream reservoirs. We continue to work with conservation allies on related issues.



**Led our 14<sup>th</sup> Annual RiverTrek public outreach and fundraising campaign.** This dedicated group of kayaking volunteers spent months working in their respective communities raising both funds and awareness for the protection of the Apalachicola River. Months of incredible teamwork coalesced into a new fundraising record for the annual campaign. We are so thankful for the many people who worked to achieve a successful RiverTrek.

**Conducted numerous educational motorboat trips** for community

leaders, elected officials, and others to foster a broader understanding of the connectivity of the Apalachicola River and Bay system.



**Thanks to you, Apalachicola Riverkeeper remains actively committed to its mission. Please consider a year-end contribution to support our continued work.** Gift memberships are also a thoughtful way to recognize a loved one. Your timely, tax-deductible gift will further our efforts to protect the Apalachicola River Basin. Our mailing address is P.O. Box 8, Apalachicola, FL 32329 or contribute online at [www.apalachicolariverkeeper.org](http://www.apalachicolariverkeeper.org).

Again, thank you for your remarkable support. The upcoming year is a new beginning--let's continue building on our decades of steadfast work to protect Florida's Apalachicola River and Bay. The board of directors and staff at Apalachicola Riverkeeper wish you all the best in 2022.

For the River and Bay,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Georgia Ackerman".

Georgia Ackerman  
Riverkeeper and Executive Director  
[www.apalachicolariverkeeper.org](http://www.apalachicolariverkeeper.org)



*P.S. You can stay up to date on our work by signing up for e-news on our website. Watch for upcoming information on our Annual Member Meeting.*

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