



Upcoming Events

With the expanding Covid-19 vaccinations RRC has begun to plan for a more normal year. The Dunnellon Boomtown celebration is scheduled for April 10th and RRC will participate with its education booth on West Pennsylvania Avenue. The Annual River Cleanup will resume and this year's event will take place May 15th starting with launches from Rio Vista Park at 9 AM. Collected debris should be returned to the park and deposited in the trailer by 11:30 AM. Prizes and a lunch will be provided following. For details call Jerry Rogers at 352-489-4648.

Rainbow River Conservation Facebook

A new resident of Sateke Village named Linda Wilinski has volunteered to maintain our Facebook website and she is doing a wonderful job with photos and educational information. There is included a donations and membership application page. We are very pleased with Linda's assistance. Keep in mind, too, that if you are shopping online RRC gets a small percentage of a sale on Amazon Smile by naming RRC as your charity.

Nine Island Cove

Last Spring we reported that RRC had made an effort to seek a no cost Florida Forever listing of the 49 acre Nine Island Cove property on the west side of Dunnellon and the City Council turned the proposal down. This listing would have made the property eligible for state funding to buy the property, deed it to the city, and turn it into a passive park. The election of new members to the City Council has resulted in new interest in this proposal. The City Council has now approved a management prospectus for this potential development and RRC is proceeding to apply for Florida Forever listing of the property.



River Trail at Nine Island Cove

Dunnellon Trail Kiosks

We featured in our Winter Newsletter a story about RRC's development of Railroad Junction and Boomtown kiosks funded by the Duke Energy Foundation. On March 31st a team of RRC, Florida Trails, Marion County, and Dunnellon representatives installed these kiosks along the Dunnellon Trail south of the Blue Run Park. Hikers on the trail can stop, study, and appreciate some of the unique Dunnellon history.



Installing Boomtown Wayside Exhibit on Dunnellon Trail

Blue Run Park

With somewhat of a reprieve from Covid19 it seems that the Dunnellon Trail is getting busier. It will get even busier when the tunnel connection under US 41 to the Withlacoochee State Trail in Citrus County is completed. Unfortunately, unnecessary delays in proceeding with erection of an on-site Blue Run Park bathroom facility occurred to the point where the budgeted money will not now reach the construction costs. We are hoping a solution to this dilemma can soon be found.

Basin Management Action Plans (BMAPs)

We have previously discussed the fact that several springs advocacy groups like RRC joined together in 2019 to petition against the inadequacy of FDEP's proposed BMAPs. After more than a year following the Division of Administrative Hearings trial the judge finally produced a ruling. It was completely inadequate and steeped with favoritism toward the FDEP. Representatives of the advocacy groups vowed to appeal the ruling to the Appellate Court and the groups' legal team has already filed formal Exceptions to the judge's ruling. We shall you apprised as legal proceedings move forward.

Nestle Lawsuit

You may have heard about the Nestle lawsuit. This evolves from the fact that the Suwannee River Water Management District allowed the Seven Springs Water Company to increase its withdrawal from the Ginnie Springs groundwater system to nearly 1 million gallons per day and sell it to Nestle to bottle and sell worldwide. The cost to the Seven Springs Water Company is a one-time permit fee of \$115. An administrative judge approved this permit. Springs groups in the Santa Fe River watershed are so concerned with the negative impact of this enormous withdrawal that they are filing an appeal to the administrative judge's ruling. This is reminiscent of an administrative judge's negative ruling in RRC's challenge to SWFWMD's flawed MFL Rule which substantially underestimates the water withdrawals from the Rainbow River recharge basin.

M-CORES Legislation

M-CORES stands for Multi-Use Corridors of Regional Economic Significance. These are toll roads approved by the legislature and governor in 2019 for development throughout the northern half of Florida. We have vigorously opposed these toll roads because of the negative impact on wildlife and the environment. There is presently a Senate bill (SB 100) making its way through the legislature to scuttle the M-CORES project and return funding to needed local FDOT remedial projects. However, the bill also contains language that would provide funding of further northerly expansion of the Suncoast Parkway and the Northern Turnpike. It is unclear at this point what this means in regard to an extension of the Northern Turnpike but we are afraid that it could track northward through the Halpata Preserve east of Dunnellon and up through the Rainbow River recharge basin.



Wood Duck Families are emerging from the Wood Duck boxes on the Rainbow River