



COOOSA-ALABAMA RIVER
IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION, inc.

WATERWAYS

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

CARIA Annual Meeting in Rome Feb 8-9, 2001

Update

WATERWAYS
Winter 2001 Issue

Plans for the 2001 Annual Meeting on February 8 and 9 are proceeding very well, thanks to the industrious folks in Rome, who are doing their dead level best to outdo Gadsden, site of our 2000 meeting.

of our meeting is to highlight that potential as a golden opportunity for waterside communities in the ACT to enhance their economic base. Economic planning agencies, particularly chambers of commerce, would benefit from this program.



CARIA Vice President for Georgia, Bill Fricks, Rome City Managers John Bennett and Jim Dixon, and the Greater-Rome-Floyd County Convention and Visitors Bureau are planning some very enjoyable activities for both days of the meeting. Registration materials were mailed in mid-December.

One change to the schedule mailed in December: Logistical planning problems have required us to move our Thursday evening reception and dinner from the Zion Farms Horse Ranch to the **Coosa Country Club**. The change will not affect the quality of our program, however, and, in convenience, will make the evening go much more smoothly. Attendees will enjoy the planned program.

The theme of the main meeting on Friday, February 9th, will be "The Value of Recreation on our Inland Waterways System." The Alabama-Coosa-Tallapoosa River Basin has vast untapped potential for recreational development, and the objective

of our meeting is to highlight that potential as a golden opportunity for waterside communities in the ACT to enhance their economic base. Economic planning agencies, particularly chambers of commerce, would benefit from this program.

There will also be several items relative to our navigation interests. The Corps' South Atlantic Division and Mobile District will update the meeting on federal projects and budgets within our system. Alabama Power will review the status of its bid to renew licenses for dams on the Coosa River. We will also hear an assessment of what we can expect in environmental policy from the Bush administration.

Finally, Mr. Lindsay Thomas, Federal Commissioner to the Alabama-Coosa-Tallapoosa negotiations, will speak at the closing luncheon.

On Friday morning, spouses or guests will have an opportunity to tour Rome's historic downtown, including shopping, which they should enjoy. The tour will return to the Coosa Country Club in time for the scheduled closing luncheon.

For more information, contact CARIA by phone, (334) 265-5744; fax (334) 265-6248 email: coosalriv@worldnet.att.net.

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NOTES:
**Make hotel
Reservation for
annual meeting: 1-
800-HOLIDAY.**

**Send or fax your
registration form to
CARIA NOW!**

Special points of interest:

- *Is the present ACT agreement equitable?*
- *Civil War History in Rome*
- *Mark your calendar for the annual meeting Feb. 8-9 in Rome, Georgia!*

WATERWAYS

Agreement on ACT Water Allocation?

On December 13th, negotiators from Alabama and Georgia reached a tentative agreement on a water allocation formula to share surface water resources in the Alabama-Coosa-Tallapoosa (ACT) River Basin. Georgia stipulated, however, that final agreement would hinge on reaching agreement also with Alabama and Florida on the Apalachicola-Chattahoochee-Flint (ACF) River Basin.

Both agreements would require an extension beyond the December 31, 2000 deadline of the respective compacts governing the negotiations.

On December 18th in Atlanta, Alabama and Georgia agreed to extend the ACT compact through February 15, 2001, to allow final details of the agreement to be worked out before submitting the plan to the public for review.

On December 28, Florida agreed to an extension of the ACF compact to May 1, 2000, which, of course, has kept the ACT agreement alive as well. Assuming the states agree on the ACF and the ACT becomes a reality as currently proposed, what is in the ACT agreement that we should know?

The tentative ACT agreement is an Alabama proposal and contains provisions that showed each state had to soften its previous demands. One of the major changes was to make the agreement effective through 2030 rather than 2050. The plan calls for negotiations to renew or modify the agreement through negotiations beginning in 2027, assuming one of the states does not opt out beforehand.

Within ten days after the commencing the agreement, Alabama agrees to dismiss its lawsuit that in 1990 had stopped the original efforts to redirect waters from the ACT Basin to the Atlanta area.

A public review of a "howgozit" on the agreement will be available on or before the tenth anniversary of the commencement date.

The heart of the agreement concerns the management of flow out of Allatoona and Carters reservoirs in Georgia. The

Corps of Engineers will be required to make weekly average releases from both reservoirs in accordance with guide curves based on the amount of water available in each.

Interpreting the language of the agreement requires a lawyer with an engineering degree, but here are the major points, much simplified:

- a) Releases from federal reservoirs at Allatoona and Carters Lake (Section 2.2), plus flows into the system between those two reservoirs and Rome, must equal 1800 cfs at Rome as long as elevations of the two reservoirs stay above a proposed seasonal level.

If reservoir elevations decrease below a predetermined level, the flow at Rome can be reduced to no lower than 1200 cfs as compared to the all-time low of about 900 cfs. Historically, flows at Rome are above 1800 cfs over 90% of the time.

- b) Georgia may withdraw up to 25% of the average annual daily flow at Mayo's Bar (Section 2.5.C). The average annual daily flow at Mayo's Bar is approximately 6600 cfs.

Alabama has the same limitations on withdrawal as measured at the mouths of the Coosa and the Tallapoosa, and at Claiborne Dam.

- c) Transfers from the ACT to the ACF Basin in Section 2.5B are limited to 75 mgd until the year 2010 (currently it's approximately 60 mgd) Then the limit is increased to 90 mgd until the year 2020 after which the limit is again raised to 100 mgd until the end of the current agreement in 2030. (These figures are in contrast to the 200 mgd Georgia demanded previously.)

- d) Georgia may contract for withdrawal of up to 220 mgd from Allatoona and

continued on page 4...

Each state involved in the ACT agreement has had to soften its previous demands.

Report on the Lower Alabama River

Mobile District is in the second year of a feasibility study to determine federal interest in improving training works in the Alabama River below Claiborne Dam. The objective is to increase the navigation channel reliability or the time a nine-foot channel is available. Current reliability is between 65-70%. Improved training works have the potential of increasing the reliability to 80-83%.

Mobile District has not discounted the option of reprogramming funds allocated for dredging the Alabama this fiscal year to other projects, which is what they did last

year. One of the factors to be considered is the amount of barge traffic on the Alabama. At the moment, there is very little. There are prospects for increased traffic, but things have not progressed to the point where we can publicly acknowledge what those prospects are.

Bottom line is, we need traffic on the river or we will have a very difficult time justifying maintenance dredging and upkeep on the Alabama.



What can be done to increase traffic on the Lower Alabama River?

Civil War History: Adventures of the *Laura Moore* on the Coosa River in Rome

One of the most famous steamboat episodes of the Civil War had its origin in Rome, Georgia, the site of our 2001 Annual Meeting.

In May 1864, a contingent of Union General Sherman's army approached Rome. By nightfall on May 17th, the Federal troops had secured positions on the hills overlooking the city.

Docked at the harbor on the banks of the city itself were two Confederate steamers, the *Laura Moore* and the *Alphretta*, which were used to transport supplies for the Confederate cause between Rome and Gadsden/Greensport, Alabama.

The Confederate commander, who was in the process of evacuating the town, asked the captain of the *Laura Moore*, Cummins Lay, to try and save the two boats from capture by the Federal troops. (Cummins Lay was the father of William Patrick Lay, who founded CARIA in 1890.)

Lay and his crew boarded the steamers late on the night of the 17th, placed thick barricades of cotton bales around the pilot-house and boiler rooms, and slipped out of

the harbor under the cover of darkness.

With no lights and initially using only the current for movement, the crews eventually had to fire up the boilers to gain speed and steering. Sparks from the stacks and heavy smoke alerted the Federal gunners who rained heavy cannon and gunfire onto the two escaping boats.

The cotton barricades did their job and absorbed several direct hits, protecting the vital parts of the boat. The two steamers made their way down the Coosa to Wilsonville, Alabama where the *Alphretta* was moored.

Captain Lay then took advantage of heavy rains and the swelling Coosa River to take the *Laura Moore* over the treacherous Coosa rapids of the Lower Coosa past Wetumpka and Montgomery and on down the Alabama River to Mobile.

Captain Cummins Lay thus became the only person ever to guide a steamboat the entire length of the Coosa-Alabama river system: a feat made possible only because of the heavy rains that May. Otherwise, the boat would never have been able to navigate the dangerous rapids of the Lower Coosa.

ACT Water Allocation Agreement

60 mgd from Carters on an annual average basis to meet municipal and industrial water supply requirements within Georgia (Section 3.1.A). These figures include any transfers to the ACF system and consumption between those two reservoirs and the Alabama state line.

Alabama Power Company, and an appointed representative from the Federal Commissioner. The Committee may appoint other non-voting members as needed. (Section 5.1)

- e) Alabama Power Company must operate its Coosa and Tallapoosa projects to maintain a weekly average minimum release from Walter Bouldin, Jordan, and Thurlow Dams of not less than 4640 cfs (Section 2.3), which is the current agreement between APC and the Corps of Engineers in support of the Alabama River.
- f) Georgia may build its West Georgia Regional Reservoir (Section 2.4) with a stipulation that provides a guaranteed minimum flow into the Tallapoosa River system, depending on the size of the reservoir built.
- g) No transfers between the Coosa River Basin and the Tallapoosa River Basin are allowed unless the West Georgia reservoir is not built, in which case an annual average transfer of 14 mgd will be allowed.
- h) The Governor of each state will continue to function as the ACT Basin Commission. (Section 5.1)
- i) The ACT Commission will accord management and enforcement authority to an ACT Committee made up of voting and non-voting members. The voting members will consist of one member and one alternate member appointed by each Governor, i.e., each state will have one vote. All decisions by the Committee will have to be unanimous. (Section 5.1)

- k) Water quality standards of each state will be honored, with continuous monitoring within each state. (Section 5.2)
- l) The ACT Committee will draft a drought plan within two years for approval by the ACT Basin Commission, with interim procedures established until the plan is approved. (Section 5.2b)
- m) The two Governors and the Federal Commissioner each will appoint an expert in hydrology, water quality, and biology, for a total of nine people, to a Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC). The SAC will report annually to the ACT Committee with monitoring and reporting data versus performance indicators along with recommendations to improve performance. (Section 5.4)
- n) Each State will report to the ACT Commission at the end of June each year of the agreement its withdrawals and returns for the previous four quarters of the year. This frequency would be increased during a specified drought period. (Section 5 c.f.)

Currently, users within Georgia take approximately 179 mgd from the ACT Basin, including the 60 mgd transfer to the ACF. Georgia has projected demands of approximately 340 mgd, including the 100 mgd transfer limitation, between 2020 and 2030.

The agreement calls for a report on withdrawals and returns once a year, except during stipulated droughts. For management purposes, it seems a quarterly report –or, even better, a monthly report—would be more useful and provide a better view of what’s happening within the system.

- j) Non-voting members of the ACT Committee will include a representative each from the US Geological Survey, the Corps of Engineers,

ACT Agreement...continued

Negotiators used a model to evaluate projected demands through 2030, including the 100 mgd inter-basin transfer, using the historic flow data from the period 1939-1989. Results of the model run can be found on the Alabama Office of Water Resources website at adeca.state.al.us and clicking on the Office of Water Resources tab. Following are general results of the model run versus historic data at key points in the ACT Basin:

- a) An increase in the average annual elevation at both Allatoona and Carters Lake of between one and five feet with the variance seasonal.
- b) A decrease in the average daily flow of 416 cfs at Rome, 107 cfs at Tallassee, 880 cfs at Montgomery, and 983 cfs at Claiborne Dam on the Lower Alabama River..
- c) An increase in the average annual elevation at Alabama Power reservoirs on the Coosa and Tallapoosa Rivers.

It should be understood that the model is an admittedly imperfect representation that may not necessarily reflect real world flows. Neither does it reflect current conditions since flows recorded over the last ten years, including obviously the last two years of drought conditions, have not been included. The model, however, should give us some idea of how new operating parameters would affect the Basin's river flows.

 From the perspective of Alabama and the Rome area of Georgia, the agreement does provide a certainty of flow during a drought situation, something we didn't have before. We also know that demands for water in both Georgia and Alabama will increase which will mean corresponding decreases in flow rates. But, assuming the model at least shows trends resulting from these proposed operating parameters, CARIA has the following observations:

- 1) There is a pronounced decrease from historic river flow volume in the Rome area as well in the Alabama River. Rome is protected in drought to some degree with a minimum flow set at 1200 cfs versus the historic low in 1988 of 907 cfs. But downstream, the Alabama River, particularly the Lower Alabama, does not fare as well.

The major flaw lies in the decrease in flows at Claiborne, exacerbating an already unacceptably low navigation reliability rate below Claiborne by decreasing the amount of water available to maintain the channel.

When the channel is dredged to design depths, a flow of 7500 cfs is required to maintain the nine-foot navigation channel below Claiborne. Historically, that flow is attained over 90% of the time, but as siltation occurs throughout the year, more flow is needed to maintain the nine-foot depth.

This agreement would reduce the availability of 7500 cfs to less than 90%, which portends a major problem even during a "normal" year, but especially during drought periods of the year.

- 2) The decreased flow rates on the Alabama will have a detrimental effect on Federal hydropower generation capability at the RF Henry and Millers Ferry facilities.

Possible consequences are higher electrical costs, especially during the hot summer months. We must wonder what the effects will be on Alabama Power's capability to generate on the Coosa and Tallapoosa rivers.

- 3) The decreased flow on the Alabama may have detrimental effects on the ecology of the Alabama River Basin.

CARIA is concerned about several aspects of this agreement and the modeling results shown on the OWR website.

Agreement on ACT Water Allocation?

Continued from pg. 5.

Georgia could ask for more water than is allowed in this agreement ... What would happen if Georgia were able to press the full use of the limitations provided in this agreement?

- 4) Elevation levels for both the Allatoona and Carters Lake Reservoirs through most of the year are from 1 to 5 feet higher than they have been historically. The question is, for the benefit of whom? Both projects were built based on regional benefits, including navigation on the Alabama, not for a distinct population outside the Basin.
- 5) Changing the purpose of Allatoona and Carters will require congressional approval.
- 6) As written, the amount of the interbasin transfer, i.e., transfers to the ACF system, is not affected by drought conditions. Up to 150 mgd on a single day (or up to 125 mgd during a single month) as long as the average release parameters are met could be transferred regardless of conditions in the ACT. So even during severe drought conditions, these transfers would be made. We think there should be a corresponding decrease in those transfers as conditions deteriorate through some predetermined level in the ACT. Why should the ACF system benefit during a drought at the expense of the ACT system?
- 7) Under the provision limiting withdrawals from Allatoona to 220 mgd and from Carters to 60 mgd (Section 3.1.A), Georgia and the Corps of Engineers have the freedom to pursue or contract for greater amounts than those stipulated and for a period beyond 2030.
- 8) The agreement calls for a report on withdrawals and returns once a year, (Section 5 c.f.)except during stipulated droughts. For management purposes, it seems a quarterly —or, even better, a monthly —report would be more useful and provide a better view of what’s happening within the system.
- 9) The ACT agreement is hinged to the ACF (Section 4.1). A suspension event, a term new to this proposal, sets three conditions under which the operational guidelines of the agreement would be suspended. The first is if the Corps of Engineers can not or will not, for whatever reason, meet its obligations under the new guidelines in either the ACT or the ACF. The second is that one of the States can not or will not meet its guidelines. The third, entitled “Other Suspension Events,” has three parts and ties the ACT agreement directly to the ACF. The ACT agreement is suspended if:
 - a) any part of the operating guidelines set down in the ACT or the ACF agreement are found to be “invalid or unenforceable for any reason whatsoever” as determined by a court of law or a federal agency with enforcing authority;
 - b) the computer model used for predicting and managing stipulated flows is found to be either incorrect or inconsistent with the guidelines;
 - c) Alabama, Florida, or Georgia unilaterally “exercises any right to suspend or terminate the ACF agreement.”

In other words, Georgia could ask for more water than allowed in this agreement. Nothing prevents them from doing so. Any dispute over such a requirement would have to follow the agreed course of resolution, but the sense is, Georgia looks at this agreement as something to tolerate until it can get into a position to demand more.

Why would the ACF links be in the ACT agreement? To protect the Atlanta metro area, to give Georgia the freedom to pursue additional measures to gain water for the ACF that would not be available other-

ACT Water Allocation Agreement

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wise. The linkage appears to do nothing for the ACT Basin, for Alabama, nor for the Rome area of Georgia.

It is worth noting that, should a suspension occur, there are provisions with the Compact to address the reasons for the suspension and find a solution. If a solution cannot be found, then the states are free to pursue any action they deem necessary.

Perhaps a full explanation of the agreement would mollify some of our concerns.

It is incumbent on the State of Alabama to ensure those explanations are made to the satisfaction of everybody in the ACT Basin.

One of the ways would be, to the maximum extent possible, reveal exactly what would have happened to reservoir levels, hydrogeneration, water flows, environmental health etc. throughout the ACT Basin if the formula had been in effect the last two years.

Also, what would happen if Georgia were able to press the full use of the limitations provided in this agreement? For example, withdrawal of the 25% of the average annual daily flow at the state line? That's a lot of water, over a billion gallons a day.

Supposedly, it would be almost physically impossible to build enough reservoirs or establish enough users within the ACT Basin in Georgia to reach that level of use, but an explanation of what is theoretical versus practical is in order.

The following is an updated
schedule of events for our annual
meeting in Rome, GA,
February 8 & 9, 2001

Rome, GA Annual Meeting Schedule

All times EST

Thursday, February 8, 2001

- Noon—2:00 pm** **Board of Directors Luncheon**
Board Rm, Rome-Floyd County Library
- 3:00 — 5:00 pm** **Tour of Mayo's Bar Lock & Dam**
Depart from Holiday Inn Skytop via bus
- 6:00 — 6:15 pm** **Board buses at Holiday Inn:** ride to
Coosa Cntry. Club for reception & dinner.
- 6:30 — 9:00 pm** **Cocktail Hour and Dinner**
Speaker: Michael H. McDougald
President, McDougald Broad-
casting Corp., Rome, GA.
- 9:00 pm** **Buses depart for Holiday Inn Skytop**

Friday, February 9, 2001

All meetings and luncheon at Coosa Country Club

- 7:00 — 8:15 am** **River Assoc. Exec. meet w/Mobile Dist.**
- 7:45 — 9:00 am** **Continental Breakfast**
- 8:30 — 8:45 am** **CARIA Membership Meeting:**
Pres. Ralph O. Clemens, Jr. presiding
- 8:45 — 10:15 am** **REPORT UPDATES**
- 8:45— 9:30** **U.S. Army Corps of Engineers**
Maj. Gen. Phillip R. Anderson
South Atlantic Division
Col. Dave Norwood
District Engineer, Mobile
- 9:30— 9:50** **Re-licensing of Alabama Power Co.**
Dams on the Coosa River
Barry Lovett, Chief, Hydro-Re-licensing, AL Power Co.
- 9:50— 10:15** **Rome Waterfront Development**
Anne Arnold, Dir. Downtown Dev/Historic Preserv.
Eric Lindberg, Dir. Environmental River Dev.
- 10:15 — 10:30 am** **BREAK**
- 10:30 — 11:00** **What can we expect in Environmental Policy from the
Bush Administration?**
Bill Stiers, Balch & Bingham Law Firm, Washington, DC.
- 11:00 — Noon** **Panel : Moderator, Bill Fricks**
TOPIC: Development of Multi-Use Waterways
- Value of Waterways Recreation to
Local Economies**
Bob Saylor, Rome-Floyd County Parks and Recr.Auth.
- Corps of Engineers Recreation Program:**
Wynne Fuller, Chief, Opr. Div. Mobile Dist.
- Strategies for Sustainable Development
of Waterways**
David Umling, East Alabama Regional Plng. & Dev. Comm.
- 12:15-1:30 pm** **Closing Luncheon**
Speaker: Lindsay Thomas,
*Federal Representative to
ACT Compact*

People

Judge Jasper Fielding, Chairman of the Coosa County Commission and Probate Judge, retired on January 14, 2001, after 43 years of service. Judge Fielding has been a strong supporter of CARIA, serving on our Board of Directors for many years. We wish the Judge and his wife, Alice, all the best in their retirement.

Congressman Sonny Callahan of the 1st District of Alabama, has been named Chairman of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development.

Congratulations to **Terry Mitchell** who has recently been elected as Probate Judge of Coosa County. Terry is replacing Judge Fielding as a member of our Board of Directors.

Scheduled Events

February 8-9 CARIA Annual Meeting, Rome, Georgia. For information, contact CARIA at (334) 265-5744, fax at (334) 265-6248, email at coosalariv@worldnet.att.net.

Please note: the CARIA Board Meeting will be on the 8th of Feb. in the Rome-Floyd County Library from noon until 2:00 pm.

April 18-20 Inland Rivers Ports & Terminals Annual Meeting, Baton Rouge, LA.
Contact Deirdre McGowan (601) 352-4778, fax (601) 355-1506.

May 17-18 Warrior-Tombigbee Waterway Association Annual Meeting, Mobile Convention Center. Contact Moren Riley (334) 431-9055. Email: wariortom@aol.com

Sept 19-21 National Waterways Conference Annual Meeting, Louisville, KY.
Contact Harry Cook (202) 296-4415.
Email: hcook@waterways.org

Oct 23-25 Tenn-Tom Waterway Development Opportunities Conference, Beau Rivage, Biloxi, MS.
Contact Don Waldon (662) 328-3286.
Email: tenntom@ebicom.net.

CARIA Announces Sponsors for the Annual Meeting in Rome, GA on February 8-9, 2001

CARIA greatly appreciates the gracious support and sponsorship of the following companies:

City of Rome
Floyd County
AG Edwards
Alabama Power Company
Citizens First Bank
First Union Bank
First Floyd Bank
Georgia Power
Greater Rome Bank
Greater Rome Chamber of Commerce
Greater Rome Conv. & Visitors Bur.
News Publishing Company
Regions Bank

CARIA also gratefully acknowledges the efforts of the City of Rome in obtaining sponsorships, and for the City's invaluable assistance in helping us organize this meeting.

Reminder to all CARIA Board Members

A Board Meeting is scheduled for February 8th from noon until 2:00 pm in the Board Room of the Rome-Floyd County Library in Rome. Directions were mailed with the meeting notice.

Due to an oversight, the date stated in the notice was incorrect: **Thursday, February 8th is the correct date for the meeting.**

CARIA Website to be Online in early February



Beginning in early February, CARIA will join the internet revolution by establishing a website (caria.org).

Purpose of the site is to provide a faster, more accessible method of communicating to CARIA members and to the public in general about issues of concern regarding the waterways on the Alabama, Coosa, and Tallapoosa Rivers.

Currently, our primary way of getting information out is via this newsletter and the annual meeting, neither of which is very timely.

The site will include the standard information about the Association's mission, objectives, and issues, etc., as well as historical data about the Association and the US inland waterways.

Users will be able to email the Association with comments. A *Members Only* section will include such things as meeting minutes, notices, etc.

Developed by Doug Simms of DNS Computer Services in Montgomery, the site will still be under construction at the time of launching, but the bottom line is a faster, more flexible and accessible method of communicating with our members.

We invite your comments.

WATERWAYS

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