

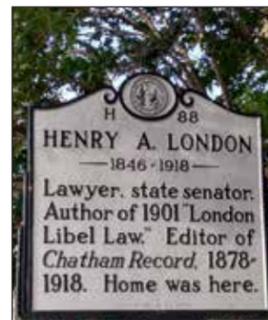
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JULY / AUGUST 2019

Fighting to Keep Pollution Out of the Rocky River

by Sonny Keisler

On behalf of Rocky River Watch, the Southern Environmental Law Center challenged a state permit to the Town of Siler City for nutrient-laden discharges from the town's wastewater treatment plant into Loves Creek and the Rocky River in North Carolina's Office of Administrative Hearings. Nutrient pollution results in algal blooms and fish kills that would prevent residents from safely swimming, boating, and enjoying the Rocky River.

In issuing a permit to Siler City, the state failed to add necessary and long overdue nutrient limits to the permit that would have prevented harmful discharges into Loves Creek and the Rocky River from Siler City's plant as a result of pollution from Mountaire Farms' new chicken slaughterhouse in Siler City. The state permit allows the concentration of harmful nutrient pollution in the wastewater discharge to be at historic highs that previously led the state to declare the Rocky River to be impaired, or too polluted to meet standards under the U.S. Clean Water Act.

"Far from meeting its obligation to protect and restore the Rocky River and clean water, the state abandoned its duty by allowing Mountaire's harmful pollution to go unchecked," said Blakely Hildebrand, staff attorney at the Southern Environmental Law Center "This permit allows nutrient levels to return to historically high and harmful levels, exacerbating an existing pollution problem."

The Rocky River is located in the Cape Fear River basin, and attracts boaters, swimmers, and fishermen from across the region. The river is home to the endangered Cape Fear shiner and other fish and aquatic life. A decade of nutrient pollution has prevented people from boating, swimming, and fishing in the river and has harmed wildlife—including the endangered Cape Fear shiner and other fish and aquatic life—that call the Rocky River home.

"The Rocky River is a special place for the people of Chatham County and the many endangered and unique species that call it home," said Connie Allred, president of Rocky River Watch. "The river deserves to be protected, and it was the state's job to protect it."

We are disappointed in the state for approving a permit for the Siler City plant that will make the pollution in the Rocky River even worse and prevent our families, friends and the community from enjoying this special resource."

The permit allows the nutrient problem in the Rocky River to get worse. Mountaire Farms, one of the largest chicken processing companies in the country, opened a new facility in Siler City and started discharging its nutrient-laden wastewater into the Siler City plant in January 2019. This multi-billion dollar company failed to design its facility to treat its wastewater for harmful pollutants from its facility, and instead saddled the Town of Siler City with the expensive burden of cleaning up the company's mess.

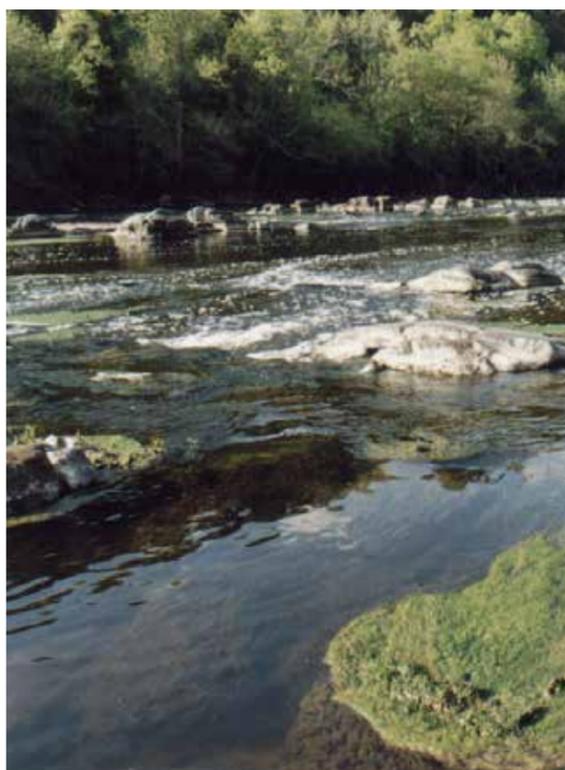


PHOTO: ROCKY RIVER HERITAGE FOUNDATION

From whence do your dreams derive—the soul or the ego?

by Joe Jacob

Recently, I was talking with a good friend of mine who has been a guiding light in the transformation of Saxapahaw from a decaying community along the banks of the Haw River in Alamance County into the vibrant village it is today. He was sharing some ideas he had when he made the comment, "Dreams never die, they just kill you".

I immediately replied, "Hey, we do not get out of this life alive. It might as well be dreams that take you out".

Ever since that conversation, I have been thinking about how sad it must be to not have any dreams. Of course, I am not talking about our brain activity at night when we first wake up from being asleep. I am talking about something deep inside of us that seems to always lay just under the surface of our consciousness. It is that push which drives us to find meaning in what we do and about what we care. It is what gives us courage to do what to others might seem silly or impossible. It is what gives us heart to be a better person than the one we perceive ourselves to be.

As a kid, you might have had the dream to become an astronaut, a doctor, a veterinarian, a star athlete or a successful business person, but was that really your dream or was it an idea we obtained from our culture that made us feel important and acceptable? Are our dreams really a product of our egos or are they something more outside of our consciousness? I think that if you look closely at what you call your dreams you might come to realize that they are not really your dreams at all. The essence of who you are may have been robbed by a seed thought planted into your mind by someone else or maybe even yourself.

DREAMS CONTINUED, PAGE 7

Summer Fest 2019 Blends Old and New Downtown

And it was hot.

Summer Fest is one of the signature events brought to the community by the Pittsboro Business Association (PBA) in conjunction with the Town of Pittsboro and with support from Main Street Pittsboro.

Now in its fourth year it is growing as the community enjoys the festive celebration on Hillsboro Street.

This year Pittsboro Mayor, Cindy Perry, arrived just in time to see the children's decorated bike parade and in her words the "amazing dancing by Ballet Folklorico Guadalupano."

"Summer Fest continues to be a festive event" Perry said "with activities for all ages."

Mayor Perry wasn't the only member of the Town Board impressed by the event, the dancing and activities for children. Commissioner John Bonitz said, "My kids love to ride in the children's parade each year. We love seeing all the different ways people show their spirit and patriotism! This year we also really enjoyed seeing Ballet Folklorico Guadalupano!"

The bike parade was managed by the Chatham YMCA



PHOTO: GARY SIMPSON

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