

SLEPC

SMITH LAKE ENVIRONMENTAL PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

FALL 2018

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Cindy Grant, President
cindy.grant@slepc.org, (205) 910-9268
Stephen Morros, Vice President
stephen.morros@slepc.org, (205) 939-3942
Peggy Hill, Treasurer & Chairman - Nominations
treasurer@slepc.org, (256) 287-1332
Stefanie Light, Secretary
stefanie.light@slepc.org, (256) 734-7551
Edwin Calvert, Board Member at Large
ed.calvert@slepc.org, (256) 339-9869
Lee Morrison, Chairman - Membership
lee.morrison@slepc.org, (205) 939-3942
If you would like to join the SLEPC board, nominate someone for a board position, or serve on a committee, please contact us at info@slepc.org.

SLEPC VISION / MISSION

The Smith Lake Environmental Preservation Committee (SLEPC) was formed in 1995 as an IRS recognized 501(c)(3) non-profit organization with the goal of preserving and enhancing the water quality of Smith Lake and its tributaries for people, recreation, fish and other wildlife through education and volunteer efforts and by working with officials and agencies and other organizations with similar goals.

WATER LEVELS

As fall is upon us, the lake level is being lowered to follow the operating guides set forth by Alabama Power. To prevent damage to your dock, ensure your dock lines have proper slack to manage the fluctuating lake levels.

SAVE OUR LAKE, WATCH YOUR WAKE!

Visit us on-line

WWW.SLEPC.ORG

WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/SLEPC/

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 29TH

The SLEPC Fall Membership Meeting is right around the corner! Please join us on Saturday, **September 29th** at the **Dodge City Community Center** which is located in the lower level of the Dodge City Town Hall. Invite your neighbors and friends to attend! All are welcome, and your attendance is appreciated.

Saturday, September 29th @ 9:00 AM
at the Dodge City Community Center

Lower Level of Dodge City Town Hall, 130 Howard Cir., Hanceville, AL 35077
(Turn at the Jack's on Hwy 69 in Dodge City - follow the blue signs)

We will have a guest speaker from Alabama Power Shoreline Management at the meeting to give us an update on the removal of unencapsulated Styrofoam and shoreline erosion. We will also have a speaker from Cullman Electric Coop to speak on electrical safety around boat docks.

We want to hear from you! Do you have ideas about how we can get everyone more involved in SLEPC? Please come share your thoughts. We look forward to seeing you all there!

SLEPC RENEW OUR RIVERS FALL CLEANUP

Join us on **Friday, September 14th** at 8:00 A.M. for the fall SLEPC/Alabama Power *Renew Our Rivers* cleanup. We will meet at the Smith Lake Park Boat Launch at 8:00 A.M. and focus on Simpson Creek. Lunch is provided and all volunteers get a **free SLEPC shirt!**

To volunteer, contact Jim Murphy at 205-529-5981 or info@slepc.org. We need an accurate count for volunteers in order to plan for lunch and shirts.

To clear up some questions, the main reason we do the cleanup on a Friday instead of the weekend is because of boat traffic and access to the boat launch. There are several companies that allow for employees to take time away from work for community service. Donating time to SLEPC for the cleanup is something that you will feel good about, even if you do have to take PTO.

If you plan to join us, please wear appropriate clothing and shoes for working in wooded and muddy areas. Apply insect repellent and sunscreen liberally. Come join us, make some new friends, and earn bragging rights for helping keep Smith Lake clean and beautiful for everyone to enjoy.

**FALL
CLEANUP:**

WHEN: Friday, Sept. 14th at 8:00 A.M.

WHERE: Smith Lake Park Boat Launch

MEET THE CANDIDATES

The officers of SLEPC are elected to a term of one year by the members at the Annual Meeting. The Nominating Committee unanimously recommends the following slate of board members for 2019:

PRESIDENT: Dr. Cindy Grant. Cindy and her husband, Dr. John Grant, are full-time residents of their eco-friendly house on Ryan Creek, and they have been members of SLEPC since 2004. Cindy has extensive experience serving on executive boards, including over sixteen years on the Jefferson County Veterinary Medical Association, where she served in several positions, including Vice-President and President. She also spent several years on both the Advisory Board and the Executive Board for Hand-In-Paw, a non-profit that helps children who are homeless or have behavioral and mental health issues. Cindy managed to retire from her veterinary practice this year, and now she has more time to devote to protecting and enhancing Smith Lake.

VICE PRESIDENT: Stephen Morros has been an active member of SLEPC since 2005 and has been a water monitor for SLEPC since 2006. He has held the offices of Secretary and VP for SLEPC. He is the AWW-certified Trainer of Water Monitors for Smith Lake and north/central Alabama and trains for both Bacteriological and Chemistry monitoring. He writes the bi-annual SLEPC newsletters, designed the new SLEPC brochure, designed and manages the SLEPC website, and conducts monthly water testing on Ryan Creek. He has served on various boards and committees throughout his collegiate and professional life and is very passionate about his work with SLEPC and protecting the quality and clarity of Smith Lake for generations to come.

TREASURER: Margaret Hill, usually known as Peggy Hill, is proud to say that she is identified as a naturalist. As a regular contributor to *Alabama Gardener* magazine she has written several articles on environmentally-friendly gardening, and she spoke on the subject at the 2018 Nashville Lawn and Garden Show. Before selling her business and retiring to Smith Lake, she served on the board of a non-profit organization in Huntsville. She was an officer for over a decade, and her roles included secretary, treasurer, and president. She wants to serve on SLEPC's board because she loves nature, and she loves Smith Lake.

SECRETARY: Stefanie Light and her husband, August (Gus) Bono, live near Cullman and own a property on Ryan Creek. Stefanie and Gus are Lifetime SLEPC members. Stefanie was elected to the SLEPC Board as Secretary in 2017 and does water monitoring with Alabama Water Watch. She has served on the Board of the non-profit Bulldog Club of America Rescue Network for 13 years as President and Secretary. Stefanie and Gus

enjoy sharing the beauty of Smith Lake with friends and family. They are pleased to volunteer their time to help preserve the lake as a valuable natural resource.

MEMBER AT LARGE: Edwin Calvert is the only charter member of SLEPC who still serves on the board, and he is highly valued for his knowledge of our history. He is one of our most active water monitors, testing seven different sites on a monthly basis.

MEMBER AT LARGE: Jerry Gray is a charter member of SLEPC and was the one who came up with the name of the group. He is a native of the area and grew up in Good Hope, graduated from Cullman High School and later attended St. Bernard College and UAB studying business. He served six years in the Alabama National Guard. Past President of the Cullman Association of Realtors, 2014. Cullman Association Realtor of the Year, 2015. Jerry is currently co-owner of BJC Real Estate and Broker of the Dodge City Office.

REPORTING FISH KILLS

Late summer this year there was a report of another fish kill. This time it was blueback herring on Ryan Creek just south of Coon Creek. It stretched for about a mile where there were hundreds of dead blueback herring floating on the water. It is suspected that the blueback herring were forced/chased into the warmer waters at the surface of the lake and died. They are an invasive species of bait fish and it is illegal to possess them on Smith Lake.



Please help the Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Division of DCNR (Department of Conservation and Natural Resources) in documenting and diagnosing fish kills in Alabama Waters by calling them ASAP when you witness a fish kill at **Operation Game Watch 1-800-272-GAME(4263)** or <http://www.outdooralabama.com/reporting-freshwater-fish-kills>.

Time is of the essence in diagnosing fish kills since waters are typically moving/flowing and water quality conditions are changing. When you witness a fish kill:

- Take digital pictures of the dead fish.
- Conduct water chemistry testing if you are a SLEPC monitor and have the water chemistry test kit (to evaluate critical parameters including dissolved oxygen [DO] and pH).
- Conduct bacteriological testing if you are a SLEPC monitor and have the bacteriological testing supplies (if *E. coli*/bacteria counts are high, this could indicate a sewage spill that could lead to DO depletion as sewage decomposes in the water).

LIKE SLEPC ON FACEBOOK AND
VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT www.slepc.org

BY-LAWS COMMITTEE LOOKING FOR MEMBERS

SLEPC's by-laws were adopted in 1995 when SLEPC was formed, and they have never been revised. It's time to re-view them. A new By-laws Committee is being established. Would you like to serve on this committee? If so, please email board@slepc.org or sign-up at our annual membership meeting on Sept. 29th.

**PLEASE SECURE ITEMS ON YOUR DOCK
SUCH AS BUCKETS, RAFTS, AND CHAIRS
TO PREVENT LITTERING THE LAKE.**

MEET THE NATIVES

Native plants that grow in the Smith Lake region

Without irrigation, it can be challenging to grow plants in the dry, shady areas of the landscape, but mapleleaf viburnum (*Viburnum acerifolium*) can handle those difficult conditions. It grows 4-6 feet tall, and 3-4 feet wide. Occasionally it suckers to form wide colonies.

As the name suggests, the leaves resemble maple leaves. Spring blooms are creamy white, spiraea-like, 2-3-inch-wide clusters appearing in late April or early May. In fall it develops purplish-black berries which nourish birds and other wildlife, and the foliage turns shades of rosy pink or maroon red. Easy to grow and adaptable to different soils and wetter conditions, mapleleaf viburnum is one of our best native shrubs.

Mapleleaf viburnum will be available at Birmingham Botanical Gardens' fall plant sale on October 20-21. For details, visit bbgardens.org. You'll find many fantastic plants at the sale, and you'll support a great cause at the same time! If you miss the sale, Petals from the Past in Jemison usually stocks this plant.



RENEW OUR RIVERS

Alabama Power and *Renew Our Rivers*, with the help of volunteers like us, has removed more than **15 million pounds** of trash from lakes and streams since the year 2000. The trash and debris has consisted of bottles and cans, tires, refrigerators, boats, flotation, deflated floats, old coolers, mountains of white-beaded foam, and more.

SLEPC FALL CLEANUP:

Friday, Sept. 14th at Smith Lake Park Boat Launch
Meet at 8:00 AM, boat departs at 9:00 AM

To volunteer, contact **Jim Murphy** at 205-529-5981
or jmurphy137@gmail.com or info@slepc.org

Hope to see you there!

WARNING: FISH CONSUMPTION ADVISORY

The Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH) and ADEM sample fish and compile an annual Fish Consumption Advisory. Here is the latest for Ryan Creek:

Ryan Creek, Smith Reservoir, approx. 2.2 miles upstream of CR 222 bridge (Big Bridge) and approx. 12 miles upstream of Sipsey Fork (Cullman County).

Largemouth bass and Spotted bass:

⇒ **Do Not Eat Any** (Mercury).

Visit the ADPH website to see the latest advisory:

<http://www.alabamapublichealth.gov/tox/fish-advisories.html>



UPCOMING EVENTS

Sept. 15: 5th Annual Fishing 4 a Cure 4 ALS

6:00 AM - 3:00 PM, Smith Lake Park Boat Launch

Contact: Diane Harris, 256-385-2616

Info: [click here](#)

Sept. 29: Smith Lake Country Music Festival

Smith Lake Park

Follow @smithlakefest on Facebook.

Info & Tickets: <https://smithlakefest.us/>

Oct. 6: Smith Lake Park Bass Fest

Bass Tournament and Music Festival

Info and Registration: <http://smithlakeparkbassfest.com/>

SLEPC

SMITH LAKE ENVIRONMENTAL PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

2516 Arlington Crescent
Birmingham, AL 35205

JOIN THE SMITH LAKE ENVIRONMENTAL PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

SLEPC is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and depends on your membership and generous donations. Please take a moment to review the membership information below. Please join us in our endeavors to preserve Smith Lake and its tributaries. Together we can keep Smith Lake beautiful and help it become a Treasured Alabama Lake for everyone to enjoy for years to come. **All donations are tax deductible** and very much appreciated. Join online at www.slepc.org.

Membership Levels:

- Annual Single Membership \$ 25
- Annual Couple Membership \$ 30
- Lifetime Single Membership \$ 100
- Lifetime Couple Membership \$ 200
- Annual Business Membership \$ 100
- I would like to volunteer services
- I would like to volunteer time
- Please add me to mailing list

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Please make checks payable to:

Smith Lake Environmental Preservation Committee

Please return this form to:

SLEPC
2516 Arlington Crescent
Birmingham, AL 35205

RENEW OUR RIVERS
SLEPC FALL CLEANUP
FRIDAY, SEPT. 14TH 8:00 AM
SMITH LAKE PARK BOAT LAUNCH!

MEETING NOTICE:

When: Saturday, Sept. 29th at 9:00 A.M.
Where: Dodge City Community Center