



PO Box 14629
Zuurfontein
1912
email: save@mweb.co.za
web: www.save.org.za

MAY 2016

HIGHLIGHTS:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• DATES TO DIARISE• SAVE AGM: SATURDAY 14 MAY 2016 AT 10:00 TO BE HELD AT THE LUCIANA LAPA
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• POLLUTION FROM WASTE WATER WORKS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• RIETSPRUIT SITE FOR MEGA SEWAGE WORKS

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – 14TH MAY

Please join us at this meeting on Saturday 14th May at 10:00. It is an opportunity to interact with the Committee and put forward your suggestions regarding our strategy.

We would also welcome nominations for committee members who will add value to the work that we are doing. We are especially in need of lawyers, engineers and environmentalists who can provide their expertise to ensure that we are able to meet our objectives.

PROGRESS WITH DEPARTMENT OF WATER & SANITATION (DWS)

The DWS has provided a comprehensive list of repairs required to most waste waterworks whose effluent flows into the Vaal River. This work, scheduled to commence in April, is expected to be fully completed by August 2016. R300 million has been set aside for these repairs. We are still awaiting information on the upgrade to the Rietspruit WWWW and other Gauteng operations whose effluent flows into the Vaal River.

The DWS has been responsive to our reports of sewage spills (which occur regularly) mostly due to the poorly maintained and ageing sewer reticulation system. We have found that in most cases these spillages have been resolved fairly quickly.

We are concerned about a spillage adjacent to the N1 highway where it crosses the R28. This has been ongoing since 2010 with the flow steadily increasing and resulting in contamination of the Rietspruit. The Emfuleni Council simply says “we have no money”. This matter has been taken up with DWS who are investigating. It is estimated that repairs to the line are of the order of R20 million. Emfuleni Council is in contempt of court in regard to this spillage. SAVE is awaiting a report back from the DWS and will, thereafter consider its options.

SEDIBENG REGIONAL SEWAGE SYSTEM (SRSS)

SAVE is deeply concerned regarding the decision taken by the Emfuleni Council and DWS to place the new, mega Sedibeng Regional Sewerage System (SRSS) adjacent to the current Rietspruit WWW site. Our reasons for concern relate to the ongoing pollution in the Rietspruit which has resulted in this stream becoming heavily silted with a depth of the silt reaching 1 metre in certain areas. We do not believe that the new works will be trouble-free, thus further polluting the ecologically sensitive Rietspruit and the Loch.

We also need confirmation that the much needed repairs to the current works will be done so that the effluent from this works which is released into the River is of an acceptable standard during the 10 years-plus that it will take for the new proposed mega RSS plant to be operational.

SAVE is awaiting details of the EIA (Environmental Impact Study) and will certainly be commenting on this study and if necessary, will consider High Court action against the authorities regarding the placement of this works in an ecologically sensitive area. Unfortunately, our court battles are far from over.

ROUND THE ISLAND RACE – Vaal Dam

SAVE was delighted to be associated with the 2016 Round the Island Race and raised R4 200 from raffles, the sale of shirts and caps. A further donation is expected from Lake Denys Yacht Club based on the number of entries.

A SAVE display stand created a strong awareness of our activities. Sincere thanks to Lake Denys Yacht Club for their support and the manner in which the club has embraced SAVE. We salute the volunteers who gave up a weekend to promote SAVE at this event.

VAAL DAM AREA – EXPLORATION RIGHTS – License No. 294 ER Project Reference: 723.18034.00003 File Ref. Rhino Free State 294 ER

SAVE is concerned regarding the above license allegedly granted to Rhino Oil and Gas Exploration SA (Pty) Limited to explore a substantial area of KZN, Free State and Eastern Cape. This includes a significant part of the Vaal Dam.

The applicant, with Philip Steyn as COO, is a wholly owned subsidiary of Rhino Resources Ltd with a head office in Las Vegas, Nevada. Patrick Mulligan is President, CEO, Company Secretary and Treasurer!

There has been publicity in KZN and in a Carte Blanche programme regarding these proposals. There has been limited opportunity for public participation.

SAVE has raised the issue with the Department of Water and Sanitation, which is investigating the matter. Irene Main, our Vaal Dam representative, is working closely with Mariette Liefferink to take this matter further with the authorities.

FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES

The Spirit of Jen Cruise was, once again, a success. We would have wished for a better turnout, but certainly the 70 people that supported us had a great time whilst contributing to SAVE's coffers. More information about the the funds raised will be presented at the AGM..

Following the success of 'Wine under Willows', we are planning to host another wine-tasting in the Spring and trust that we will receive the support of all wine lovers, property owners and people who love the River and want to ensure that it is kept clean.

PUBLICITY

The media is following the pollution situation in the Vaal River with great interest. A follow-up on the Carte Blanche programme which focused on Vaal Dam is expected soon. SABC-2's 50/50 environmental programme recently highlighted the health risks associated with contact with polluted water.

There have been several articles in The Star, Beeld and of course Vaalweekblad. We appreciate their support in highlighting the problems we face. Their efforts have certainly contributed to the DWS opening communication channels with us.

RIVER RATS FUN DAY – 2ND APRIL

An initiative by Andrew Surtees and friends resulted in a fun day on the Vaal River when 70+ boats of all shapes and sizes gathered in the shallows opposite Milos.

River rats entered into the spirit of the day, dressing themselves and their boats in all sorts of finery. It was a great day to socialise, make new friends and enjoy the River.

All participants are looking forward to the next one.

SAVE Banking Details:

Account name: Save the Vaal Environment

Bank: Standard Bank

Account number: 281 049 521

Sandton City Branch

Branch Code: 018105

Patron: *The Hon. Justice W.L. Wepener*

Committee members: *M. Plant (Chairperson); M. Stewart (Deputy Chairperson) P Boucher; T. du Toit; M.J. Gaade; G. Colgate; A. Henegan; S. Mokoena; S. Sellschop; M. Stewart*