



SAVE

✉ - P O Box 14629, ZUURFONTEIN, 1912

& Fax - 083 286 3500 / 0866945161

Email - save@save.org.za

www.save.org.za

Follow us on Facebook and Twitter:

@savethevaal

Save the Vaal Environment

NEWSLETTER – APRIL/MAY 2017

Highlights

- **Diarise these dates:**
- **SAVE AGM Sunday 28th May at 11:00 at Luciana Estate**
- **Skippers' Licences – 20th May at Luciana Country Estate**
- **SAVE wine tasting – Saturday 7th October**

- **Parys residents form SAVE committee.**

We, at SAVE, are saddened by the passing of Susan Sellschop – a founder member and an ardent supporter of SAVE for over 20 years. Susan was a leading light in preventing a strip mining operation on the Free State banks of the Vaal River. Our sympathies to Susan's family. Her passing is a loss and she will be remembered as a member of the River community and an ardent supporter of saving the Vaal River.

Sedibeng Regional Sewage System (SRSS)

Discussions are ongoing with the Department of Water and Sanitation and Emfuleni Local Council. The SRSS, announced with much fanfare by the Minister of Water and Sanitation in 2015, remains on the drawing board!

Plans for a new mega works have been dropped in favour of more 'cost-effective' increases in capacities and upgrades to the existing three waste water works. The focus of the upgrade has change, yet again, from Rietspruit to Leeukuil. Capacity increases and upgrades continue at Sebokeng at great cost due to disruptions by the community because they were disappointed with the number of jobs given to locals.

Registration Number - 011015200004

Committee members: Malcolm Plant - 0825662101 (Chairperson); Maureen Stewart (Vice-chairperson) – 0825705058; Thomas du Toit - 082 419 6526; Andy Henegan - 083 700 0452; Samson Mokoena – 084 291 8510; Johan Smit- 0832044674; Irene Main - 078 521 1676; Mike Gaade – 0825686826; Belinda Daymond- 0828078888.

Patron: The Hon. Justice W.L. Wepener

The SAVE committee is very concerned that Vaal River City will enjoy the bulk of the capacity increases. The developers of Vaal River City have called for tenders and one can presume that work will commence as soon as the tenders have been awarded. Emfuleni Local Council has given assurances that sewer connections will not be made until capacities have been increased. We have been advised that consideration is being given to the use of package plants for Vaal River City. However, technical, legal and other regulations have not been prepared as yet.

We are taking legal steps to access information from the Gauteng Province regarding full details and 10 year projections of capacity requirements for Vaal River City via the Public Access to Information Act (PAIA). The figures to be requested will be compared with capacities proposed and requirements for the existing infrastructure and other developments.

SAVE does not wish to stifle development in the Vaal Triangle but will certainly take legal action to ensure that existing sewer lines and capacity requirements are given priority ahead of the R11bn Vaal River City development through Court proceedings, if necessary.

EMFULENI LOCAL COUNCIL

There have been numerous management changes at Emfuleni, which have disrupted our communication channels with the Council. This was addressed at a recent meeting. We have received contact details and need to establish the process for reporting spillages.

Two major sources of pollution are of concern, ie the pipeline along the R28/N1 and the Vereeniging/Three Rivers lines and pump stations. These have been an ongoing source of major raw sewerage spillages into the Vaal River. Both of these projects were scheduled for completion in February but work has not yet been completed. SAVE has informed the Emfuleni Council managers that if these two projects do not meet the new deadline of end May, SAVE will take Court action to compel Emfuleni to satisfactorily complete these projects.

Certificate of Competence for watercraft (Skipper's license).

There will be a course for skippers' licenses (Certificate of competence) for aspirant water craft handlers at Luciana Country Estate on 20 May 2017. River property owners and their families and friends who wish to make use of the opportunity to qualify, can contact us at lucianacountryestate@gmail.com. The minimum age is 16 years – or close to it.

RIETSPRUIT FORUM

The statistics presented highlight the serious pollution problems of the Vaal River, mainly due to raw sewerage and mining operations. It is of greater concern that this is not a decision-making forum and has been reviewing the stats and shaking their heads for years. We will do our best to take these matters further up the line within DWS.

Acid Mine Drainage

Mariette Liefferink, CEO of the Foundation for a Sustainable Environment (FSE), makes an important contribution to the Rietspruit forum. Mariette presented disturbing information that reflected the DWS is not meeting its own standards for effluent released from the central and eastern basins for sulphate, manganese and electrical conductivity which are non-complaint and impact on water resource quality standards for the Vaal and Crocodile Rivers.

In February, this year, the DWS and Trans Caledonian Tunnel Authority launched the Eastern Basin's AMD plant, one of the largest high density sludge plants in the world. The plant has been operational since August. The effluent which is discharged into the Blesbokspruit contains high levels of sulphate (1 460 mg/L). The water resource quality objective for the Vaal is 600 mg/l. Little, if any notice was taken of SAVE's and the FSE's comments on the EIA.

This is very disturbing and SAVE will be following up this matter and is fully supportive of the FSA's endeavours. Unfortunately, we have limited funds to deal with all the pollution problems and therefore need the financial support of the community to assist us.

SAVE, PARYS

Congratulations to Johan Smit who arranged a public meeting in Parys to create awareness about SAVE and its activities. The attendees were clearly unhappy with the pollution of the river at Parys and the state of the sewer system in that town. A committee has been formed to communicate with the Ngwathe Local Council and to raise funds. Best wishes for every success to Johan and his team of volunteers.

THANKS TO DONORS

SAVE recently attended a Trustee Meeting of the Riviera Villas Body Corporates to discuss what we do and how they can help.

We are most appreciative of the warm reception and also for the donation to our fund-raising efforts.

Deneysville Yacht Club hosted the Vaal Dam Round the Island Race. Once again, SAVE was proud to be associated with this event. Our presence helped to create awareness of our activities

Thank you Lake Deneys Yacht Club for your donation. Further funds were raised with a raffle.

WINE TASTING

We are appealing to all our friends to support the SAVE Wine Tasting Event on 7th October. It's a great fun day and is our major fund-raising event.

Conclusion

SAVE has spent nearly 3 years in discussions with the DWS and Emfuleni Local Council. We have made great strides forward during this time in terms of emergency repairs to 26 waste water works whose effluent is pumped into the Vaal River at various points.

However, the key issues outstanding, ie the benefits of the SRSS to existing infrastructure, the never-ending delays in completing major projects and the situation with Vaal River City, clearly show that it's time for action.

We encourage you to attend our AGM when we hope to have more information available.

When: 11 a.m. on Sunday 28th May 2017

WHERE: Luciana Country Estate