

# WHAT ANGLERS SAY



## An Investment in a Healthy Fishing Habitat

“In the St. Johns River Estuary, the sea of seemingly endless spartina flats and oyster beds exist only as a result of a fine balance of fresh water from the St. Johns and saltwater from the Atlantic Ocean. Without that balance, these beautiful flats and the multimillion dollar sportfishing industry that depends on them are in jeopardy.



Captain Benny Blanco

With one restoration project, one investment you can restore healthy freshwater fishing habitat and healthy estuarine fishing habitat by reconnecting the Ocklawaha River to the St. Johns River Estuary.”

Captain Benny Blanco  
Florida Sportsman Watermen

## It is Time to Leverage Our Recreational Opportunities

“We have lost opportunities to create a sustainable fishery and leverage recreational opportunities. The number using the Rodman Reservoir has gone down. Boat ramps are frequently clogged, requiring repeated herbicide spraying. Bait shops and campgrounds have closed. We no longer have the striped bass, catfish, and large schools of mullet. What has happened to the economic benefit of the Rodman Dam? It is time to have a dialogue about how we can leverage our recreational assets for Putnam County’s economic benefit.”

Sam Carr, Chair of the Putnam County Waterways and Trails Committee and Fisherman

## Competitive Bass Fisherman Supports Restoring the Ocklawaha River

“As a long-time competitive tournament bass fisherman, I’ve loved fishing Rodman and was a supporter of Save Rodman. But now that I’ve learned about the collateral damage to our natural springs in the Ocklawaha, I find that I’ve changed my mind. As great a bass fishery as Rodman is - I don’t think it’s worth killing the natural springs.”

Bill Rossi, Bass Fisherman and Retired UF Professor, FL



Redfish feeding in an estuary. Stock Photo



## Thinking About the Long-Term Benefits to the Fishery

“As a fishing guide, my mission is simple, to preserve old Florida’s heritage. Anytime in Florida we can restore a waterway such as the Ocklawaha, that is a good thing. I want anglers to realize that there are long-term benefits to doing things the right way...that we may not always see in the short term.”



Rami Ashouri with redfish.

Rami Ashouri, Saturiba Fishing Charters

## Bring Our Fish Back

“The fish have dwindled. We have lost migratory species. How can you continue to turn your back on this River? We need to get our wild scenic river and fish – back.”

Erika Ritter, Angler and Owner and Operator,  
A Cruising Down the River, Eureka, FL

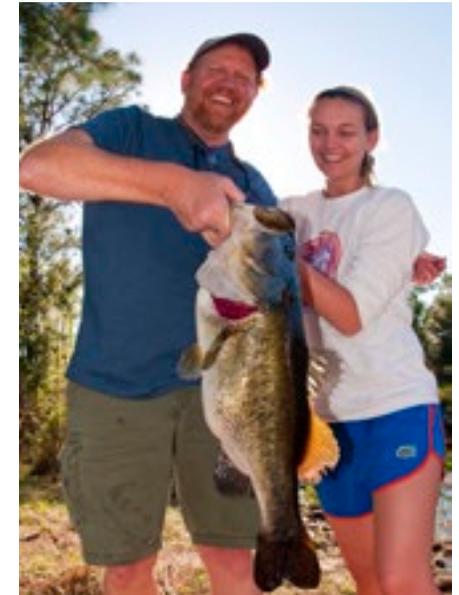


Photo by Mark Emery

## The Rodman Dam has Impacted the Silver River and Silver Springs

“I have been on the Silver River since I was a kid. And although it is still a beautiful river, there is a lot going wrong here. We are missing striped bass, channel catfish, large schools of mullet and other species that once inhabited the Ocklawaha and Silver Rivers, partly because of the Rodman Dam.

We all once loved the Rodman Reservoir. The who’s who of bass fishermen once regularly fished it. Unfortunately, the Rodman fishery has gone down. Muck is building up, herbicide treatments are used regularly, a cypress forest is dying there, and the long-term outcome is not good. It is time for us to make this river system whole again by reconnecting the St. Johns, Ocklawaha, and Silver Rivers.”



Mark Emery with largemouth bass catch.

Mark Emery-National Geographic Cinematographer,  
multiple Emmy Award-winner, Angler, Outdoorsman  
and Wildlife Photographer