# We are the river. United we are the solution.



#### SUMMER 2021

#### TABLE OF CONTENTS

Rural Land Protection &

#### LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT & CEO

The pandemic. March 2020 tornadoes. The polar vortex storm. The March 2021 flood. These are all reminders that we are living during major changes that will shape our lives, the future for our families, communities, and economies. Climate change is upon us. Focusing only on ways to adjust to the new, more extreme weather patterns, does not address the fundamental problem.



The International Energy Agency, which advises world capitals on energy policy, was clear in its recent report that all major economies need to hit net zero carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions by 2050 to avoid the worst effects of the global changes currently in motion! This is doable when we consider how we can each reduce our energy use in our everyday lives (using less stuff) and telling elected officials and community leaders that this is the defining effort of our time.

Achieving our organization's mission of clean water and healthy rivers for all Tennesseans not only will rely on citizens and leadership in the Southern US to prioritize climate change but also on tackling environmental inequity. The South has been a national dumping ground that has left challenging legacy pollution across rural and urban communities in Tennessee. Tennessee is now one of the fastest growing states in the nation, and that growth must not exacerbate existing inequities or destroy the natural heritage that makes Tennessee so attractive in the first place.

Environmental equity exists when no single group or community faces disadvantages in dealing with environmental hazards, disasters, or pollution. At their core, environmental inequities – where a group of people are disproportionately affected by environmental crises and impacts – are based on economic inequality, discrimination, the unequal distribution of political power, and the erosion of civil liberties.

The pandemic highlighted how power imbalances are exacerbated as decision-making bodies from town halls, the state legislature, and state permitting agencies went virtual, dramatically limiting public involvement. This is why our Clean Water Protection and Rural Land & Land Use programs have always focused on transparent government decision-making and meaningful public input in these processes that affect everyone's health, livelihoods, and property and the prosperity of communities. The next 10 years are crucial for us all to step up in the ways we are best equipped and make a difference. Most of us will be alive to experience our collective success or failure in managing the extent of climate change and addressing systemic injustices so **every Tennessean** can rely on clean water and enjoy healthy rivers.

Sincerely – Dorie Bolze

Clean Water Policy 2 & 3
Science for Clean Water 4 & 5
Restoration & Volunteer Efforts 6 & 7
Outreach & Education 8 & 9
About Us 10 & 11
Funding Our Work with Your Help 12 & 13
About Us14 & 15
Our Supporters

# Nearly **50%** of Tennesseans

rely on waterways for their drin-

king water, but in the last

decade water quality degradation.

has become widespread, especially

in the rapidly urbanizing areas of

the state.

# CLEAN WATER POLICY

Providing expertise to agencies, legislators and elected officials to shape laws and regulatory policies that ensure clean water and healthy rivers for all Tennesseans.

#### GROWTH PRESSURE INCREASED DRAMATICALLY WITH PANDEMIC

The dramatic influx of people and new corporate headquarter relocations, along with the changes triggered by the pandemic with people working remotely, are all having profound impacts on the rapidly urbanizing greater Nashville region. Many land use/ growth plans in the region and local regulations are not resulting in growth that focuses people where the infrastructure is (think schools, roads, sewer, drinking water), nor are they maintaining rural areas to support agriculture. Nor are they effectively preserving natural areas of forests, floodplains, and stream buffers needed to adapt to and reduce climate change impacts.

We have analyzed and provided our recommendations on **50** proposed state and national bills and regulations; industry state environmental permitting proposals; and local growth plans and development proposals that directly affect water quality, flooding, drinking water, and fish and wildlife.

The pandemic did not slow down proposals for state environmental agency permits nor the number of bills in the TN state legislature to reduce state environmental regulatory oversight and enforcement that is vital to ensuring public health, clean water, and protection of people's property values. Thanks to core mission support from the **Dan and** Margaret Maddox Fund and our donors because the need for our expertise and coordination with community members, partners, and experts to review these numerous proposals has never been higher! We are a part of several national coalitions. and our staff serve on the state TN Water & Wastewater Finance Board appointed by the Governor and lead a statewide water network



The Nashville region is projected to grow by 1 million new people in less than 15 years. As a result of the pandemic, this will be even sooner as the Nashville area was the top relocation destination in 2020! Water quality degradation has become widespread in the rapidly urbanizing areas, according to the state!

# Tennessean.

### <sup>FRANKLIN</sup> **'A monumental vote': Williamson** commission approves rezoning to preserve rural areas

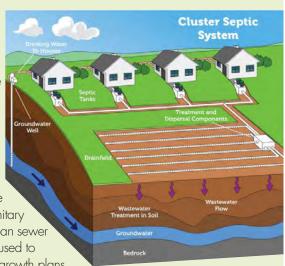
Kerri Bartlett Nashville Tennessean

### Here are highlights of our recent efforts and priorities:

- Successfully advocated for the adoption of the Williamson 2040 land use plan and implementing zoning ordinances during the pandemic that included reducing zoning density as one of several approaches to prioritize conserving rural land.
- Opposed development proposals in rural Nashville along the South Harpeth and northern Williamson County that did not follow the local government growth plans that were developed with significant community input.
- Provided expertise on flooding along the Harpeth in Franklin that resulted in scaling back of an extensive floodplain alteration proposal for a large residential development proposal in an area with major existing flooding challenges.
- Worked with partner groups to oppose the development of a quarry that would endanger sensitive species in the Duck River in Humphreys County.
- Worked with community groups to oppose an extension of a quarry under Richland Creek in Nashville
- ▶ Worked to ensure all environmental issues were disclosed in state review of proposed fuel depot in Burns, TN.
- Working to make sure that so-called "conservation subdivisions" are not used to improperly allow increased development density for developments.
- Serving as experts on the Environmental Roundtable of the Greater Nashville Regional Council working on a regional conservation strategy for natural and cultural resources.

### **SPOTLIGHT:** SPECIALITY SEWER SYSTEMS KEEP PUSHING FOR STATE LEGISLATION TO DRASTICALLY REDUCE REGULATORY OVERSIGHT

One of the issues we are watching closely is the regulation of specialty sewer systems call "alternative" or land application sewer systems. "Alternative" server systems are like large septic tank systems that serve a single subdivision or an entire community. These systems do not directly discharge into streams, but rely on the soil in drip fields on land to do the final processing of sewer waste. These systems are useful in providing sanitary options for rural areas far from urban sewe lines. However, they can also be used to hop-scotch well-developed urban growth plans



and zoning (such as in Williamson, Rutherford, and Wilson counties). Because they are loosely regulated, they can also **pollute both the land and water. Of the 302 permitted land application sewer systems in TN, 94 of them (31%) have received Notices of Violations and/or are subject to enforcement actions,** according to recent state analysis.

For the past 2 years, the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) has attempted to develop better regulations but was forced to delay action this spring when private sewer companies sponsored legislation to essentially deregulate all oversight of the design and construction of these systems. **We worked with partners to advocate before both the state legislature and the TN Board of Water Quality, Oil & Gas to prevent unwise legislation and to allow TDEC more time to develop meaningful regulations. We also worked to oppose efforts to allow the public financing of private alternative sewer systems.** This is a priority topic as growth in rural areas continues, as well as cities, like Franklin, are considering large land application (and/or underground injection) for sewer discharge **expansion**.

Illustration courtesy of United States Environmental Protection Agency

# PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT AND OPEN GOVERNMENT: A MAJOR CHALLENGE DURING THE PANDEMIC

The pandemic created major challenges communicating with state and local decision-makers, and public participation was dramatically affected as meetings went online. **Zoom calls do NOT give the public adequate rights to participate in matters that will change their public health and livelihoods, especially when 46% of rural Tennesseans do not have reliable access to the internet.** We organized discussions among First Amendment experts and helped oppose legislation that sought to make these changes permanent so that public officials cannot avoid facing their constituents over controversial issues.

### EXPANSIONS ARE OFFICIAL! TWO NASHVILLE GROUPS UNDER OUR LEADERSHIP

One of our strategic priorities is the need to expand effective citizen engagement by building coalitions across Tennessee of community groups and leaders who are effective champions for clean water and local waterways in their communities. We have created a framework under state corporate laws to enable us to provide our programmatic expertise and the important organizational needs of fiscal management and governance. This enables new and existing groups to be able to focus on their efforts and be the voice in their communities without having to take on the huge burden of managing a full-blown non-profit entity.

This past year we assumed responsibility for the **Richland Creek Watershed Alliance** in Nashville to carry on the efforts of the founding Executive Director who retired. We are the fiscal sponsor for the **Mill Creek Watershed Association**, a rapidly developing creek that is home to the endangered Nashville crayfish, found only in Mill Creek.

#### AWARD-WINNING CLEAN WATER PROTECTION:



HC received the 2021 Tennessee Conservation Voters Service Award for "building active and successful relationships with state legislators". This

award recognizes our continued bi-partisan work with legislators to provide our expertise so they could make informed decisions on environmental and clean water protection.

# HOW CAN YOU HELP?

YOU CAN HELP by getting to know your local and state officials and keeping abreast of state environmental permits. SPEAK UP WHEN IT MATTERS.

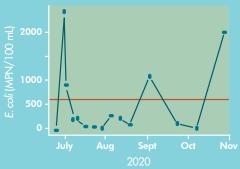
#### **STATE ELECTED OFFICIALS:**

Find your state legislator and follow bills on the TN General Assembly website: https://www.capitol.tn.gov/. Harpeth Conservancy provides science-based conservation for the rivers of Tennessee

Harpeth Conservancy provides science-based conservation for the rivers of Tennessee

# E. COLI STUDIES FIND HIGH LEVELS ABOVE STATE STANDARDS FOR RECREATION TO PROTECT PUBLIC HEALTH

According to the Center for Disease Control, top causes of recreational water illnesses include human pathogens that can be monitored via E. coli sampling. The State of TN performs very little E. coli sampling, particularly in our highly recreated rivers, such as the Harpeth River State Park with over 500,000 visitors annually. None of these sampling efforts are combined with predictive modeling, which would provide the public an "early warning" notice if waters may be unsafe to recreate. Our goal is to address this by creating a Citizen Water Quality Monitoring Network that will regularly monitor water quality in TN rivers. The program was launched on the Harpeth in 2020 at four very popular river access areas. The study found E. coli levels that exceeded by SEVERAL TIMES the state regulatory standards throughout the popular summer recreational season (see data) State standards are set to protect public health for recreational use of waterways.

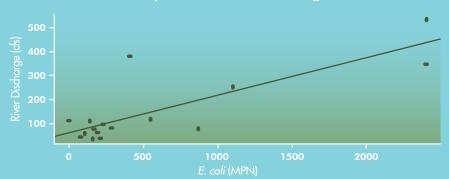


E. coli data in MPN (most probably number) from water samples collected during 2020 in the Harpeth River at the Harpeth River State Park, State Scenic River Section, Highway 100 Bridge Canoe Access in Bellevue. The red line marks the state's regulatory standard for *E. coli* levels to ensure safe recreation for scenic river sections.

#### BUILDING A PUBLIC "REAL-TIME" ALERT SYSTEM WITH MATHEMATICAL MODELING

We are continuing our monitoring program on the Harpeth in 2021 and have expanded it to Richland Creek and Mill Creek in Nashville along greenways and other public access areas. We need to collect about 2 years of E. coli data at locations on a waterway before we can build a mathematical computer model for that river, creek, or lake that predicts whether recreation is a high public health risk. The predictive model uses easy to obtain information such as river flow, how "turbid" or muddy the water is, water temperature and other data to find a combination that is a strong predictor of high *E. coli* levels in "real-time" without having to continue to collect water samples often or in so many locations.





River flow (or discharge) presented as cfs (cubic feet per second) compared to levels of E. coli. As river flow increases we often observe elevated levels of E. coli as indicated by the green trend line.

## HOW CAN YOU HELP?

You can help us expand by covering the costs of a new or existing sampling location.

\$150 for one sample (lab and staff costs)

\$1,250 outside lab costs on for *E. coli* samples at one location for summer season

\$3,750 total cost for *E. coli* sampling at one location for summer season

\$10,000 - \$12,000 capital costs to set up Harpeth Conservancy in-house E. coli lab. This will drastically reduce costs per sample, enable volunteers to be involved in lab work, and expand our ability to add new sites and do tests in areas of concern.



Water samples being tested under black light with special lab equipment.

#### **SPECIAL THANKS TO DONORS OF THE WATER QUALITY** MONITORING PROGRAM EFFORT

- Andrea Waitt Carlton Family Foundation
- Anonymous Donor
- Dan and Margaret Maddox Fund
- Grateful Daniel Fund
- International Paper
- John Ingram
- Laura Turner
- Lucius Burch, Jr. Wildlife Habitat Fund
- Mississippi River Network
- Tara & Robert Levine

#### POLLUTION REDUCTION PLAN FOR HARPETH: OUR SCIENTIST WORKING WITH EPA ADVANCED COMPUTER MODELS TO SET LIMITS TO PREVENT HAZARDOUS ALGAL BLOOMS

The Harpeth is officially classified as "impaired" by the state because of too much phosphorus, nitrogen, and other pollutants that can lead to conditions ripe for hazardous algal blooms and low oxygen levels. Our 2019 summer study found a common toxin produced by blue-green algae in streams of the Harpeth. Back in 2015, HC helped launch the pollution reduction plan effort, called a "TMDL" (total maximumin daily load) the Clean Water Act, that is required to reduce the pollution so the river recovers. This effort on the Harpeth being led by TDEC with many entities involved, is the first of its kind in TN with the EPA providing its expertise by developing the sophisticated water quality computer model.

HC's Dr. Jackwood is the only staff scientist for non-profits in TN and much of the Southeast with the ability to use these sophisticated computer water quality pollution models. This summer through 2021 will require lots of time to work with the computer model to run scenarios to see what pollutant reduction options will result in measurable results and account for Franklin's plans to increase sewer capacity.

### IT'S DÉJÀ VU ALL OVER AGAIN: FRANKLIN STUDYING SEWER EXPANSION, INCLUDING INCREASING DRINKING WATER SOURCE WITH SEWER DISCHARGE!

It is essential to get a pollution reduction plan established as Franklin is already analyzing how to expand its sewer capacity another 50% even with the current sewer plant expansion to 16 million Gallons a Day still under construction! Franklin is studying several options based on their consultant's report. Two options include adding sewer discharge into the city's drinking



water plant either by having sewer discharge into the river from a new sewer plant not far UPSTREAM OF THE FRANKLIN DRINKING WATER PLANT and even sewer discharge directly into the drinking water reservoir! In 2012, the city aldermen shot down the option of a second sewer plant upriver of the drinking water plant, but clearly it is back on the table. The city consultants are also studying options to inject sewer discharge into the ground as well as applying 2 million gallons a day of sewer discharge on land along the Harpeth than then seeps into the Harpeth through shallow groundwater.



# SCIENCE FOR CLEAN WATER



# OUR SCIENCE EXPERTS SOUGHT TO SHARE KNOWLEDGE

In addition to being HC's Director of Watershed Science and Restoration, Dr. Rvan lackwood, is also an Adjunct Professor in the Sustainable Practice Graduate Program at Lipscomb University where he teaches Water Management. Dr. Jackwood gave presentations to local, regional and national groups about water quality, our research, and conservation such as:

- River Network Annual Conference
- The Nature Conservancy (TN Chapter) Seminar Series
- Harpeth Conservancy's Conservation Conversation
- Trout Unlimited Chapter Meeting
- Vanderbilt University Nonprofit Speaker Series
- TN Water Resources Symposium Annual Conference



Algal blooms sicken people, animals across **United States** 

By Greg Cima Published on February 03, 2021

400-plus animal illnesses found in first three years of federal surveillance

National press coverage in recent years have highlighted how toxic algal blooms are increasing from too much nitrogen and phosphorus pollution, and making waterways unsafe for drinking, recreating, or for our pets and livestock.

### **RESTORATION PROJECTS**

As a part of our Lessons on the River and Be River Responsible Programs, we have conducted TEN hands-on volunteer projects through May 2021 for stream and habitat restoration and river clean-ups, with more to come.

#### INVASIVE PLANT MANAGEMENT AT HARPETH RIVER STATE PARK



#### TREE PLANTING AT LL BURNS PARK -TRIBUTE TO JESSICA GRAHAM

A tree planting was held on March 20th as a tribute to Jessica Graham (1984-2020) for her service with Harpeth Conservancy and her passion and commitment to the Harpeth River. 36 volunteers planted 300 seedlings to continue HC's 2012 ten-year plan with the Town of Kingston Springs' Parks and Recreation Department to re-establish a forested buffer along the Harpeth River following the 2010 flood which denuded the riverbank.



Volunteers from four Middle TN counties gathered on a cool winter day to **remove invasive privet** from the Gossett Tract, a heavily used river access point on the Harpeth River. The project is part of the TN State Park's on-going invasive plant management project.



## **MILL CREEK TREE PLANTING**

In partnership with Mill Creek Watershed Association, volunteers planted 200 seedlings along Mill Creek. These were a portion of a total 500 seedlings we planted for Tennessee Environmental Council's Statewide 250K Tree Day.

#### THANK YOU TO OUR RESTORATION PROJECT SPONSORS









WATERWAY FLOOD **RECOVERY PROJECT** LAUNCHED IN RESPONSE TO HISTORIC MARCH 2021 FLOODING

- **5** Flood clean-up projects
- **83** volunteers
- **205** volunteer hours

4 tons removed



THANK YOU TO OUR WATERWAY FLOOD **RECOVERY SPONSORS &** PARTNERS

- Bellevue Chamber
- Inaram Charities
- Metro Nashville Parks
- Harpeth River State Park
- River Plantation HOA
- Town of Kingston Springs
- Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency
- Waste Management

# HOW CAN YOU HELP?

- Organize your own clean-up, tree-planting or invasive removal project.
- Report flood waterway damage or other blockages.
- Don't mow up to stream banks.

Plant native plants and remove invasive plant species.

- Only use public river access points.
- Do not flush "flushable" wipes or medicines down the toilet.

Use phosphorus-free fertilizer in the middle TN region.

# Tennessean.

# WEATHER **'Worst flooding event': since 2010: Torrential rains leave deadly wake,** large cleanup effort

Andy Humbles, Brinley Hineman, Cole Villena, Yihyun Jeong, and Duane W. Gang Nashville Tennessean Published 5:39 a.m. CT March 28, 2021

The greater Nashville region experienced another historic flood on March 28 driven by the effects of climate change. The over 7 inches of rain in 24 hours was the highest on record for March and second highest for Nashville overall. The first and third highest rain events were the back-to-back events that caused the historic May 2010 flood! These intense rain events overwhelm culverts, stormwater management systems and lawns. Flash flooding is caused by fast-rising, dangerous, moving waters in small streams and creeks, even though water levels on major rivers are not rising as quickly and may not even hit peak flood levels.

Debris from homes and commercial areas from flooding that ends up in waterways is not addressed by FEMA unless identified on an official hazardous material list. This means everything from siding, two-by-fours with nails, toys, sheds, and more dangerous items in waterways are up to the community to remove in order to prevent future flooding from blockages and to safely recreate. As we did after May 2010, HC is leading the effort to coordinate flood debris clean-up in waterways. We organized 5 waterway flood clean-ups this spring and are now conducting assessments of hundreds of flood debris reports. Later this summer more volunteer flood clean-ups will be needed.

#### HARPETH RIVER FLOOD CLEAN-UP





**34 volunteers removed 500 lbs.** of litter from Hwy 100 to Newsom Mill. Alison Greiner, HC volunteer, won the prize for the most trash. This was a partnership with the Bellevue Chamber.

from Richland Creek.

# Volunteer!

Start where you are. Use what you have. **Do what you can.** —Arthur Ashe

#### **RICHLAND CREEK FLOOD CLEAN-UP**



Volunteers removed **400 lbs.** 

#### **VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT**



#### **RIVER CLARK**

Meet River Clark, a 9 year old who volunteers regularly with HC to protect our rivers and wildlife. How could he not get our Volunteer Spotlight with that name?! This year, River and his mom planted trees and participated in three river cleanups with us. River has been canoeing the Harpeth since he was 5 years old. He has been kayaking in his own kayak since he was 7. It was no surprise when River volunteered to paddle the "trash boat" during a recent cleanup event at Hidden Lake State Park. River says he likes to volunteer because it is fun, he gets to meet new people, and he likes helping mother nature.

### HOW CAN YOU HELP?

**SIGN-UP AS A VOLUNTEER** https://harpethconservancy.org/ get-involved/volunteer/

Contact us if you have a group of 6-10 people for a weekday or weekend.

Pick up after your pet.

Organize your own clean-up.

#### EDUCATION Rivers in the Southeastern U.S. are the THIRD most biodiverse in the world!

#### ONS ON THE RIVER HIGHLIGHTS:



\*We were able to operate outdoor events during COVID with significant safety protocols.

### 2020/2021 LESSONS ON THE RIVER & PARTNERS INCLUDED:

What's in YOUR Rivers? Macroinvertebrates Metro Nashville Parks & Recreation

Wildlife photography John Guider and Boone Thomson

Guided interpretive hikes TN State Parks

> Sunset kayak trip Cumberland Kayak

Family Fun Day Thanks to the Ford Family!

Pollinator and Native Plants **Bates Nursery!** 

**Plus** restoration and clean-ups Listed on pgs 6&7



#### **LESSONS ON THE RIVER**

Lessons on the River expanded from prior Lessons on the Harpeth. Despite the pandemic, we were able to hold monthly hands-on events throughout the middle Tennessee region.

# UPCOMING 2021/2022 LESSONS ON THE RIVER:

Hands on, in-person programs

DATE	TOPIC
July	Family Fun Day on the Harpeth in Franklin area
August	River Clean-up
September	Kayak Fishing with Geoff Luckett, founder tnkayakangler.com
October	River Restoration Project
November	Sustainable Farming: Soil and Water Conservation Best Practices
December	Investigative Walk McCabe Trail Richland Creek Greenway
January	Invasive Plant Removal
February	Tree Planting
March	River Clean-up

Programs subject to change -visit our website for details.



# FAMILY FUN DAY

Saturday, July 10th, 11:00 am-3:00 pm Ford's Bend on the Harpeth, Franklin TN

Children's Kayaking, Scavenger Hunt Sno-Cones, Fishing Demo/Lessons, Harry Otter, Nashville Predators, and more!

**Thank you** Sarah and Tim Ford for hosting.

Special Thanks to our Lessons on the River Sponsors: Colonial Pipeline, Barbara J. Mapp Foundation, Middle Tennessee Electric Membership Sharing Change, Mississippi River Network, TWRA, TVA, International Paper, Predators Foundation In 2020, we introduced a new virtual program, Conservation Conversations (CCs). These panel discussions held on the 4th Wednesday



of every month center around water-related topics and issues, allowing participants to engage with invited guest experts from these fields. This program began as a way to accommodate the changes required by COVID-19 and has enabled us to dramatically increase our program offerings to more people not just locally, but across the state and country.

To date, we have hosted 12 CCs with almost 500 people connected online. As we continue to build upon this program, we increase environmental education and awareness, provide more opportunities to discuss a range of environmental topics, and build partnerships with other organizations, government agencies, and academic institutions.

### **CONSERVATION CONVERSATIONS HIGHLIGHT:**

Our February 2021 Conservation Conversation was very successful thanks to our quest experts. The program discussed how Tennessee waterways are unique because of the limestone geology, known as karst. It creates the many beautiful waterfalls, caves, and

unusual places where creeks and streams go underground and then resurface, all connected. Proposed changes to federal clean water laws would not have protected Tennessee's complex, natural waterways and would have led to more pollution if the state's

current clean water



Chris Groves, Ph.D. Jim Redwine University Distinguished Professor of Hydrogeology & Director of Crawford Hydrology Lab at Western Kentucky Vice President & COO, Harpeth

HARPETH

laws had been weakened. Visit our YouTube Channel to watch this and other past CCs.

#### **PARTNERSHIPS VIA FEATURED GUEST EXPERTS:**

CAESAR at University of Memphis | Clean Water Nashville, a program of Metro Water Services | EPA Center for Public Health and Environmental Assessment | Mill Creek Watershed Association | Southeastern Grassland Institute | Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation | Tennessee Environmental Council Tennessee Plant Conservation Alliance | Tennessee Scenic River Association Tennessee Valley Authority | Turnip Green Creative Reuse | US Fishing and Wildlife | UT-TSU Extension Davidson County | Western Kentucky University

#### SCHOOL FOR SCIENCE AND MATH AT VANDERBILT

In the Fall of 2020, we were asked by Dr. Nathan Haag to lead a group of high school students from the School for Science and Math at Vanderbilt in a Community Engaged Research Project. Our AmeriCorps members guided the students for 5 months as they created a board game that teaches the importance of protecting Tennessee's rivers involving river trivia and making sustainable decisions in your daily life.

#### Waters of TN & How YOUR Voice Defines & Protects Them!



Brian Waldron Ph D

Conservancy

ector for the Center for Applied Earth Science and Engineering Research (CAESER) Institute & Associate Professor, Civil Engineering, University of Memohis

#### HERE ARE THE CONSERVATION **CONVERSATION TOPICS WE'VE COVERED SO FAR:**

- Getting on the Rivers: Access and Safety
- Ensuring Environmental Equity
- Water Quality and Harmful Algal Blooms
- Lawn Care Maintenance and Fertilizer
- Fishing in Tennessee
- Wildfires & Water Quality and Impacts of Backyard Burning on the Environment
- Holiday Recycling Tips to Protect River Ecosystems
- Identifying, Reporting, and Preventing Sewer Overflows
- Waters of TN and How YOUR Voice Defines and Protects Them
- Women in Environmental Science
- What's Blooming: Invasive vs Native Species in Tennessee
- Flooding in Tennessee

#### COMMUNITY EVENTS

While COVID halted gatherings for most of 2020, we are getting back out in the community to provide information and fun activities to inform people about our work and what they can do and ways to take action to protect clean water and healthy rivers!

1. Adventure Science Center -Go Green Week – for Earth Day!

2. Main Street Festival/Franklin -HC tabling along the Harpeth in July.

3. Richland Park Farmer's Market visit our table to learn about our work on Richland Creek.

4. Rocketown Celebrity Clay Shoot -HC was 1 of 5 invited environmental partners in June.

5. Nashville Dragonboat Festival -Come see us on the Cumberland.

**Special Thanks** to our donors who make our Conservation Conversations possible





**Barbara J. MAPP FOUNDATION** 

#### HARPETH CONSERVANCY STAFF Our staff truly rose to the challenges FINANCIAL SUMMARY



presented by the pandemic working remotely; creatively and safely moving events and opportunities online, while still defending our rivers and conducting research. We expanded our programs to provide nformation and training on how to ensure clean water and safely enjoy the biologically diverse waterways of Tennesee. We are thankful for our families and donors who supported us through a challenging year! Back Row: Ryan Jackwood, Jim Redwine, Samantha Estes, Angela Bryan, Mikelle Benfield, Éli Serrano. Front Row: Dorie Bolze, Jane Polansky, Haylee Waddey Hall



#### THANK YOU FOR YOUR LEADERSHIP: JOHN DAB John Dab joined our Board of Directors in 2009 when we

were still the Harpeth River Watershed Association. He was introduced to us by his then employer and our long time supporter, Nissan North America. In 2016, John stepped into the role of Board Chair and, following retirement from Nissan,

made a career move to Senior Corporate Counsel at HealthTrust Purchasing Group. John led our organization through a name change, a pandemic, and some complex local and statewide issues. In March of 2021, John rolled from our Board onto our Advisory Board. He will remain actively involved while lending his talents to other organizations, starting to enjoy the post-pandemic life again with his wife, Barbara, and visiting his three adult children who now live on both coasts. We are forever grateful for his leadership. Thank you, John!

#### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Courtney Laginess** Board Chair Assistant General Counsel, FIS

**Christian Currey** Vice Chair Founder, FarmVet

**Jared King** Treasurer

CPA, CFE, CGMA Senior Manager, Assurance Services, KraftCPAs PLLC

Jen Ripple Secretary Editor-in-Chief, DUN Magazine

**Kevin Davis** Senior Corporate Counsel, HealthTrust

Matt Dobson, V Dobson Property Tax Consulting

#### Johnathan Fisher Founder, Paddle, LLC

**Drew Powell** Martin & Zerfoss, Inc.

**Kimberly K. Sharp** Manager, Retirement & Compliance, Total Rewards Nissan USA

**Grace Stranch** Attorney, Branstetter Stranch & Jennings

**Dee Dee Wade** Affiliate Broker. Fridrich & Clark Realty, LLC

#### **Jeff Pritchett** Board Intern

Owen Board Fellow for 2021 Vanderbilt University

**Orrin Ingram** 

#### ADVISORY COUNCIL

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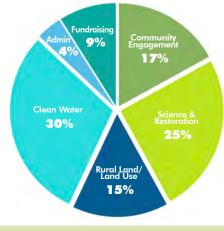
10

Unaudited FYE 2020 (FYE-March 31, 2021)

#### **INCOME** \$659,338



#### **EXPENSES** \$535,305



Assets Liabilities	\$356,241 \$180,519	
Net assets	\$175,722	

See our annual audit, 990 tax filings, and other documents at our Giving Matters profile (givingmatters.com).

**EVERY DOLLAR IS CRITICAL FOR OUR** WORK TO PROTECT CLEAN WATER AND OUR RIVERS IN TENNESSEE! Please start or renew your membership TODAY.

Giving is not just about making a donation. It is about making a difference.

- Kathy Calvin, CEO United Nations Foundation

Since 2015, HC has participated in the AmeriCorps Program (and their AmeriCorps VISTA program) by hosting AmeriCorps

members who support our outreach, education, science and restoration programs. In collaboration with Hands On Nashville, we have hosted 9 AmeriCorps members from around the country.

# Our current AmeriCorps members are:

MIKELLE BENFIELD Mikelle joined HC in August 2020 for a 1-year term as Environmental Outreach & Communication Coordinator. She



is focusing on expanding outreach efforts through community events, educational programs and social media communication. Mikelle is originally from Las Vegas and earned a B.S.from Penn State and an M.S. from the United Nations University, both majoring in Geography.

#### **ELI SERRANO**

Eli joined the HC team in August 2020 to serve a 1-year term as the Community Outreach & Education Coordinator. Eli recently graduated from Cornell University with a B.S. in Animal Science, as well as an Environmental Sciences & Sustainability minor.

#### **MADDY JOHNSON**

Maddy joined our team as an AmeriCorps Member in May 2021 as part of a 1-year service term. Maddy graduated

in 2020 from the University of Dayton with a B.S. in Environmental Science and was involved with UD's river research lab.

### Summer Intern:

**MATTHEW SILVERMAN** Matthew lived in New York as a child, then moved to Tennessee



and went to Brentwood High School. He studied Environmental Policy at the University of Michigan and just finished his first year at Lewis & Clark Law School. Matthew plans to pursue a career in environmental law, and is working at Harpeth Conservancy to do legal research this summer with the Clean Water Protection program.

During the pandemic we haven't been able to be at in-person events, but we have been very active in the press and as speakers at online conferences and meetings. You can watch or read these on our website or YouTube channel

Tennessee Women In Green - Dorie spoke about our work at TWIG's April 2021 meeting with over 50 participants for Earth Month.

Nashville Public Television - Science Director, Dr. Ryan Jackwood was featured in the March 2021 NPT Volunteer Gardener episode titled 'Homeowner Responsibilities toward Healthy Waterways.' www.wnpt.org. Nashville Public Television TENNESSEE LOOKOUT

**NewsChannel5** – In December, Dorie was a **News**Channel featured expert in their story reporting that 55% of the NASHVILLE river miles recently assessed by the state are too polluted to support one of their basic functions for recreation, drinking water, fishing, or wildlife.

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# MEDIA COVERAGE

**TN Lookout** – Jim Redwine was featured in an April 2021 story regrading

proposed state legislation: "For-Profit Providers are Seeking Access to Public Funds, a Move Environmental Groups Oppose."

The Drake – Board Member and owner of Paddle Dog Adventures, John Mattox, II, wrote an article for the fall 2020 issue of

The Drake, that highlights one of our biggest successes to reduce sewer pollution in the Harpeth River.

# WHAT WE DO

Harpeth Conservancy leads collaborations, builds consensus, solves problems, and puts solutions in place that reduce pollution and maintain healthy areas.

> **RESTORATION** Implement and promote projects that improve waterways in both rural and urban areas.

**ISSUES** Ensure pollution problems are addressed - like sewer and drinking water and provide leadership for effective statewide clean water policies and strategies.

**VOICE** Work to ensure everyone has meaningful involvement in decisions and legislation that affect clean water, public health, their livelihoods and rivers.

EDUCATE Promote practices and approaches that individuals, landowners, farmers, businesses, and governments can do that effectively make a difference.

**RECREATION** Promote responsible recreation including safe access to our rivers

SCIENCE Conduct and fund river studies on water quality, public health threats, and wildlife





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# RIVER SWING REIMAGINED





Max VanderBroek, Hayley Roberts, Jana and Bruce Roberts (of Harpeth Moon Farms)



David Schadel, Julia Bonner, Paul Allen, Heather Beckwith (of Wealth Strategies Partners)



Alexa Liddle, JB Strauss, Owen Canavan, Kathryn & Christian Currey (Co-Chairs)



Chris Dawson, Chad Smith, Sarah & Tim Steinlein (of Harpeth Search)

Just like most things during 2020, we first rescheduled our 17th Annual River Swing, then we reimagined it...Kathryn and Christian Currey still served as Co-Chairs, but mother and matriarch, former Co-Chair Agneta Currey passed away the week of the event, so Dorie Bolze and Claude Carmichael stepped up as hosts. Of course, we raised a glass in Agneta's and Brownlee's memories as we kicked off the evening with the Old Hickory Bourbon Peach Tea from Lipman Brothers. The guest list was paired down to a small sponsor thank you gathering with people only seated in their COVID bubbles only, so tables ranged from 2-10 people. As masked guests arrived they headed immediately to their tables to enjoy individual charcuterie boxes from WillCo. Wine & Cheese and fall table decorations of pumpkins and eucalyptus donated by Harpeth Moon Farms and roses donated by Garden Delights. The silent auction with over 200 items was held online and featured items like a Gunner Kennel, Vince Gill autographed guitar donated by Gruhn Guitars, and a bike from Regions Bank. Puckett's Grocery & Restaurant distributed individual boxed dinners. JB Strauss, Kaleb Patterson, Will Looney, Andy Forman and Quincy Meeks entertained our guests. Special performances by Adam Wakefield (runner-up, Season 10, The Voice) and Jenny Leigh rounded out a reimagined evening that raised almost \$240,000!

### **RIVER SWING CONTINUES** TO BE AWARD WINNING!

River Swing Reimagined 2020 Won:

#### NFocus:

Editor's Choice – Best Outdoor Event Best Reimagined Event – tied for 3rd place Best Outdoor Socially Distanced – 2nd place Best Online Auction – 3rd place

> Sizzle Awards: Best Fundraiser/Charity Event 3rd place

# SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR 2020 RIVER SWING SPONSORS AND PARTNERS





Thank you to SO many **HUGE THANKS TO:** people who engaged Adam Benner their social networks by Dorie Bolze doing **fundraisers** Heather Creel for us to raise over Dylan Duke \$10,000! Want to do Wayne Edwards your own? Use this link Haylee Waddey Hall to get started: https:// Nancy Hiatt www.facebook.com/ **Bruce Roberts** fund/HarpethRiver/ Ginger Shirling Sarah Steinlein Michael Turpin



Join us **Thursday, July 29 at 6 pm** for a Downtown Sunset Skyline Float with Cumberland Kayak. Only \$35/person (\$10 discount!) and limited to first 20 people. Cumberland Kayak is also doing floats on the Harpeth all summer. visit www/cumberlandkayak.com

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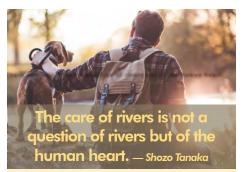
SPECIAL THANKS TO RIVER SWING COMMITTEE

Hailey Anderson | Kristen Barber | Anna Barnes | Suzanne Bond | Owen Canavan, Entertainment | Jennifer Cobb | Kathryn & Christian Currey, Co-Chairs | Caitlin Daschner | Carrie DuRard | Wray Estes | Kay Ferrell | Amos Gott | Heidi Hartman | Tammye Maddax | Parn & John Mattox | Melinda Morgan | Baxter Overton | Dee Plunkett | Jen Ripple | Julie Russell | Dane Setzer | Kimberly Sharp | Betsy Sloan | Susan Snyder | Sarah Steinlein | Jennifer Stewart-Wright | DeeDee Wade | Tracie Walker



### SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 18TH RIVER CIRCLE FARM 6:00-10:30 P.M.

Entertainment by Joe Andrews (formerly of Old Crow Medicine Show), Ben Cameron (The Cameroons), J.B. Strauss and more!



Each year, we kick-off our Rally for Rivers Year-End giving campaign with Giving Tuesday and running through December 31st. Thanks to YOU, we raised over \$250,000! A SMASHING success and record!

#### List includes financial and in-kind donations from 4/1/2020 - 3/31/2021

#### \*\$10,000+

Andrea Waitt Carlton Family Foundation Colonial Pipeline Mr. and Mrs. Christian Currey Mr. and Mrs. John Ingram Mr. Orrin Ingram, II Dan and Margaret Maddox Fund The Barbara J. Mapp Foundation Ms. DeeDee Wade Mrs. Mary Wade

#### \*\$1,000-\$9,999

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Please request our new PLANNED GIVING GUIDE to ensure clean water and healthy waterways in Tennessee for generations to come.

Mr. Pete Hodo

Ms. Kay Holland

Ms. Maraaret Horr



P.O. Box1127, Franklin, TN 37065

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GET SOCIAL WITH US!

#### WHAT'S INSIDE

- River Swing September 18th
- E.coli Study Results
- Flood Clean-up Work
- Pandemic Policy Concerns



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Harpeth Conservancy is thankful for all gifts – financial support, gifts of stock, bequests, and cars/trucks! Huge thanks to **Colonial Pipeline** who donated not one, but **TWO** vehicles! We need them for our restoration, clean-up and water quality sampling efforts! Let us know if you are interested in donating any assets to our organization.

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