



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Harpeth Conservancy Expands Leadership with Grace Stranch as new CEO, Dorie Bolze as President, and Anne Passino as its new Director of Clean Water Protection**

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — The Harpeth Conservancy board of directors has approved a restructuring of the top leadership that expands the organization’s capacity to achieve its mission of clean water and healthy rivers for all Tennesseans.

- Grace Stranch, The Harpeth Conservancy’s COO since September 2021, now is CEO. Stranch, a Nashville native, previously practiced full time with the Nashville law firm Branstetter, Stranch & Jennings, PLLC, now Stranch, Jennings & Garvey, PLLC where she remains of counsel. Stranch has more than 15 years of experience in community engagement across Tennessee.
- Dorie Bolze, founding CEO, continues full-time involvement as President. Her focus is on the Harpeth Conservancy’s capacity building campaign and providing clean water policy leadership across the state. The [Nashville Business Journal named Bolze one of its 2023 Women of Influence Award recipients in the Nonprofit Leader category](#) last week.
- Anne Passino is the Harpeth Conservancy's Director of Clean Water Protection, a new position. Passino, a Nashville native, practiced law in Tennessee for 15 years, including as a senior attorney with the Southern Environmental Law Center where her primary focus was on clean water and growth and development.

“The next 10 years are critical to protect the future of our rivers, creeks, and clean water access for all Tennesseans. To meet this challenge, the board and staff developed a capacity expansion plan to address the burgeoning need for increased conservation leadership in the state and to attract top talent and experts,” said Courtney Laginess, the Harpeth Conservancy’s board chair and assistant general counsel for intellectual property at Jacksonville-based FIS.

Tennessee’s globally unique waterways and clean water are under tremendous pressure with more than 1 million people expected to move into to greater Nashville region in the next decade.

According to the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation, almost 60 percent of the state’s waterways do not meet water quality standards to protect public health and aquatic life. These numbers will continue to degrade with the predicted growth, especially in urban areas.

Middle Tennessee, with Nashville at the center, is also the nation’s most at-risk region for inland flooding. Rapidly developing urban areas and rural towns need updated tools to protect property owners from flooding and to help reduce the impact of climate change.

SCIENCE-BASED CONSERVATION FOR THE RIVERS OF TENNESSEE

*Harpeth Conservancy is a Tennessee non-profit corporation and a 501(c)(3) organization.*

*All donations are tax deductible to the full extent allowed by law.*

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The Harpeth Conservancy has expanded from its original core focus on the State Scenic Harpeth River, which flows through 5 counties in the greater Nashville region. The science-based conservation organization is now Tennessee's statewide organization dedicated to restoring and protecting clean water and healthy ecosystems for rivers championed by the people of Tennessee.

Link to staff leadership bios [here](#).

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Founded in 1999, the Harpeth Conservancy is a science-based non-profit conservation organization. Its mission is to restore and protect clean water and healthy ecosystems for rivers in Tennessee by employing scientific expertise and collaborative relationships to develop, promote, and support broad community stewardship and action. The Harpeth Conservancy works with landowners, businesses, community, local, state, and federal decision-makers and its members to foster solutions that reduce pollution and maintain healthy areas.

The rivers in Tennessee, including the Harpeth, are part of the unique freshwater river systems of the Southeast that contain some of the greatest variety of aquatic life in the world. The Harpeth Conservancy has expertise in a range of disciplines, including water quality science, environmental and conservation law and policy, sustainable land use planning, agricultural best management practices, and volunteer and community engagement.  
[www.harpethconservancy.org](http://www.harpethconservancy.org).