

Vol. 21 | November 2024

THE RIPPLE EFFECT

The Annual Newsletter of WaterWays





Our mission is to empower kids and community members to protect and restore the waterways where they live, work, and play.



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A NOTE FROM OUR DIRECTORS

MARY BETH SUTTON | Founder & Executive Director

20 years of WaterWays! WOW! When I started WaterWays as Caribbean SEA in 2004, I had no idea where we would go, where we would grow. As I traveled the Caribbean, we started fledgling programs in the Tennessee Valley first with summer clean water camps and later learning green infrastructure with **Joe Sawyer**, leading to installation of a wetland with the **Raines Group** and rain gardens at **Thrasher Elementary** and **Red Bank High**. When I got hit by cancer nine years ago, other WaterWays team members ensured our work continued. First and foremost was our Board of Directors, led by **Mark Curran**. They worked with me to make sure things got done while I was out. They brought me to tears that day. Standout Board member, **Connie Hill**, oversaw the Gear Closet operations and really made it better! That's a big deal for a small nonprofit: how well our team works together to move our mission forward. Our staff expansion started with **Maria Cooksey**, who made a lasting impact while still at UTC and later as our first Caribbean Program Director. She paved the way for hiring **Nadia Sonia Cazaubon**, our steadfast presence in St. Lucia, who continues to lead our programs and drive efforts to restore water quality from Ridge to Reef.

We like to say our staff is small but mighty and much of that is thanks to **Brooke Fleeman**. Since joining us in 2019 as our Education Coordinator, she has risen to the position of Assistant Director—essentially our COO. She has helped launch new programs, improve existing ones, and lent her creative genius to help us grow. She leads our team with dedication, hard work and a spirit of laughter and fun. Brooke's talents continue to amaze me, and I am grateful for her every single day. Next time you see Brooke, please tell her thanks for all she does for us and all of our waterways! **Thank YOU for being part of our team!**

BROOKE FLEEMAN | Assistant Director

Hello WaterWays community! Joining the organization five years ago has truly been an amazing adventure! From the very first day, I felt embraced by a community that isn't just passionate about water quality, but also wholeheartedly committed to making a real difference in our environment.

As I look to the future, it is my hope that WaterWays continues to grow and flourish, expanding our reach and impact in even more communities. Thanks to our dedicated staff, exciting programs and projects are underway such as the **Mountain Creek restoration projects** (*pg. 13*) set for 2025 and the successful expansion of our **Project Mangrove** program in Belize (*pg. 6*). I am particularly excited about the WaterWays **Sustainability Fund** (*pg. 17*), an endowment that will ensure that WaterWays continues to help empower communities to protect our rivers and streams for years to come.

All of this is possible thanks to you, our community! Together, we are making waves of positive change, and I am grateful to be part of this incredible journey with each of you. Let's continue to inspire and be inspired, **as we champion the cause of clean and accessible water for all.**



With Gratitude,

MARY BETH SUTTON
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

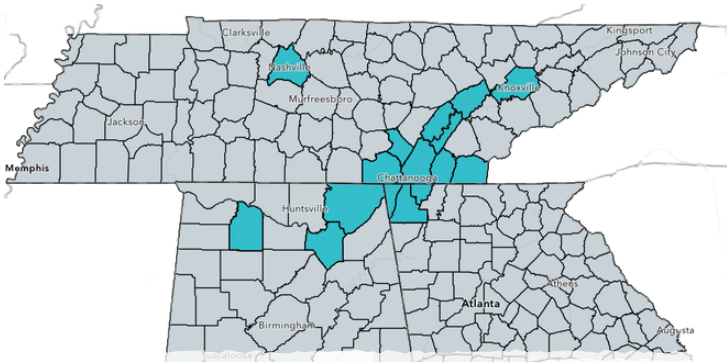
BROOKE FLEEMAN
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

WHO WE ARE

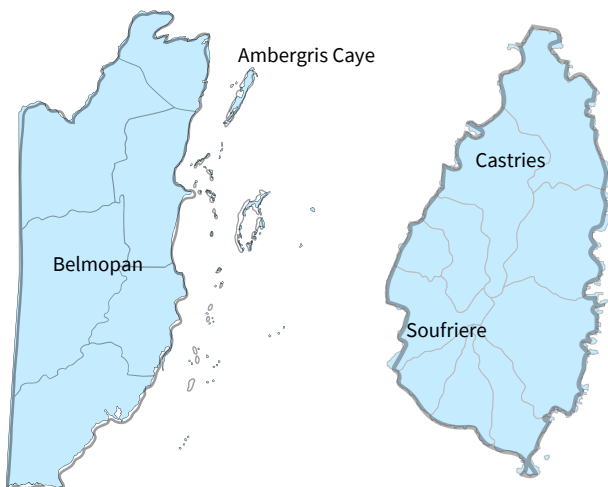
At **WaterWays**, we are dedicated to fostering a deeper understanding of our natural environment through innovative programs and services aimed at engaging children, families, and communities. Our mission is to connect urban youth with their local watersheds, promote sustainable practices, and empower citizens to protect our waterways. We envision a future where every child knows the beauty of their natural surroundings, every community takes part in stewardship, and every waterway thrives. **Together, we can protect our environment and ensure a sustainable future.**

WHERE WE WORK

While we have worked in many countries in the Caribbean over the last 20 years, our current work is focused in **St. Lucia, Belize**, and the **Southeastern U.S.** *The areas highlighted in blue below represent our active area of work.*



Tennessee, Georgia, & Alabama

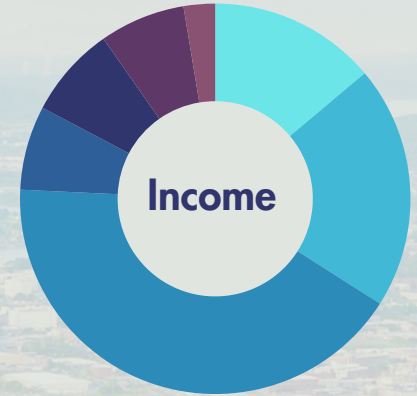


Belize

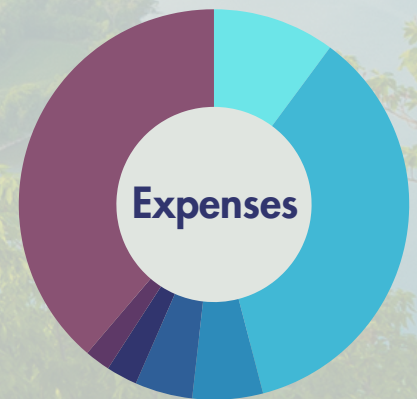
St. Lucia

2023 FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Thanks to the unwavering support of our donors and volunteers, we continue to make an impact in our local communities.



- 14% Donations
- 20% Program Grants
- 42% Restoration Grants
- 7% Consulting
- 7% Gear Closet
- 7% Events
- 3% Program Fees



- 10% Programs
- 36% Restoration
- 6% Caribbean
- 5% Gear Closet
- 38% Staff Compensation
- 3% Management & General
- 2% Fundraising



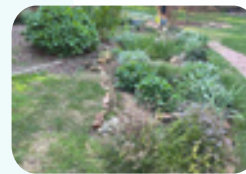
20 YEARS

AT A GLANCE



FOUNDING IN ST. LUCIA

Programming began in St. Lucia in 2004 with a two-week on-campus program with agriculture students from Ciceron Secondary School followed by the introduction of teacher training in environmental education. The first ever Rainforest to Reef Camp took place in 2007.



RAINSMART YARDS

In partnership with the City of Chattanooga and Hamilton County, the RainSmart Yards initiative was founded in 2018. This award program recognizes creek-friendly yards that capture and retain stormwater during rain events, as well as creating habitat for native plants and pollinators.



EXPANDED TO OTHER COUNTRIES

While our work continued to grow in St Lucia, we also expanded to other countries like Dominica, Curaçao, Belize, Jamaica, Haiti, and the Dominican Republic where we worked on programs and projects such as teacher training and workshops, watershed exploration and protection, student camps, restoration projects, and more.



REBRANDING

CaribbeanSEA and TenneSEA rebranded to WaterWays in 2019 to better reflect our mission.



REPLICATED PROGRAMS IN U.S.

After success in the Caribbean, watershed programs were replicated in the Southeast US beginning with Kids for Clean Water Camp in 2008.



RESTORATION PROJECTS IN THE U.S.

We partnered with the Raines Group to install a stormwater wetland at their 4 Squares property. We provided educational programs and built rain gardens at Thrasher Elementary and Red Bank High School. Our first streambank restoration project took place at Red Bank Elementary, with subsequent stormwater green infrastructure projects at Red Bank Community Center and at Walden's Ridge Park. Most recently, we repaired failing septic systems and remediated acidic drainage from old coal mines. We have also engaged community members through a series of streambank repair workshops, successfully stabilizing sections of Read Creek's eroded streambank at Walden's Ridge Park.



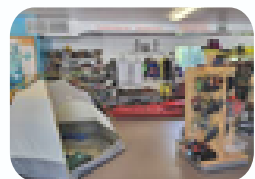
RESTORATION PROJECTS IN THE CARIBBEAN

We constructed a biogas digester at a Mabouya Valley farm and more in the Soufriere Basin to prevent pig waste from contaminating local streams. With support from the Chattanooga Breakfast Rotary, we also installed a constructed wetland for sewage treatment in Aux Leon, St. Lucia. In Dominica, we rehabilitated a public toilet in Mero and installed a wetland treatment system partnering with Conyers, GA and Dominica Rotary Clubs. In Curaçao, we partnered with Sunset Waters Beach Resort and the Lee's Reef Project to build a wetland treatment system for the resort.



OUTDOOR CLASSROOM

WaterWays and Enterprise South Nature Park worked in conjunction with Volkswagen Chattanooga to construct an outdoor classroom and education area in Enterprise South Nature Park where we host hundreds of students annually on vital topics such as wetland function, water quality, watershed stewardship, and litter reduction.



THE GEAR CLOSET

The Gear Closet was established in 2012 to support WaterWays and offer affordable outdoor gear, ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to enjoy the outdoors. Additionally, we're proud to divert thousands of pounds of used gear from landfills each year. In the fall of 2023, we relocated to our new location at 305 Signal Mountain Road.



WATERWAYS SUSTAINABILITY FUND EST. 2024

To honor the work that has gone before and to sustain the work for the next 20 years and beyond, the WaterWays Board of Directors announced the establishment of an endowment fund, the WaterWays Sustainability Fund, which is housed with the Community Foundation of Greater Chattanooga.



LITTER REDUCTION INITIATIVE

The litter reduction initiative began in 2013 with the first ever Bonnaroo Clean-up. Since then we have expanded our programs to include Adopt-A-WaterWay program (2018), taking over the Tennessee River Rescue (2021), and installing litter booms on Chattanooga Creek (2023) and in St. Lucia (2024).

SCAN THIS QR CODE TO VIEW THE FULL TIMELINE





Litter Boom installation.



Ribbon cutting ceremony for the Choc River Litter Boom.



Rainforest to Reef Camp, photo taken at Anse Des Pitons after a day of snorkeling.

LITTER BOOM INSTALLED IN ST. LUCIA

On World Environment Day, June 5th, WaterWays, **Osprey Initiative**, and **Heineken Saint Lucia Ltd.** launched the **SEAA project in Castries**, aimed at improving the **Choc River's** water quality through community education and corporate responsibility. Later that month, we celebrated the installation of St. Lucia's first litter boom! To clean out the boom we hired a local contractor who was also trained to audit the captured litter. The boom has gained significant attention by local officials and businesses with a continued adoption of the river by the Satellite Rotary Club. We are leading environmental clubs at schools in the watershed which will lead to the creation of recycling bins for schools and a community program for incentivizing recycling. The project was featured in official discussions about the Returnable Containers Bill. Stay tuned for more litter reduction initiatives in St. Lucia!

CLEANING UP THE SOUFRIERE RIVER

The **Soufriere River basin** bounded by the Pitons in St. Lucia has long been a focus of WaterWays. Originating in the rainforests, it is impacted by agriculture, piggeries, tourism and other development before it reaches the sea. Litter is an increasing problem while the elevated E. coli concentrations have long been an issue. We received a **UN** grant to begin planning an **Adopt -A-River** pilot program focused on the Soufriere River to facilitate the clean up and long term protection of the river. We developed a **Charter for the Management of the Soufriere River** and established a committee to oversee its management. In going over our proposed activities, we quickly exceeded the budget for a UN Small grant. The consensus of the stakeholders, including the **UN Small Grants Fund**, was to keep all project components intact and instead seek additional grants from other sources to fund everything. **We have a challenge ahead of us!**

RAINFOREST TO REEF CAMP

WaterWays held our annual **Rainforest to Reef Camp** this summer at **Grand Eden Estate**, welcoming eighteen children from various communities in Saint Lucia, many experiencing camping for the first time. Activities included bird watching, treasure hunting, hiking to **Enbas Saut waterfall**, stargazing, and a bonfire with sausages and s'mores. The camp ended with snorkeling at **Anse des Pitons**, where participants saw diverse marine life and the impact of Hurricane Beryl's storm surge, making for a memorable educational experience.



Students and University of Belize and Environmental Research Institute staff at the Calabash Caye Field Station.

PROJECT MANGROVE - BELIZE

WaterWays' inaugural **Project Mangrove** workshops proved to be a great success. Thanks to **Galen University** and their Environmental Science Department, educators traveled to Galen's campus for lessons on watershed management and how they can help students have a better understanding of their role in the environment. Afterward, educators and students from various parts of the country gathered at the **University of Belize's** remote **Calabash Caye Field Station** to delve into the Ridge to Reef concept, emphasizing the interconnectedness of ecosystems and the pivotal role of mangroves in enhancing climate change resilience.

Situated within the Turneffe Atoll Marine Reserve, approximately 33 nautical miles from Belize City, the field station is surrounded by mangrove islands. Participants had the opportunity to explore the forest trail and outran the mosquitos on the way to the mangrove tower. Snorkeling on the Marine Reserve's snorkel trail, a segment of Belize's extensive barrier reef system, was definitely a highlight for everyone. In addition, the workshop included an investigation into beach litter, nature-based activities, and the development of a mangrove curriculum. We are eager to see how the inaugural group of teachers and students will apply their newfound knowledge. Participants provided overwhelmingly positive feedback about the Project Mangrove Workshops, recognizing the crucial role of mangroves in their ecosystems.



Teacher Workshop participants snorkeled at Seastar Hotel in the Turneffe Atoll Marine Reserve.

This workshop was made possible by our partnerships with **Galen University, the University of Belize and Environmental Research Institute (ERI) Calabash Caye Field Station, and the Turneffe Atoll Sustainability Association (TASA)**. This project and workshop is funded by the **CEK Foundation's Earth Focus Initiative**.



TRASH FREE TOMORROW

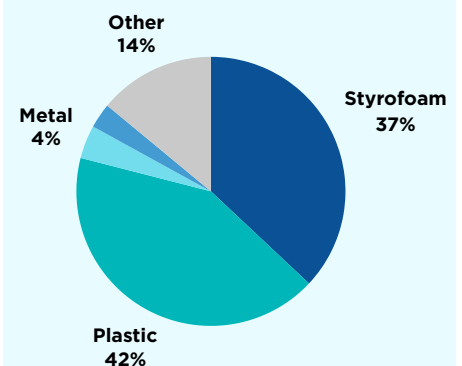
What happens to litter left behind by others? It may make its way to **Chattanooga Creek**, the city's most polluted waterway.

Since the installation of the floating litter boom on Chattanooga Creek in May of 2023, it has successfully intercepted **OVER 5,000 POUNDS** of litter and debris from entering the Tennessee River. Among the items collected we've found tons of plastic bottles, styrofoam, and aluminum cans. The most surprising item? A jetski! Working with additional partners, we plan to install two additional litter booms in the Chattanooga area in the coming months.

This summer, we also expanded our litter reduction initiatives to the Caribbean, where we installed the first litter boom in St. Lucia to combat litter challenges similar to those we face in the U.S.

These achievements wouldn't be possible without the support of our partners: the **City of Chattanooga, Hamilton County Water Quality, Wild Trails, Coke Consolidated, Heineken St. Lucia, and Osprey Initiative.**


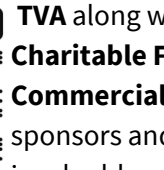
**MATERIAL COLLECTED FROM CHATTANOOGA CREEK BY TYPE
MAY 2023- PRESENT**






THE TENNESSEE RIVER RESCUE

This October, volunteers across the Tennessee River Valley helped collect over **38,000 pounds of litter** during the annual **Tennessee River Rescue**. In collaboration with our partners at the **Tennessee RiverLine**, WaterWays has broadened its efforts to include communities in Northern Alabama, completing over 45 projects throughout the region. We would also like to thank Osprey Initiative for coordinating our first recycling effort this year. The Tennessee River Rescue plays a vital role in supporting the Tennessee River Watershed, recognized as one of the most biodiverse areas in the world. It exemplifies the collective effort needed from community members, municipalities, and both state and federal organizations to safeguard our shared resource. We hope the increased awareness from this event will bring us closer to achieving our goal of a **Trash Free Tomorrow**. **We would like to thank**



TVA along with the **American Water Charitable Foundation, Hepaco, Commercial Metals** and all of our sponsors and zone leaders for their invaluable support.

ADOPT-A-WATERWAY


 WaterWays' Adopt-A-Waterway allows individuals, families, and organizations to commit to ongoing stewardship in their local streams throughout the Tennessee Valley Watershed.

Become an adopter today!






For the past seven years, WaterWays has proudly partnered with the **City of Chattanooga** to bring the **RainSmart Yards** program to life, helping local homeowners transform their landscapes into sustainable, stormwater-smart ecosystems. This year we kicked off our survey season on **World Water Day** with a fun, family-friendly scavenger hunt across Hamilton County's watersheds, offering swag and prizes to participants.

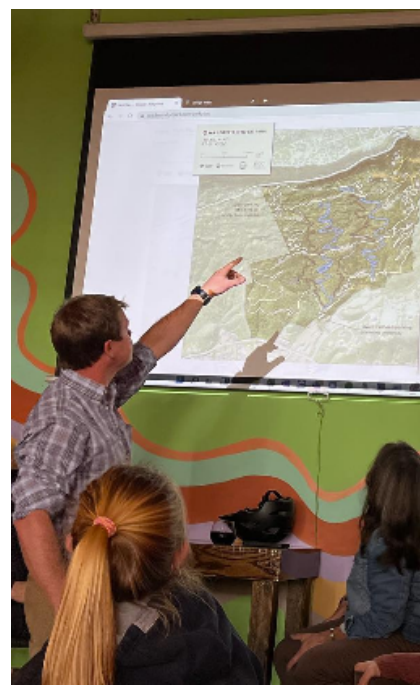
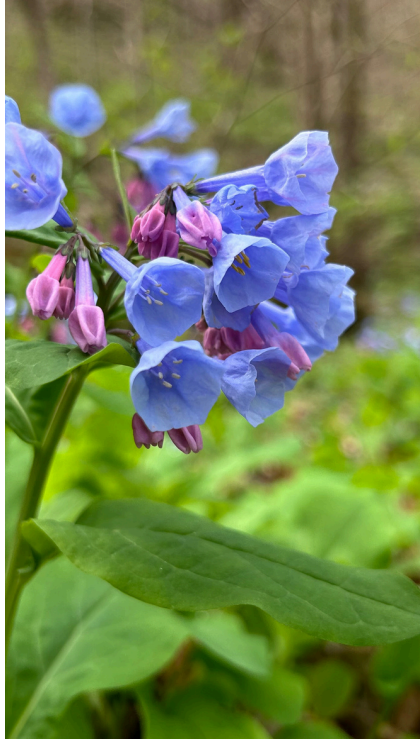
In the spring, we hosted a hands-on rain garden workshop, where homeowners learned how to design and implement rain gardens to manage stormwater runoff. While we didn't hold a RainSmart competition this year, we continued our mission by surveying yards throughout our area and successfully remediating stormwater issues while creating pollinator-friendly habitats. Moreover, we've worked to expand the program to the **City of Red Bank** which is now offering stormwater fee discounts. RainSmart Yards remain a vital part of improving water quality in our community by reducing stormwater runoff and enhancing local biodiversity.

If you're interested in making your yard part of the solution, sign up for next year's survey. Also, stay tuned for updates on workshops and the new challenge for next year's program!

Email info@mywaterways.org for more information.

 Keep an eye out for next year's World Water Day Celebration – we're already planning a full day of exciting activities!





WILD PLANT RESCUE



2023 was a hard year to follow up for **Wild Plant Rescue**. Last year we were able to conduct many rescues and participate in two plant sales! This year we found it difficult to connect with developer contacts willing to let us rescue native plants from their properties. So while this program isn't as busy as it was last year, we are still taking calls and emails to rescue native plants before any type of planned disturbance during the native plant growing season (February-November). If you know of any upcoming development projects in our area with native plants in need of rescuing before clear-cutting, email rosy@mywaterways.org.

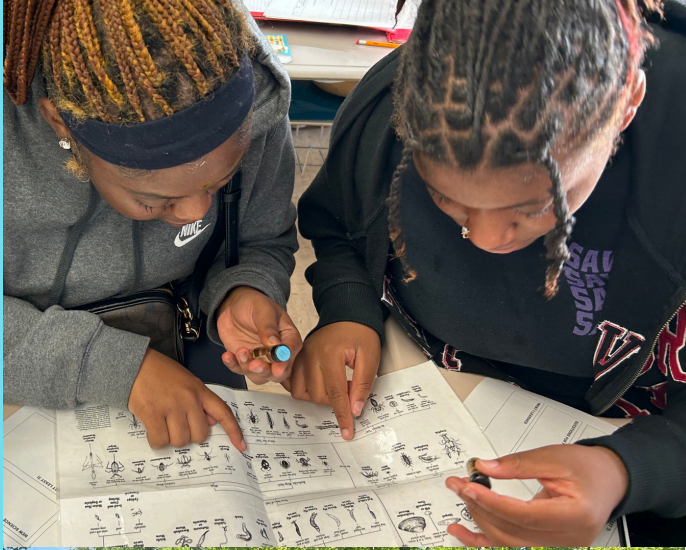
CONSERVATION AND CORKS

This year, we launched our first pop-up event, "**Conservation and Corks**," at Chattanooga's new wine bar, **50/50**, celebrating local conservation efforts. The evening included a premium wine tasting by **TheLeo Wines**, a sustainability market and nature-based trivia, with proceeds supporting WaterWays' initiatives. The successful event united native plant nurseries, eco-friendly vendors, and conservation organizations, raising awareness and funds for environmental projects. It fostered community engagement and connected attendees with conservation professionals. We hope to establish this as an annual tradition to enhance conservation and community involvement.

NATURE BY THE PINT



Our fourth season of **Nature by the Pint** is underway! Since the start of this series, we have worked with multiple breweries to put on once-monthly nature-based talks ranging from topics like our very first session on Mycoremediation in 2021 (given by our very own Rosy Harpe!), to caves, fish, prescribed fires, wildflowers and so much more! Keep an eye out for our monthly Nature by the Pint series, now through April 2025. We'll be at **The Greenhouse** by **Oddstory Brewing Company** on MLK on the third Wednesday of each month from 6-7:15pm. **See you there!**



A YEAR IN REVIEW

WaterWays worked with nearly **3,000 students** for in-person outdoor education programming in the 2023/2024 school year! Thank you to all that made personal education donations or volunteered your time for field trips. Together, we are helping get kids outside.

AMERICAN WATER GRANT

The **American Water Charitable Foundation** is a wonderful organization that continues to support the mission of WaterWays. This past school year, we were able to work closely with **Brainerd High School** students to learn about the **South Chickamauga Creek watershed**. Students connected to their waterway by conducting abiotic (non-living) water quality tests and biotic (living) index measurements both on their campus and through a field trip to Audubon Acres and paddle trip on North Chickamauga Creek.

CHECK OUT A CREEK- KIT

Need supplies to get your students or family in the creek? Then head to the **Chattanooga Public Library (Downtown, 2nd floor)**! WaterWays partnered with the Children and Youth services team to offer "**Water Exploration Kits**" to Chattanooga Public Library patrons. The kits include nets, critter viewers, ID Guides, scavenger hunts, water quality test kits, and lesson plans. This was all made possible through a grant from the **American Water Charitable Foundation**.

EAST LAKE OUTDOOR CLASSROOM

We are thrilled to announce the completion of the first phase of the **Outdoor Classroom at East Lake Elementary School**. Our heartfelt gratitude goes to our partners at **Wild Rose Homes** and **Lee-Smith, Inc.** for their dedicated efforts in constructing this space. Additionally, we extend a special thank you to the **Chattanooga Rotary Club** for their generous sponsorship of this project.

Rotary donors at the grand opening (pictured left).



NEWS AT ENTERPRISE SOUTH NATURE PARK

Hamilton County Parks has graciously partnered with us for environmental education! Their support will increase our ability to connect with students from underserved communities through field trips to **Enterprise South Nature Park**. Students will be immersed in nature and learn all about the importance of water and wetlands.

NEW THIS YEAR

We will be hosting some community programs for the general public to encourage discovery in this beautiful county park. Check out our website and social media for details on dates, etc.

Below is a teaser list of programs:

- Marvelous Mammals of the Wetlands
- Silly for Salamanders
- Brilliant Birds of the Wetlands
- Pollinator Protectors



MEET PERI ANNE

OUTREACH & EDUCATION SPECIALIST

Peri Anne Edwards joined **WaterWays** in May as the **Outreach & Education Specialist**. She has a passion for water, nature, and all of the critters! She has 8+ years of experience with informal environmental education. She believes that conservation requires informed and involved citizens, and that begins with education. Contact her to schedule your school or community program today! Perianne@mywaterways.org

COMMUNITY SCIENCE

Education, stewardship, and science are at the core of everything we do. We are proud to combine the three by launching a community science database with **FieldScope**. Our initial projects will include abiotic (non-living) and biotic (living) water quality data collected by our school-based Stream Teams and a trash audit from our community Adopt-A-WaterWay teams. This data can be used as evidence to support green infrastructure, restoration projects, and more.



Discover Life in America (DLiA) has partnered with us to bring the power of outdoor discovery and community science through iNaturalist to our outdoor classroom at the Volkswagen Summit Education Area within Enterprise South Nature Park. This project will create a database of species observations specific to this location. Download the iNaturalist app and keep an eye out for the species we catalog!



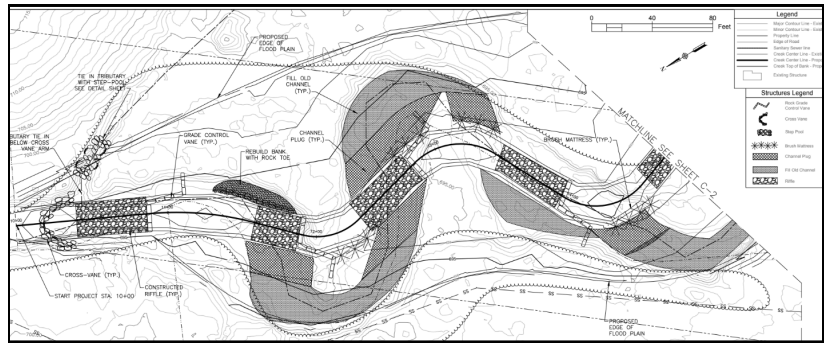
WaterWays is
The Tennessee Environmental
Education Association's
ORGANIZATION OF THE YEAR 2024!



Dr. Andrea Ludwig, Professor of Biosystems Engineering and Soil Science at the University of Tennessee, installs livestock during a Creekbank Protection and Repair Workshop.

RESTORING MOUNTAIN CREEK

Coming soon! Starting in 2025, Mountain Creek will undergo a transformation that has been a decade in the making. With federal funding from the **EPA's 319 Grant Program** and the **American Rescue Plan**, WaterWays and the **City of Chattanooga** will initiate large-scale stream restoration and floodplain reconnection projects throughout the Mountain Creek watershed. The project area encompasses properties including the **Mountain Creek Church of Christ** (shown to the right), **Red Bank High School**, **Red Bank Elementary School**, and the **Spring Valley** and **Quail Hollow** neighborhoods in Red Bank. The Church of Christ project will involve full scale stream restoration utilizing natural channel design methods and rerouting the stream to a functional meander that hopefully enhances local water quality, minimizes land loss due to erosion, and revitalizes local biodiversity.



Preliminary design plans for the Mountain Creek Church of Christ restoration project (top photo) vs current stream channel (bottom photo).



TDEC GRANT FOR STRINGERS BRANCH

We are excited to announce that WaterWays has received a substantial grant from the **Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC)** to fund a collaborative streambank restoration along **Stringers Branch**. This project, beginning this fall, brings together WaterWays, **Baylor School**, and **the City of Red Bank** to restore multiple sections of the creek.

A strong partnership with Baylor is key to WaterWays' mission of educating the community on water resources. **Dr. Ben Holt** and his students will conduct research on reducing invasive species and implementing streambank restoration methods. Their work will generate valuable data for future publications, enhancing understanding of watershed health. This hands-on experience will teach students about watershed management and ecosystem restoration, while also contributing to local watershed restoration and fostering future environmental stewards.



WaterWays and Baylor staff investigate future restoration sites on Stringer's Branch.

WHY STREAMBANK REPAIR MATTERS

Stringer's Branch, an impaired stream, has faced significant environmental challenges over the years. Almost entirely channelized by concrete, this stream suffers from erosion, loss of natural habitat, and poor water quality. Streambank repair is crucial for such impaired waterways because it helps to restore the natural flow of water, reduce sedimentation, and improve aquatic habitats. By replanting native species and **implementing bioengineering methods** like live staking and coir logs, we can address erosional issues and promote long-term health of the stream. This restoration effort will not only stabilize the streambank but also enhance water quality, biodiversity, and flood resilience in the surrounding areas.

EXPANDING OUR IMPACT

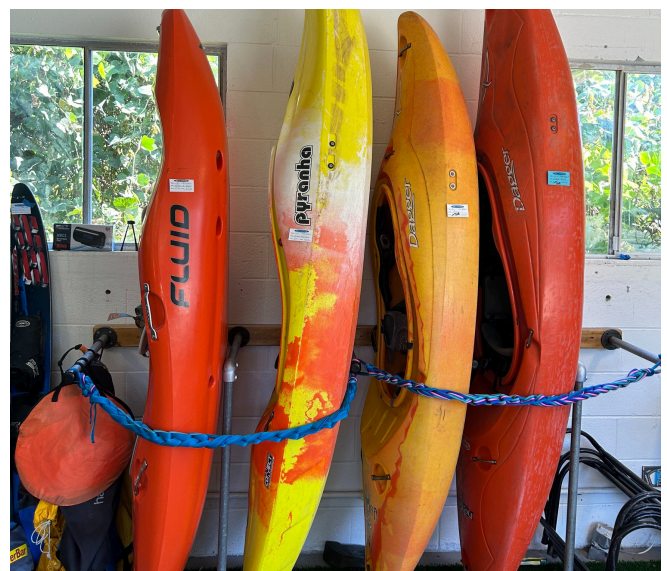
In addition to restoring sections of Stringer's Branch on Baylor's campus, we'll also be repairing areas near our new office space at The Gear Closet. Furthermore, we've already applied for additional TDEC funding to expand this important work into the Mountain Creek watershed and to continue the streambank restoration at Read's Creek, helping protect even more of our region's water resources.



CHATTANOOGA'S USED GEAR STORE

We sell used outdoor gear! What happens with the money? It goes to support WaterWays and helps clean up your rivers, lakes, and streams. This small store contributes about \$60,000 annually to our mission.

It's been an exciting few months at the Gear Closet. At the end of this summer, we celebrated our one year anniversary at our **new location on Signal Mountain Road!** Since our move, we've met so many new customers and been able to greatly expand our inventory and operating hours. As we move into fall and winter, you'll find great deals on used (and new!) hiking boots, winter wear, tents, sleeping bags and more! Shop brands like **Oboz, Patagonia** or **Mountain Hardwear** for huge markdowns on retail prices while helping us support conservation efforts in our local watersheds. This time of year we are always on the hunt for camping, hiking and climbing gear. Downsize your gear closet at home by making a donation of your ready-to-recycle gear!



NEW SHOP HOURS!

SUN - FRI: 12PM - 6PM

SATURDAY: 10AM - 6PM



MEET THOMAS GEAR CLOSET MANAGER

Thomas is a former zookeeper and outdoor adventure guide who has a strong passion for the conservation of wildlife. A native of Memphis TN, Thomas spends most of his time enjoying all of the great outdoor fun East TN has to offer with his family. He looks forward to meeting you at the Gear Closet and helping you get set up for your next adventure!



Bonnaroo clean-up volunteers (pictured right).



SAVE WATER DRINK WINE

What an incredible evening at Save Water, Drink Wine 2024! The **Philip Grymes Outdoor Chattanooga Center** provided the perfect backdrop for an unforgettable night filled with great music, delicious wine and beer, and a diverse array of tasty dishes. Guests enjoyed browsing through the silent auction featuring items like a wine excursion in California, custom art pieces, and the beloved Dolly Parton cast iron pans!

Attendees also had the opportunity to learn about local watersheds and enjoy games on the lawn, all while soaking in the beautiful riverside setting. A huge thank you to our sponsors and guests for making this event such a success and for their commitment to clean water. **Here's to making memories and making a difference! Cheers!**



SAVE THE DATE! MARCH 29TH, 2025



BIG SPLASH 2024 AWARD RECIPIENTS

For our **2024 Big Splash Awards**, we only took nominations from within our staff looking for those people and businesses that have stood out in promoting our mission in our first 20 years! Our **Corporate Water Champion** award was given to the **Grandview Foundation**, whose support of us sparked our growth and increased our ability to effect positive change for our waterways. Representing the Foundation to receive the award were Maggie Paden and her uncle, Tom Paden. Our **Community Water Champion** is none other than **Sandy Kurtz**, who has helped us from the very beginning of our work in the Tennessee Valley and continues to be one of our best advocates! She currently chairs the South Chickamauga Creek Greenway Alliance. Our **Volunteer Water Champion** awards went to two individuals without whose leadership we definitely wouldn't have progressed to where we are today. Both **Robert Blenker** and **Mark Curran** have made indelible marks on our organization while being President of our Board of Directors. Their dedication and long hours spent on our behalf helped spur our growth and sustain us. **We appreciate all of our Big Splash awardees and everything they do to protect our waterways!**



THE WATERWAYS SUSTAINABILITY FUND

WaterWays celebrates 20 years! To celebrate WaterWays' success and ensure the long term sustainability of our work, the Board of Directors has established an endowment fund, the "WaterWays Sustainability Fund." Our new endowment fund is managed by the Community Foundation of Greater Chattanooga. Long time board member **Robert Blenker** is excited to be able offer the first gift of stock to kick off the fund. In a testament to the enduring



support of our community, another of our generous supporters has enthusiastically embraced our endowment fund and **issued a remarkable matching challenge of up to \$100,000, so you can double your impact!**



"It is astounding to witness the growth of this nonprofit from the glimpse of an idea into a thriving organization specializing in education and restoration of our streams and rivers. The staff is doing an incredible job and I want to support them long-term." - **Robert Blenker**



Community Foundation of Greater Chattanooga

Save Water Drink Wine



2024 SPONSORS



Jacobs



Hamilton County



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Special thanks to the Bluff View Art District

THANK YOU!

A special shout out to our premier Tennessee River Rescue sponsors Tennessee Valley Authority, American Water Charitable Foundation, Hepaco, and Commercial Metals.

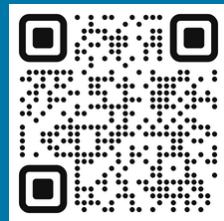


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Support our mission of clean water for all. Donate today! WaterWays accepts donations year round via Venmo, PayPal, or a mailed check. Your monetary donations go towards Kids 4 Clean Water Summer Camp, our educational programs, materials, and so much more to improve our local waterways. In-kind donations like nets, magnifying glasses, and larger sized boots make education even more meaningful. **Our mission is powered by our community!**

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We proudly operate as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit institution. Charitable contributions toward our work are fully tax-deductible.



TO THOSE WHO MAKE ALL OF THIS POSSIBLE, THANK YOU!

MARCH 29TH, 2025



SAVE WATER, DRINK WINE



AND

WINE • BEER • FOOD • COMMUNITY **BEER!**

WaterWays' annual **Save Water, Drink Wine** fundraising party is back! Join us for an evening celebrating our area watersheds, all while enjoying local food, entertainment, and, of course, wine! All proceeds will benefit our ongoing projects, including Stream Teams, the Tennessee River Rescue, and restoration.



WATERWAYS

P.O. Box 4437

Chattanooga, TN 37405 USA

www.mywaterways.org