

Waterkeeper Alliance Annual Report

2020



In protecting the waters they love, Waterkeepers also protect the people who depend on those waters.

The events of this year have certainly made that work harder. But the COVID-19 pandemic has also made the work more important than ever.

Waterkeepers have always done their work shoulder-to-shoulder. Whether they're dragging tires out of a river, buttonholing local legislators about a sewer plant, or showing tadpoles netted out of the shallows to first graders on a field trip, the people in our movement thrive on face-to-face work.

When the pandemic made such in-person work impossible, it required us all to rethink, quickly, almost everything we do.

What's amazed and inspired me is how well the people in this movement did just that.

At Waterkeeper Alliance, our training team, which had been working toward and looking forward to our Miami Conference for almost a year, quickly moved all the planned sessions online. It also created

new ones aimed at helping Waterkeepers respond to the pandemic. In all, the team delivered 41 sessions, providing training to 1,201 participants.

Waterkeeper Alliance leadership ran calls with executive directors from U.S. Waterkeeper groups to discuss issues around the CARES Act, financial management, and development best practices.

Our communications team sent out daily emails through most of March and into April with pandemic resources for Waterkeeper groups and leveraged our impressive social media following to lift up the work done by Waterkeepers around the world. As one Waterkeeper wrote in response, "There is a lot of great information that you are sharing, but much more than that, it feels like a lifeline. ... So, thank you."

Besides the quick changes wrought by the pandemic, this had already been a groundbreaking year.

Just a few examples:

- We held our first-ever International Summit in Nairobi, Kenya, last November. Waterkeepers from 16 countries gathered for networking, planning, and training on topics ranging from peacebuilding through water security, to running a nonprofit, to plastics monitoring.

- A January settlement in North Carolina will result in the largest coal ash cleanup in America to date. The settlement Duke Energy and North Carolina's Department of Environmental Quality reached with Waterkeeper Alliance, nine North Carolina Waterkeeper groups, and environmental justice partners includes a comprehensive cleanup plan for the coal ash lagoons at all 14 Duke Energy sites in North Carolina, where 126 million tons of ash has been or will be excavated.

- We filed a petition to USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service seeking rulemaking to prohibit environmentally harmful mortality management practices (i.e, incineration, burial) and the development of a database of federally-supported mortality management efforts. We filed it with state and national partners because of concerns that COVID-19 would increase animal mortality in North Carolina and elsewhere.

- Waterkeeper Alliance, **Waterkeepers Chesapeake**, and **California Coastkeeper Alliance** signed an important settlement agreement with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency that requires the agency to propose revised regulations for existing and emerging contaminants. Under the settlement, the case can be reopened if EPA fails to comply. This is a critical step toward creating regulatory limits on "forever chemicals" and other emerging contaminants.



Waterkeeper groups participate in a community clean-up during our International Region Summit in Nairobi, Kenya.



We know, despite all the changes in our world, there are more victories to come. All of us at Waterkeeper Alliance and every individual in every Waterkeeper group remain committed to the fight for clean water. While that fight may look different now than it did a year ago, our determination is the same.

So is the one factor that makes all our work possible—you.

Which brings me to a historic moment. After Pres. Richard Nixon vetoed the Clean Water Act in 1972, Sen. Edmund Muskie of Maine led the override effort, saying on the Senate floor, “Can we afford clean water? Can we afford rivers and lakes and streams and oceans which continue to make possible life on this planet? Can we afford life itself?”


Congress overrode Nixon’s veto, and we all got the answers to Muskie’s questions in the decades of expansion and prosperity after the Clean Water Act became law in 1972. The answer was a clear and ringing, “Yes.”

Yes, we can afford clean water. Yes, we can afford rivers and lakes and streams and oceans that continue to make possible life on this planet. Yes, we can afford life itself.

You know this. And you’ve never forgotten it. Thanks to your unwavering support, we’ve been able to continue defending clean water, even in the face of enormous upheaval. Thanks to you, we’ve been able to keep going.

As we review our last fiscal year and embark on a new one, I thank you, from the bottom of my heart, for keeping this growing movement of clean water warriors afloat through good times and bad.

Sending you all my wishes for clean water, and good health.


 Marc Yaggi
 Executive Director

“

Yes, we can afford
clean water.

Yes, we can afford
rivers and lakes and
streams and oceans
that continue to
make possible life
on this planet.

Yes, we can afford
life itself.

– Marc Yaggi,
Executive Director

”

Movement-
wide,
we have
more than

1,100

staff,

1.1

million
volunteers
and
supporters

And a
collective
budget of
more than

US \$66
million

There are **351** Waterkeeper groups
in **48** countries.

Waterkeeper groups patrol and protect

2.81

million sq. miles

of watersheds...

Waterkeeper Alliance is a
top-ranked 501(c)(3) charity,
with Top-Rated status from Charity Watch, 4 Stars from
Charity Navigator, and Platinum Status from Guidestar.

For every **\$1 donated** to Waterkeeper Alliance,
\$979 was secured in fossil fuel cleanup costs.

...which provide water for drinking,
fishing, and swimming to more than

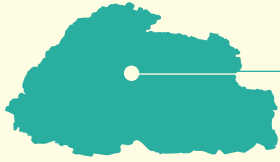
710
million people

Through our
website, email,
social media,
and news media
outreach, we
reach more than
21
million
people
each month.

Waterkeeper Alliance meets the
20 Standards for Charity Accountability
with the Better Business Bureau's Wise Giving Alliance.

*This annual report reflects the 2020 fiscal year, which runs from July 1, 2019, to June 30, 2020.

This year we
welcomed 11
new Waterkeeper
groups preserving
and protecting
more than 48,000
square miles of
watershed in
7 countries.

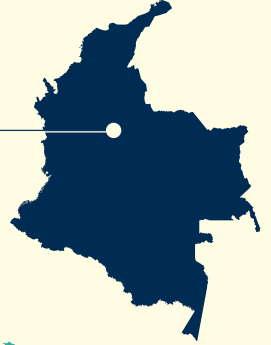


Bhutan

- Drangme Chu Waterkeeper

Colombia

- Canal del Dique Waterkeeper

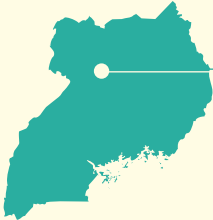


India

- Hindon River Waterkeeper

Peru

- Amazonas Perú Waterkeeper

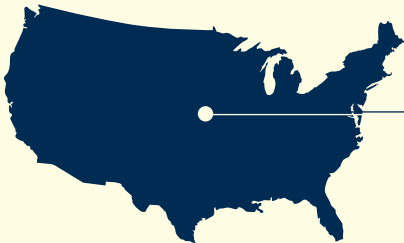
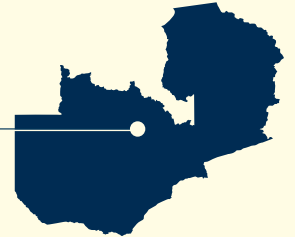


Uganda

- Kazinga Channel Waterkeeper

Zambia, Zimbabwe, Republic of South Africa

- Save the Zambezi, a Waterkeeper Alliance Affiliate



United States

- Chautauqua-Conewango Consortium, a Waterkeeper Alliance Affiliate
- Kissimmee Waterkeeper
- South & West/Rhode Riverkeeper
- South Platte River Waterkeeper
- Spring Creek Coalition, a Waterkeeper Alliance Affiliate

Where We're Focused



Photo by Christian Vinces/Shutterstock

AMAZON BASIN

A massive proposed project in Peru's most critical Amazonian rivers is threatening the health of entire aquatic ecosystems and the way of life for at least 64 Indigenous groups. We successfully recruited the **Amazonas Perú Waterkeeper**—sponsored by Derecho, Ambiente y Recursos Naturales based in Loreto, Peru—to help fight the Hidrovia Amazónica, or Amazon

Waterway Project. This massive dredging project would severely threaten biological diversity, water quality, and food security. Now with **Marañón Waterkeeper**—which is fighting the proposed building of large hydro dams that would threaten the uppermost headwaters of the Amazon—we are recruiting additional Indigenous-led Waterkeeper groups to extend our reach throughout the Amazon Basin.



Photo by Ehrl / Shutterstock

NORTH AMERICAN GREAT LAKES

In May this year, we launched *Drinkable Great Lakes—Protecting the Source*, a project with eight Waterkeeper groups to protect the North American Great Lakes' source waters and recruit new Waterkeeper groups dedicated to Lake Huron and Lake Superior.



Photo by Tykhansky / Vacheeslav / Shutterstock

NILE BASIN

We also laid the groundwork to recruit and strengthen more Waterkeeper groups to protect the Nile Basin, which has about one-third of the world's freshwater, spans 11 countries, and supports over 300 million people. Our key strategist Leonard Akwany, the **Kenya Lake Victoria Waterkeeper** and a 2020 recipient of our prestigious Terry Backer Award, is also a Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) Wetlands Expert. The upcoming NBI Forum presents an excellent opportunity for Waterkeeper Alliance to create an impact and expand our movement .

Regional Summits



SOUTH ASIA 20-22 SEPTEMBER 2019

In Kathmandu, Nepal, the South Asia Regional Summit had 21 participants representing Waterkeeper groups from Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, and Sri Lanka. Participants formalized a declaration to launch a region-wide education and awareness project with youth, women, and marginalized groups, launch a pollution mapping pilot project to serve as a model for a region-wide initiative, and actively participate in transboundary dialogue and research.

The groups identified the Ganges-Brahmaputra-Meghna (GBM) basin as a priority watershed due to diminishing river flows from groundwater depletion. The South Asia Waterkeeper groups will conduct transboundary expeditions of waterways in the GBM Basin to document threats to the watershed and develop joint campaigns to protect its free-flowing rivers. Anticipated projects include hosting an international coal energy and climate conference for the GBM region in Bangladesh, and a collaborative project with farmers to aid their transition to sustainable agricultural practices.



GREAT LAKES 1-3 OCTOBER 2019

The Great Lakes Regional Summit in Detroit, Michigan, United States had 13 participants representing Waterkeeper groups from Michigan, New York, Ohio, and Wisconsin. Participants established a new initiative, *Drinkable Great Lakes—Protecting the Source*, which will position and communicate the North American Great Lakes’ incredible value and their surrounding watersheds as essential “living infrastructure,” that protects the drinking water supply for 40 million people.

“Nothing compares to being able to personally share stories, experiences, triumphs, and challenges with fellow Waterkeepers. The value of this time together in order to empathize, strategize, and maximize our collective impact provides immeasurable results for our communities and our Great Lakes.”

– Jill Jedlicka,
Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper



GULF AND SOUTH ATLANTIC 8-11 OCTOBER 2019

The Gulf and South Atlantic Summit in Black Mountain, North Carolina, United States had 74 participants representing Waterkeeper groups from Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kansas, Kentucky, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Texas. Waterkeepers are continuing to work on three regional initiatives: *Swimmable Waters*, to help new programs build bacterial monitoring programs; *Stormwater and Litter*, to focus on plastics and microplastic pollution by fighting bans on bans, advancing bottle bills, and standardizing microplastic monitoring; and *Legislative and Regulatory Failure*, to set meetings with EPA Region 4 and establish standardized “asks” of the agency for replication in other EPA regions.

“The Waterkeeper Alliance Regional Summit was the most important 4 days in my first 6 months leading Catawba Riverkeeper. I came away not only with some great technical knowledge and practical ideas, but new friendships, mentors, and colleagues. Most importantly, this summit INSPIRED me – I came home feeling like my job is REALLY important and that the responsibility of building the capacity of our organization so that we can do more mission-critical work matters.”

– John Searby, Catawba Riverkeeper Foundation



INTERNATIONAL 10-14 NOVEMBER 2019

The International Summit in Nairobi, Kenya, had 41 participants from Australia, Belize, The Bahamas, Democratic Republic of Congo, Israel, Iraq, Jordan, Kenya, Mexico, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal, Sweden, Togo, Uganda, and the United Kingdom. EcoPeace Middle East, the parent organization of the three **Jordan River Waterkeeper** groups in Israel, Jordan, and Palestine, led an intensive, full-day session on environmental peacebuilding to pursue water security, including lively role-playing scenarios about cross-border cooperation. The training created opportunities to exchange experiences and capacity building—providing tools, technical advice, and training to support strategic planning, political advocacy, and grassroots activities that employ EcoPeace’s unique methodology.



Virtual Conference

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Waterkeeper Alliance pivoted away from its in-person Waterkeeper Alliance Conference—which would have been hosted by **Miami Waterkeeper** from June 3-7 in Miami, Florida—to a virtual training series.

From May 12 to June 9, 2020, Waterkeeper Alliance hosted more than 40 online sessions for our global movement. Workshops on water quality monitoring; dam removal; diversity, equity, and inclusion; the Clean Water Act; climate change; infrastructure projects in the Amazon; and more, were led by presenters from Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Peru, Sweden, The Bahamas, and the United States, and attended by participants representing six continents. Waterkeeper Alliance also hosted regional roundtables, an orientation for new Waterkeeper groups, and our Annual Meeting.

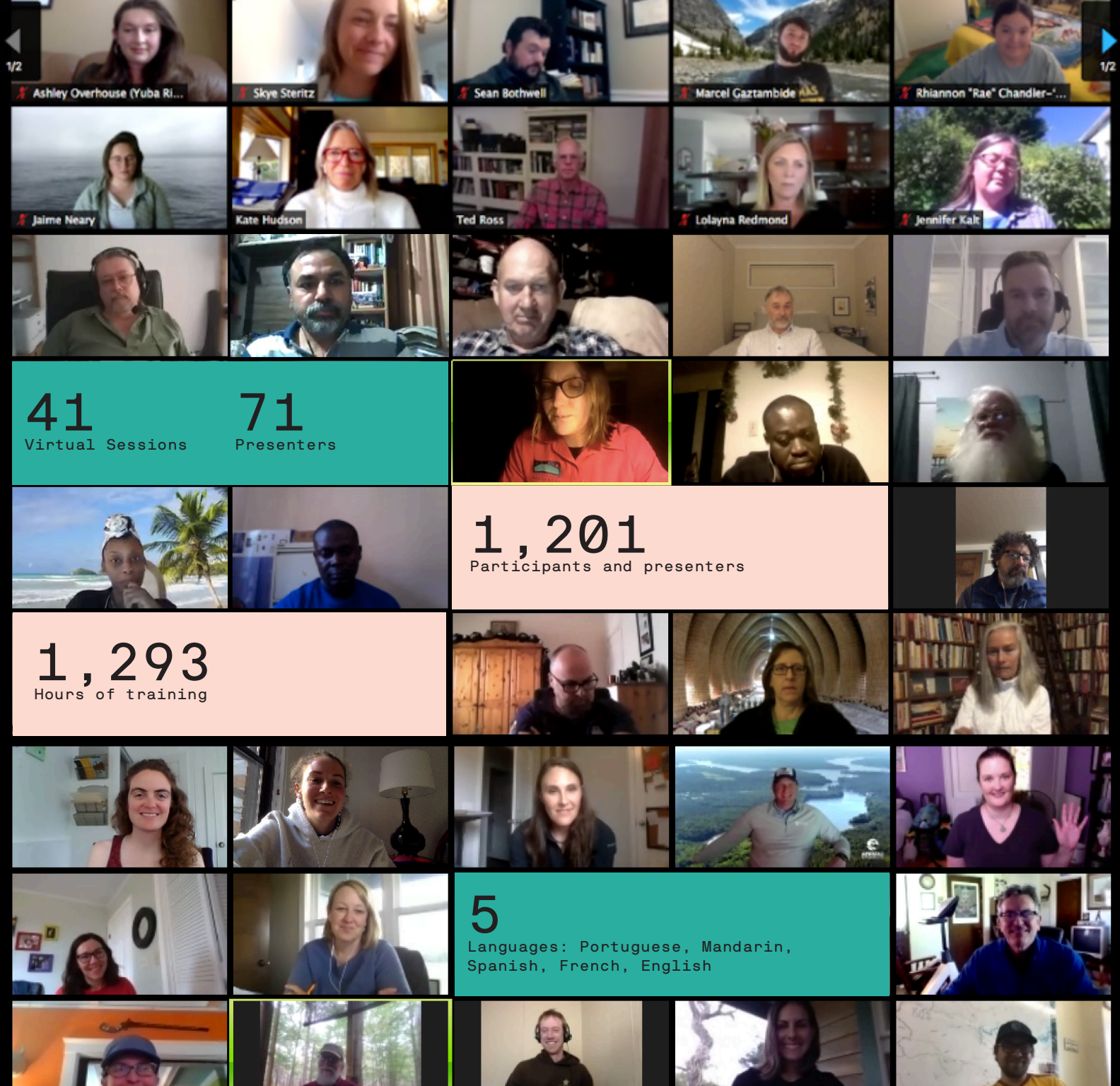
The original agenda planned for

the in-person event was amended to confront our new reality and included sessions on crisis communication, financial management, digital media, and self-care. Another late-addition included reviewing a recent U.S. Supreme Court decision (*County of Maui v. Hawaii Wildlife Fund*) that closed a loophole in the Clean Water Act.

Acknowledging the financial hardship COVID-19 created for many NGOs, the sessions were free for all staff and board members of our Waterkeeper groups. Each session was recorded and placed on the Alliance's cloud-based Resource Library. Though a virtual conference cannot provide all the benefits of an in-person gathering, by not charging a fee, providing "open" attendance, and recording sessions, the Waterkeeper movement's knowledge exchange was more accessible than any conference we have ever hosted.

“As a newer Waterkeeper organization, having access to a diverse array of experts through the trainings and webinars hosted by Waterkeeper Alliance elevates my ability to be more impactful in my local watershed. And while I missed the in-person connections in 2020, the flexibility provided by a virtual conference allowed me to be more engaged with the information and attend more presentations than would have been possible otherwise. Being able to connect with Waterkeepers around the world, from our own watersheds, was incredibly valuable.”

— R. Bartels,
Missouri Confluence
Waterkeeper, USA



Ashley Overhouse (Yuba Ri...

Skye Steritz

Sean Bothwell

Marcel Gaztambide

Rhiannon "Rae" Chandler-...

Jaime Neary

Kate Hudson

Ted Ross

Lolayna Redmond

Jennifer Kalk

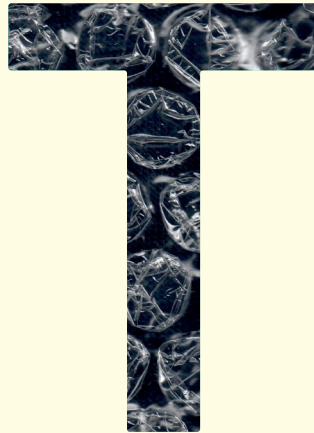
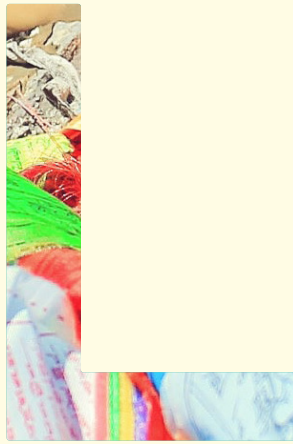
41
Virtual Sessions

71
Presenters

1,201
Participants and presenters

1,293
Hours of training

5
Languages: Portuguese, Mandarin,
Spanish, French, English



POLLUTION

ENGAGING OUR SUPPORTERS

Waterkeeper Alliance and a coalition of environmental groups—including Environment America, United States Public Interest Research Group, League of Conservation Voters, Recycle Across America, One More Generation, Captain Planet Foundation, Plastic Pollution Coalition (a Project of Earth Island Institute), and The Surfrider Foundation—jointly developed and presented a series of webinars to more than 700 attendees on solutions to plastic pollution. The seven webinars educated coalition members, supporters, and the general public about the dangers of and strategies to address the global epidemic of plastic pollution, focusing on source reduction.

STRENGTHENING OUR COMMUNITIES

Waterkeeper Alliance is rolling out new strategies to measure, categorize, and prevent plastic pollution at an unprecedented global scale. Waterkeeper Alliance is partnering with Waterkeeper groups from Australia, Kenya, Mexico, and The Bahamas, and world-renowned researchers from the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation. Our collaborations will categorize and trace the movement of plastic pollution and produce quality toolkits for Waterkeeper groups worldwide to design effective, data-based pollution prevention plans. Our mission: Craft plastic pollution-prevention plans that work for each participating geographic, socioeconomic, and political context.

ENGAGING OUR SUPPORTERS

At the start of summer for those in the northern hemisphere—a time when many flock to local rivers, lakes, and beaches—Waterkeeper Alliance teamed up with Sperry on #KickOutPlastic, an Instagram campaign to inspire people to take real action on the plastic pollution crisis. As part of our partnership, Sperry donated \$25 for every person who posted with the hashtag #KickOutPlastic to encourage user-generated content and help the campaign gain and sustain momentum. We reached the maximum donation of \$75,000 within 24 hours thanks to our social media influencers who shared the message to their nearly 6 million followers on Instagram. The campaign grew our Instagram following by 13 percent and engaged more than 1.8 million people in our fight to tackle the copious amounts of plastic dumped into our oceans right at the source.

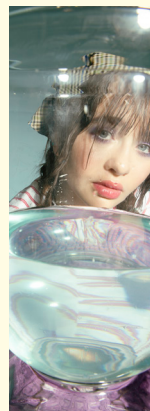


In October 2019, Waterkeeper Alliance teamed up with Sperry, Journeys, Orange County Coastkeeper, and BIONIC for a beach cleanup in Newport Beach, CA to raise awareness of the global plastics epidemic. Watch the video by clicking above!



Photos by Rebekah Campbell at Slate Studios

Meet our
#KickOutPlastic
 Influencers
 (Total Followers: 5.96 M)
 Yvesmark Chery, [@yvesmark.chery](#)
 Torraine Futurum, [@torraine](#)
 Malina Weissman, [@malinaweissman](#)
 Benji Krol, [@benjikrol](#)
 Jorge Garay, [@jeyjeygardi](#)
 Syd Soulliere, [@punk_irl](#)
 Salina Johns, [@salinakilla](#)
 Lily Chee, [@lilychee](#)
 Xiye Bastida, [@xiyebeara](#)



The Terry Backer Awards



TERRY BACKER, the first Long Island Soundkeeper, was—and remains—one of the Waterkeeper movement’s most iconic activists: Spirited, determined, charismatic, and effective. He was a fearless warrior for Long Island Sound and was a driving force behind that small group of Waterkeepers whose advocacy created our global movement for clean water. When Terry died of brain cancer in 2015, The New York Times described him as “a 12-term Connecticut state representative, a third-generation commercial fisherman and an environmentalist who fought successfully for the preservation of Long Island Sound.”

The Terry Backer Award commemorates Terry’s legacy and honors fellow Waterkeepers who embody his spirit and dedication to protecting everyone’s right to clean water. Candidates are nominated by their peers, who also vote for the winners. This year’s winners—Leonard Akwany and Raman Kant Tyagi—embody Backer’s grit and fortitude.

LEONARD AKWANY, the **Kenya Lake Victoria Waterkeeper**, has mentored, trained, and mobilized over 5,000 stewards to conserve Lake Victoria's wetlands and waters. He has found funding for green technologies, such as green energy, composting toilets, and hybrid-biogas, that are geared towards conservation of freshwater ecosystems. He established wetlands pedagogical centers for local wetlands conservation and, together with other conservation groups, advocated successfully for creating the Lake Kanyaboli National Reserve and the Yala wetlands complex, including a successful fight against multinational Dominion Farms' plan to annex the Yala wetlands.



RAMAN KANT TYAGI, the **Hindon River Waterkeeper** and former East Kali River Waterkeeper in India, mobilized students, social activists, women, farmers, and government workers to return the East Kali River to life by freeing land from encroachment, cleaning the riverbed, and digging lakes and recharging pits. He also led the effort to stop sewage dumping into the river. "The river has started flowing from here, reclaiming its worship status among communities," his award nomination stated. "People are still visiting this revived origin from faraway places to see for themselves how the community has achieved such wonderful results."



The Hero Awards

The Hero Awards honor the people who have stayed with our movement for 20 years. Waterkeepers wage long fights against tall odds; sticking with those fights for two decades is a remarkable achievement. This year, we proudly recognize:



GARRY BROWN /
ORANGE COUNTY COASTKEEPER

Orange County Coastkeeper Garry Brown's efforts have resulted in 40,000 students connecting to the environment through hands-on field trips. Since Garry founded the organization, Orange County Coastkeeper has grown from three full-time employees working in one office with a \$125,000 annual budget to 24 full- and part-time employees working from three offices with a \$2.1 million annual budget. It now includes two added Waterkeeper groups under its umbrella—**Inland Empire Waterkeeper** and **Coachella Valley Waterkeeper**.



MARK RASMUSSEN /
BUZZARDS BAYKEEPER

Buzzards Baykeeper Mark Rasmussen's work led to the protection of 7,000 acres of land throughout the watershed. Buzzards Baykeeper is also an accredited land trust, pursuing the restoration and protection of the Bay's ecosystem at all government levels. Buzzards Baykeeper pushed for limits on nitrogen pollution in every corner of the Bay, developed new laws to make the Bay safer from oil spills, and fought for a full cleanup of toxic pollution in New Bedford Harbor.



TRAVIS WILLIAMS / WILLAMETTE RIVERKEEPER

Under Travis Williams, **Willamette Riverkeeper** supports free canoeing and kayaking trips for thousands of people who learn to love and protect the river. He led the effort to establish the Willamette Water Trail in 2005, writing “The Willamette River Field Guide” and two Water Trail Guides for the river. He spent 17 years leading the charge to clean up the Portland Harbor Superfund site. Because of the pandemic, this summer Willamette Riverkeeper replaced its annual 100-person fundraising trip with a 187-mile nine-day paddle, led by Travis.



BOB SHAVELSON/ COOK INLETKEEPER

Cook Inletkeeper Bob Shavelson has helped bring together Alaskans from all walks of life to protect the state’s waters. When Alaska Gov. Sean Parnell introduced legislation that would exclude Alaskans from important natural-resource decisions, Inletkeeper helped spearhead a statewide organizing effort among Alaska Natives, sport and commercial fishers, and small-business owners, prompting thousands of comments to lawmakers and standing-room-only crowds at public hearings, killing the bill.



HELENA KRALOVA / MORAVA RIVERKEEPER

Finally, in memoriam: Helena Kralova, our much loved and much missed **Morava Riverkeeper**, taught a generation of students in the Czech Republic how to monitor water quality. Helena, who died of cancer in 2019, worked on issues including flood control, river restoration, and river cleanups. Helena was a civil engineer with a Ph.D. in water management, an associate professor at the Brno University of Technology, a true advocate, and a friend to so many of us.

Spotlight on:

North Carolina

CAPE FEAR RECLASSIFICATION

Waterkeeper Alliance and Cape Fear River Watch, parent organization to **Cape Fear Riverkeeper**, represented by the Southern Environmental Law Center, successfully petitioned the state's Environmental Management Commission to conduct rulemaking to remove North Carolina's "swamp waters" classification from a 15-mile stretch of the Lower Cape Fear River. Restoring the appropriate classification will drive needed agency efforts to reduce upstream pollution in North Carolina's largest and most industrialized watershed, where the annual swine waste load is equivalent to the human waste produced by the entire New York City metro area.

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

As a result of our Title VI settlement with North Carolina's Department of Environmental Quality, the agency adopted a number of changes to protect the disproportionately Black, Latino, and American Indian communities living near swine operations. Those efforts included changes to its odor control checklist for swine operations, a violation point system for swine operators, a new public participation policy, a limited-English-proficiency access policy, an anonymous comment tool, and a revised community mapping system. The agency also completed air and water

quality studies to evaluate the impacts of industrial swine production and agreed to expand the water quality study after reviewing initial results.

Waterkeeper Alliance also equipped all its partner Waterkeeper groups in the region to do in-house analysis for bacteria in water samples and partnered with Duke University and the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services to pilot a public health data-mapping tool. The state agency used the pilot to apply successfully for additional grant funding from the Centers for Disease Control to continue development of the tool. This tool will inform agency decisions and enable the state to better communicate environmental and public health data; it will also make the clearest, most data-driven case about the environmental justice issues the state faces.

Waterkeeper Alliance is working with area Waterkeeper groups to foster and deepen relationships with sustainable farmers, sending action alerts to encourage members to purchase sustainably raised products, and mapping sustainable family farms to further support their small businesses. We're also working with Waterkeepers to prevent the expansion of the swine-waste to energy biogas plan. This has included publishing an op-ed opposing the plan, submitting opposition comments to regulators, and meeting with state and local decision makers.



THE LARGEST COAL ASH CLEANUP IN AMERICA

Duke Energy and North Carolina's Department of Environmental Quality on January 2, 2020, settled a suit brought by Catawba Riverkeeper Foundation, Cape Fear River Watch (Cape Fear Riverkeeper), MountainTrue (French Broad Riverkeeper, Broad Riverkeeper, Green Riverkeeper, and Watauga Riverkeeper), Neuse River Foundation/Sound Rivers (Upper Neuse Riverkeeper, Lower Neuse Riverkeeper, and Pamlico Tar Riverkeeper), Waterkeeper Alliance, the N.C. State Conference and Stokes County Branch of the NAACP, and other partners. The result: A plan for the most extensive coal ash cleanup in America to date. The agreement includes a comprehensive cleanup plan for the coal ash lagoons at all 14 Duke Energy sites in North Carolina, where 126 million tons of ash has been or will be excavated.

Statewide,
96.7% of all
basin ash
across all
14 coal-fired
power plants
in North
Carolina has
been or will
be excavated.



With the coal ash removal at Marshall and Allen steam stations in addition to prior commitments at other sites, approximately 44.5 million tons of coal ash will be excavated from coal ash pits along the Catawba River in North and South Carolina. With the removals from Belews Creek, Mayo, and Roxboro, almost 40 million tons of ash in the Roanoke and Dan River Basins will be moved to lined storage. Nearly 17 million tons of coal ash will be removed at Roxboro, and over 17 million tons of coal ash will be removed at Marshall. Ash already in permitted landfills or structural fills will be subject to additional protective measures, including stabilization actions and groundwater and surface water monitoring and remediation. Over 8 million tons of ash will be excavated at Cliffside on the Broad River.



“Coal ash pollution is an environmental justice issue, and this agreement will bring more justice to the communities around coal ash sites in North Carolina.”

— Reverend Dr. T. Anthony Spearman
of the N.C. State Conference
of the NAACP

Spotlight on:

The Bahamas

HURRICANE DORIAN

Hurricane Dorian made landfall on The Bahamas on September 1, 2019, leaving devastation in its wake. A nearly 20-foot storm surge inundated the drinking water supply on the islands with saltwater. Dorian's sustained 185 miles per hour winds ripped open the covers of several large oil storage tanks on East Grand Bahama, causing an oil spill at a site run by Equinor ASA that contaminated significant coastal habitat and freshwater sources for local residents. Waterkeeper Alliance staff traveled to The Bahamas on September 22, 2019, to provide on-the-ground support with relief efforts and establish a water quality monitoring program to assess the storm's environmental impacts.

In the months that followed, **Waterkeepers Bahamas** and Waterkeeper Alliance continued to conduct an intensive assessment of the Equinor spill site to determine the scope and environmental risk to wildlife, habitat, and water resources. The study results will be integrated into additional research conducted by the Bahamas National Trust, The Nature Conservancy, and the Perry Institute for Marine Science, each conducting evaluations on forests, vegetation, and marine resources. This work was delayed due to COVID-19, but we hope to complete the eco-risk assessment,



using water quality and sediment sampling results for oil, in late 2020. We have also helped assemble and coordinate a coalition of public interest, community, and citizen-based groups that will continue to advocate for protecting the Bahamian environment.

OFFSHORE DRILLING

Bahamas Petroleum Company wants to drill four exploratory deepwater wells in Bahamian waters west of Andros Island and south of the Bimini Islands, with the first project scheduled to begin by March 2021. The proposed drilling sites are located close to Miami, directly upwind and upcurrent from the city's



coast, placing significant risks to both Bahamian and southeastern U.S. coastal resources. Waterkeeper Alliance, **Waterkeepers Bahamas**, The Bahamas Reef Environment Educational Foundation, and Oceana have put together a one-year plan to build community and international opposition to pressure the Bahamian Government to deny or revoke all offshore drilling approvals.

LIGHTHOUSE POINT

The Bahamas is the most vulnerable nation in the Caribbean to climate change impacts. Waterkeeper Alliance, **Waterkeepers Bahamas**, and other local partners are working on the Last Chance campaign to protect the future of Lighthouse Point and create a sustainable future for South Eleuthera and the surrounding oceans. Lighthouse Point, located at the southernmost tip of Eleuthera, has been treasured by generations of Bahamians and visitors worldwide. Its limestone cliffs overlooking unspoiled beaches and

turquoise waters are unique to The Bahamas. The Point is surrounded by waters containing important geological features and rich biodiversity, including endangered coral and high concentrations of sharks, fish, and other marine life. The surrounding ocean is so biologically rich that the area was formally proposed as a Marine Protected Area to the Bahamian government. Yet Disney Cruise Line is pushing ahead with plans for a massive cruise ship port that would bring up to 20,000 weekly visitors to the point, including a half-mile long pier to be built over valuable reefs and seabed. This project poses serious environmental, economic, and cultural threats.

The Last Chance for Lighthouse Point campaign has generated worldwide support, gathering more than 300,000 signatures on its petition to Disney to change course and collaborate with our Bahamian partners on a more sustainable alternative for Lighthouse Point.

PUBLIC LANDS

The Trump administration has, since 2017, been putting tens of thousands of acres of public lands on the auction block for oil and gas extraction in six Western U.S. states. Waterkeeper Alliance alerts Waterkeeper groups when fossil fuel sales are proposed in their area and supports them in their fight to protect their watersheds from the impacts of oil and gas extraction. Waterkeeper Alliance also joined local Waterkeepers and partners in submitting protest letters and comment letters about the proposed sales. As opposition mounted and oil prices sank in the spring, the Bureau of Land Management pulled back from selling 45,000 acres it had initially proposed.

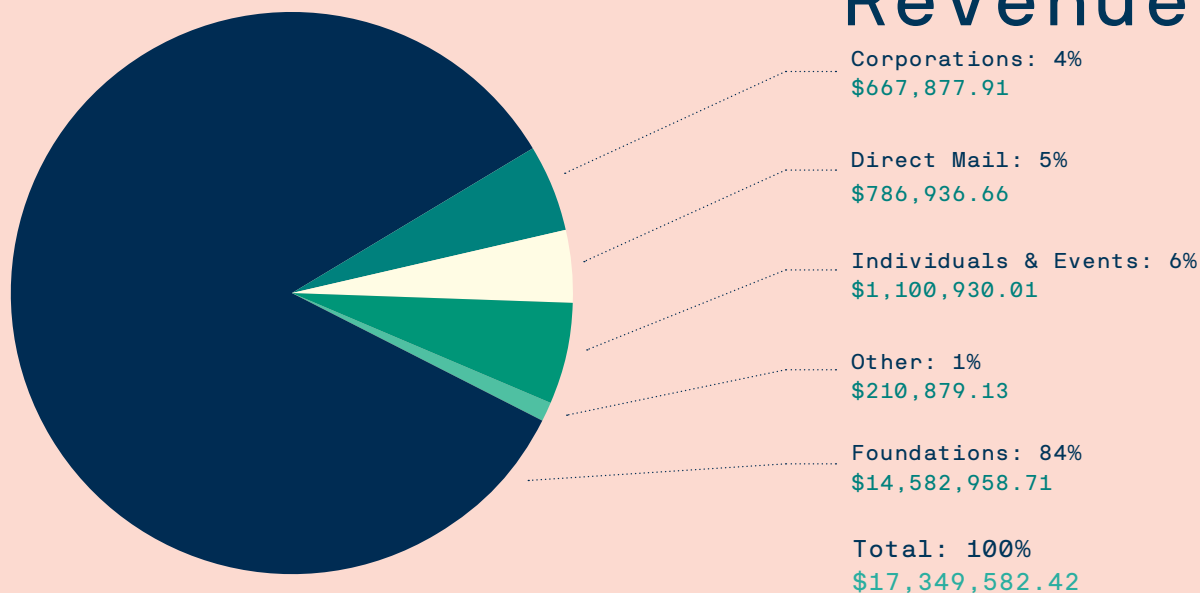
DRINKING WATER PROTECTION

Waterkeeper Alliance, **Waterkeepers Chesapeake**, and **California Coastkeeper Alliance** settled a lawsuit against the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency that alleged that EPA had fallen years behind in its mandatory review of contaminants to determine if they should be regulated under the Safe Drinking Water Act. The settlement forces EPA to catch up on its obligations and requires EPA to propose revised regulations for existing and emerging contaminants. The lawsuit can be reopened if EPA fails to comply with the agreement. EPA's mandatory obligations under the Safe Drinking Water Act include identifying unregulated contaminants, regulating those contaminants, and reviewing and revising existing drinking water regulations, all according to a timetable mandated by Congress. EPA has repeatedly failed to perform these legal obligations on time, putting people's health and lives at risk.

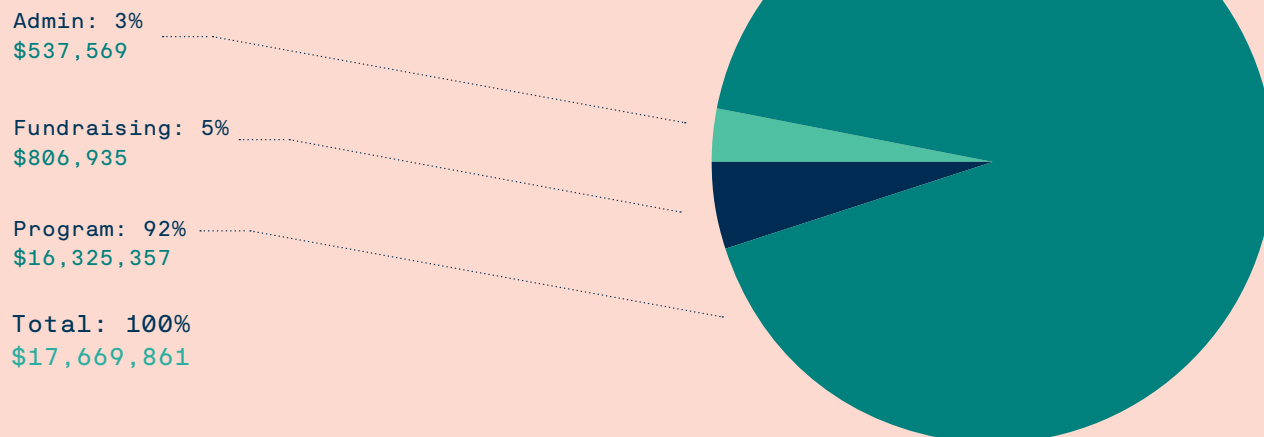


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Revenue



Expense



Net Assets: \$2,319.915

Donors

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The Baltoro Trust Dated June 14, 1979
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On the Cover: Plastic pellets, also known as nurdles, are often used in the manufacturing of large-scale plastics. Plastic production leads to environmental destruction at every step. Photo by Extarz/Shutterstock.
On the Back: The Amazon Rainforest in Brazil. Waterkeeper Alliance is focused on expansion into the Amazon, where a massive proposed project threatens the health of aquatic ecosystems and the way of life for at least 64 Indigenous groups. Photo by Gustavo Frazao/Shutterstock.