



Gills Creek

WATERSHED ASSOCIATION

2023 ANNUAL REPORT



OUR MISSION

Protecting the Gills Creek Watershed through Conservation, Advocacy, Restoration, and Education.

Timberlane Drive becomes part of Gills Creek after heavy rain.
Amelia Guerry, Intern | Spring 2023



Great Blue Heron in the rookery near Timberlane Dr.

CONSERVATION

URBAN OASIS: TIMBERLANE DRIVE

We are working in tandem with Richland County to negotiate the purchase of three remaining privately owned lots in the flood zone.

Goals:

- Demolition of the structures
- Closure of the uninhabited portion of the road
- Development of a natural park that will treat stormwater, absorb floodwater, and provide community access to nature.

ADVOCACY



Touring Hyatt Park with many of our partners.
Gwen Geidel, Vice President
Fall 2023

ACTING AS A CONDUIT BETWEEN THE COMMUNITY AND GOVERNMENT ENTITIES

The Gills Creek Watershed covers 47,000 acres within 6 entities:

- Richland County
- City of Columbia
- Forest Acres
- Arcadia Lakes
- City of Cayce
- Fort Jackson

The relationships we're building within these entities helps us more effectively advocate for responsible development and improved stormwater treatment.



ADOPT-A-STREAM

GCWA ARRANGES FOR TRAINING AND ASSIGNS MONITORING SITES

THE DATA WE CONTRIBUTE HELPS PROTECT OUR WATERSHED

AAS Training with GCWA volunteers, Richland County employees and community members | Spring 2023

RESTORATION

Native plants in riparian buffers stabilize the soil and filter stormwater

**Planting at Crowson Rd was completed
March 2023**



Our completed Water Quality Enhancement Project at Crowson Road, Spring 2023

NATIVE PLANTS AT CROWSON ROAD



BLACK-EYED
SUSAN

Rudbeckia hirta



VIRGINIA
SWEETSPIRE

Itea virginica



CAROLINA
ALLSPICE

Calycanthus floridus



Palmetto Trail Talk
Rebecca Milford, Outreach Coordinator
Gwen Geidel, Vice President
Bailey Slice Parker, Executive Director
October 2023

EDUCATION

From speaking at community gatherings to tabling at conservation events and collaborating with schools, we've had fantastic opportunities to educate people of all ages about the importance of healthy watersheds.



Watershed Field Day with
Koinonia of Columbia
Forest Acres Rotary Club
June 2023



WATERSHED CHAMPIONS

OUR WATER QUALITY YARD CERTIFICATION PROGRAM HAS GONE PUBLIC AND IS ATTRACTING HOME OWNERS, CHURCHES, AND SCHOOLS!

Image:
Ann Yancey, GCWA volunteer
September 2023

“We forget that the water cycle and life cycle are one.” - Jacques Yves Cousteau



As my term as President ends, I have one last opportunity to thank you for all your hard work and dedication to the watershed. Since I last reported to you, we have hired Bailey Slice Parker to serve as the Association's Executive Director. I am sure you have experienced Bailey's infectious energy and enthusiasm firsthand, and she has already made a huge impact on the association and its members and continues to keep the Gills Creek mission at the forefront of everything she does. We are completing Crowson Road improvements and are continuing to look for new opportunities to improve and maintain the watershed. We will elect four dynamic new Board Members at our annual meeting who will bring renewed drive to advance our mission to restore, educate and advocate on behalf of the Watershed. Last, but certainly not least, I would like to thank our devoted volunteers for all the time and effort they have invested in the Watershed. We could not accomplish our mission without them. Stay well!

Scott Elliott, Esquire
Elliott & Elliott, P.A.

By the Numbers



ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- ✓ Crowson Road Stream Enhancement
 - ✓ WaterGoat Installation
- ✓ Adopt-a-Stream Program Expansion
- ✓ Watershed Champions Rollout
- ✓ Scrapyard Case SETTLED

VOLUNTEERS

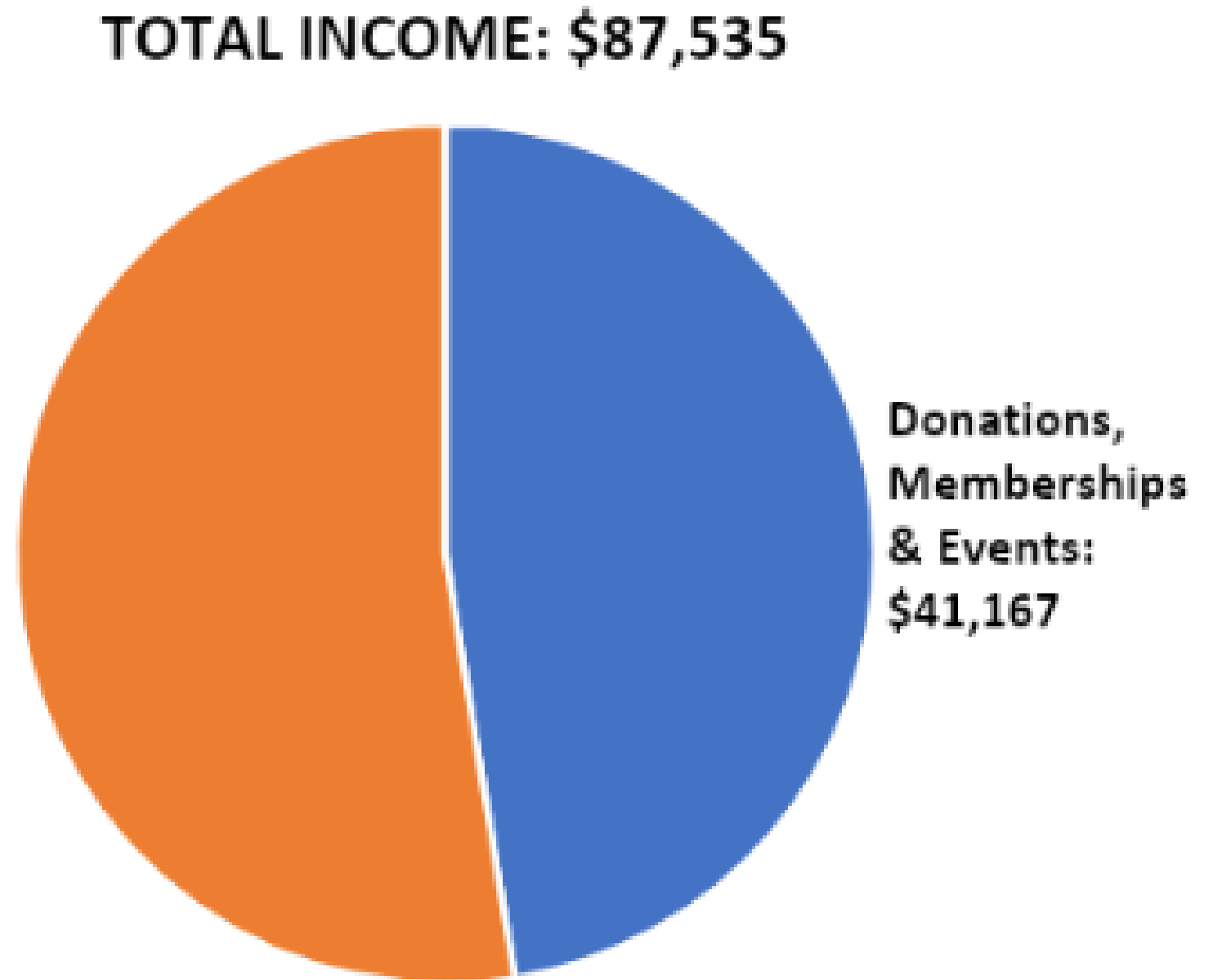
- 7 Litter Sweeps - 98 Volunteers
- 7 Info Tables at Events - 23 Volunteers
- Annual Meeting - 15 Volunteers
- Wine for Water - 35 Volunteers
- WaterGoat Installation - 2 Volunteers
- Adopt-a-Stream - 10 Volunteers

OUTREACH

- 3 Watershed Walks
- 2 Watershed Field Days
- 6 Presentations

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW: FISCAL YEAR 2022-2023 JULY 1, 2022 – JUNE 30, 2023

**TOTAL INCOME FOR THE YEAR
WAS \$87,535.
\$46,000 was from grants, and
\$41,167 was from donations,
memberships, and income from
Wine for Water.**



TOTAL EXPENSES FOR THE YEAR:

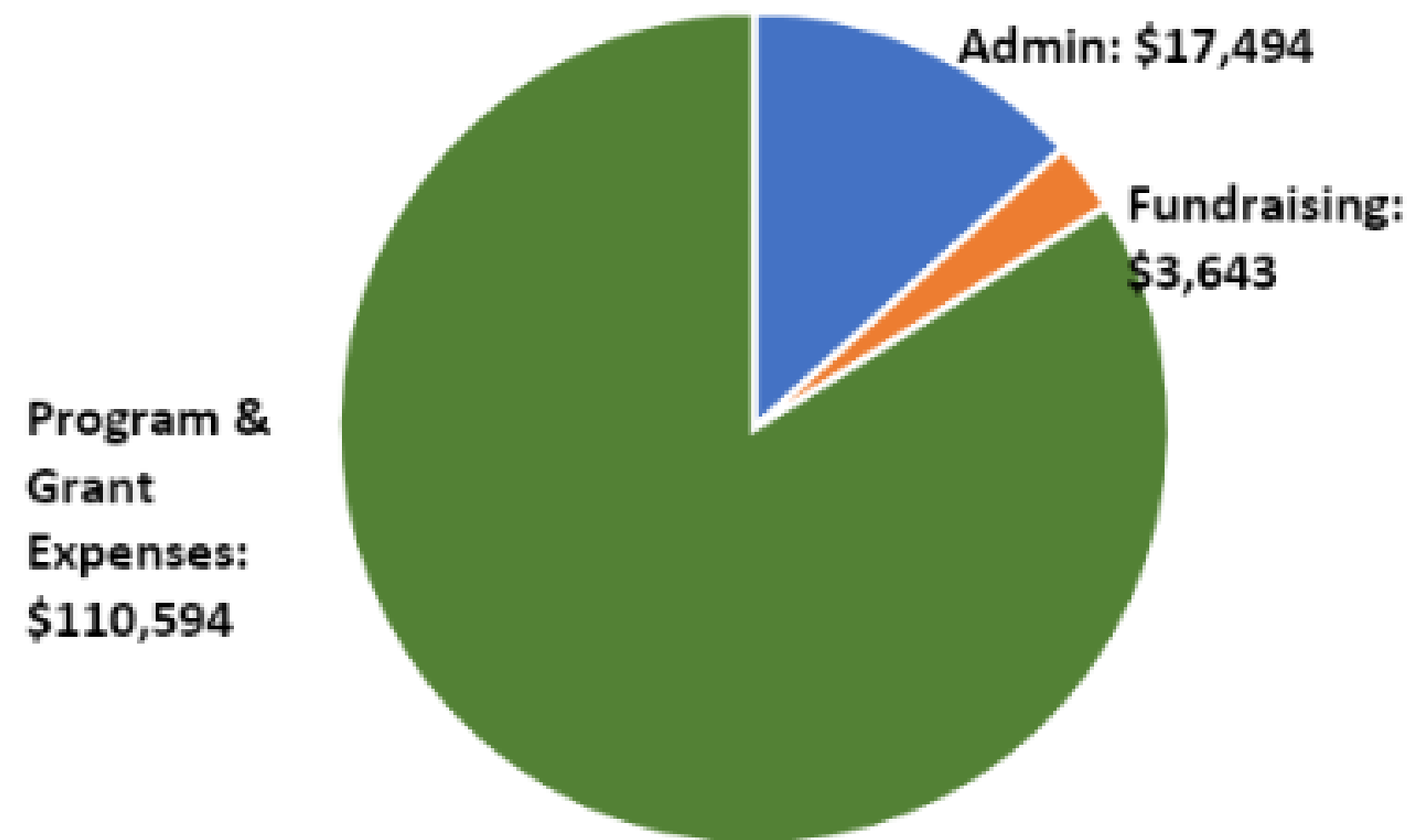
\$131,731

Grant funding for project expenses during the year totaled **\$92,244**, including funds received in prior years.

Expenses included final stages of work at the Crowson Road stream enhancement project; and completing the conceptual design for a park at conserved properties on Timberlane Drive. This work was paid for with grant funds as well as approximately **\$18,350** of reserve funds.

Administrative and Fundraising expenses for the year were **16%** of total expenses. This percentage is often used as a measure of a non-profit's financial efficiency – a lower percentage is considered better. **16%** is a good percentage.

TOTAL EXPENSES: \$131,731





BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Scott Elliott, Esq. - President, Gwen Geidel, Ph.D., JD - Vice President, Sally Huguley, Ph.D. - Secretary, Mark Robertson - Treasurer, Frank Fusco, Gray Ladd - Education Committee Co-Chair, Guillermo Espinosa, Sam Agee - Stewardship Committee Chair, Tom Kohlsaar - Technical Committee Chair, Andrew Melanson, Rob Robertson



STAFF

Bailey Slice Parker - Executive Director
Rebecca Milford - Outreach Coordinator
Amelia Guerry - Spring Intern
Courtney Rucker - Fall Intern

Community Partnerships



Lauren Megill Milton



Lauren Megill Milton began working as a staff attorney for the South Carolina Environmental Law Project in 2019. She is one of three SCELP employees based in the Columbia area. Lauren graduated from Anderson University and earned her J.D. (Juris Doctor) from Charleston School of Law. She represented plaintiffs in construction litigation at Lucey Law Firm before joining the SCELP team. She loves the outdoors, which inspired her to work for SCELP, and is happiest hiking, kayaking, or climbing - and watching Gamecock football!

Wrenn Barrett

Wrenn Barrett, PE, is JMT Consulting Engineers' Columbia Office Leader and a Vice President over Operations in South Carolina and Georgia, offering engineering services in project management, transportation roadway and bridge design, subsurface utility engineering, utility coordination, and construction management. Wrenn has 35 plus years' experience in civil engineering and has worked in both the public and private sectors. Wrenn has lived in the Gills Creek Watershed (on the pond in Kaminer Station) since 1994 and has a vested interest in the current and future health of the watershed.



Emily Jones



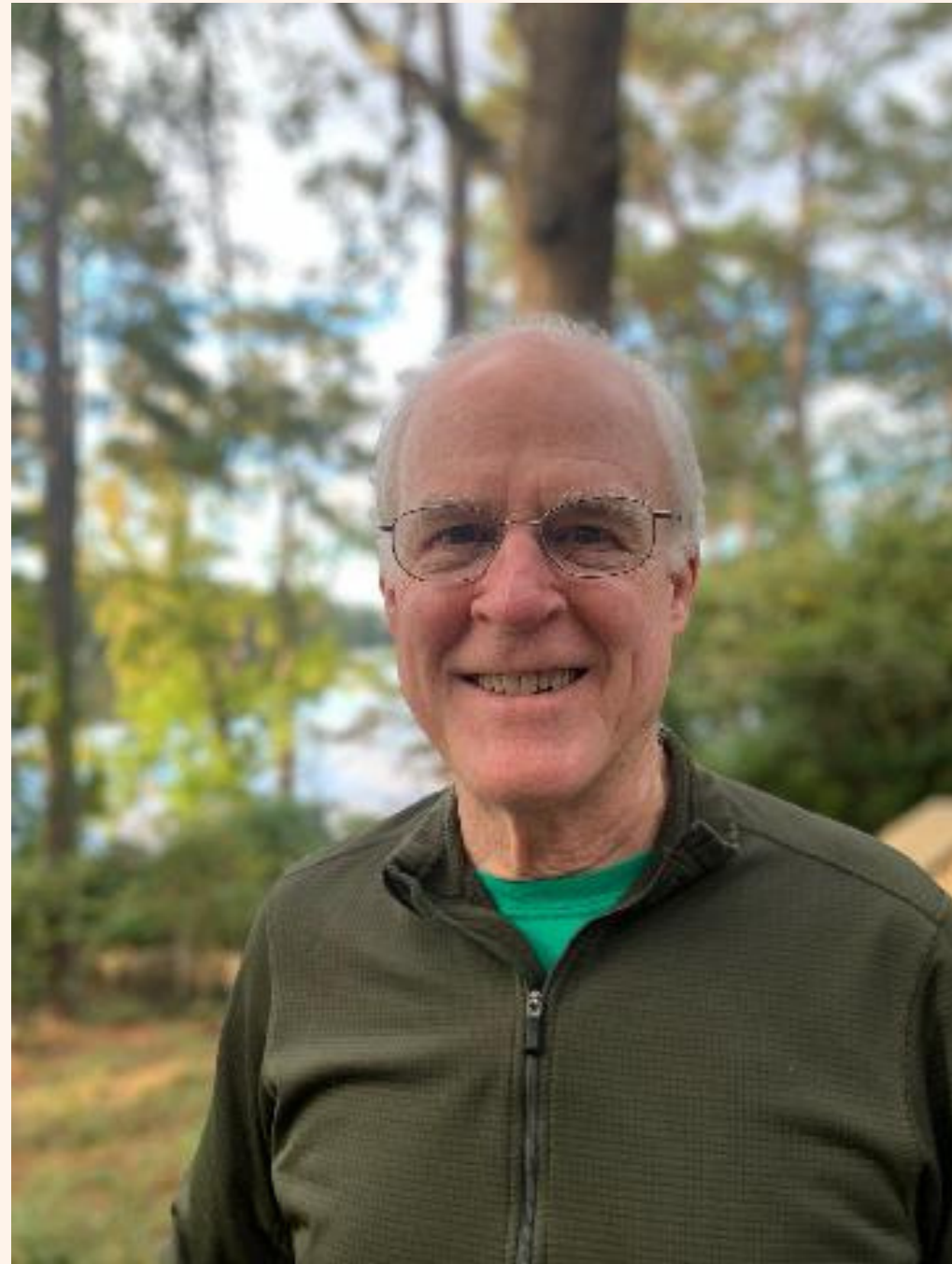
Emily Jones is a 20-year resident of the Watershed with a long-standing interest in landscape restoration and community design. She served on the GCWA Board from 2008-2014, including a term as President from 2010-2014. She is a registered landscape architect with 30 years experience in various roles of public and private practice. Since 2012 she has been employed with the University of South Carolina overseeing a wide range of construction projects.

Frank E. Robinson

Frank E. Robinson, III is a Senior Vice President-Investments, Senior Financial Advisor with Wells Fargo Advisors. Previously, he was with BB&T and has been a financial advisor since 1995. Frank enjoys the outdoors whether he's fly fishing in a river or salt water, hunting with his dogs for upland game and spending time with his family. He is married to Katherine Robinson, and they have 2 grown children, Kate and Frank, IV.



Mark Robertson



Mark Robertson recently retired as Executive Director of The Nature Conservancy, and is widely regarded as both a conservationist and expert in non-profit management.

Background that will be particularly relevant to the Gills Creek Watershed Association includes experience in fundraising and non-profit finances, as well as in the use of an array of land protection devices. Mark lives on Carey Lake.

Mark is up for reelection for a second term.

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