



**GILLS CREEK
WATERSHED
ASSOCIATION**

Uniting for Clean Water

www.gillscreekwatershed.org

2013-2014 ANNUAL REPORT



Contents

About the Watershed and President's Message 4

Committee Activities and Projects 5

Board of Directors, Partners, Sponsors and Organizational Members . . 7

Donors and Members 8

Cover

Looking upstream from the Gills Creek bridge crossing on Devine Street just before it becomes Garners Ferry Road, this section of the creek is the focal point of the Middle Watershed Plan for turning this creek around with stream restoration, greenways, picnic spots and paddling opportunities.

This two-page spread

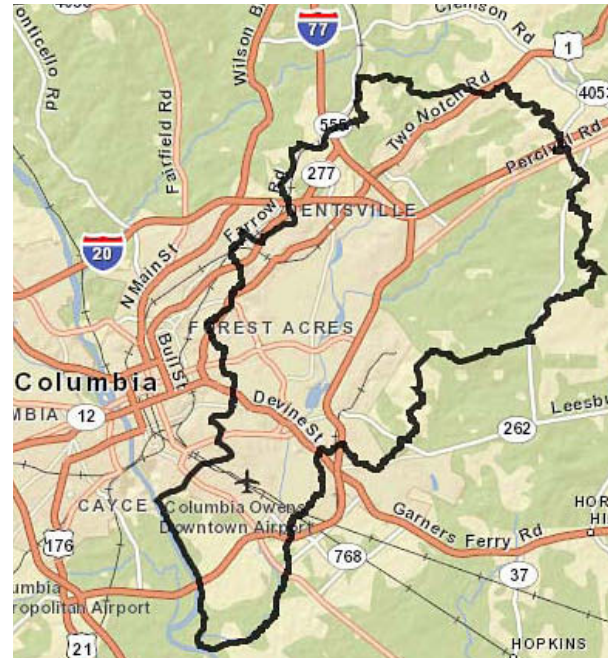
is a paddlers view of the creek on the stretch from Rosewood Drive to Shop Road which is also part of the Middle Watershed project for greenways and blueways.

The Gills Creek Watershed

The area of the Gills Creek Watershed is 76 square miles. It contains approximately 70 miles of streams, over 47,000 acres of land, and over 100 impoundments totaling 944 acres. The primary named tributaries of the watershed are from east to west are Gills Creek, Jackson Creek and Little Jackson Creek. All three tributaries are impounded multiple times to create over a dozen lakes from Centennial Lake to Lake Katharine.

Downstream of Lake Katharine, Gills Creek flows freely through a variety of residential, agricultural, and commercial land uses until its confluence with the Congaree River south of I-77.

Over 140,000 people reside in the Watershed which stretches across the Town of Arcadia Lakes, City of Forest Acres, the City of Columbia, Fort Jackson, and unincorporated Richland County. Each of these jurisdictions has their own land use policies, including plans for growth, zoning regulations, development standards, and sediment and erosion control regulations. A primary goal of the GCWA is to bring together the different jurisdictions in the watershed to restore and protect the watershed through implementation of the management plan, coordinated stormwater regulations, and cooperative restoration projects.



Find out where you are in the watershed by searching for your address in the interactive map on our web site at gillscreekwatershed.org/maps

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

During the past fiscal year, the Gills Creek Watershed Association continued to develop its role as a non-profit advocate for watershed issues in the community. We thank our membership, over 250 strong as of June 2014, for sustaining this effort.

The Association continues to serve as a key player in monitoring watershed issues, working with jurisdictions in our watershed, identifying opportunities and securing funding for projects to promote water quality, recreational opportunities, and optimizing the value of Gills Creek for our community.

Urban watersheds face myriad problems as a legacy of decades of careless development patterns and 'externalized costs.' It takes years of planning to build consensus and marshal the resources required to implement significant watershed restoration. But the notion of reclaiming our community's creeks and streams to restore their viability as healthy habitats and community resources is a compelling vision for many of us. A non-profit group like GCWA can provide important guidance and leverage to the public investment and planning required, and we give thanks to our many partners for supporting this vision so far!

Emily Freeman Jones



Education Committee

- Participated in community events with thousands of people in attendance and provided educational information about the watershed, major pollutants which impact water quality, and how people can become more involved.
- Spoke at 25 meetings including neighborhood and homeowner associations, civic groups, church groups, and conferences. Over 2,500 people attended these meetings.
- The Big Splash, our e-newsletter, is sent monthly to over 600 friends, with information on watershed issues and events. Past issues can be viewed at www.gillscreekwatershed.org.
- The GCWA participated in and organized a variety of clean-ups focused on trash and debris removal. Seven clean-up events were conducted throughout the watershed during FY 2013-14. Over 130 bags of trash and 11 bags of recycling were removed using entirely GCWA volunteers.

Membership Committee

- Increased our membership base to 286.
- Brought in \$5,600 in membership income
- Partnered with Rocky Branch Watershed Alliance and the Smith Branch Watershed Alliance to present the most successful Wine for Water event to date.

Financial Stewardship Committee

- Secured a five year pledge of \$15,000 from EDENS
- Exceeded the FY 2013-14 fundraising goal of \$19,500

Technical Committee

- Reviewed the technical aspects of stormwater projects of Richland County and the City of Columbia including the Owens Field Taxiway Extension, Devil's Ditch Project, the Little Jackson Creek Mitigation Project, and Owens Field Park BMP and Education Project
- Worked with the City of Forest Acres and Richland County to review and establish a buffer ordinance for Forest Acres
- Investigated formal complaints/concerns from citizens regarding potential violations of stormwater regulations



Erich Miarka explaining watersheds at Brennen School.



Adopt A Highway cleanup in cooperation with Heathwood Hall



GCWA window display at Mast General Store



Wine For Water on Earthday with Rocky Branch Watershed Alliance and Smith Branch Watershed Alliance at Senate's End

- Provided input to Richland School District 2 for a proposed new elementary school in an environmentally sensitive area of the watershed

Special Projects:

Middle Watershed Master Plan

Beginning in 2012 with a grant from the Richland County Conservation Commission, the GCWA was able to design a Master Plan of the portion of Gills Creek extending from Kilbourne Road south to Shop Road. This plan details opportunities for a greenway, stream restoration, kayak canoe launches, and stormwater best management practices (BMP) along Gills Creek. GCWA is now working to implement portions of this plan.

Owens Field Park BMP and Education Project

The GCWA, working in coordination with Richland County, was awarded a 319 nonpoint source pollution reduction grant from the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control. Grant funds are being used to construct three bioretention cells at Owens Field Park that will capture and infiltrate stormwater before entering Devil's Ditch and Gills Creek.

City of Columbia Consent Decree and Supplemental Environmental Project

The GCWA helped structure the Supplemental Environmental Project (SEP) portion of the EPA/City of Columbia consent decree. A portion of SEP funds will be used for on-the-ground restoration projects and stormwater BMPs along Gills Creek.

Environmental Education Kiosks

The GCWA was awarded a grant from the Richland County Conservation Commission to install three environmental education kiosks around the Gills Creek Watershed. These kiosks will educate the public on the impairments of Gills Creek Watershed and what they can do to help.



Touring the Owens Field Park improvement project



Middle Watershed project rendering of the Crowson Road area

2013-14 Board, Staff & Partners

2013-14 Board of Directors

- Emily Freeman Jones, *President*
- Sam Agee, *Secretary*
- Dan Tufford, *Treasurer*
- Lewis Kirk, *Technical Committee Chair*
- Sam Agee, *Membership Committee Chair*
- Tamera Warren, *Education Committee Chair*
- Thom Bristol
- David Cowen
- Michael Criss

- Alicia de Myhrer
- D. Michael Kelly
- Carol Kososki
- Valerie Marcil
- Pete Mayers
- Julie Mayson
- Mary McIntosh
- Judy Timmons
- Mark Watson

Advisory Board Members

- James B. Atkins, *Richland County*
- Mary Caflisch, *Carolina Clear, Clemson University Extension Services*
- Quinton Epps, *Richland Count Stormwater Division*
- Victoria Kramer, *City of Columbia Engineering Department*
- Tracy Mitchell, *City of Columbia Stormwater Manager*

- Jim Manning, *Richland County Council*
- Carol Roberts, *SCDHEC Saluda & Catawba Watershed Manager*
- Amy Overstreet, *USDA NRCS*
- Nancy Stone-Collum, *Richland County Conservation Commission*
- Mullen Taylor, *Mullen Taylor, LLC*

Staff

- Erich Miarka, *Program Coordinator*

Partner Organizations

- Richland County
- City of Columbia
- City of Forest Acres
- Town of Arcadia Lakes
- Richland County Stormwater Consortium/Carolina Clear
- Richland County Conservation Commission
- Keep the Midlands Beautiful

- Intertape Polymer Group
- City of Columbia Climate Protection Action Committee
- Congaree Riverkeeper
- Rocky Branch Watershed Alliance
- River Network
- American Rivers

Sponsors

- Edens
- The Reynolds Family
- McCormick Taylor

- Delta Interests, LLC (Tommy Thomason)
- Jarden Applied Materials
- Ben Arnold

Sponsorship is available at four levels: Champion (\$5000+), Leadership (\$1000), Sponsor (\$500), and Friend (\$250).

Organizational Members

- Cary Lake HOA (46 residents)
- Lake Katharine HOA (86 residents)
- Little Lake Katharine (18 residents)
- Spring Lake HOA (40 residents)

The Gills Creek Watershed Association offers homeowners associations and other organizations in the watershed the option to join for all their members. Organizational members join as a single entity using organizational funds. All members of the organization receive full benefits of membership in the GCWA.

Donors

Sue Barnes, Palmetto Garden Club, Mr. and Mrs. John Glenn, Frank Cox, Mark Huguley, Will Haltiwanger, William & Mary Keenan, Cornelia McGhee, David Whiteman, Jonathan and Lyssa Harvey, Frank Wiles, Whole Foods (5% day), Candytuft Garden Club, Brockman Elementary PTO, and Les Case

Neighbor Members

Sue Barnes	Henry Nechemias	Ryan Rykaczewski
Barbara Bowers	Jim Olsen	Thomas Thomason
William Dillard	Paul Palmer	Ann Yancey and Michael Tkacik
Barbara & Buford Goff	Lee Phippen	Paul White
Marjorie and Jim Hightower	Mark Van Popering	Stuart White
Jim Manning	Virginia Reynolds	David Whiteman

Partner Members

Gary and Noemi Cadle	Margaret Kherlopian	Nick Propst
Roe David	Cary Lafaye	Mark and Deborah Robertson
Caroline Eastman	Robert Larsen	Chuck Salley
Craig and Denisa Garner	Margaret Mayers	Eric Sevigny
Bernie Gaudi	Carol Mayfield	Kathy Smith
Joseph Geiger	Thomas McCartha	Kathy and Peter Swanson
Cheche and Charlie Goldman	Steve & Susan McInnis	Ed and Polly Tilden
John and Rhonda Grego	David McIntosh	Elmer Whitten
Bill Horton and Mary Major	Carrie McIntosh	Marlene Wilson and Annette Smith
Linda Jackson	Noel and Linda Morphis	
Robert Jackson	Leona Plough	

Individual Members

Dianne and Terry Barnes	Marguerite Frongillo	Edwin and Tracy Jones	Edward Poliakoff
Phil Barnes	Beth Gladden	Tom Kohlsaas	Adelaide Powell
Mark Binkley	Tom Hall	Samuel J. Kopack, Jr.	Nena Powell Rice
Robert Boney	Will Haltiwanger	Carol Krebs	Jacqueline Prueitt
Susan Brownlee	John Hart	William Latham	Mark and Jane Salley
Les Case	Jonathan and Lyssa Harvey	Violet Lindstrom	Barbara Slice
H. Burton Case, Jr	Alix Hay	Richard McMackin	Linda Stewart
Gail Cole	Sandra Van Hout	Andy Miller	Braden Stoneburner
Frank Cox	Carolyn Hudson	Amy Moore	Douglas Truslow
Kirstin Dow	Belinda James	Cornelia McGhee	Dee Dee Williams
Dayna Ducote	Mel Jenkins	Maria Platanis	Ed Wrightson

\$50 Neighbor Membership includes discounted event tickets, t-shirt or grocery bag, a bumper sticker, and the monthly The Big Splash e-newsletter

\$25 Partner Membership - includes a t-shirt or grocery bag, a bumper sticker, and the monthly The Big Splash e-newsletter

\$15 Individual Membership - includes a bumper sticker, and the monthly The Big Splash e-newsletter

Hamilton, McKinney & Moss, Certified Public Accountants, conducted an audit of the Association for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2014 and presented it to the Board of Directors in October. Financial documents are available to be viewed by request.

The Gills Creek Watershed Association

Byrnes Building 430C (office), 712 Main St, EWS 603 (mail), Columbia, SC 29208, 803-727-8326
www.gillscreekwatershed.org