



GILLS CREEK WATERSHED ASSOCIATION

BRIDGE
CLOSED

NO
OUTLET

2015-2016 ANNUAL REPORT



Cover

Forest Lake Place, October 4, 2015, 3pm

This two-page spread

Upper Rockyford Lake and its breached dam with Lower Rockyford Lake in the upper right, October 7.

Photos by Erich Miarka. Thanks to Dominion Resources, Inc for providing the helicopter, and to City Councilman Moe Baddourah for arranging the flight.

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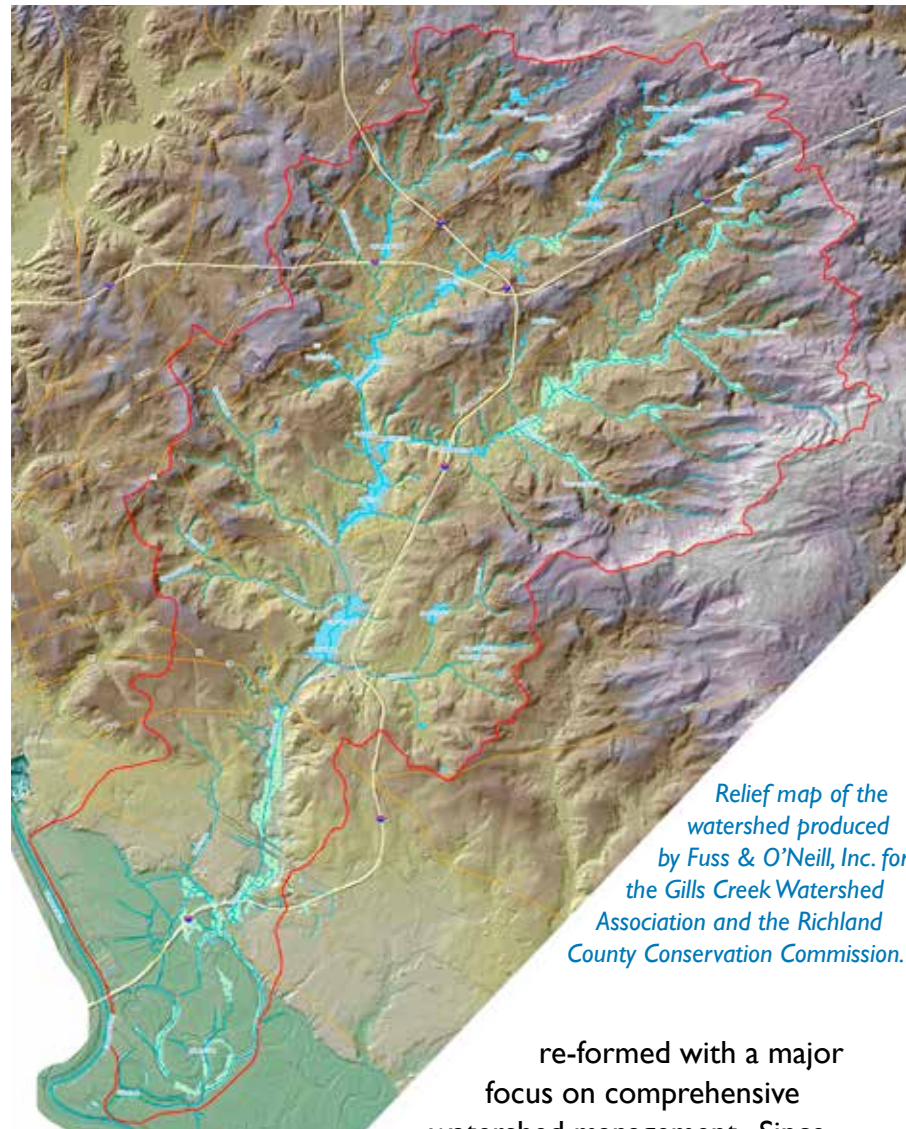
THE GILLS CREEK WATERSHED ANNUAL REPORT FOR FISCAL YEAR JULY 1, 2015 TO JUNE 30, 2016

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 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, the City of Cayce, 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.

The GCWA was originally formed in the late 1990's by a group of citizens that noticed a decline in water quality in the Lake Katharine area. In the late 1999, The GCWA became a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. In 2006, Richland County conducted public outreach meetings in response to pressure from DHEC to do something about the poor water quality in the watershed. With the support of Richland County, in 2006-07 the GCWA



Relief map of the watershed produced by Fuss & O'Neill, Inc. for the Gills Creek Watershed Association and the Richland County Conservation Commission.

re-formed with a major focus on comprehensive watershed management. Since 2007, the GCWA has been working to improve our organizational structure, create a strong and dedicated membership base, implement stream and lake restoration projects, and advocate for policy changes to improve water quality. The Gills Creek Watershed Association Strategic Plan was completed July 2007 and updated in 2015. The Gills Creek Watershed Management Plan in was completed in May 2009. Both those documents and others are available on our web site. Since that time, we have been working implement those plans, and to engage citizens, government, organizations, and businesses in the watershed on how to best protect, restore and manage the watershed to make it an asset to the community.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



In the past year, Gills Creek and Gills Creek Watershed Association went from being little known and misunderstood entities, to suddenly being at the center of one of the worst flooding events in Columbia's history. Our tiny, but well-positioned organization was able to be a reliable source of news and information in the days and weeks following the flood. As the long days of emergency management led to longer-term recovery questions, we were able to help lead the conversation in our community about flood recovery, and how to avoid future disastrous floods. We also led 9 stream and floodplain clean-ups that removed tons of flood debris. Our Executive Director, Erich Miarka, worked tirelessly to provide clear information through our website, monthly

newsletters, and numerous radio, TV, and newspaper articles. He worked behind the scenes with local, state, and federal representatives to help shape policies that will benefit the health of the watershed and our community. As an organization we moved forward with being managers and/or advisers for city, county, state, and federal grants to improve stormwater management, improve water quality, and provide recreational access to Gills Creek. We had another highly successful Wine for Water in the spring, and we saw roughly 30 percent increases in membership and our Big Splash newsletter circulation.

While we have much more growing and work to do, the Columbia area is developing a greater understanding of how watersheds work, and the importance of managing them well. I thank all of our dedicated members for their ongoing commitment to improving our watershed.


Valerie Marcil

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

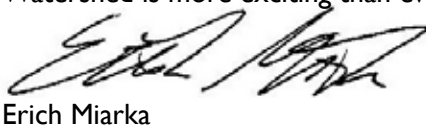


It's been a momentous year for Gills Creek Watershed and our Association. Last year's flood and the subsequent disaster opened our eyes to the potential of Gills Creek. The October flood was devastating for our community but we hope to make some positive, lasting changes for Gills Creek out of it. Never before in the history of our organization have we had this kind of attention and momentum. Now is the time to take advantage every resource available to ensure Gills Creek is given the attention that it deserves. Because of the federal disaster declaration there are millions of dollars available to improve our community and make it more resilient against future flooding. Many projects that help reduce flooding and flood risk have the added benefit of improving water quality too, something that is sorely needed in Gills Creek. GCWA has been an advocate for sensible redevelopment and restoration of floodplains throughout the disaster recovery process. Thanks to these efforts and the direction of Richland County's Blue Ribbon Flood Commission there will likely be over 60 homes and over

a dozen commercial properties bought out and turned back into greenspace. Our work is far from over, however. GCWA will continue to advocate for smart growth and redevelopment and whenever possible, restore floodplains back to their natural state.

Next year will be another exciting year as these federal disaster recovery projects start making their way into the construction phase. We also look forward to the construction of the Gills Creek Greenway which is slated to begin in 2017. This walking and biking trail will reintroduce people to Gills Creek and turn the Creek back into a community asset. Urban stream restoration can help clean our water, reduce flooding, provide alternative transportation, and promote economic development in the surrounding areas.

Thank you to all of our members and supporters that have helped make our work possible. We rely heavily on you all for fundraising, volunteer efforts, and advocacy work. Our membership is larger than ever and continues to grow. Serious watershed improvements are well within our grasp and momentum is building. The future of Gills Creek Watershed is more exciting than ever!


Erich Miarka

GILLS CREEK WATERSHED

A connected system at the breaking point — let's manage it together.

Sunday, Oct. 4, 2015

- Pine Tree Lake dam failed
- Cary Lake dam failed
- Bridge at Rockbridge Rd. washed out
- Spring Lake dam overtopped
- Forest Lake dam overtopped
- Around 3am, Semmes Lake dam on Ft. Jackson failed
- Lake Katharine dam overtopped
- Water came surging down Wildcat Creek

This storm created a tipping point of extreme conditions — reported to be 3-5' over Lake Katharine at times — with catastrophic consequences.

WHAT HAPPENED AT GILLS CREEK:

- 20 inches of rainfall based on a Forest Acres rain gauge
- 16 inches fell in just 6 hours early Sunday morning
- Several major lakes in the watershed lowered their reservoir levels in anticipation of the storm
- That one day (Sunday) was the wettest day in the history of Columbia

Tuesday, Oct. 6, 2015

Multiple false reports of the Windsor Dam failing. Windsor Dam is fine, as is the Upper Windsor Lake Dam (Parliament Lake).

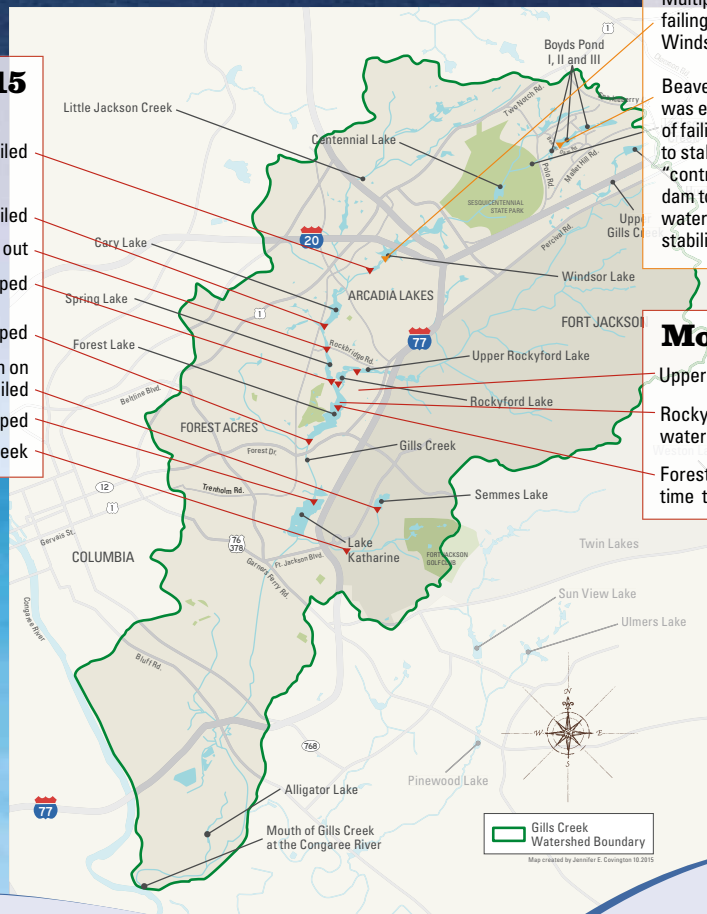
Beaver Dam (Boyd's Pond) off Polo Road was experiencing erosion and was at risk of failing. Crews worked all day Tuesday to stabilize the dam and dug an emergency "controlled breach" around the side of the dam to alleviate pressure and move more water downstream. The Beaver Dam was stabilized and is not expected to fail.

Monday, Oct. 5, 2015

Upper Rockyford Lake dam failed

Rockyford Lake dam failed sending water into Forest Lake

Forest Lake had lowered enough by this time to buffer the excess water



THE GILLS CREEK WATERSHED

ASSOCIATION IS AN ADVOCATE for improved conditions in the watershed, through smart land use, implementation of innovative storm water practices and low-impact development. Over the past 50 years, the network of small creeks and various lakes in its 75-square-mile area has handled increasing amounts of stormwater run-off, leading to stream bank erosion, degraded water quality and habitat, increased flooding, and sediment build-up in lakes and creek bottoms.

The Association is a non-profit 501(c)3 environmental community organization. It does not have any regulatory role or authority, but rather seeks to increase awareness, educate residents, and lead the community conversation on improved resilience of the creek system.

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THIS DISASTER, WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP, AND HOW TO BECOME MORE INVOLVED, VISIT WWW.GILLSCREEKWATERSHED.ORG.



EDENS
This ad was funded in part by a donation from EDENS and Cross Hill Market, proud sponsors of the Gills Creek Watershed Association.

This visual recap appeared in The State newspaper on Sunday, October 19. It shows the watershed with callouts noting events during the flooding.

The Flood of 2015

Early in October 2015, weather forecasters began warning of a confluence of events that could possibly result in unprecedented precipitation in South Carolina. The SC Department of Health and Environmental Control issued an alert to dam owners on October 1 to "take the appropriate steps to safely lower the water level in their reservoir." Many lake owners in the watershed did just that. GCWA had been monitoring the situation and was in contact with residents and government officials. We also began updating our social media (Facebook and Twitter) and our web site with alerts and updates. On the morning of October 4, Executive Director Erich Miarka began surveying the conditions in the watershed on the status of dams, roads, and neighborhoods with photographs, in some cases correcting erroneous reports by local news outlets. Over the next days and weeks, we worked closely with residents, city and county officials, and relief organizations to provide information and assistance. It became obvious that very few people understood the Watershed and how it works, including the tributaries and many lakes and ponds.

In the following months, GCWA continued to meet with individuals, groups and government agencies to chart a path to recovery that will lead to better conditions in the watershed which will reduce flooding impacts, increase resiliency, and improve water quality and quality of life.

GCWA has been serving as a representative on Richland County's Blue Ribbon Commission which is tasked with identifying flood recovery projects. These projects range from floodplain buyouts to infrastructure improvements and stream restoration projects.



Rockbridge Road, 11am October 4. Photo Erich Miarka.

GCWA has been actively advocating for strict enforcement of the floodplain development ordinance. Wherever possible, GCWA pushes for floodplain and creek restoration. This includes not allowing several businesses to build back directly adjacent to Gills Creek.

Gills Creek Watershed Association's 2015 Flood Response

Guest Opinion in The State - November 8, 2015

As individuals, members of the Gills Creek Watershed Association ache for those whose lives and property have been upended by the unprecedented flood event. We especially mourn for the lost lives. And we extend our thanks and gratitude for the local, state and federal responders, as well as the jon-boat navy and other volunteers who worked tirelessly to help those in distress and to begin to return order to our community.

As an association — formed in the 1990s to work with Richland County, Columbia, Forest Acres, Arcadia Lakes, Fort Jackson and Cayce to restore and protect

the watershed — we call for equal dedication and coordination in developing plans, policy and funding that will result in a safer and healthier watershed. While flooding has previously been a problem in limited areas, this storm event has been a game-changer in many ways.

Today residents better understand the interconnected nature of the Gills Creek system of lakes, ponds and streams. Perhaps less clear is the fact that the watershed includes more than 75 square miles of land and 125,000 residents. This entire area collects and concentrates all its rainfall into the creek system,

from Two Notch Road over to Fort Jackson and the VA Hospital, and from Wildewood to the Congaree. So while the current focus has been on the dams and lakes, let's recognize that the challenge is much larger.

In a healthy watershed, stormwater has adequate opportunities to soak in before concentrated run-off becomes a problem. When 20 percent of a watershed area is impervious, stream health is considered poor, and run-off becomes more critical. In Columbia, conventional suburban development over the past 75 years has encroached on the natural floodplain. More than 30 percent of the Gills Creek watershed is developed, and much of the floodplain and even the floodway has been built upon. We have squeezed the Gills Creek system to the breaking point. Throw in the climate science that predicts more violent weather patterns in the future, and we indeed have a new normal to plan for.



Cary Lake dam from the east side, noon October 4. Photo by O Alicia de Myhrer.

For this reason, we have considered various approaches to integrated system management. One example with merit is an overlay district — a public watershed commission, akin to the Richland County Conservation Commission or the East Richland Public Service District. Such an entity could take on the long-term management of the creek system, handling dam maintenance and upgrades, lake dredging and stream restoration projects. Improved stormwater management, state-of-the-art-hydraulic flood-gates and an early warning system could be implemented. A state or county water infrastructure authority might

serve to accomplish these goals as well.

Lakes provide significant public value, and there is a precedent for spending public funds to enhance and improve the buffering or reservoir capacity that they can provide. Lakes trap pollution that originates upstream, and public roads built over private dams improve access across the watershed.



Upper Rockyford Lake dam is still good, 1pm October 4. Photo Erich Miarka.

The Gills Creek watershed has had swamps drained, dams built and streams channelized since the 1800s. The creeks and lakes have been a source of power,



Forest Lake dam overtopped but holding due to armoring, 1pm October 4. Photo Erich Miarka.

recreation and drinking water. The Garners Ferry area where the most devastating flooding occurred was a swamp that was drained and the creek channelized around 1917. Surely this history of alteration and

impairment can offer us some lessons moving forward.



Devine St looking east, 10:30am October 4. Photo Erich Miarka.

Nature is indifferent to human activity. The rain will fall, creeks will swell, and floodplains will flood.

Gills Creek Watershed Management After The 2015 Flood

Guest Opinion in The State - June 26, 2016

The October floods were an eye-opening event that cost lives and billions of dollars in damage. This may have been a 1,000-year storm event, but that does not mean we will never see anything like it again. It is imperative that we find a comprehensive solution to myriad problems surrounding Gills Creek Watershed, with flooding certainly at the forefront.

This is a challenge that individuals and even neighborhoods cannot address on their own; it requires a mutual, shared responsibility across the watershed.

A special purpose tax district, approved for one lake community and under consideration for several others in Forest Acres, is an opportunity to provide some stability and funding for selected lake and dam projects.

For some private lakes, a reversion to natural stream corridors may be a solution. But the lakes and dams are not the only problems in the watershed. In fact, the dam failures were a symptom of a much larger problem: the overall

We should not try to control nature but instead give it the space it deserves. Let's manage the lakes and streams cooperatively and share the risks and rewards. Let's use FEMA mitigation funds to buy out flooded properties built too close to the creeks or river. Let's peel back the pavement. Let's keep future development out of flood-prone areas and restore stream buffers wherever possible. Let's re-create natural green corridors for habitat and recreation in the floodplain.

Like Nashville after its flood and Greensburgh, Kansas, after its tornado, we can learn and respond. This disaster gives us an opportunity to rebuild in a responsible and resilient way by implementing solutions throughout the watershed, making Gills Creek, its lakes and tributaries an asset to the entire community.

Valerie Marcil, President of the Gills Creek Watershed Association

land-development pattern and corresponding stormwater runoff in Gills Creek Watershed.

Gills Creek and its tributaries no longer function like a natural stream would during high flows and floods. There is not much undeveloped floodplain



Rosewood Dr looking at Midlands Tech from the upper entrance to Beecliff Dr, 12:30pm October 4. Photo Lewis Kirk.

left for floodwater to safely disperse. Instead, Gills Creek is bottle-necked, and during heavy storms, the bottle breaks.

One third of the land area in the watershed — about 25 square miles — is covered by roofs and pavement. Such high rates of impervious



Forest Dr looking west, 1pm October 4. Photo Erich Miarka.

surfaces lead to stormwater runoff, and that excess and often polluted water leads to trouble downstream. Historically, the lakes have buffered many effects of runoff, benefiting the entire watershed. During the floods, the lakes and dams were not enough to hold back this deluge.

The stormwater problem is not a new problem, nor is it unique to our area. This is a legacy of



Upper Rockyford Lake dam breaches, 3pm October 5. Photo Erich Miarka.

decades of development during a time when natural drainage systems were poorly understood,

and eventually compromised. The typical practice was to get the water off-site as quickly as possible. The consequences, multiplied over time, are often disastrous for people and places downstream.

One strategy for a more broad-based approach to watershed issues would be to implement a stormwater utility fee in Richland County. Many municipalities around the country have implemented such programs, including Columbia, although at a relatively low rate. Stormwater



Remains of the TitleMax, 4:30pm October 5. Photo Erich Miarka.

utility fees are typically assessed on the amount of impervious surface on site, so that the generators of stormwater pollution pay for the runoff they create rather than shifting the costs to the rest of us. This fee can be paired with credits that provide incentives for reducing the negative impacts of stormwater.

The combination of the fee and fee credits encourages developers and property owners to reduce their impervious surfaces and runoff.

Stormwater utility fee revenues should be used to repair and upgrade aging stormwater infrastructure, stabilize stream banks and restore flood plains. This would improve water quality, provide wildlife habitat and natural green space and reduce flood risk to people and property. It could be the start we need to get rid of that Gills Creek bottleneck.

Another broad-based approach would involve the cooperative management of individual lakes that recognizes their costs, risks and benefits. More stringent review of redevelopment in floodplain areas also would improve the watershed.

While we work to put the pieces back together, let's think big and holistically by addressing the real cause of our flooding problems. Let's manage Gills Creek Watershed as a whole, not piece by piece. Let's build back smarter or not at all in certain flood-prone areas. Let's restore

floodplains and vegetated buffers around our urban streams so the next time we will not be in harm's way.

We are dealing with the consequences of poor land-use decisions that we have collectively allowed over time and that cannot be reversed overnight.

If we do not deal with this issue now, we are destined to face similar disasters in the future.

Erich Miarka, Executive Director of the Gills Creek Watershed Association

Committee Activities

The GCWA conducts a majority of its work through committees.

Education Committee

The responsibilities of the Education Committee are to reach out to interested citizens and residents to learn about their particular water quality concerns and help them to find solutions. The Education Committee also educates the general public on watershed issues including water quality impairments,



Using the watershed enviroscape teaching tool at the Summer Celebration of Water.

stormwater runoff, and nonpoint source pollution. The Committee meets once a month to organize and strategize for upcoming events and festivals.

Activities of this Committee during FY 2015-2016 include the following:

- GCWA representatives participated in 8 community events with thousands of people in attendance and provided educational information about the

watershed, an interactive EnviroScape watershed model, information about sources of major pollutants which impact water quality, and how people can become more involved.

- GCWA representative spoke at 25 meetings including neighborhood and homeowner associations, civic groups, church groups, and conferences. Over 860 people attended these meetings.
- GCWA Executive Director presented information



After the flood a group of volunteers from the Rosewood neighborhood said they were tired of the trash in the Devine St area. GCWA arranged for a trash pick up and made some progress!

about the GCWA and issues facing it at two conferences, River Rally and SC Conservation Summit.

- The GCWA sent monthly e-newsletters to

approximately 900 people. E-newsletters include information about current and upcoming events, education on stormwater, and acknowledgment of projects and/or volunteers. A newsletter has been sent each month of this fiscal year. The newsletters are on our website at www.gillscreekwatershed.org.

- The GCWA organized and led a variety of clean-ups focused on trash and debris removal. Eight clean-up events were led by GCWA throughout the watershed during FY 2015-2016 including lake and road cleanups (near the Creek). Tons of flood related debris and litter were removed during these cleanups with a total volunteer force of 162 people.
- The GCWA participated and shared information at SCDHEC's first ever "Dam Summit". GCWA representatives provided stormwater and flood related resources with the 150 attendees from across the state.
- Organized and led a field trip for GCWA Board and friends of the association to several key sites in the watershed including the Little Jackson Creek restoration site, Elementary 20, and the new Richland County Magistrate's Court. Each of these sites features some stormwater related BMP.

Membership Committee

The responsibilities of the Membership Committee include recruiting new individual and organizational members and promoting membership renewal. The Membership Committee also organizes fundraisers and membership activities.

Activities of the Membership Committee during FY 2015-2016 include:

- Grew email list and The Big Splash newsletter contact list from 700 to 900
- Growing the membership base to 420 members, the highest membership count since GCWA's inception and a 30% increase from last year. Organizational members include the Cary Lake Homeowner's Association, Lake Katharine Homeowner's Association, Little Lake Katharine Homeowners Association, Forest Land Company, and Spring Lake Company,
- Organized and held the sixth annual Wine for Water fundraiser event. This year's Wine for Water

brought in 320 attendees and raised \$9,800 for the Association. This year GCWA partnered with Rocky Branch Watershed Alliance and Smith Branch Watershed Alliance for Wine for Water to grow the fundraising potential and strengthen organizational partnerships.



The sixth annual Wine For Water fundraiser celebrated Earthday with excellent food from local restaurants and a live and silent auction with items donated by local businesses and the community.

- Produced a Gills Creek calendar distributed them for free to over 100 citizens of Gills Creek Watershed. This calendar shows citizens that Gills Creek, its lakes, and tributaries have potential to be a community asset and should be treated as such.

Financial Stewardship Committee

The responsibilities of the Financial Stewardship Committee include advising the GCWA Board on financial matters and reporting, and seeking new and sustained sources of revenue.

Activities of the Financial Stewardship Committee during FY 2015-2016 include:

- Advocated for and received funding for continuation of facilitation services for GCWA
- Developed an annual budget and fundraising plan
- Exceeded fundraising goal of \$30,200
- Continued multi-year pledge from development firm EDENS
- Secured 5 new business sponsorships

Technical Committee

The responsibilities of the Technical Committee

include reviewing and coordinating technical projects in the watershed, reviewing and responding to regulatory matters such as TMDLs, NPDES and MS4 permits, identifying potential restoration and water quality improvements, investigating citizen water quality complaints, and providing technical guidance to the Board, Executive, and Educational Committees. One valuable role of the Technical Committee is to serve as a clearinghouse for staff and project information between our partner jurisdictions.



Richland School District 2 Elementary 20 site plan.

Activities of the Technical Committee during FY 2015-2016 include:

- 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, Owens Field Park BMP and Education Project, and the City of Columbia

Special Projects

Gills Creek Greenway A

Beginning in 2012 with a grant from the Richland County Conservation Commission, the GCWA was able to hire a consulting team to design a greenway and blueway Master Plan for the portion of Gills Creek extending from Kilbourne Road south to Shop Road. This plan was presented to City officials and staff. Subsequently, the County's Penny Transportation Sales Tax passed and this greenway was funded in

Supplemental Environmental Projects

- Hosted presentations from and provided input to the South Carolina Emergency Management Division (SCEMD), the Carolina United Resource Group (a SC Department of Mental Health project), the Center for Resilience Studies Network, the SCDHEC Dam Safety Program, Heritage Engineering (engineering consultants for several of the breached dams), and USDA's NRCS Emergency Watershed Protection Program.
- Investigated formal complaints/concerns from citizens regarding potential violations of stormwater regulations
- Provided input to Richland School District 2 for a proposed new elementary school in an environmentally sensitive area of the watershed



Tour of the Richland County District 2 Elementary 20 construction site near the confluence of Little Jackson Creek and Jackson Creek.

- Identified opportunities for stream and floodplain restoration projects in the Watershed, including along Crowson Road

that plan. GCWA serves on the Greenway Advisory Committee for the Penny Project Development Team and has been working with the City and key landowners to ensure project success.

Owens Field Park BMP and Education Project

The GCWA, working in coordination with Richland County, applied for and 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 four bioretention cells at Owens Field Park that will capture and infiltrate stormwater before entering Devil's Ditch and Gills Creek. This project is currently under construction and will be completed in 2017.

Devil's Ditch and Little Jackson Creek Mitigation Project

Because of a taxiway extension at Hamilton-Owens Airport over 750 linear feet of Devil's Ditch must be buried in a culvert. GCWA worked with Richland County Stormwater, the Airport Commission, and



Ward Marotti of WK Dickson & Co., explains features of the Little Jackson Creek mitigation project in the Spring Valley neighborhood.

the consulting firm working on the project to identify potential mitigation sites. A site along Little Jackson Creek in the upper portion of Gills Creek Watershed was selected as the mitigation site. GCWA fully supported this project and recommended it to the Army Corps of Engineers. Construction is currently underway for this project and will be completed in 2017.

City of Columbia Consent Decree and Supplemental Environmental Projects

The GCWA helped structure the Supplemental Environmental Project (SEP) portion of the EPA/City of Columbia consent decree. A portion of SEP funds are being used for on-the-ground restoration projects and stormwater BMPs along Gills Creek. During FY 2015-2016 GCWA staff and volunteers have been working with the City to finalize the design of these BMPs. GCWA has also been working with property owners for easement acquisition.

EPA Environmental Justice Small Grant

In FY 2015-2016 GCWA was awarded an EPA Environmental Justice Small Grant to conduct a fish survey and mercury assessment in the lower portion of the Gills Creek Watershed. This area is commonly fished by nearby residents – a traditionally underserved community. It is known that many of these fishers consume their catch. No thorough mercury risk assessment has been done in this portion of the watershed so the exact level of mercury in these fish is unknown. This grant will discover what the exact level of mercury in fish tissue is and communicate those results to the effected community. This project is ongoing but so far surveys have been issued to local fishers and some fish samples have already been collected.

Additional Outreach

- GCWA Executive Director wrote a guest column in The State newspaper regarding for stormwater related issues ranging from water quality to flooding. The State is viewed by as many as 70,000 people.
- Following the flood of October 2015, the GCWA published an article in the Free Times, The State, and Columbia Star newspapers. The article included a map of the watershed and described a timeline of events relating to the October 2015 flood.
- Throughout FY 2015-2016 GCWA participated in a series of radio interviews for SC Public Radio. Subjects for these stories ranged from flooding to stormwater management to water quality problems and sources. These interviews were broadcast statewide.
- The GCWA Facebook page was heavily visited following the October flood. The GCWA Facebook page was a source of accurate news and information and was used by people from all over the country. The Facebook reach in October 2015 alone on the Gills Creek page was 143,316 people.
- The GCWA newsletter, The Big Splash, was very popular in FY 2015-2016. At least one newsletter was sent each month, and some months had several newsletters. The Big Splash was sent to over 900 email contacts each month.

2015-16 Board, Staff, Partners, Sponsors & Organizations

Board of Directors

Valerie Marcil, *President*
 Alicia de Myhrer, *Vice President*
 Sam Agee, *Secretary, Membership Committee Chair*
 Mary McInstosh, *Treasurer*
 Lewis Kirk, *Technical Committee Chair*
 Tamera Warren, *Education Committee Chair*
 Emily Freeman Jones, *Immediate Past President*

Judy Timmons
 Pete Mayers
 Julie Mayson
 Ann Yancey
 Rob Robertson
 Lyle Darnall
 D. Michael Kelly

Jeffrey L. Dudycha
 Madilyn Fletcher
 Carol Kososki
 Gregory Sprouse
 Judy Timmons

Staff

Erich Miarka, *Executive Director*

Advisory Board Members

Jim Manning, *Richland County Council*
 Mark Huguley, *Mayor, Arcadia Lakes*
 Michael Jaspers, *City of Columbia Stormwater Manager*
 Quinton Epps, *Richland County Conservation Commission*
 Nancy Stone-Collum, *Richland County Conservation Commission*

Michael L. Hipp, P.E., *Ft Jackson*
 Carol Roberts, *SCDHEC Saluda & Catawba Watershed Manager*
 Elliott Powell, *Past President and Board Member Emeritus*
 Karen Jackson, *Carolina Clear, Clemson University Extension Services*
 Mullen Taylor, *Mullen Taylor, LLC*

Partner Organizations

Richland County
 City of Columbia
 City of Forest Acres
 Town of Arcadia Lakes
 Richland County Conservation Commission
 Richland County Stormwater Consortium/Carolina Clear
 Congaree Riverkeeper

Sustainable Midlands
 Rocky Branch Watershed Alliance
 Keep the Midlands Beautiful
 Intertape Polymer Group
 City of Columbia Climate Protection Action Committee
 River Network
 American Rivers

Sponsors

Aetna Foundation Matching Grant - c.o. John and Carol Kososki
 EDENS
 First Citizens Bank
 Forest Lake Property Owners Association

LS3P Associates
 Thompson Construction Group
 Wildlands Engineering
 WK Dickson

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

Organizational Members

Cary Lake Homeowners' Association (46 residents), Lake Katharine Homeowners' Association (86 residents), Little Lake Katharine Homeowners' Association (18 Residents), Spring Lake Company (39 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 minus membership gifts.

Hamilton, McKinney & Moss, Certified Public Accountants, conducted an audit of the Association for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2016. Financial documents are available to be viewed by request.

Donors

In Memory of Nat Salley and Faye Levinson

Sarah Vann and Danny Bonds
Douglas Woodbrow

In Memory of Sara W. Faulks
Debi and Tom Poole

Van Anderson
Annette H Boette
Stacey Brennan

Gerrit Jobsis and Vicki Bunnell
Meredith Carlen
Jason Craig
Katherine David
Ruth Ann Dean
Beverly DuBose
Will Haltiwanger
Melinda Harrill
James Hendrick
John and Martha Hudgens

David Kulbersh
Susan Leonard
Patricia Mason
Marie Meglen
Chad Messinger
Edie McNeish
An Posner
Ed and Kathy Robinson
Kevin Ryan
Jane and Mark Salley

Findlay Salter
Bill Stangler
Kerry Stubbs
Sarah Taylor
Roy and Dann Thomas
Brie Turner-McGrievy
JoAnn Turnquist
Tracy Wales
Robert Weyeneth

Members

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Matt and Rebecca Agee
Tara Allden
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Robert Askins
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Frank Baker
John Balaam
Chris Barnes
Sue Barnes
Keith and Laura Barron
Martha and Sterling Beckman
Mark Binkley
Annette Boette
Carol Boggs
Robert Boney
Matt Bowers
William Brennan
Jerry Bright
Susan Brownlee
Eric Buff
Robert Bunch
Les Case
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John Cavanagh
Anthony Centola
John Clark
Leslie Cotter
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