

# RIVER SPEAK

NOV/DEC 2024



## It's the Season of Giving

Your donations provide critical funding for programs that protect fishable, swimmable, drinkable water for our families, our economy, and our future. Your donations, of any amount, will help us fight to protect your rivers.

## ONLINE AUCTION NOVEMBER 18 - DECEMBER 2

We're hosting an online auction, offering lots of great gifts for yourself, your family, and your friends!

Every bid helps support our Riverkeepers' work to: safeguard clean water, defend floodplains and wetlands, protect vulnerable communities, and partner for sustainable stewardship.

Scan the QR Code



Or visit:

<https://tinyurl.com/WinyahRivers>

# Meet our new Waccamaw Riverkeeper Preston Kelly



Born and raised in Darlington County, Preston has a deep-rooted passion for our local waterways, having spent his childhood fishing and exploring the Lynches, Wateree, and Santee rivers. A graduate of Coastal Carolina University with a BS in Marine Science and a MS in Coastal Marine and Wetland Studies, he is dedicated to protecting, conserving, and advocating for healthy freshwater and saltwater systems.

**Join us in welcoming Preston to the team!**

# OUR TEAM



**JEFF CURRIE**

Lumber Riverkeeper  
LumberRK@  
winyahivers.org  
(910) 668-0372



**ERIN DONMOYER**

Black-Sampit Riverkeeper  
BlackSampitRK@  
winyahivers.org  
(907) 301-3687



**PRESTON KELLY**

Waccamaw Riverkeeper  
Riverkeeper@  
winyahivers.org  
(843) 309-6385

Jeff is busy engaging Lumber River communities in cleaning up legacy pollution and dealing with new and emerging threats. Jeff's work includes advocating for PFAs cleanup at a Lumberton site, and challenging the expansion of biogas projects, the threats created for communities and the greenwashing by the industry. Jeff is also working with UNC's Institute for the Environment to offer well water sampling in Robeson County and with UNC Pembroke for surface water sampling. Jeff has realized significant success, including with the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina.

Erin has been busy with activities at our Rocky Point Community Forest, assisting the Chicora Tribe with establishing a Tribal Ceremonial Space and planning for a medicinal native plant garden. She is actively engaged with the State Park Network and working with communities to educate and address their concerns. Erin has successfully installed 2 Divirod sensors on the Black River to provide real-time data on water levels. Erin is actively investigating PFAs contamination in her rivers, part of a research project with CCU/Seagrant and Waterkeepers Carolina.

Preston is getting his feet wet, literally, involved in water quality monitoring and litter cleanups. He is working with our student interns to get to know the Waccamaw river accesses and reconnect with our adopters there. Preston is joining our PFAs Team, working with CCU researchers on a Seagrant project, to investigate how flooding impacts the distribution of contaminants in our riverine communities, including the Bucksport community. His climate resiliency work includes a focus on protecting floodplain/wetlands in the Upper Waccamaw in Horry County.

# OUR TEAM



**DYLAN COLEMAN**  
PeeDee/Lynches Rivers  
Project Coordinator  
PeeDeeLynchesPC@  
winyahivers.org  
(843) 289-0620

Dylan has recruited community volunteers to our Adopt-a-Landing litter cleanup program and SC Adopt-a-Stream to monitor water quality in the Lynches and the Pee Dee Rivers. He is part of the PFAs study team on the Big Pee Dee. He actively defends wetlands in his watersheds (e.g., Little Pee Dee Most Endangered River) and serves on the Board of the Lynches River Conservation Fund for land protections.



**DEBRA BUFFKIN**  
Executive Director  
ExecutiveDirector@  
winyahivers.org  
O: (843) 349-4007  
C: (843) 340-0163

Debra leads our team to ensure we are meeting our mission, safeguarding clean water and healthy communities. Debra is building our stakeholder relationships to ensure sustainable watershed stewardship, participating in numerous committees (e.g., Pee Dee River Basin Council)



**Evan Murph**  
Fall Intern



**CHRISTINE ELLIS**  
Deputy Director  
Christine@  
winyahivers.org  
(843) 340-0163

Christine supports Debra and our team, raising funds through grants and our campaigns to ensure that our Riverkeepers have the resources they need to protect our rivers and support our communities' needs for access to clean water for drinking, recreation and a vibrant economy.



**Paige Sullivan**  
Fall Intern

# FUN ON THE RIVER

## RIVER PADDLES

Join us for a river paddle and experience the beauty of our local waterways!

Check out our Events Calendar on our website for paddling opportunities near you.



In every walk with  
nature one  
receives far more  
than he seeks.

John Muir



## PONTOON TOURS

We are partnering with Waccamaw Outfitters in Conway to offer pontoon tours on the Waccamaw.

Call Captain Matt  
@ 843-488-3121 to reserve  
a spot on one of the tours.

# LITTER-FREE RIVERS

## RIVER CLEANUPS

We're partnering with our communities, including our Riverkeeper Adopt-a-Landing groups, to clean up our local river landings! Join us (we recommend long pants and closed toe shoes). We'll provide gloves, grabbers, and trash bags.



Remaining Fall Dates:

Monday, November 18th: Bucksport Marina

Monday, December 2nd: Wachesaw Landing

\*All Cleanups are from 1:30-3:00\*

## BUTT OUT!

We are partnering with Keep America Beautiful to rid our rivers of cigarette litter. Our Riverkeepers are installing receptacles at specific public river accesses for convenient cigarette butt disposal.

Together we can BUTT OUT!



# GRATEFUL FOR OUR VOLUNTEERS!



# EVENTS



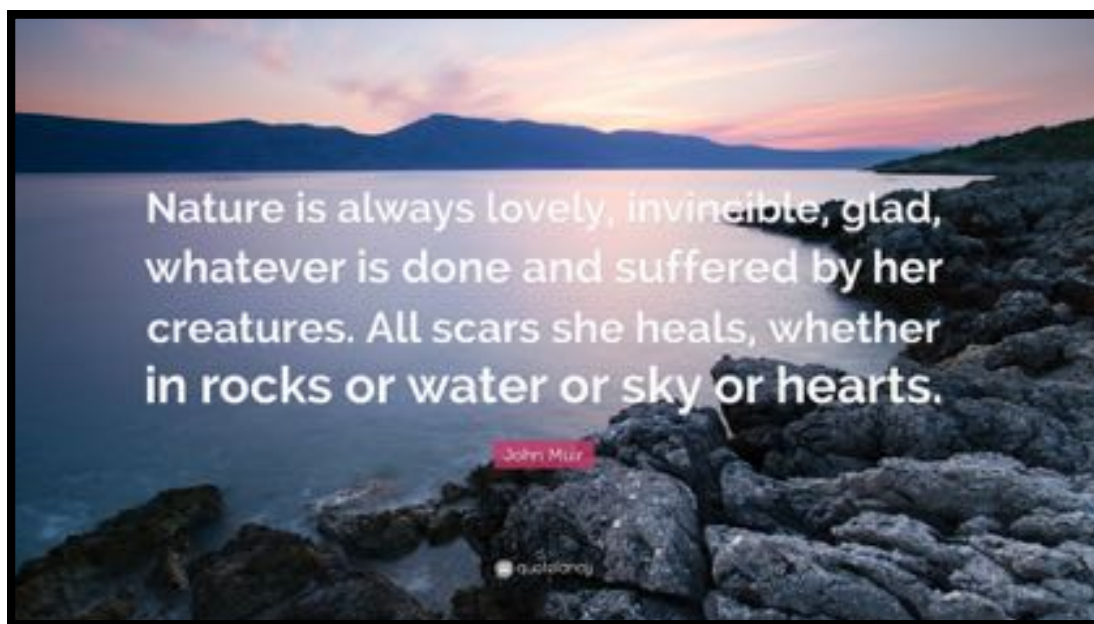
## OYSTER ROAST/ RIVER CELEBRATION

**Save the Date!**

**Saturday, March 22nd**

**We'll celebrate our rivers  
together!**

**More details coming soon.**



## CITIZEN SCIENCE

We partner with SC  
Department of Environmental  
Services to train volunteers to  
help monitor the health and  
quality of our waterways.



[www.scadoptastream.org](http://www.scadoptastream.org)



# HOLIDAY GIVING

From now through December 31st,  
join our family of river lovers.

Your year end donations provide critical funding for our  
Riverkeeper programs in 2025.

Scan the QR code  
or at  
[winyahivers.org/donations](http://winyahivers.org/donations)



Donate \$100  
Receive a free t-shirt!



# ANNUAL PHOTO CONTEST

We had another amazing photography contest, with many wonderful photographs entered that show the beauty and splendor of our greater Winyah Bay watershed. Please enjoy these amazing photographs from our winners!

<https://youtu.be/jiOp0ZHB9r4>



**Best In Show**  
**"Big Itch"**  
**Anthony Morano**



**Scenic 1st Place**  
**"Wacca Wache Marina"**  
**Robert Steffens**



**Georgetown County 1st Place**  
**"In Flight"**  
**Mary Hardee**



**Wildlife 1st Place**  
**"Blue Crab Special"**  
**Bronnie Fisher**



## Winyah Rivers Alliance

EIN 57-1118288

*A 501c3 nonprofit organization serving the rivers of the greater Winyah Bay watershed*

### STAFF

**Debra Buffkin**

Executive Director

**Christine Ellis**

Deputy Director

**Preston Kelly**

Waccamaw RIVERKEEPER®

**Jefferson Currie II**

Lumber RIVERKEEPER®

**Erin Donmoyer**

Black-Sampit RIVERKEEPER®

**Dylan Coleman**

Pee Dee Rivers/Lynches River  
Project Coordinator

**MAILING ADDRESS**

P.O. Box 554  
Conway, SC 29528-0554

### Membership Application Form

Personal Information: Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: Month: \_\_\_\_\_ Day: \_\_\_\_\_

Membership Type (Please Check One): Individual (\$50) Family (\$75) Student/Volunteer Membership (\$25) Individual Life (\$450) Family Life (\$700) Other (*you choose your amount*)

Membership Fee: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (Payable to Winyah Rivers Alliance)

Areas of Interest (Please Check All That Apply): Watershed Protection River Cleanup Environmental Education Advocacy Land Conservation Sustainability Community Outreach Other

Skills or Expertise (Optional): \_\_\_\_\_

**OFFICE LOCATION**

301 Allied Drive  
Conway, SC 29526  
**(843) 349-4007**  
WinyahRivers@winyahrivers.org

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Officers

Dan Hitchcock - President  
Richard Moore - V. President  
Michelle Lewis - Treasurer  
Amy Hill - Secretary

Directors

Tom Badgett  
Betty Gause  
Clay Swenson  
David Shane Lowry  
Reggie Daves  
Dana Shields  
Matt Varnadore  
April Cain

How did you hear about us?  
\_\_\_\_\_

By signing below, I agree to support the mission and objectives of Winyah Rivers Alliance. I understand that my membership dues will contribute to the organization's conservation efforts and community outreach programs.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for joining us in our efforts to protect and preserve the environment for future generations. We look forward to having you as a valued member of our organization!

# OUR NONPROFIT...



## WINYAH RIVERS ALLIANCE

An alliance of RIVERKEEPERS, we protect, preserve, monitor and revitalize the health of the lands and waters of the greater Winyah Bay watershed,

including the Waccamaw, Lumber, Little Pee Dee, Pee Dee, Lynches, Black, and Sampit River watersheds.



Protecting waterways, safeguarding drinking water, and sustaining recreational water resources that Carolinians hold dear.



United in protecting every community's right to drinkable, fishable, swimmable water.

WINYAH RIVERS ALLIANCE  
PO BOX 554, CONWAY, SC 29528-0554  
843-349-4007  
WINYAHRIVERS.ORG