

RIVER SPEAK

DECEMBER 2025



Merry Christmas & Happy New Year from the Winyah Rivers Alliance Team!

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.

Donate today at :

<https://winyahivers.org/donations/>

Let's Celebrate!

Join the Winyah Rivers Alliance organization, staff, and volunteers as we celebrate! January marks our 25th year!

**Hobnob at Hobcaw: Winyah Rivers Alliance
25th Anniversary Celebration and Oyster Roast!
Friday, January 30, 2026 4-7 pm
Kimbel Lodge at Hobcaw Barony**

Tickets available now on our website blog posts tab or visit:
<https://winyahiversfoundation-bloom.kindful.com/e/hobnob-at-hobcaw-wra-25th-river-celebration-and-oyster-roast->

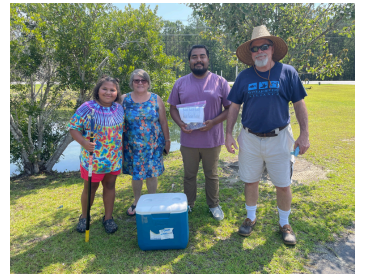
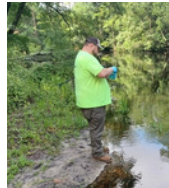


OUR YEAR IN REVIEW & AN EXCITING YEAR AHEAD!



GRATEFUL FOR OUR VOLUNTEERS!

The accomplishments of Winyah Rivers Alliance in 2025 would not have been possible without the extraordinary dedication of our volunteers. Your commitment to our mission has driven a year of incredible progress. We are deeply grateful for your passion, hard work, and unwavering partnership in achieving a healthier watershed for all.



THANK YOU, ANDY QUATTLEBAUM AND BLACKWELL FAMILY FOUNDATION, FOR THE KAYAKS & TRAILER!

The generous donation of 12 Kayaks and a Kayak Trailer were donated for the purpose of environmental education, litter cleanups, and invasive species monitoring.

YMCA “Rising Gents” program paddle



NMB Christian School Water Quality Monitoring



WRA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President – Dan Hitchcock of Pawleys Island, SC
Vice President – Richard Moore of Pawleys Island, SC
Treasurer – Position OPEN
Secretary – Amy Hill of Conway, SC
Tom Badgett of Conway, SC
April Cain of Whiteville, NC
Reggie Daves of Conway, SC
Betty Gause of Conway, SC
David Shane Lowry of Lumberton, NC
Dana Shields of North Myrtle Beach, SC
Amelia Wood of Conway, SC
Stacey Proctor of Conway, SC



OUR TEAM



JEFF CURRIE

Lumber Riverkeeper

LumberRK@

winyahrivers.org

(910) 668-0372



ERIN DONMOYER

Black-Sampit Riverkeeper

BlackSampitRK@

winyahrivers.org

(907) 301-3687



PRESTON KELLY

Waccamaw Riverkeeper

Riverkeeper@

winyahrivers.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 protections, challenging the expansion of biogas projects, the threats created for communities and the greenwashing by the industry. Jeff is also working with UNC Chapel Hill's Institute for the Environment to offer well water sampling in Robeson County and with UNC Pembroke for surface water sampling & environmental education. Jeff has realized significant success, including with the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina.

Erin is busy with activities at our Rocky Point Community Forest, assisting the Chicora Tribe with establishing a Tribal Ceremonial Space, planting a medicinal native plant garden and preparing to be the Water Trail Manager for the new Black River State Park! She is actively engaged with the State Park Network and working with communities to educate and address their concerns.

Erin has successfully installed Divirod sensors on the Black River to provide real-time data on water levels, & is actively investigating PFAS contamination in her rivers, with CCU/Sea Grant and Waterkeepers Alliance.

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's Dr. Hanebuth investigating 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 on the Waccamaw River in NC and SC.

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 Pee Dee Rivers. He is part of the PFAS study team. 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)



GINA SUGGS

Executive Assistant
executiveassistant@
winyahivers.org
Available M, T, Th, F 9-2
O: (843) 349-4007

Gina assists our team with updating the website, data organization, fundraising, and charity events, as well as creating our newsletters. Check out her bio at WinyahRivers.org. Gina is at the office every Monday, 9-2, if you want to stop by and say hello! She is also Available M, T, Th, F 9-2 by phone or email.



CHRISTINE ELLIS, Advisor
Christine@
winyahivers.org
(843) 349-4007

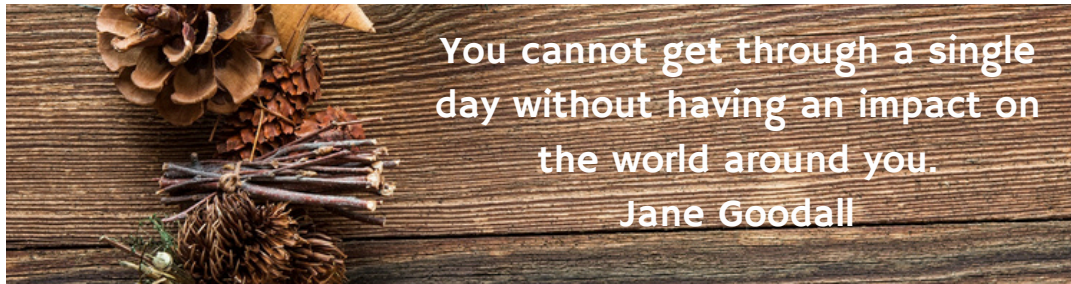
After years of dedicated service to Winyah Rivers Alliance in various leadership capacities, Christine Ellis now volunteers her time and expertise as an Advisor to the organization. Christine's input remains vital to the Alliance's mission to protect, preserve, monitor, and revitalize the health of the lands and waters of the greater Winyah Bay watershed.

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 or contact your Riverkeeper to schedule!



Waterkeeper Alliance North America Regional Summit

The WRA Team attended the Waterkeeper Alliance North America Regional Summit in Pittsburgh, PA. Waterkeepers from all across the U.S., Canada, and the English-speaking Caribbean met for collaboration, skill sharing, and networking. The summit is designed to connect Waterkeepers from across the region to collaborate on water protection and pollution issues. It serves as a platform for Waterkeepers to work together on solutions for local and regional water challenges.

LITTER-FREE RIVERS

RIVER CLEANUPS

We're partnering with individuals, community groups, businesses, schools, and team-building groups for River Cleanups!

We'll provide the supplies (gloves, bags, and guidance), you bring the energy and enthusiasm! It's a chance to connect with nature and your community in a unique and rewarding way. Thank you to all of our Volunteers that made this year's cleanups possible!

Email your Riverkeeper to schedule a clean-up event!



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

EVENTS

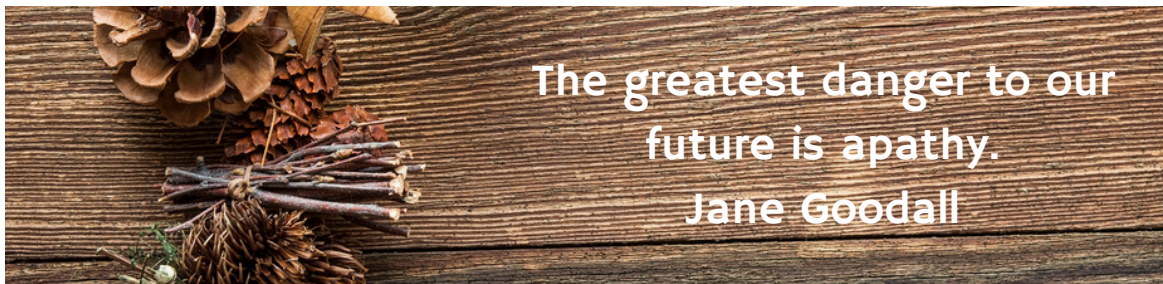
WINYAH RIVERS ALLIANCE CALENDAR & BLOG



Did you know that Winyah Rivers Alliance has a current event calendar and a blog?

Visit us at winyahrivers.org! Our current events calendar and Blog Posts tabs are where you can find event details, purchase tickets for events & much more!

Check it out today at:
winyahrivers.org



SC ADOPT-A-STREAM

www.scadoptastream.org

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

We are excited to have volunteers ready to collect water quality data in our watersheds! If you are interested in becoming a volunteer, contact your riverkeeper!

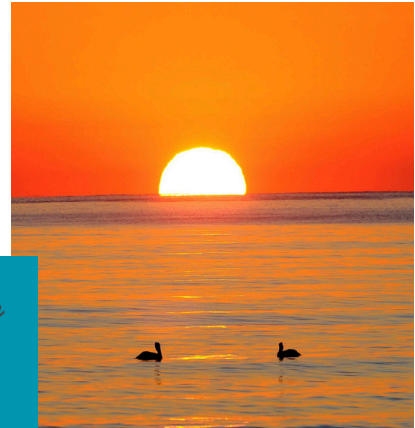


ANNUAL PHOTO CONTEST

We had another amazing photography contest, with many wonderful photographs entered that show the beauty and splendor of our greater Winyah Bay watershed. The 3 Entry Categories were: Georgetown County Heritage, Scenic, and Wildlife. Thank you, Bunnelle Foundation and 803 Labs, Inc., for sponsoring this event. The winning photographs will be at our 25th River Celebration!



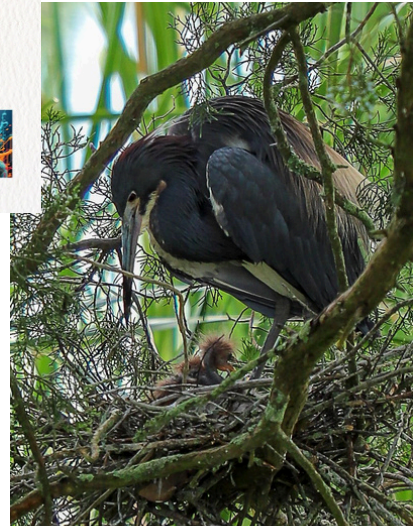
Best in Show-Hot in Pink
by Randy McDowell



Scenic 1st Place- Peaceful Sunrise at Hunington Beach by Charles Slate



Georgetown County 1st Place-Pink Equals Love by James O'Neil



Wildlife 1st Place- A Mothers Duty by Kim Wall

2025 Photography Contest Tour

November: Waccamaw Neck Library, December: South Carolina Maritime Museum in Georgetown, January 2026: Socastee Library, February: Mullins Library, March: Conway
Check out our website blog post for any changes to the tour schedule.

<https://winyahrivers.org/2025-photography-contest-tour-schedule/>

HOLIDAY GIVING

Your year-end donations provide critical
funding for our
Riverkeeper programs in 2026.

Donate at:
winyahrivers.org/donations



Debra Buffkin, Executive Director



Preston Kelly
Waccamaw
Riverkeeper



Erin Donmoyer
Black-Sampit
Riverkeeper



Jeff Currie
Lumber
Riverkeeper



Chritine Ellis
Advisor



Gina Suggs
Executive
Assistant



Dylan Coleman
Pee Dee/
Lynches Rivers
Project Cordernator



CELEBRATING 25 YEARS 2001 2026



WINYAH RIVERS ALLIANCE
WinyahRivers.org



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