

2024 / 2025 Annual Report

Catawba-Wateree Water Management Group

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MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIRMAN

Dear Members and Supporters,

Every drop of water that flows through the Catawba-Wateree carries a story. Decades ago, our predecessors secured dam licenses, protected forested headwaters, and forged the first Basin-wide partnerships. Those actions still ripple outward today, supporting lake levels during drought, cleaner intakes for our treatment plants, and a stronger regional economy.

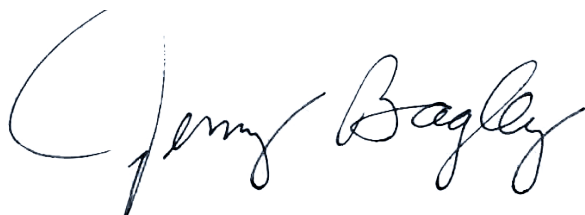
In **2024/2025 we felt those ripples again.**

- Approved land conservation grants to shield 142 critical acres.
- The Citizens' Water Academy graduated its largest in-person class yet.
- The house was packed again for the annual Water Summit.
- The Group stepped up to administer contracts to combat invasive and nuisance species.
- Our Integrated Water Resources Plan moved into final drafting.
- And when Hurricane Helene smacked the Basin, our mutual-aid protocols proved their worth, helping crews restore service quickly and safely.

Each milestone rests on groundwork laid years earlier, and each now sends its own wave forward. The challenges ahead—population growth, climate swings, aging infrastructure—demand the same foresight that guided our founders. That is why your Water Management Group is pressing on with data-driven planning, collaborative response, and investments that link water security with economic vitality.

Thank you to our member organizations, regulators, community partners, and engaged citizens. Together we ensure that what we do **today** becomes tomorrow's steady current, carrying safe, abundant water to every home, business, and habitat across our Basin.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Jimmy Bagley". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "B".

Jimmy Bagley, PE

Chair, Catawba-Wateree Water Management Group

OUR STORY

Mission	To collectively identify, fund, and implement strategic initiatives that extend the capacity of the Catawba-Wateree River to effectively serve the community, while protecting and enhancing the ecological health of the Basin.
Vision	The Catawba-Wateree Water Management Group envisions a future with a sustainable water source achieved through proactive planning, cutting edge research, water shortage preparedness and premier partnerships.

FROM FORMATION TO IMPACT – A 20-YEAR SNAPSHOT

2006		70 stakeholders sign the Comprehensive Relicensing Agreement during Duke Energy's hydro project relicensing, charting a 40-year water management roadmap.
2007		Eighteen water utilities and Duke Energy form the Catawba-Wateree Water Management Group (CWWMG) to tackle drought, extend supply, and coordinate conservation.
2010		South Carolina v. North Carolina settlement tasks both states and CWWMG with updating the Basin's water-supply study every 10 years.
2014-2015		First Water Supply Master Plan sets sustainable targets through 2065.
2015-2018		New 40-year FERC license issued and amended, locking in river protections.
2017		Inaugural Water for All Summit draws 100+ participants; attendance has since doubled.
2019		Citizens' Water Academy launches
2024		Membership grows to 21 with Concord (NC), Tega Cay (SC), and York County (SC).

Today we're delivering the Integrated Water Resources Plan, funding land-conservation grants, cutting storm-water runoff and leaks, and pairing water- and energy-efficiency incentives—all to keep the Catawba-Wateree River resilient for the next generation.

OUR MEMBERS

Twenty-one public water utilities from North and South Carolina, plus Duke Energy, make up the Catawba-Wataree Water Management Group (CWWMG). Together we safeguard the river that supplies drinking water to more than 2 million people. We share data, pool funding, and act as one team to keep the Basin clean and resilient as the region grows.

MEMBER UTILITIES

Catawba River Water Treatment Plant
(Lancaster County WSD
SC & Union County NC)

York County (SC)

Charlotte Water (NC)

Chester Metropolitan
District (SC)

City of Belmont (NC)

City of Camden (SC)

City of Concord (NC)

City of Gastonia |
Two Rivers Utilities (NC)

City of Hickory (NC)

City of Lenoir (NC)

City of Morganton (NC)

City of Mount Holly (NC)

City of Rock Hill (SC)

City of Statesville (NC)

City of Tega Cay (SC)

Duke Energy Carolinas

Lincoln County (NC)

Lugoff-Elgin Water
Authority (SC)

Town of Granite Falls (NC)

Town of Mooresville (NC)

Town of Valdese (NC)



OUR BOARD



Chair
Jimmy Bagley, PE
City of Rock Hill, SC



Vice-Chair
Jeff Lineberger, PE
Duke Energy Carolinas, LLC



Treasurer
Allison Kraft, PE
Town of Mooresville, NC



NC At-Large Director
Jeff Church, Ed. D
Town of Lenoir



SC At-Large Director
Brad Bucy, PE
Lancaster County Water &
Sewer District, SC

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

A panel of professionals with diverse interests related to the purpose of the CWWMG provide independent perspectives on our direction, governance, and strategy, ensuring every decision stays true to the Group's mission.



Vicki Taylor
Environment
(Chair)



Calvin Sawyer, PhD
Academic/Research



Connie Wade
Discretionary Seat -
Catawba Nation



Eleanor Mixon
Local Government



Robert Long, CECD
Economic Development



Ryan Carter
Regulatory/State Government



Shirley Greene
Residential Landowner of
Project or River Frontage



Wesley Wightman, PE
Industrial/Business



Mitch Peele
Agricultural/Forestry



Keith Larick
Agricultural/Forestry

Recreation - **Open Position**

OUR BASIN

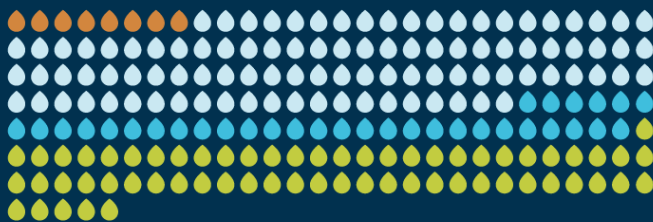
Stretch & Shape		376 miles from the Blue Ridge Mountains to the Santee, with 11 linked lakes threading through a 5,680-sq-mi Basin only 30 miles wide.
Essential Supply		Drinking water for 2 million people and cooling water for plants that represent one-fourth of Duke Energy's Carolinas power generation capacity.
Living Network		80,000 acres of open water, 1,800 miles of shoreline, and habitat for countless species, plus year-round boating, fishing, and hiking.
Power & Beyond		12 hydro stations, 5 nuclear/fossil stations, 21 public water systems, farms, industries, and recreation all draw from the same source.
Why Lakes Matter		Our reservoirs act like a regional "water savings account," shifting water availability through droughts and downpours, even as natural evaporation can exceed total human use.

Protecting this finite yet powerful system keeps our communities thriving today and tomorrow.

WATER DEMAND (MGD)

The Catawba-Wateree River Basin is the main source of drinking water for approximately 2 million people in our region. The population in the Catawba-Wateree River Basin is steadily growing and has increased by about 10 percent since the 2010 census. By 2075, the overall water demand in the Catawba-Wateree River Basin is expected to increase by approximately 57%.

2024 Net Water Withdrawal from the River:



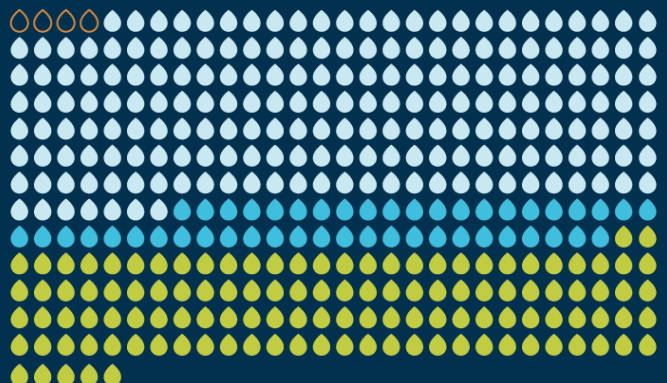
7.7
Industrial

32.9
Agricultural/Irrigation

97.5
Public Water Systems

62.3
Power

2075 Projected Net Water Withdrawal from River:



-4
Industrial

47
Agricultural/Irrigation

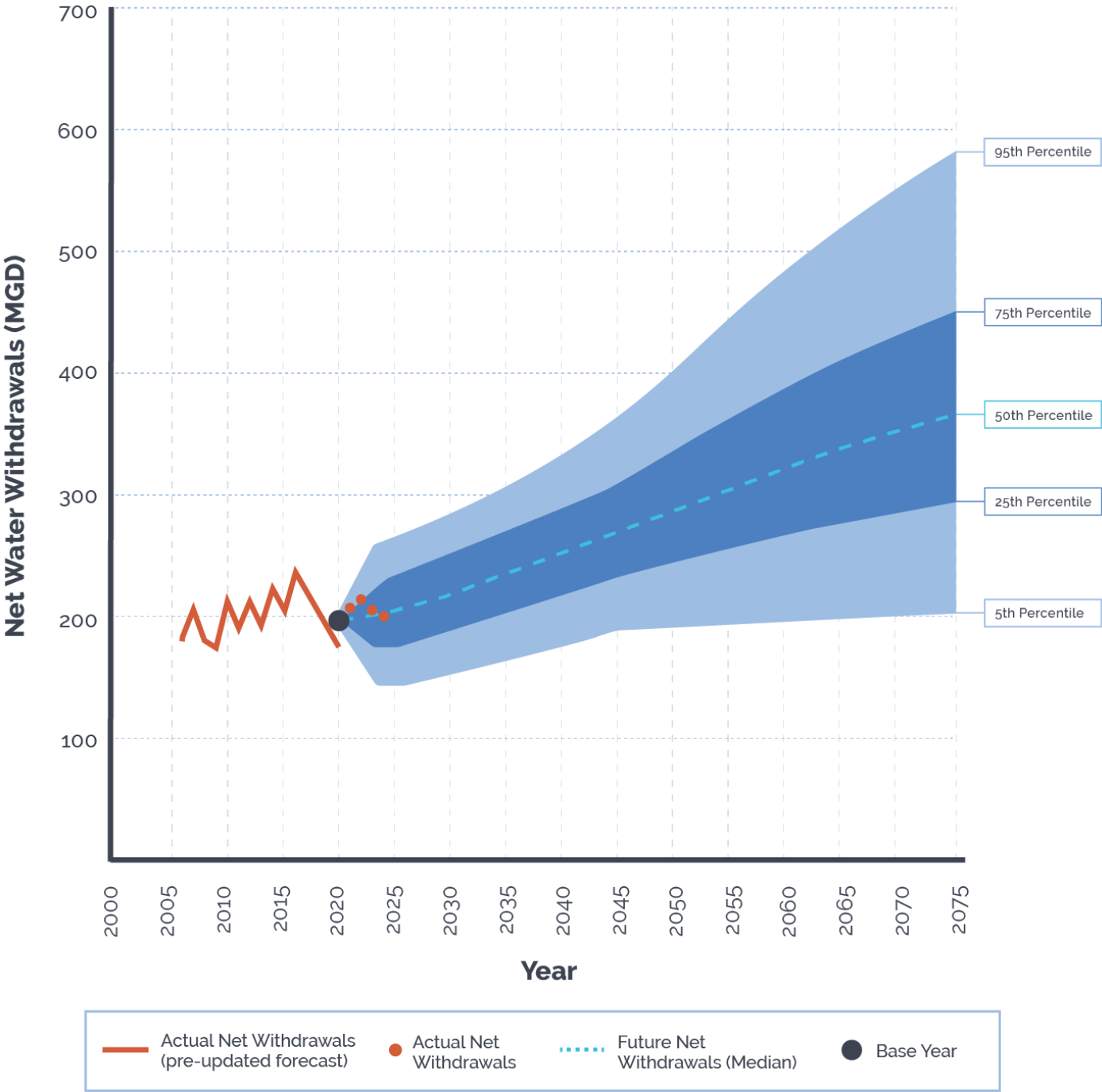
199
Public Water Systems

111.9
Power

PROJECTED VS ACTUAL NET WITHDRAWAL

As part of our new Integrated Water Resources Plan (IWRP), we are updating water demand projections to provide reliable water withdrawal and return forecasts for the Catawba-Wateree River Basin. These new projections extend to the year 2075, expand the Basin boundary, and account for a range of potential variations such as droughts and heavy rain that can impact water usage.

The 50th percentile forecast represents the most likely future net withdrawals, with a 90 percent chance that the long-term flow withdrawal trend will be somewhere in between the two extremes. These ranges provide a valuable perspective on the potential impacts of reliably meeting future treatment capacity needs.



OUR WORK

INTEGRATED WATER RESOURCES PLAN SECURING WATER TO 2075

Back in 2006 a severe drought showed that, without action, the Catawba-Wateree could face critical shortages within a generation. We answered first with the 2014/2015 Water Supply Master Plan. In 2021 we launched development of its successor, the five-year **Integrated Water Resources Plan (IWRP)** project, to tackle supply, water quality, land conservation, and climate stress in one coordinated roadmap.

Four years of progress (2021-2024)

Year	Key Milestone	What It Means for the Basin
2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formed 25-member Steering Committee Updated population & industrial demand to 2075 Built climate/land-use "what-if" scenarios 	Everyone now works from the same data set and prepares for multiple futures - not a single forecast.
2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mapped nutrient & sediment hot spots Created a new inflow dataset for every sub-watershed Upgraded WaterFALL® hydrologic model Convened Stakeholder Advisory Team 	Stronger science plus real-world input pinpoints where quality risks meet rising demand.
2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overhauled CHEOPS reservoir model Ran 50-year simulations for drought and growth scenarios 	First complete picture of how supply, demand, and quality interact.
2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finished final quantity & quality evaluations Calculated economic impacts of each option Began utility & county toolkits 	Translates technical findings into cost-smart, ready-to-use actions for every partner in the Basin.

WHAT'S NEXT

Late 2025	Draft recommendations released for public and Board review.
Early 2026	Member utilities and both states consider adoption; final IWRP version issued; implementation toolkit finalized.

WHY IT MATTERS

The IWRP will give every community along the river a single, data-driven playbook for:

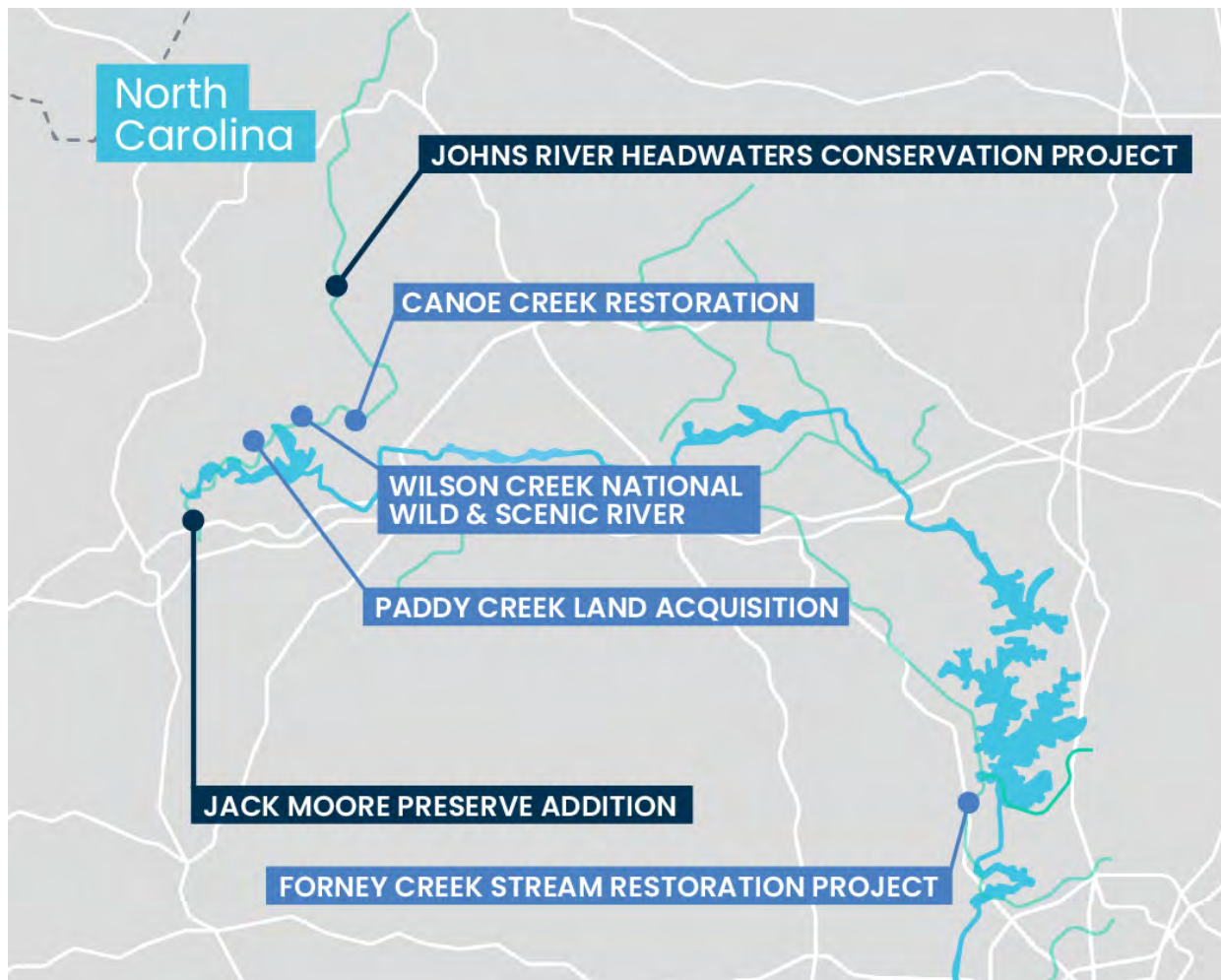
- Meeting rising demand without sacrificing water quality
- Weathering droughts with confidence
- Aligning land-use decisions with clean-water goals
- Stretching every infrastructure dollar for maximum benefit

After thousands of staff hours and the collective insight of two states, the finish line is in sight. The choices we make in 2025-26 will ripple forward for the next 50 years, ensuring the Catawba-Wataree remains a reliable source of life, recreation, and economic strength for all.



PROTECTING WATER BY PROTECTING LAND

Healthy forests and wetlands filter sediment, slow stormwater, and recharge aquifers. In 2024/25, the CWWMG committed \$65,000 in land conservation grants to support permanently protecting over 140 acres that guard the Catawba-Wataree's headwaters, creeks, and lake shorelines.



PAST INVESTMENTS

Johns River Headwaters (Caldwell Co.) – 332 acres | \$40 K

Safeguards a high-elevation source that feeds the entire river system.

Wilson Creek Wild & Scenic Corridor (Caldwell Co.) – 93 acres | \$40 K

Protects 1.5 miles of pristine trout habitat and popular recreation waters.

Paddy Creek, Lake James Headwaters (Burke Co.) – 27 acres | \$20 K

Restores a 300-ft forest buffer along 1,950 ft of creek, cutting nutrient loads to the lake.

Jack Moore Preserve Gap-Fill, Hoyle Creek (Gaston Co.) – 6 acres | \$30 K

Closes a gap in a 100-acre riparian preserve, improving flood storage and habitat.

Forney Creek Link (Lincoln Co.) – 2 acres | \$20 K

Connects parcels within a 470-acre restoration corridor slated for stream improvements.

Canoe Creek Parcels (Burke Co.) | \$14 K

Supports creation of Oak Hill Community Park & Forest and long-term water-quality gains.

2024/2025 GRANTS

Catawba Land Conservancy (\$15,000 donated).

This grant supported the acquisition of a donated conservation easement on a 16-acre wooded property located at the confluence of Davis Branch and Waxhaw Creek in Union County, NC. The property is within the Waxhaw Creek Significant Floodplain Natural Area and is a critical watershed for the Carolina Heelsplitter (a rare and endangered mussel only found in North and South Carolina). The easement will create a 100-foot riparian buffer between the community and the river. It is planned to be located within a future Carolina Thread Trail route.

Catawba Riverkeeper (\$50,000 donated).

This grant supported our partners, the Catawba Riverkeeper, with their 2024 and 2025 programs. These programs included Riversweep, a Basin-wide cleanup day where community members met at 60 sites along the Catawba River to pull trash and debris out of the River. The CWWMG was the Presenting Sponsor of Riversweep in 2024 and 2025. 2024's Riversweep was a particularly critical event as the clean-up efforts happened days after Hurricane Helene struck, adding huge amounts of debris to the Catawba River. These donations also funded Riverfest, an annual festival celebrating the Catawba River. Lastly, the grant supported the Swim Guide, a live report that shows the quality of the river and if it is safe for swimming.



Source: Catawba Riverkeeper. AM-Stewart-Photography

Hurricane Helene Relief Efforts (\$25,264 donated).

[\$15,264K to the RK and \$10K to NC Wildlife Federation]

In response to the widespread damage caused by Hurricane Helene, a total of \$25,264 was donated to support critical cleanup and restoration initiatives across the Catawba-Wateree Lake System. Of this amount, \$15,264 was directed to the Catawba Riverkeeper Foundation to assist with large-scale debris removal and waterway recovery, while \$10,000 was contributed to the North Carolina Wildlife Federation to protect habitats and restore ecological balance. These funds are helping address over 75,000 pounds of debris already cleared from shorelines and islands, with ongoing efforts focused on sediment management, safe navigation, and long-term environmental health.

Each project keeps runoff clean, evens out flows, and helps secure a reliable drinking-water supply for the two million people who rely on the Catawba-Wateree River Basin.

Learn about lands prioritized for source water protection with the Source Water Protection Tool: <https://catawbalands.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html>

Daniel Austin

Rocio Bell

Michelle Bradley

Alexandra Buckley

Paul Calamita

Harold Cline

Natalie Curry

Jenn Dunn

Brian Fulk

Anna Gionfriddo

Hank Guess

Maya Holcomb

Scott Hunsinger

Stephanie Hunsinger

Amanda Kinniburgh

Raina Lenear

Ed Lindsey

Antonio Maturo

Anthony Meadows

Nicky Milde

Jeff Parkey

McLayne Reese

Ellie Riggs

Christine Robbins

Cara Rusmisell

Sheldon Russell

Olivia Salazar

Jennings Storie

Charles Thach

Marica Thomas

Ray Webber

Thomas Zappelli

COMMUNITY

2025 CITIZENS' WATER ACADEMY GROWING THE NEXT WAVE OF RIVER STEWARDS

From January to March 2025, we ran our fourth Citizens' Water Academy: eight fast-paced sessions (classroom, virtual, and on-the-river tours) that turned residents into informed advocates for the Catawba-Wateree.

What participants learned

- How the river system works – from Blue Ridge headwaters to Lake Wateree
- Duke Energy's dams and the FERC licensing rules that guide flows
- Where our drinking water comes from and what happens after we flush
- Storm-water and land-use impacts on water quality
- Recreation, conservation easements, and why healthy forests = clean water
- Tools in the new Integrated Water Resources Plan

2025 results

- 30 new graduates join our alumni network of community leaders, teachers, and utility staff.
- Alumni now help review local land-use plans, speak at public meetings, and volunteer for shoreline clean-ups – multiplying our reach across the Basin.

The academy keeps growing, and so does the collective voice for a secure, sustainable water future. Congratulations to the Class of 2025!



WATER FOR ALL SUMMIT 2025

At this year's annual Water for All Summit, we were thrilled to welcome over 200 water industry professionals and advocates from across the region to discuss the power of partnerships in addressing current water challenges and the innovations and strategies that will drive future sustainability. Topics included: *Catawba-Wateree Lake System Cleanup Efforts post Hurricane Helene*, *Recovery Efforts from the City of Asheville post Hurricane Helene*, *Management tips for combatting nuisance species*, *Strengthening Resiliency through Nature-Based Solutions*, and *Community Driven Water Resilience*. Our keynote speaker was David Melton, Water Resources Director for the City of Asheville, who spoke about recovery efforts in Asheville and Lake James.

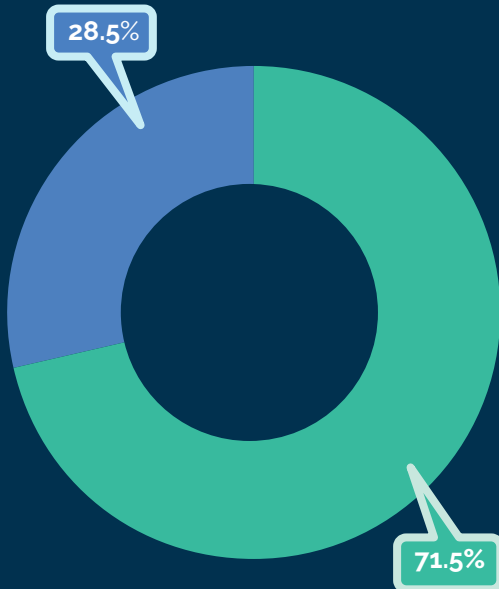


OUR FINANCIALS

January 1, 2024 - December 31, 2024

Income

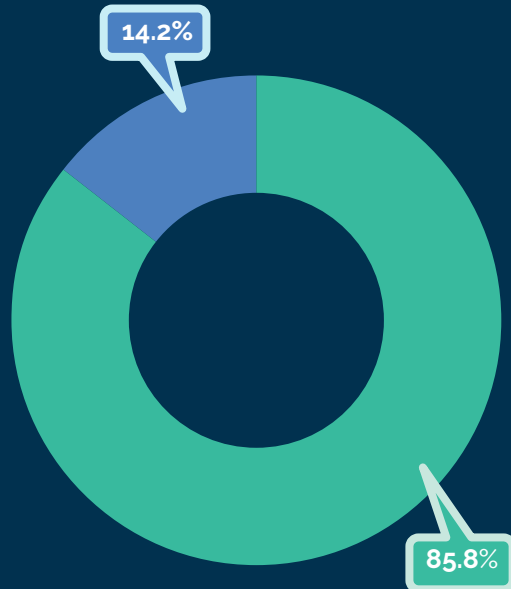
Member Dues: \$702,758
Other: \$279,976



TOTAL: \$982,734

Costs & Expenses

Projects: \$550,848
Other: \$91,297



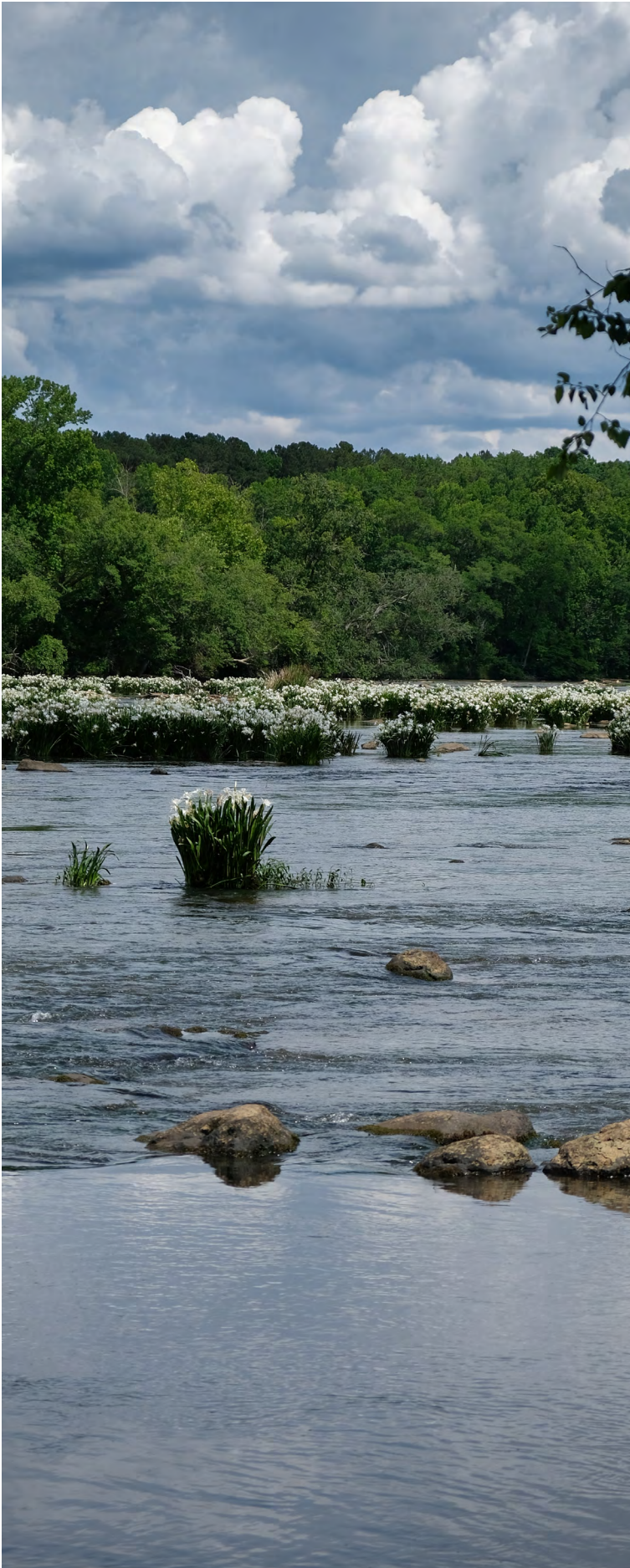
TOTAL: \$642,145

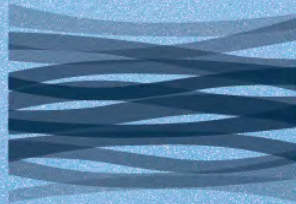
Income

Interest	Residual funds from agency transactions
\$20,985	\$1,479
Annual Summit Registrations 2024	Supplemental funding
\$8,533	\$4,348
Private funding for Source Water Protection	
\$10,000	
SCDHEC Grant (deferred revenue from 2023)	
\$138,324	
NCDEQ IW/RP Grant (earned revenue 2024)	
\$96,308	

Cost & Expenses

Strategic Communications Project	Catawba Riverkeeper Grants
\$143,379	\$37,764
Integrated Water Resources Plan Year 3	North Carolina Wildlife Federation
\$58,397	\$10,000
Integrated Water Resources Plan Year 4	CWWMG Administration
\$96,308	\$77,355
USGS Groundwater Wells O&M	Insurance
\$106,000	\$1,840
Water Loss Management Program	Legal and Other Professional Services
\$99,000	\$10,867
	CWWMG Padfolios
	\$1,234





**CATAWBA
WATEREE**
WATER MANAGEMENT GROUP

CatawbaWatereeWMG.org

