

# 2020-2021 IMPACT REPORT

In a time when nothing was normal and challenges seemed to multiply, **our backyards and community greenspaces became a refuge.** When so much was out of our control, it was more important than ever to **feel the power of making a positive difference.**

Out of the cloudiness of the last year comes incredible clarity. In backyards across the County, people took action to clean up their local waterways. Amid the global pandemic and powered by this grassroots groundswell, WSA adopted a new strategic plan with ambitious goals to grow leaders and mobilize communities.

Our vision of **clean water** and a **healthy environment** for all is linked inextricably to:



### Leadership

In neighborhoods, houses of worship, libraries, and businesses, hundreds of Watershed Stewards help transform good intentions into actions that make an impact. With so many passionate Steward leaders, the future is bright, and the water is clear.



### Living Rooms

Our collective ability to achieve clean water hinges on the daily actions of more than 600,000 people who live, work, and gather in Anne Arundel County. By combining social science with relationships, Stewards can meet people where they are to identify actions that ensure clean water.



### Landscapes

In 2020 alone, over 10,000 native plants and trees were planted in 244 projects throughout the County. From single trees to stream restorations, these projects will result in sustainable landscapes and cleaner waters.

Our strategic plan includes a strong focus on diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice. **We are committed to listening, growing, and taking action to create equitable access and to promote inclusive practices.** Only then will WSA, together with volunteers, partners, donors, and community leaders, achieve bold, enduring impact.

We hope you will find inspiration within these pages to energize your vision for clean water in Anne Arundel County. To those who made this impact possible - Stewards, partners, donors, and friends - our gratitude is deep. For those who have not yet joined us, opportunities await.

**Cheers to clean water for all,**

Frank Dawson, Board Chair

Suzanne Etgen, Executive Director

# Mobilizing Leaders

True change depends on strong leadership. From schoolyards to congregations, neighborhoods to businesses, Watershed Stewards connect communities across the County to take action for clean water.



In November 2020, **28 Watershed Stewards graduated from our 12th Certification Course**. A resilient group of candidates, these dynamic leaders pivoted to virtual classes amidst the pandemic and executed capstone projects with social distancing protocols.

From planting conservation landscapes to engaging students in lessons on protecting native wildlife, Class 12 Stewards **coordinated environmental action and ignited appreciation for our natural world during a time of uncertainty.**

"By participating in grassroots action for clean water, community members better understand that **individual actions matter**. WSA's programming educated me and has given me **direction and confidence in helping children understand how what they do matters.**"

-Martha Sykora, Watershed Steward

**The interest in our 13th Watershed Steward Certification Course was stronger than ever.** After completing the first-ever virtual Certification Course, **33 Steward Candidates** ventured outdoors for spring field sessions. Capstone projects from tree plantings to living shorelines are being planned from Glen Burnie to Deale.



# Replant Anne Arundel

Local residents came together to **Replant Anne Arundel** in 2020, adding almost 5,000 native trees to our landscapes. These trees will host thousands of birds and pollinators, and soak up millions of gallons of stormwater in the years to come, altering not only the look and feel of our communities, but also radically increasing our climate resilience.

The City of Annapolis will join WSA's Replant family with Replant Annapolis later this year and the tree planting will continue.

Since March 2020, **nearly 100 volunteer Tree Troopers have been trained** to design and plant native, climate-resilient tree projects. These **volunteer leaders are key to developing community projects** in neighborhoods, houses of worship, libraries, schools, and businesses throughout the County.

Tree plantings not only have ecological and water quality benefits, but Replant also has tremendous potential to create social equity and amplify inclusion through economic development. WSA and Replant partners are forging new strategies for engagement to connect contractors of color with tree planting and increase equity and access to trees for underrepresented communities.

Special thanks to Anne Arundel County, Maryland Department of Natural Resources, the Helena Foundation, Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay and the Chaney Foundation for prioritizing trees through Replant Anne Arundel.



# Engaging Communities

## Community Partners Collaborate for Clean Water

Stewards are a growing presence at area libraries, leading virtual and in-person programs for children and adults, and greening the grounds. At the Eastport-Annapolis Neck Library, regular flooding impacted library operations. Class 12 Stewards Jay Resnick and Katrina Golladay worked with library employees, groundskeepers, Tree Troopers, and local volunteers to restore an abandoned bioretention area, plant 40 native trees, and shrubs, and install multiple rain barrels. With a maintenance plan in place, library operations can carry on, and visitors can enjoy the restored grounds!

## Riva Neighbors Create a Clean Water Community

Faced with runoff issues, residents in Riva's Glen Isle community united to tackle water quality issues in the South River. Together, they engaged neighbors to pick up pet waste, remove invasive English Ivy, and practice proper septic care.

Homeowners installed 54 native trees, 2,170 sq ft of conservation landscapes, 6 rain barrels and tanks, and identified more projects for the future! Together, their collective community action captures and cleans stormwater before it reaches the South River.

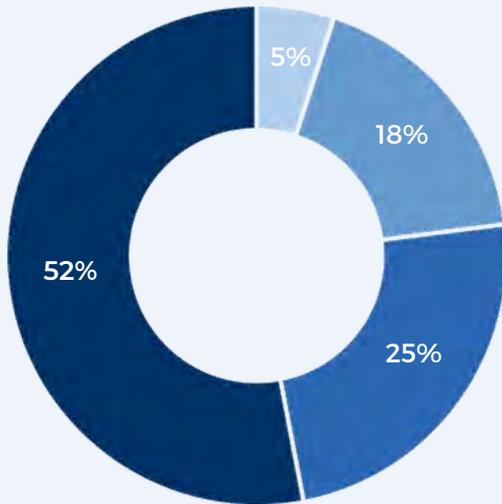
## Faith Communities Find Strength in Numbers

Green teams at congregations throughout the County are translating their faith into action. At St. Andrew by the Bay, the Creation Care Team restored their grounds and encouraged the congregation to adopt habits that help at home, like reducing single-use plastics. Woods Memorial received Interfaith Power and Light's Cool Congregations Sacred Grounds Award for their collaborative effort to restore the church's four-acre habitat. Congregants of all ages at Christ Our Anchor pledged to be environmentally conscious and restore creation. St. Phillip's Episcopal, Mt. Moriah AME, and Empowering Believers Church continue to improve the stormwater projects on their grounds, while at Our Lady of the Chesapeake, parishioners are working together to maintain their new native trees, planted through Replant. With funding from BG&E and Environment Anne Arundel, Congregation Kol Shalom had several new projects designed and installed, including a step-pool conveyance and a rain garden to deal with flooding and erosion. Families who attend the synagogue's Tree of Life Preschool and Stewards in Class 12 planted a large conservation landscape to further stabilize the hillside. At each of the over 30 RiverWise congregations, environmental learning and action grow along with their projects.



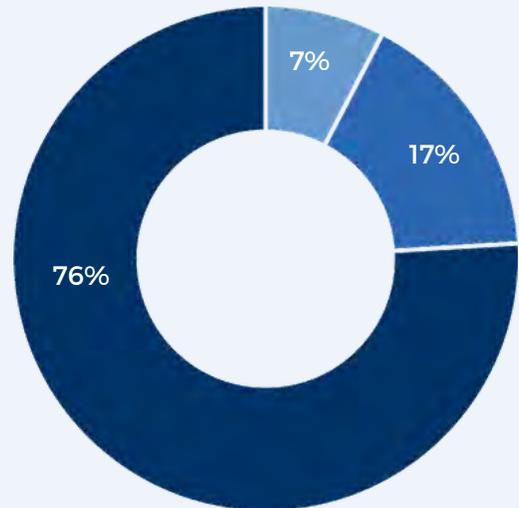
# 2020 Financials

## REVENUE



Corporate Donations	\$37,378
Individual Donations	\$144,300
Grants	\$199,088
Contracts	\$421,879

## EXPENSES



Fundraising	\$52,187
Management & General	\$117,369
Programmatic	\$546,639

Visit [aawsa.org/financials](https://aawsa.org/financials) to view financial reports



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# 2020 Impact



**10,006**  
NATIVES  
PLANTED



**4,180**  
STEWARD HOURS  
VOLUNTEERED



**244**  
PROJECTS  
INSTALLED



**44**  
TREE TROOPERS  
TRAINED



**28**  
STEWARDS  
TRAINED



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Watershed Stewards Academy is located at Arlington Echo Outdoor Education Center. We are grateful for this tremendous partnership with Anne Arundel County Public Schools, connecting Stewards with the latest environmental literacy initiatives.