

COASTAL
CONSERVATION
LEAGUE

Contact Us

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Impact Report

July 1, 2019 - June 30, 2020



Cover photo of Bay Point Island taken by Miles Sanders

Friends,

The past year has been like no other. We have all faced unprecedented challenges, and the Coastal Conservation League is no exception.

But I am pleased to report that thanks to unwavering support from people like you and to the passionate commitment of our talented staff, we are meeting our challenges. The Conservation League has the resources and financial strength to keep up our work protecting and defending the South Carolina coast.

We are busier than ever working to make sure the coast we love is resilient in the face of climate change, sea level rise, and other threats. We are working in communities from the North Carolina border to the Savannah River, helping to protect health, safety, and quality of life. And we are focusing on making sure our work and our organization are as equitable as possible, involving and supporting the wonderful people and places that make our coast such a unique and special place.

Moving forward with our mission has required adjustment and adaptation. I couldn't be prouder of how the Conservation League staff has risen to the occasion with so much dedication.

For example, when GrowFood Carolina's restaurant customers (which accounted for 70% of sales) vanished almost overnight, we started packing food boxes for purchase and providing local produce free to families in need, working with donors like you and local partners like the Lowcountry Food Bank. We have supported farmers and communities by delivering thousands of food boxes since the pandemic began, and look forward to delivering thousands more for years to come.



When the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers proposed building a seawall around the Charleston peninsula, we stepped in and organized virtual meetings to educate the public about the proposal and raised funds to identify more comprehensive and environmentally and culturally sensitive flooding solutions.

When pristine Bay Point Island (front cover) was threatened with resort development, we organized virtually, partnered with the Gullah/Geechee Nation on an online petition drive, and mobilized public action for zoning meetings.

I could go on and on.

As we go about our work on behalf of the coast and its people from our home offices, living rooms, dining room tables, and from the GrowFood Warehouse, we never forget that you make it all possible. I am endlessly amazed by the dedication, interest, and generosity of our supporters, even in times as difficult and uncertain as these.

Thank you for all you do and for the difference you make.

Onward!

Laura Cantral

Executive Director



Conservation Highlights

July 1, 2019 - June 30, 2020

GrowFood Carolina Feeds Farmers

Providing fresh produce to our neighbors

With the advent of Covid-19 earlier this year, many restaurants and institutions scaled back operations, reducing demand for produce from local South Carolina farmers. In an effort to support our 100-plus partner farmers *and* provide food to the community during the shutdown, GrowFood explored new opportunities, such as offering produce boxes for purchase by the public. To help farmers and our communities even more, from April to June of this year, generous donors helped us raise over \$25,500 to donate food boxes—8,500 pounds of fresh, local produce—to area organizations like the Lowcountry Food Bank. Initially experimental, the success of the food box program has made it a priority project for GrowFood in the upcoming year as we continue supporting South Carolina farmers, as well as families in need, by supporting and providing fresh, healthy, local food to families in need.

Contact GrowFood Carolina General Manager,
Anthony Mirisciotta—anthonym@growfoodcarolina.com

Once the restaurants shut their doors, we got a call from [a distributor]. They canceled all their produce orders with us. A few days after that, I received a call from Becca, and I was so scared that GrowFood was going to follow suit. I just didn't know what we were going to do. But she was upbeat and talking about plans to provide baskets to the public, and other ideas that would keep supporting us farmers and keep our produce moving. We began shipping our greens to GrowFood, and that kept us going. We couldn't keep up with the eggs, we didn't have the meat to sell. I was scared, and all of our employees were scared. Our family depends on it and their families do as well. But the orders kept coming and coming [from GrowFood], and we're really blessed.

—Joey McQuade, Sylvan Farm
GrowFood Carolina Partner



\$1,405,888
returned to GrowFood farmers

100+ partner farmers

18 new farming partners

2,000
food boxes donated to families in need

1,382
food boxes sold

Food boxes being loaded into GrowFood Carolina truck to be delivered to the Lowcountry Food Bank.

Bay Point Island Threatened

Leading the charge in conserving Lowcountry land & wildlife

Since 2016, developers have had their sights set on developing an upscale resort on Bay Point Island, a vulnerable barrier island at the mouth of Port Royal Sound. The proposed resort, described by the developers as an “ecotourism destination,” would damage the fragile island and the local Gullah/Geechee community. The Conservation League has been working closely with the Gullah/Geechee Sea Island Coalition, as well as with other partners, to stop the immediate threat of the resort construction. Long term, we are advocating for the permanent protection of Bay Point Island by making it more difficult to obtain a special ecotourism land use permit and by exploring opportunities for additional land protection.

Contact South Coast Office Project Manager,
Juliana Smith—julianas@scccl.org

Supreme Court Sides with Citizens on Cruise Ship Standing

Giving citizens the right to weigh in on environmental impacts in their neighborhoods

In February 2020, the South Carolina Supreme Court reversed a lower court’s decision that denied citizens’ ability to challenge a permit authorizing the construction of a new cruise ship terminal at Union Pier in Charleston. This was a landmark decision that allows concerned citizens who would be negatively impacted by pollution or other environmental damage to take legal action to protect their quality of life.

Contact Land, Water, & Wildlife Program Director,
Emily Cedzo—emilyc@scccl.org



Flooding in Charleston

Charleston Sea Wall Study Released

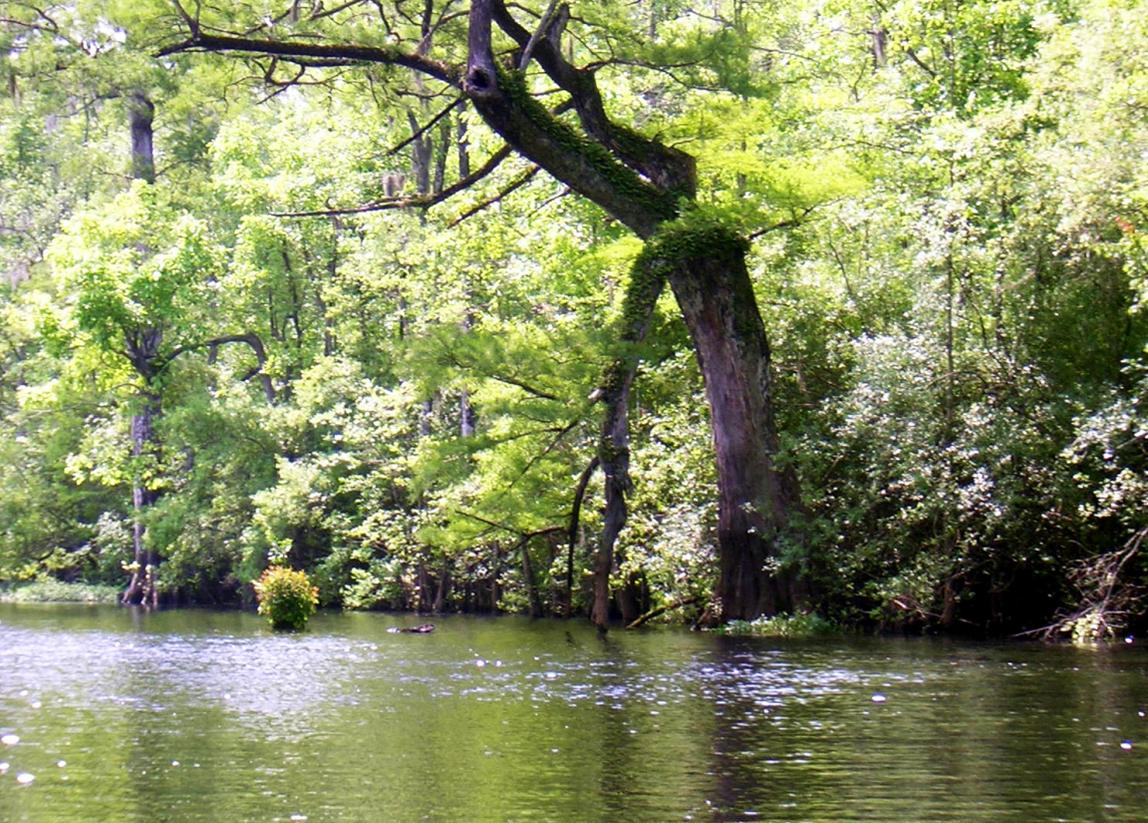
Working to protect the Greater Charleston Community

The Conservation League has been working on issues related to flooding and drainage for years. Earlier this year, when the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers completed its long-anticipated storm surge study and proposed a 12-foot seawall around the Charleston peninsula, we doubled down on our commitment to identify and support the best solution for our community—one that will address flooding issues by comprehensively utilizing natural resources that provide important resilience benefits and protect the city’s cultural resources. By using a design that works with water and nature, we can combine hard engineering, like concrete and steel, with ecological elements, such as marshes and oyster reefs—taking advantage of the best of both worlds for our community and the surrounding environment.

Contact Communities & Transportation Program Director,
Jason Crowley—jasonc@scccl.org

2 court
rulings

64,558
new SC residents to
balance with nature



Waccamaw River

Mine Threats Multiplied

Protecting land & communities from sand mine proliferation

As proposed mining operations continue to show up across the Lowcountry, we have been working to protect citizens, communities, and the landscape from harmful operations. We actively worked with partners in Conway to oppose the rezoning of 151 acres for a sand mining operation at the Depot Road Tract adjacent to the Waccamaw River, Waccamaw National Wildlife Refuge, and Waccamaw River Park. We are also actively engaged in the mining permit process at Pineland Mine in Dorchester County, Donmar Mine in Berkeley County, and Southern Mine in Charleston County.

Contact Land, Water, & Wildlife Project Manager,
Riley Egger—rileye@scccl.org

5 legal cases filed

363 new donors

Charleston's Comprehensive Plan Launched

Advocating for communities to get involved in planning

The Conservation League reviewed and provided preliminary feedback to the City of Charleston as it began updating its Comprehensive Plan, a requirement every 10 years. This plan will serve as a vision and guide for policymaking. Its development involves an extensive public planning process—providing an opportunity for us to engage the community in planning for its future. The city has hired the Dutch Dialogues team, among other consultants, to help develop a new plan focusing on a more equitable and resilient community and to help preserve this part of the Lowcountry's unique character and natural conditions. The Conservation League held a debate the impacts of sea level rise; hosted a series of free, public events including a candidate forum to address targeted questions about flooding in Charleston; the Winthrop Civic Forum where authors Gilbert M. Gaul and Orrin H. Pilkey debated the impacts of sea level rise; The Dutch Dialogues, a presentation of the Dutch Dialogues team's findings and a Mayoral Debate focused around the study and the topic of flooding, leading up to the 2019 November election.

Contact Communities & Transportation Project Manager,
Betsy La Force—betsyl@scccl.org

17,815 acres protected

public meetings attended

1 Energy Freedom Act Passed

Atlantic Coast Pipeline Defeated

Moving toward clean energy for the state and the climate

Since 2014, we have been part of a coalition of conservation groups across the Southeast fighting against the proposed Atlantic Coast Pipeline—a project that would have paved the way for future gas infrastructure and development along the coast of South Carolina. On July 5, 2020, the companies behind the \$8 billion pipeline project announced its cancellation, marking a victory for environmentalists. The 600-mile transmission pipeline, which would have stopped 21 miles from the South Carolina border, was a controversial project that proposed disrupting public lands and communities, like the Appalachian Trail, as well as places like Union Hill, VA, a historic Black community.

Crab Bank Restoration Progress

Restoring bird habitat with the dredge material from the Charleston Harbor deepening

In 2018, you helped us to raise \$2 million to save Crab Bank, a narrow slice of sand near the mouth of Shem Creek that is critically important and is one of only five protected Seabird Sanctuaries in the state. Restoration at Crab Bank is currently planned to take place in 2021. We can look forward to enhanced habitat protections not only at Crab Bank, but at other important habitats like Cape Romain. At Cape Romain, the S.C. Coastal Bird Conservation Program, working with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Cape Romain National Wildlife Refuge, recently provided an extra layer of protection for birds and habitat by hiring a Shorebird Steward to monitor the area and educate visitors.

104 partner organizations

1,003 action-taking advocates

103 comments & testimonies given

I-526 Went to Court

Protecting rural islands from further development

The Interstate 526 extension onto the Sea Islands involves spending hundreds of millions of dollars of taxpayer money, displacing residents, and altering the landscape and communities of the affected area forever. The project would divert sales tax dollars—possibly taking resources away from important flood management and traffic improvements. The Conservation League and two Charleston County residents challenged Charleston County Council's decision to use sales tax dollars for I-526 in court last year. We continue to work through the legal process to protect taxpayers' dollars so that funds are used in the way Charlestonians were promised.



Marsh land on Johns Island

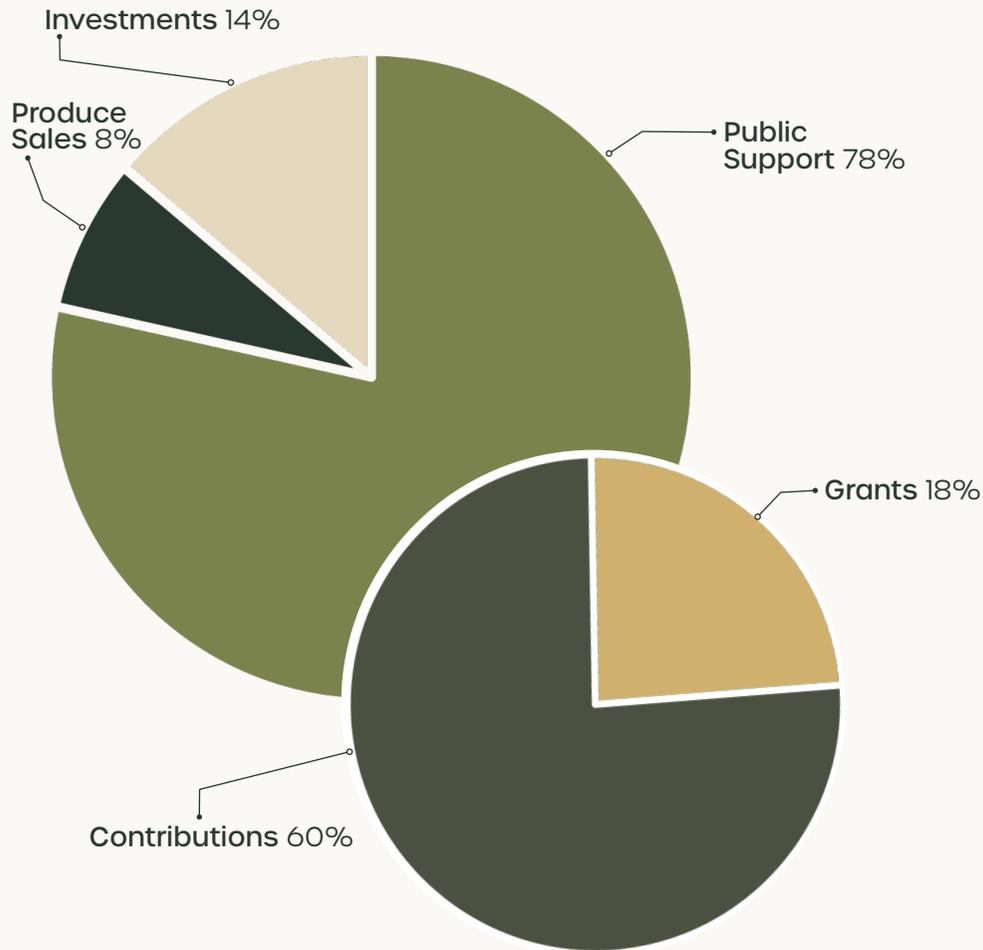
Financial Report

July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020

As of June 30, 2020

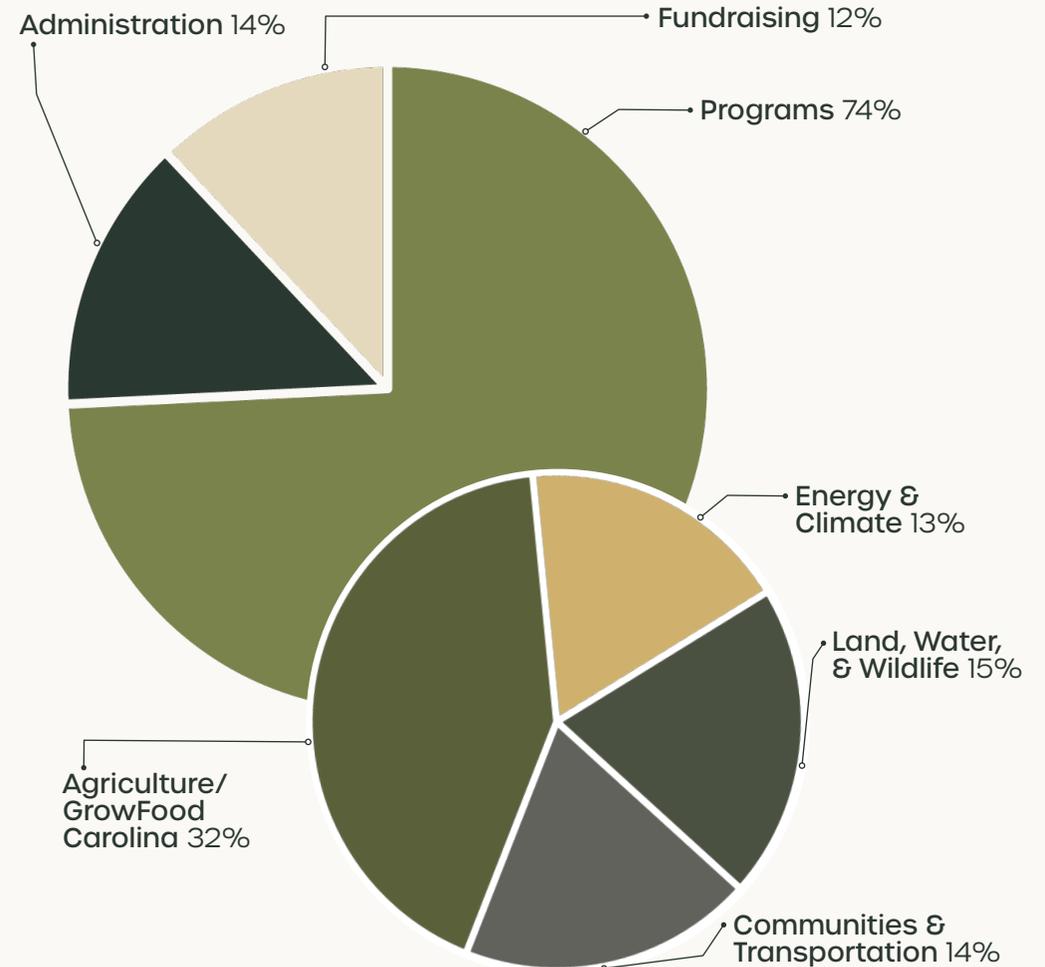
Total Assets	\$17,651,795
Total Liabilities	\$1,188,421
Net Assets	\$16,463,374
Change in Net Assets	\$67,295

FY 2019/2020 Revenues



FY 2019/2020 Public Support Breakdown

FY 2019/2020 Functional Expenses



FY 2019/2020 Program Expense Breakdown

Our Team

as of June 30, 2020

Board of Directors

Ceara Donnelley, *Chair*
Katharine Hastie, *Vice Chair*
R. Kent Griffin, *Treasurer*
John Thompson, *Secretary*
Johnston C. Adams
J. Anderson Berly, III
Daniel W. Boone, III
Bill Brenizer
Lee Edwards
George Gephart
Cynthia Kellogg
W. Jefferson Leath, Jr.
Pierre Manigault
Jeremiah Milbank, III
Margot T. Rose
David Westerlund
Stephen Zoukis

Welcome to our new Board members

George Gephart is a native of Baltimore who has served on the Boards of Natural Lands Trust, The Nature Conservancy (PA), and the Curtis Institute of Music.

Bill Brenizer is originally from Charlotte, NC. His interest in the Conservation League was sparked by his 20-year tenure on the Board of Nantucket Land Council, an environmental organization whose mission and activities are very similar to those of the Conservation League.

Staff

Laura Cantral, *Executive Director*

Programs

Lisa Turansky, *Chief Strategy Officer*

Land, Water, & Wildlife

Emily Cedzo, *Land, Water, & Wildlife Program Director*

Riley Egger, *Land, Water, & Wildlife Project Manager*

Rachel Hawes, *Land, Water, & Wildlife Project Manager*

Communities & Transportation

Jason Crowley, *Communities & Transportation Program Director*

Betsy La Force, *Communities & Transportation Project Manager*

Robby Maynor, *Berkeley County Project Manager*

Energy & Climate

Eddy Moore, *Energy & Climate Program Director*

Alan Hancock, *Energy & Climate Advocacy Director*

Columbia

Merrill McGregor, *Director of Government Relations*

South Coast

Jessie White, *South Coast Office Director*

Juliana Smith, *South Coast Office Project Manager*

GrowFood Carolina

Anthony Mirisciotta, *General Manager*

Shaunda Fifer, *Sales & Marketing Director*

Richard Finne, *Warehouse Ops & Distribution Manager*

Kevin Gilly, *Warehouse Ops & Distribution Manager*

Paul Haire, *Inventory Control & Quality Assurance Specialist*

Katie Kuhn, *Sales & Marketing Associate*

Austin Lucas, *Warehouse Ops & Distribution Manager*

Benton Montgomery, *Operations Manager*

Caroline Rothkopf, *Sales & Marketing Assistant*

Deirdre Tanner, *Supply Chain Wizard*

Brita Von Fossen, *Sales & Marketing Manager*

Rebecca Watson, *Farm Coordinator*

Maxwell Williams, *Warehouse Intern*

Communications

Adam Findeisen, *Communications Director*

Jasmine Gil, *Outreach Coordinator*

Diane Knich, *Communications Manager*

Catie Lucey, *Creative Services Associate*

Development

Nancy Appel, *Development Director*

Kati McArdle, *Grants & Donor Communications Manager*

Tes Myrie, *Major Gift Officer*

Administration

Tina Allen, *Chief Financial Officer*

Deb Davidson, *Human Resources Officer*

Andy Hollis, *Director of Technology & Operations*

Kim Larson, *Accountant*

Staci Loeffler, *Database Administrator*

Reed Rayborn, *Executive Assistant & Board Liaison*

DeAnna Ridley, *Bookkeeper*

Jamie Roschal, *Office Coordinator*

Interns

Ginny Naughton, *Energy Justice Fellow*

Ashwin Sanzgiri, *Government Relations Intern*