

A 🌰 Place 🌰 For 🌰 All 🌰 Seasons

FRED L WATERMAN CONSERVATION EDUCATION CENTER

2024 ANNUAL REPORT



FRED L. WATERMAN CONSERVATION EDUCATION CENTER

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AGENDA FOR 2025 ANNUAL MEETING

Saturday, January 25, 2025

1:30 PM – 2:30 PM

Opening / Welcome	Board President Matthew Kisloski
Introduction of Full Board	Board President Matthew Kisloski
Center Finances	
1. 2024 Financial Summary followed by brief Q & A	Board Treasurer Rex Decker
2. Presentation of 2025 Budget followed by brief Q&A	& Executive Director Christopher Audette
Introduction of Ex Dir.	Board President Matthew Kisloski
Director's Statement on the Center	Executive Director Christopher Audette
Introduction of Staff	Executive Director Christopher Audette
Election Committee presents slate of officers	Nominating Committee Chair Steve Majka
Call for vote by members in good standing in attendance	Board President Matthew Kisloski
Introduction of guest speakers:	Executive Director Christopher Audette
1. Officer Anthony Rigoli – NYS DEC Natural Resources, Conservation Enforcement, and the role of Nature Centers	
2. Artist Karen Kucharski – Haudenosaunee Portraits Exhibit Statement of Thanks and viewing of a video featuring Tom Porter on Ohen:ton Karihwaterhkwen, the central prayer and invocation for the Haudenosaunee.	
Closing remarks	Board President Mathew Kisloski

2025 SLATE OF DIRECTORS

* Voted on by members in good standing during the annual meeting.

New Directors Approved by Board in 2024

Scott Clarke

Avery McLean

Existing Directors Running to Renew Their Term

Rex Decker

Diane Wiener

2025 SLATE OF BOARD OFFICERS

*For your information only. These officers are voted on by the board of directors after being approved by members in good standing.

Mathew Kisloski – Board President

Rex Decker – Board Treasurer

Sally Guydosh – Interim Board Secretary

Vice President – Vacant

THE CENTER'S GOALS

- Make quality environmental education resources and services readily available to all.
- Collaborate with and support other environmental education providers throughout New York.
- Enhance, promote, and complement the effectiveness of existing environmental education programs Identify needs and trends to help inform environmental policy and educational program development

OUR MISSION

Waterman Conservation Education Center's Mission is to promote conservation education outdoor recreation activities and environmental literacy.

OUR VISION

Our vision and our members are united in the belief that we need to prepare the next generation with the knowledge and skills to seek sound, balanced decisions that maintain public health and the environmental quality of our community and the world.



2024 BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND STAFF

Executive Board*

Matthew Kisloski	President
Rex Decker	Treasurer
Sally Guydosh	Secretary
*Vice President position vacant	

Board Members at Large

* Asterisk indicates provisional status until voted onto the board by membership at 2025 annual meeting

Scott Clarke*	Dylan Horvath
Emily Lovelass Lantrip	Stephen Majka
Avery McLean*	Jerry Michael
Robert Rodgers	Jim Shuler
Jeff Smith	Diane Wiener

Staff

Christopher Audette	Executive Director
Steve Brigode	Conservation Technician
Courtney Fitzgerald	Executive Assistant
Michelle Knuepfer	Programs Specialist
Karen Ritter	Weekend Receptionist

Camp Administration

Courtney Fitzgerald	Camp Director
Maria Gorman	Medical Director (volunteer)

Camp Counselors

Elizabeth Abashian	Michelle Knuepfer	Emily Musselwhite	
Debbie Miller	Tyler Coy	Emma Settle	Kyle Koprevich

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Susquehanna was steely-gray and appeared delicately pitted by fine raindrops falling from an overcast sky. The familiar shoreline seemed to calmly glide toward me over the silken water as our expertly piloted boat cruised toward its berth. Climbing onto the dock, I turned and extended a hand to help the first passenger off. A tiny rivulet of water meandered across her rain jacket's hood and, careening off her nose, embarked on its remarkable journey to Chesapeake Bay after joining the river water below with a splash.

"That. Was. *AWESOME!*"

You have to hand it to the OFA Class of 1969 – they sure have grit.

When they converged on Owego this past September for their 55th high school reunion, they were greeted by chilly, rainy weather. As it became evident that the rain would continue through their planned Susquehanna River cruise with the Waterman Center, they boldly chose to proceed. In high spirits, they clambered aboard our (as of yet, uncovered) pontoon boat, and were rewarded with misty river vistas, acrobatic Belted Kingfishers, and flighty Green Herons – all against the stoic and serene backdrop of Hiawatha Island.

It pays to hang in there!

Last year was about doing much more than hanging in there for the Waterman Center! 2024 was the year of program development, partnerships, and growth! At our interpretive center, as well as at our various preserves and in the community, we packed an astounding 69 programs into 2024 that were attended by over 1,000 people. While impressive, this doesn't include the hundreds of meaningful interactions we had with attendees of festivals and community events; the richness of program delivered during the six weeks of summer camp program delivered to 50 children each week; nor does it recognize the impromptu day-to-day tours, giftshop chats, and salad-munching "Ted talks". In 2024, we directly recorded close to 3,000 people hiking or visiting the center, though we estimate many, many more enjoy our trails.

As a small non-profit organization, we are privileged to enjoy a close and meaningful relationship with our volunteers. We continue to make improvements to our facilities, develop and deliver exceptional programming, and inform our policy and decision-making owing to these wonderful, bright, and dedicated people. I encourage you to spend a moment appreciating the names on our volunteer list and reflecting on what they represent for the impact we make every day.

It would be remiss to discuss the Waterman community without mentioning our talented, energetic, resourceful, and tireless staff. They are the warm and welcoming heart of our operations. They make a choice every day to come to work ready to deliver what it takes to make Waterman the treasure that it is. We were lucky to welcome two new staff members in 2024 – Courtney Fitzgerald in her new role as

Executive Assistant and Steve Brigode as Conservation Technician. Their enthusiasm and fresh ideas are already driving fresh improvements at the interpretive center and beyond! We also bade farewell to Cheryl Utter, who played a critical role in establishing the feeling of belonging and acceptance at the Waterman Center and is dearly missed. We wish her the very best in retirement!

During a recent meeting, we took a break to visit Ted in the auditorium and took pause at the way he interacts with his environment, shifting his position for optimal temperature, comfort, and who knows how many other unseen factors. Not exceptional in any way for a reptile, but in that moment, it spoke to something deeper – like Ted, we place ourselves where we need to be. If we take the time to attune ourselves to our needs, we place ourselves with intention. That, in a large way is what the Waterman Center is all about. We are that warm patch of sunlit trail. We are that cool, burbling stream. We are a place for people to belong, and I sincerely hope that you feel like you belong here. We wouldn't be who we are without you!

Yours in nature, hope, and peace,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Audette", with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Christopher Audette
Executive Director

SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR PARTNERS IN CONSERVATION

Achieve
Allstate, Landers Agency
Apalachin Fire Department
Apalachin Garden Club
Apalachin Lions Club
Audio Classics
Avangrid-NYSEG
BAE Electronic Systems
Barney & Dickenson
Best Buy Green Team
Binghamton Garden Club
Binghamton University Emerging Leaders Program
Boy Scouts of America
Broome County Planning Department
Broome County Department of Public Works
Broome County Legislature
Broome-Tioga BOCES
Chemung Canal Trust Company
Cook's Tree Service
Community Foundation of South Central New York
Community Options
Cornell Cooperative Extension of Broome and Tioga Counties
Cornell New York State Hemlock Initiative
Managing and Monitoring Ash – Ecological Research Institute
Delta Engineers
Direct Driven Motorsports
Endicott Precision
The Family Reading Partnership & Book Bus
Farmer Brown's Marketplace
Franziska Racker Center
Fuddy Duddy's
Garden Club of Endwell
George A and Margaret Mee Charitable Foundation
Girl Scouts
Hillside Garden Landscaping
Kiwanis Club of Owego
Lockheed Martin Day of Caring
Mildred Truman Faulkner Foundation
Naturalists' Club of Broome County
New York State DEC
Owego Kitchen
Riveo Creative
Robinson Lumber
Scott Smith and Son, Inc
Sierra Club, Susquehanna Chapter
SRW Products
The Stewart W. and Willma C. Hoyt Foundation
Stiletto's Fine Arts Studio
Sweeney's Market
Taylor Garbage
Tioga Arts Council
Tioga County Soil and Water
Tioga County Youth Bureau
Tioga State Bank
Town of Owego
Town of Union
Triple Cities Hiking Club
Tri Town Insurance
Two River's Photography Club
United Way of Tioga County
Upstate Shredding
Vestal Recreation Department
Vision's Federal Credit Union
Zuke's Excavating, LLC

WATERMAN CENTER VOLUNTEERS 2023

(IN NO PARTICULAR ORDER)

Rita Nossal	Loretta Brady	BSA Troops (various)
Jerry Michael	Jeff Smith	Girl Scout Troops (various)
Joan Hunt	Robert Dannecker	Jon Manning
Linda Frisbee	Kevin Millar	Fred Trost
Nina Smith	Tom Babcock	The Orzel Family
Beth Burton	Vitus Haggemiller	Albert Fiato
Kathy Eddy	Dylan Horvath	Emily Lovelass Lantrip
Robert Rodgers	Rex Decker	Josh Yeager
Fran Berry	Stephen Majka	Jean Rodgers
Chris Rounds	Matt Kisloski	Elizabeth Pimpinella
Sally Guydosh	Triple Cities Hiking Club Members	Jeanette Wertz
Mary Ann Cascarino	Wonderful Winter Wildlife Walk Cast and Crew	Bill Bitner
Gary Diehl	Gale Thomas	Gary Malyszek
Scott Clarke	Joyce Neira	Frank Adomshik
Achieve Residents	Lorraine Bleiler	Joyce Knuepfer
Community Options Residents	Ellen Pasto	Michael Haas
Cin Carlin	Bunny Begeal	Dominick Curley
Dave Martin	The Farr Family	Rick Marsi
Diane Wiener	David Grindell	Bill Baburchak
Gary King	Tom Kelly	Gail Morrison
Maria Gorman	Rick Chrisler	Luke Saunders
Andy Gorman	Eric Phelps	Al Fiato
Joe Italiano		Randy Howell

2024 IMPACT AND ACTIVITIES

2024 PROGRAMS

January

2 Guided Hikes

Vestal Rec Camp

Owego Pre-K

February

Vestal Rec Camp

Intro to
Backyard Birding

Community Helper Talk

Superb Owl Hike

March

3 Guided Hikes

Ted's Birthday

Birdwatching Basics

April

2 Guided Hikes

Envirothon

Rick Marsi

Girl Scouts

Avangrid/NYSEG
volunteer day

May

3 Guided Hikes

Elementary Field Trip

SVMS Presentation

Vestal Front St Days

June

4 Guided Hikes

NVHS STEM Day

MaMA Presentation

2 Windsor Field Trips

Strawberry Festival

July

3 Guided Hikes

Microscopy Corner

Moth Night

Waterman Community
Picnic

August

Guided Hike

Library Program

Owego Rec Camp

EXPLORE Camp

September

Cornell Raptors

2 Lyceum Courses

WISE Presentation

G&E Therapies Group

Harriet Marsi Video

BOCES

October

BOCES

Night Hike

Lockheed
Volunteer Day

River Cruises

November

Owl Presentation

Troop 284 Campout

ELP Planning & Event

Pumpkin Smash Event

Vestal Rec

BOCES

December

Wonderful Winter
Wildlife Walk

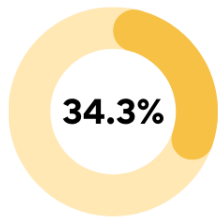
Karen Kucharski
Art Exhibition

VISITORS & VOLUNTEERS 2024

Each year we take time to look back at the amazing community the Waterman Center creates! Our dedicated volunteers who keep the trails nice across our six preserves as well as hikers and program attendees who embrace our mission are critical to the Waterman Center's rich 49 year history!

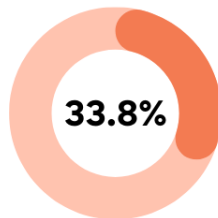
Visitor Breakdown - 7,926 Visitors, Hikers & Volunteers

Hikers at IBM Glen, Brick Pond, Apalachin Marsh, & Pettus Hill are not included, unless the hiking club reported attendance numbers. We estimate an additional 3,000 hikers at IBM Glen and 2,000 at Brick Pond



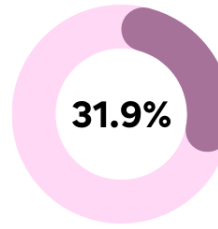
Hikers

Visitors
2195 adults
523 kids
20 clubs



Volunteer Days

2688
volunteer
days



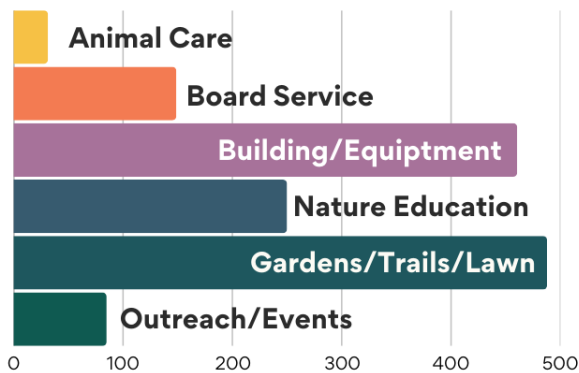
Programs

We hosted **69**
programs this year!
Serving 673 adults &
498 kids.
Plus **396 table stops**
at outreach events
and **964 Camper**
Days this summer!

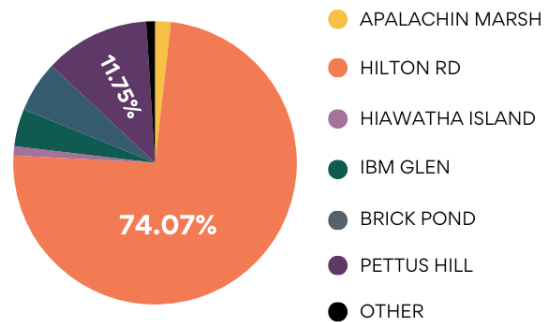
Volunteer Breakdown - 2,021 Recorded Hours

Not all volunteer hours get reported, but every hour spent is important! Thank you!!

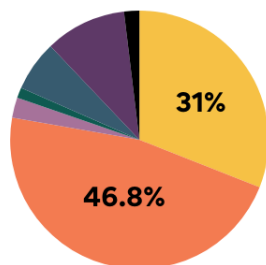
Time Well Spent!



Volunteer Hours per Location

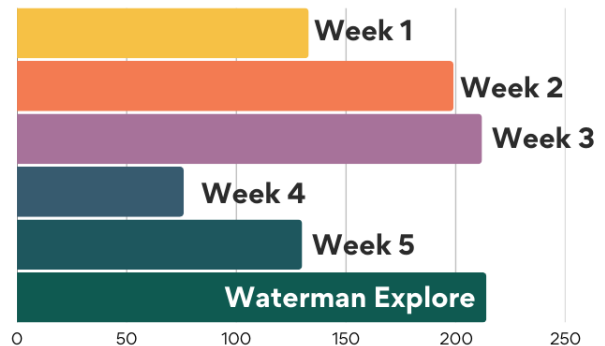


159 active members
28 new members!



- INDIVIDUAL
- FAMILY
- BUISNESS
- CONTRIBUTOR
- PATRON
- BENEFACTOR
- HONORARY

964 Camper Days this Summer!



NOTABLE GRANTS, SPECIAL PROJECTS, AND FORESEEABLE CHALLENGES

IBM Glen Parking Lot Expansion and Trail Enhancement Project- \$203,750.00 Project Total

\$150,000 grant award from the Hoyt Foundation

\$53,750 in awards from the Broome County Small Community Fund

Based on the number of trail maps distributed, the IBM Glen is hands-down our most popular nature preserve. Even if we were to decide on an average party size of 2.5 people per map, the resulting nearly 8,000 hikers in 2023 fails to account for regular hikers who don't need maps, and those who use digital maps!

Despite having been private property for as long as people of European descent have asserted their presence in the region, the IBM Glen is an important historic, cultural, and natural resource which plays a critical role in our regional recreation and tourism sectors. It is perhaps among the longest-running examples of privately held, public access land.

The Waterman Center committed to keeping the IBM Glen forever free and open in 2004 when it accepted the land donation. In 2023, we began a multi-year project to increase our capacity to accommodate visitors to the IBM Glen as well as make it easier to reach what is arguably the 'Glen's most iconic feature – the historic stone arch bridge near the Gray's Creek waterfall. This project will continue through and hopefully conclude in 2025.

The parking lot has nearly been doubled in size with a brand-new expanded area downhill from the existing lot. It is surfaced with a pervious, stabilized gravel grid product with some associated drainage and green stormwater features – like a small rain garden – to capture runoff from both sections of the lot, preventing erosion damage to the forest floor and sedimentation in Gray's Creek. The gravel grid expansion was completed during Fall 2023 and the existing lot was resurfaced in Spring 2024.

Through the combined efforts of an Eagle Scout Project and our own volunteers, the wooded center island between the two lots was thinned slightly and a small, interpretive "tree walk" was installed with signs identifying and describing key species. This added an educational feature for visitors to enjoy before even leaving the parking area!

The stone arch bridge trail enhancements will be planned and designed during Winter and Spring 2025. Budget and materials costs will dictate the extent of the project, but the goal is to use securely anchored sections of walkway with associated steps and boulders set into the steep hillside, to provide easier

access to the bridge and falls overlook. Fewer footfalls directly contacting the fragile soil dressing the slope will reduce and eventually reverse the erosion which has begun to rapidly degrade the bank.

We're proud to be charged with the stewardship of a space as grand as the IBM Glen and grateful for the partnerships and awards that make the current round of improvements possible!

Growing Pains and an Operational Shortfall

In the financial statements and budget contained within the following section of this report, you will notice that both the grants and maintenance categories are quite large. This is both to account for and predict the revenue and associated expenses for these grant-funded projects.

A challenge that we must address over the upcoming months is finding additional support should materials and/or labor costs increase to the point that our existing budget for the remaining parking improvements and the trail enhancements becomes inadequate.

An additional and broader challenge stems from what will ultimately be a strength – a larger staff, higher capacity to deliver programs, and improved facilities. The problem, unfortunately common fare in the non-profit sector, is declining donor and fundraising revenue.

In the subsequent reports, you will notice a substantial deficit in our projected budget for 2025, though substantially reduced in comparison to the shortfall anticipated in 2024. The board of directors continues to brainstorm and plan ways to reduce the deficit to a more manageable level. We of course plan to control expenses to the fullest extent possible, and we will fundraise more frequently. We have reserve funds whose purpose is to buoy us when this type of shortfall happens, from time to time. Of course, we must strive to avoid deploying these funds as they are exceptionally difficult to regenerate. Impressive growth in programming and program revenue throughout 2024 and going forward will surely play a pivotal role in keeping the center's finances healthy.

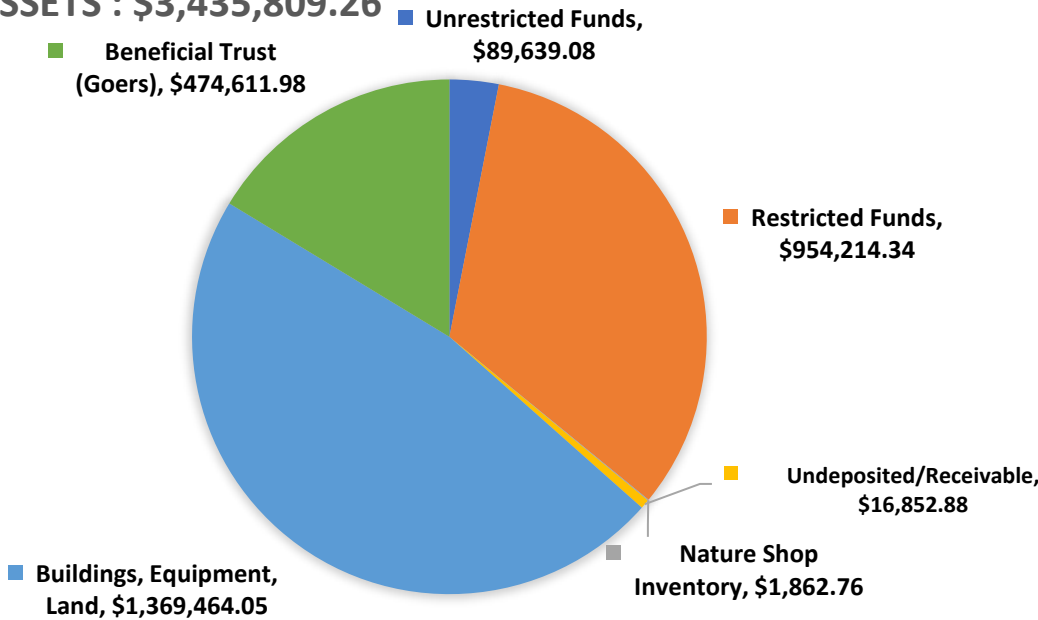
Our point here is that we are working to manage the shortfall. It is also that the source of the problem can be characterized as "growing pains". Operating costs tend to increase. We have more staff, working increased hours, and paid at rates that the market demands. This staff – which has been exceptional in recent years – is one of our greatest resources to generate additional revenue. We intend to accomplish that this year. Our membership, our volunteers, and our donors are another resource. We need your help, your contributions, your ideas, and your networking to expand our support base. The Waterman Center is strong as an organization, expanding our reach and improving our facilities and programs alike. In the face of other nature centers closing their doors, we implore you – help us remain strong, an asset to our communities, long into the future.

TREASURER'S REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

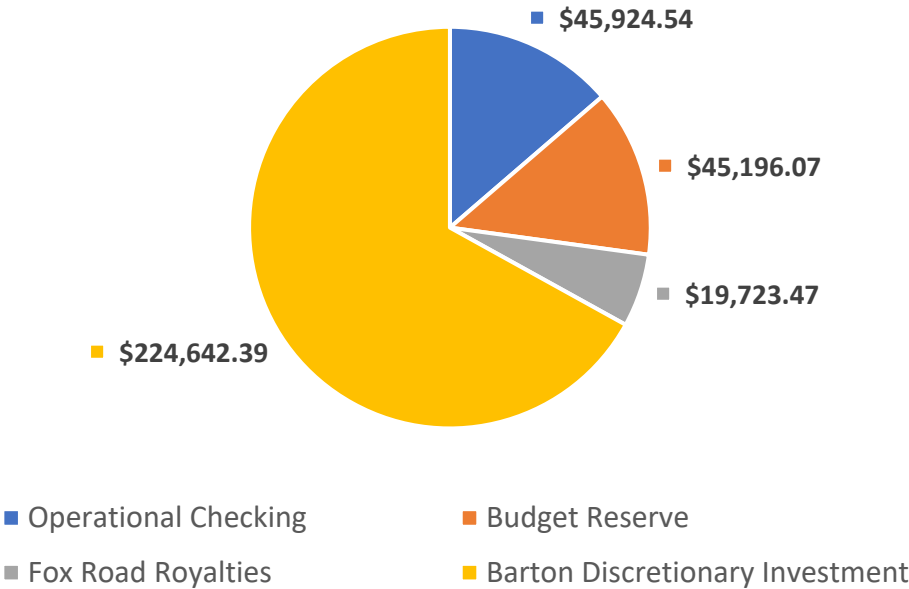
Summary Charts of Financial Position and Cash Flow

2024 WATERMAN CENTER ASSETS

TOTAL ASSETS : \$3,435,809.26

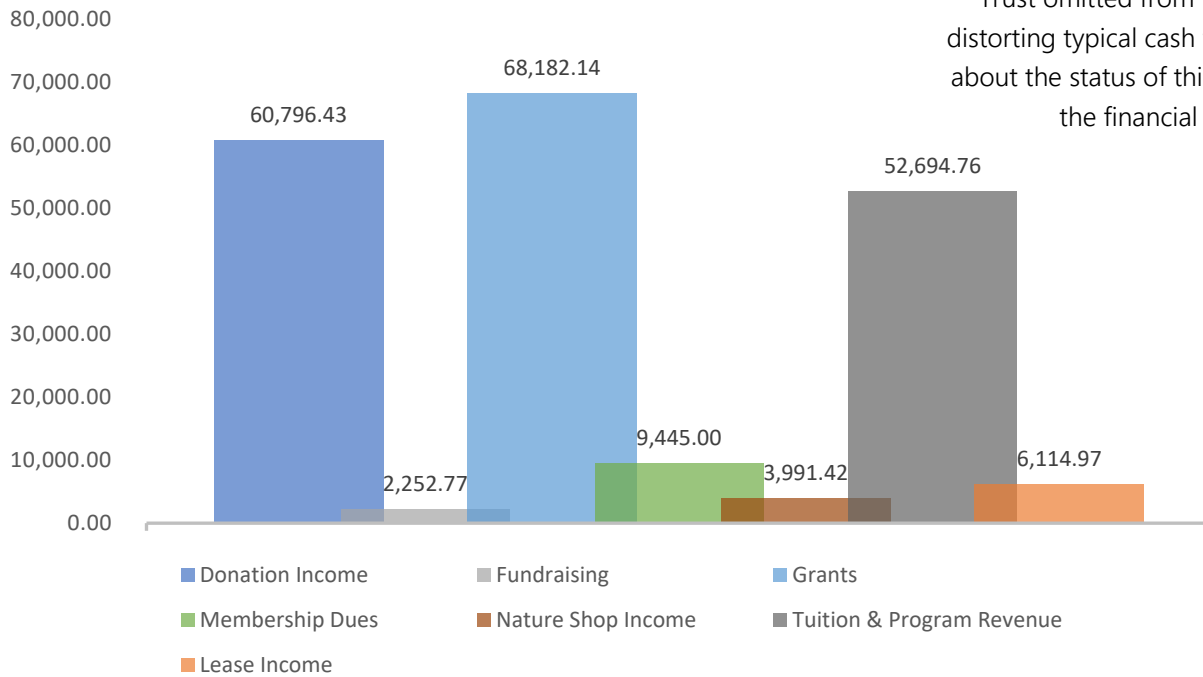


2024 Unrestricted and Discretionary Funds

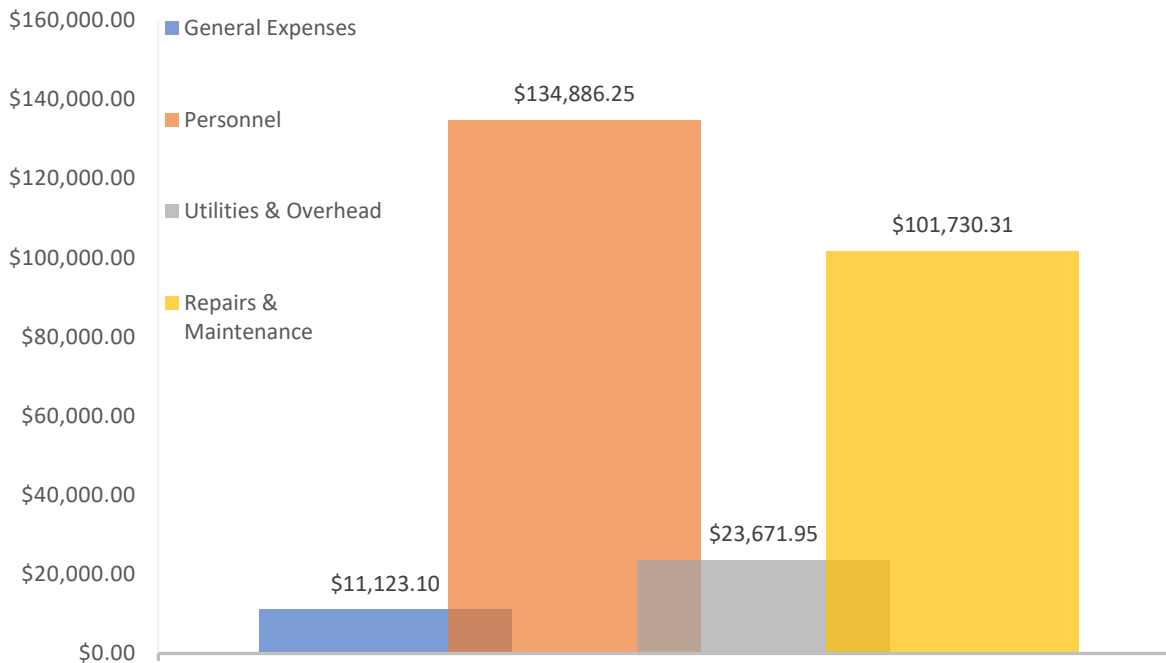


2024 Revenue - \$711,041.03

Please note: Funds received from the Sbarra Trust omitted from this figure to avoid distorting typical cash flow. For information about the status of this bequest, please see the financial statements.



2024 Expenses - \$315,766.39



*Please refer to the detailed financial statements for a line-item breakdown of “other income” and “other expenses”

Fred L Waterman Conservation Center

Statement of Financial Position

As of December 31, 2024

	TOTAL
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Bank Accounts	
0001 JOURNAL	0.00
1000 UNRESTRICTED	
1070 PayPal	1,582.18
1071 WIX Clearing	0.00
1075 Square Clearing	-105.50
1090 TSB Bingo Checking	3,641.79
1100 TSB Checking (General)	41,442.89
1105 TSB Savings	0.00
1105-0 Discretionary Savings	21,815.82
1105-1 Designated-Abrams	-1,321.50
1105-2 Designated-Forest School	20,000.00
1105-3 Designated-IBM Glen	0.00
Total 1105 TSB Savings	40,494.32
1115 TSB Fox Road Savings (Gas Lease)	2,597.85
1190 Petty Cash/Cash On Hand	-14.45
Total 1000 UNRESTRICTED	89,639.08
1200 RESTRICTED	
1205 CCTC Brick Pond (Foundation)	221,116.17
1210 CCTC Barton Estate	220,850.35
1215 CCTC Pettus Estate	549,063.06
1220 CCTC GIGP Checking	0.00
1225 CCTC Sbarra IM x2778	420,361.11
1230 CCTC Sbarra Custody Account	40,370.09
Total 1200 RESTRICTED	1,451,760.78
Total Bank Accounts	\$1,541,399.86
Accounts Receivable	
Accounts Receivable	500.00
Total Accounts Receivable	\$500.00
Other Current Assets	
1300 Inventory-Nature Shop	1,862.76
1400 Undeposited Funds	8,058.56
1500 Contributions Receivable	7,037.05
Total Other Current Assets	\$16,958.37
Total Current Assets	\$1,558,858.23
Fixed Assets	
2100 Equipment & Furniture	132,780.93
2105 Buildings & Improvements	957,055.98
2110 Intangibles	4,909.70

Fred L Waterman Conservation Center

Statement of Financial Position

As of December 31, 2024

	TOTAL
2150 Accumulated Depreciation	-520,031.56
2180 Land	827,624.00
Total Fixed Assets	\$1,402,339.05
Other Assets	
1600 Beneficial Interest in Trust	474,611.98
Construction in Progress - GIGP	0.00
Total Other Assets	\$474,611.98
TOTAL ASSETS	\$3,435,809.26
LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Accounts Payable	
2000 Accounts Payable	10,001.74
Total Accounts Payable	\$10,001.74
Other Current Liabilities	
2010 Payroll Clearing	0.00
2015 Payroll Tax Payable	0.00
2020 FWH / FICA	0.00
2035 SWH (State W/H)	0.00
2040 SUTA	0.00
Total 2015 Payroll Tax Payable	0.00
2050 Direct Deposit Payable	0.00
2300 CCTC Line of Credit (GIGP)	0.00
2400 PPP Loan Payable	0.00
2450 Accrued Payroll	1,006.03
2500 Accrued Expenses	0.00
2800 Deferred Revenue	0.00
2901 New York Department of Taxation and Finance Payable	248.38
Out Of Scope Agency Payable	0.00
Total Other Current Liabilities	\$1,254.41
Total Current Liabilities	\$11,256.15
Total Liabilities	\$11,256.15
Equity	
3200 Opening Balance Equity	0.00
3999 Retained Earnings	2,936,179.34
Net Revenue	488,373.77
Total Equity	\$3,424,553.11
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	\$3,435,809.26

Fred L Waterman Conservation Center

Income and Expenses

January - December 2024

	TOTAL
Revenue	
4025 Donation Income	568,359.97
4059 Fundraising	457.60
4100 Grants	68,182.14
4200 Membership Dues	9,445.00
4240 Nature Shop Income	3,991.42
4249 Tuition & Program Revenue	52,694.76
4300 Special Events	1,108.00
4450 Lease Income	6,114.97
4999 Uncategorized Income	18.17
Sales	669.00
Total Revenue	\$711,041.03
Cost of Goods Sold	
5004 COGS-Fundraisers	3,451.04
5005 COGS-Nature Shop	1,692.84
5006 COGS-Program/Event	20.49
Total Cost of Goods Sold	\$5,164.37
GROSS PROFIT	\$705,876.66
Expenditures	
6000 Miscellaneous Expenses	2,306.39
6100 Insurance	8,283.58
6200 Personnel	136,018.27
6300 General & Administrative	9,700.43
6310 Travel	1.50
6400 Professional Services	19,145.00
6500 Utilities	11,514.78
6700 Taxes Paid	998.93
6800 Repairs & Maintenance	122,633.14
Total Expenditures	\$310,602.02
NET OPERATING REVENUE	\$395,274.64
Other Revenue	
4400 Interest Earned	79.16
4440 Investment Income-Trust	45,842.94
Total Other Revenue	\$45,922.10
Other Expenditures	
6900 Investment Expenses	8,077.82
9977 Unrealized Gain/Loss on Trust	-11,471.51
9987 Unrealized Gains (Losses) from Investments	-43,783.34
Total Other Expenditures	\$ -47,177.03
NET OTHER REVENUE	\$93,099.13
NET REVENUE	\$488,373.77

2025 BUDGET

Income

Category	Amount
Donations	\$60,000.00
Events, Fundraising, & Sales	\$6,500.00
Membership Dues	\$12,000.00
Program Revenue	\$55,000.00
Grant Income	\$75,500.00
Fox Rd Royalty Income	\$6,000.00
Miscellaneous Income	\$45,136.00
Total Income	\$260,636.00

Expenses

Category	Amount
Cost of Goods Sold	\$2,150.00
Insurance	\$9,000.00
Professional Services	\$11,500.00
Miscellaneous Expenses	\$3,050.00
Bank Fees	\$1,000.00
General Administrative Expenses	\$8,000.00
Utilities and Telephone	\$12,000.00
Repairs and Maintenance	\$109,000.00
Personnel Expenses	\$153,550.00
Taxes	\$1,000.00
Total Expenses	\$310,250.00
Net Operating Income	(\$ 49,614.00)

Special Feature: How Everyday Philanthropy Continues to Build the Waterman Center

Many of us are aware of high profile philanthropic efforts of those who have expressed the intention of giving substantial amounts of their wealth to charitable causes both during and after their lifetimes. It is less common that we think of this phenomenon in the context of the Southern Tier, so I would like to focus our attention on how directed and planned giving helped to build the Waterman Center, continues to drive our progress, and will be critical to our future sustainability and success.

Indeed, the Waterman Center would not exist in its current form were it not for the contributions of funding and land from Lolita Waterman. Peter Ellis and others continued this legacy, setting aside land and funds to support and continue our mission. Ellis was instrumental in acquiring and protecting our lands around Brick Pond and provided funding to support it in the form of the "Critter Trust". This year we plan to showcase and honor the life and contributions of Charles Pettus, an African American physicist and engineer who willed his beloved property in Windsor to become our sixth nature preserve and a substantial endowment dedicated solely to its care. Pettus cared deeply about our community, youth development, and the well-being and learning derived from nature and we are honored to serve in each of those areas.

Through the years other individuals have made bequests to support the Waterman Center overall. When we mention "reserve" or "emergency" funds, these are often what we are referencing. We recently received a considerable sum from the estate of Nicholas Sbarra, who served the center for many years as a volunteer, supporter, and as board treasurer. Nicholas strongly believed in the value of our work and was so deeply connected to us that a celebration of his life was held at the interpretive center. His gift helped us complete important projects around the center and has been wisely invested to provide the funds necessary to maintain our new Conservation Technician staff position which has been a long-desired and impactful strategic move for our organization.

Several of our members, supporters, and volunteers choose to make qualified charitable distributions (QCD's) to the Waterman Center from their retirement accounts. This mode of giving may have tax advantages for the donor and is an important, much appreciated way that we fund our operations. If you are interested in how QCD's might work for you, we encourage you to speak with a financial planner or tax professional.

The unfortunate truth is, for organizations like the Waterman Center, reliance on government or private grants, corporate support, and individual donations will continue to become ever more difficult. Including the Waterman Center in your plans as you consider philanthropy in the form of qualified charitable distributions, bequests, or trusts is one of the most impactful things you can do to ensure Waterman's sustainability and longevity!

Notice Of Annual Meeting

January 9th, 2025

Notice Of Annual Meeting

The Waterman Conservation Education Center Board of Directors is pleased to invite you to the 2025 Annual Membership Meeting, which will take place at the Waterman Center Interpretive Building Auditorium at **1:30 PM on Saturday, January 25th, 2025**. While **all community members are invited to attend** the meeting, in order to participate in certifying the 2025 slate of directors, Waterman members must be in good standing as of Tuesday, January 14th, 2025. Our records indicate that your membership expires on ____ (if no date is listed you are not currently a member). Beverages and light refreshments will be served.

Please contact us via phone at (607) 625-2221 or e-mail at info@watermancenter.org if you wish to verify your membership status.

A special presentation will immediately follow the business portion of the meeting

The annual meeting agenda and slate of directors are enclosed with this letter. As a member of the center in good standing, you may vote to accept the 2025 slate of directors. Having been approved by our membership, the 2025 Waterman Board of Directors will then vote on the slate of officers in executive session. The slate of officers has been provided solely for your information.

We are very excited to spend the afternoon with you talking about all things Waterman!

Sincerely,

The Waterman Conservation Education Center Board of Directors

Waterman Conservation Education Center Annual Meeting

Saturday, January 21, 2024, 1:30 pm
Hilton Road, Apalachin, NY and Zoom

1. **The meeting was called to order at 1:35 p.m. by President Matt Kisloski.**
2. **Present:**
 - 2.1. **Board Members:** Rex Decker, Sally Guydosh, Dylan Horvath, Matt Kisloski, Emily Loveless, Jerry Michael, Steve Majka, Jim Shuler, Jeff Smith and Diane Wiener.
(Robert Rogers was excused.)
 - 2.2. **Executive Director:** Christopher Audette
 - 2.3. **Waterman Members and Guests:** Seven members were in attendance.
3. **Welcome and Introduction of Board Members Matt Kisloski**
4. **Treasurer's Report – Rex Decker, Treasurer & Chris Audette, Executive Director**
 - 4.1. Rex and Chris discussed the financial position and revenue and expenses for 2023. Personnel and maintenance costs were the main expenses while grants provided much income for projects.
 - 4.2. Improvements to the Center, the Pettus Hill Preserve and to the Glen were noted. Fundraising efforts in 2024 are being planned along with more grant requests. Chris discussed the various trusts and the income from them.
5. **Statement on the Center – Chris Audette, Executive Director.** Chris welcomed the attendees and referred to the Annual Report which was available to everyone.
 - 5.1. Chris read his report which described the 2023 finances and activities noting achievements and plans:
 - The youth day camp is an outstanding feature of Waterman Center.
 - The WISE Project, the renovation of the bathrooms, and the replacement of the exterior doors and windows make the Center more welcoming and efficient.
 - The expansion of the parking lots at the Pettus Hill Preserve and the IBM Glen add significant space for visitors.
 - There are planned improvements at Brick Pond, and the Hoyt Foundation is funding trail improvements at the IBM Glen.
 - Waterman Center is interfacing with the planning consortium for the Southern Tier Water Trail to encourage more water-based recreation and tourism in our region.
 - 5.2. A power point showed photos of some of the programs and projects:
 - A new trail head sign fringed with memorable action words,
 - Glen parking lot,
 - renovated bathrooms,
 - and a listing of the 45 events and programs in 2023, noting the importance of the Eagle Scout projects that took place on Waterman Center properties.
 - 5.3. Chris discussed the statistics of the programming at the Center. It is estimated that 8,272 people visited the Center and the IBM Glen last year and 1,540 volunteer hours were reported, most going toward trail maintenance. There were 596 campers.
 - 5.4. A slide show of exceptional moments captured photos of volunteers plus summer campers encountering nature with enthusiasm.
 - 5.5. Spread the word, as Waterman is a special place. A discussion occurred on ideas to bring this about.
6. **Nominating Committee Report – Steve Majka**
 - 6.1. Board Members Dylan Horvath, Stephen Majka, Jerry Michael, Jim Shuler, and Jeff Smith need to be reelected for 3-year terms.

6.2. A request was made for nominations from the floor. There being none, a vote was called for, and the slate was elected as presented.

7. Introduction of Jeff Smith – Chris Audette

Board member, Jeff Smith, has a vast knowledge of nature, microscopy and Hemlock Trees. He prepares short YouTube videos of fascinating nature happenings for the public. Jeff is doing plant surveys for Waterman Center.

8. Program – Understanding and Impeding Hemlock Woolly Adelgid at Waterman Properties – Jeff Smith

8.1. Jeff began by explaining the term “functionally extinct”, meaning a species is not gone, but is not playing a major role in the woods any more, giving examples of the American Chestnut, Elm and Ash trees.

8.2. The Hemlock trees are under attack by the Hemlock Woolly Adelgid. Waterman has trees affected at the IBM Glen, Hilton Road and Hiawatha Island. After giving a description of the Woolly Adelgid and the harm they cause to the tree, Jeff gave a timeline of their arrival in 2014 and the resulting attempt to keep 500 trees alive at the Glen and 100 at Hilton Road. Waterman became involved with the NYS Hemlock Initiative through Cornell. Silver flies were released to protect the trees and to give the Hemlock some years to survive. A fungus beetle, Little Larry, is a predator of the Woolly Adelgid and has recently been spotted locally, although it was not brought in as an agent.

8.3. Questions and Comments were received from the audience. The program was well received.

9. Adjournment for the Annual Meeting occurred at 3:35 pm.

Respectfully submitted.

Sally Guydosh, Secretary