

Voice of the Haw

HAW RIVER ASSEMBLY FALL 2025



RECORD-BREAKING FLOODS: OUR WATERSHED'S NEW REALITY

On Monday, June 7, 2025, our watershed community awoke to a very different landscape. Tropical Storm Chantal caused the river to rise 14 feet above flood stage overnight, cresting at nearly 23 feet in Bynum. Chantal inflicted significant damage to Alamance, Chatham, Durham, and Orange counties, leading to six confirmed storm-related deaths and extensive destruction to homes and businesses. Local states of emergency were declared, first responders conducted over 100 swift water rescues, and emergency shelters opened for displaced residents.

Though the flood waters have receded and our Haw River is back to her slow and rocky self, our team will be focused on Chantal response for months to come, addressing both the longer term impacts and recovery needs for our watershed. We have conducted 135 well tests for impacted community members; 46% of these failed due to bacterial contamination.

We've partnered with health departments to provide resources to community members, emergency responders to proactively assess safety needs, and leaders from our community and mutual aid groups to provide resources to the people who need it most.

We are also conducting additional water quality and soil testing for metals near pollution concern sites inundated by flood waters. We are working with dam safety agencies and other nonprofit organizations to address 11 dams in the watershed that are now at high risk of failing. We have created a debris tracking map to prioritize sites for clean ups in the coming months, and have scheduled several clean ups with our partners and volunteers.

Some areas in our watershed saw up to 12 inches of rainfall in a matter of 24 hours. These intense rain events are a direct result of a changing climate, and will continue to threaten this region with catastrophic flooding.

With the loss of wetland protections and incentives for green stormwater infrastructure, an increase in pavement and a decrease in forested stream buffers, the rainfall has nowhere to go but into the raging river. Our city stormwater plans have been to get the rain water away, into channels and ditches and streams, as quickly as possible. With this mindset, the downstream communities continue to be at risk.

Though state and federal elected officials have deemphasized and defunded climate resilient efforts and strategies, we will continue to work with our state advocacy partners, state agencies, county and municipal elected officials and staff, and researchers to put policies in place that minimize the harms of future flooding events.





This time of year is always a little bittersweet for me, as we say goodbye to the cicada hums and perfectly ripe tomato sandwiches, the occasional sunburn and spontaneous river swims, late evening sunsets and falling asleep on screened porches. Since the flood, I've been soaking in every second of these little summer gifts, and ruminating on one of my favorite lines from Mary Oliver's "The Summer Day."

"I don't know exactly what a prayer is. I do know how to pay attention."

I have been fortunate enough to live right on this river we all love, about 10 feet from the banks of the Haw. I wake up with osprey diving for their breakfast and watch herons roost on the island at night. I pay attention. But a dear friend of mine who was flooded during Hurricane Florence reminded me recently, "If you can see the river, the river can see you."

I was flooded out of my home during Tropical Storm Chantal, and though my home and my pets and my belongings were mostly spared, my world was upended for several weeks.

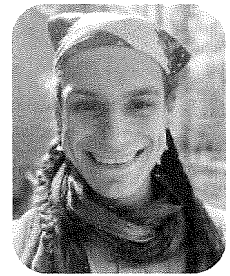
The Haw demanded our attention. Our team and a handful of incredible volunteers stepped up to take on the work of investigating contamination, assessing immediate flood impacts through inundation mapping, providing invaluable resources to the impacted communities who needed help, all while I sorted what I could salvage from the flood wreckage. They cooked for me, took home my laundry, housed me, reminded me to reapply sunscreen and drink water, brought box fans and dehumidifiers and mold remediation equipment. They walked my dog and held my hand and responded to countless emails and media inquiries in my absence.

Beyond our small staff and volunteers, dozens of people donated to help purchase well testing supplies and clean up gear. Others showed up to clear trails along the river and muck out buildings and homes for our friends and neighbors across the watershed.

As we recover from this flood and learn how to prepare for the next, I am so moved by the resilience and compassion of our Haw River watershed community. This flood devastated so many homes and businesses across the region, and it was our community, our friends and neighbors, who were the first to jump in with everything they had to offer. In the wake of more drastic cuts to environmental protections, climate policies, and critical prevention and response measures for natural disasters at the federal and state level, we have stepped up to rely on each other. Thank you to each of you who gave what you had, your time or knowledge or dollars, to our communities in the wake of Chantal. I encourage you to take some time to sit quietly on the river bank with your toes in the water, and pay attention.



NEW ADDITIONS!
Haw River Assembly welcomed Kim Westermann, our new Membership & Fundraising Manager, on June 1, bringing creative ideas and easing our workloads. Also, Aidan Loretz is leading our pipeline advocacy, organizing community efforts against the Southeast Supply Enhancement Project and developing climate programming for community colleges. Both Kim and Aidan will be present at this year's Learning Celebration, so come out and give them a warm welcome!



2025

HRA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Ayo Wilson**, President, Durham
- Rufus King**, Vice-President, Chatham
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- Chris Carter**, Alamance
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- Francisco Plaza**, Orange
- John Wagner**, Chatham
- Mac Jordan**, Emeritus Member, Alamance
- Omega Wilson**, Environmental Justice Advisor, Alamance

HAW RIVER ASSEMBLY STAFF

- Emily Sutton**, Executive Director & Haw Riverkeeper
- Carolyn Paden**, Administrative Director
- Jessica Black**, Environmental Educator
- Kaitlyn Elliott**, Water Quality Program Manager
- Aidan Loretz**, Pipeline Community Organizer
- Anita Moore**, Communications Manager
- Hannah Welbom-Lewis**, Events & Program Manager
- Kim Westermann**, Fundraising & Membership Manager

STATE & LOCAL ADVOCACY

NC WATER PROTECTION EFFORTS MEET LEGISLATIVE ROADBLOCKS

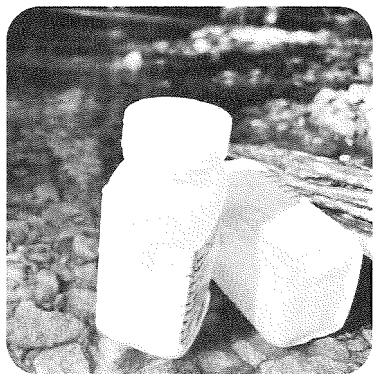
Very few legislative bills made it through committees, through both House and Senate chambers, and across Governor Stein's desk this session to become law. One of those bills that failed to move through the legislature was Senate Bill 666, 2025 Water Safety Act. This bill would have directed commissions to adopt standards for drinking water and discharges of PFAS, and provide funds for mitigation of PFAS contamination. The drinking water standards proposed would have reflected the federal Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCLs) set by the EPA in 2024, which are currently under threat of being rolled back.



Last year, North Carolina set temporary groundwater standards for PFAS, in large part because of our work with community members in Swepsonville to petition for better protections after their water had been contaminated by sludge fields and preregulatory landfills. These groundwater standards are temporary, and will expire without permanent rules in place. Though this bill did not move this session, we will be working with legislators next session to continue its progress.

One bill that became law through veto override was House Bill 402, Limit Rules with Substantial Financial Costs. This bill will require any proposed rule that could exceed a \$10 million dollar cost over any five year period to be adopted only through a unanimous vote by the commissions. This makes any work to move PFAS groundwater, surface water, or drinking water standards exceedingly more challenging to move through the Environmental Management Commission or budget commissions.

LOOPHOLES ALLOW CONTINUED PFAS AND 1,4-DIOXANE POLLUTION



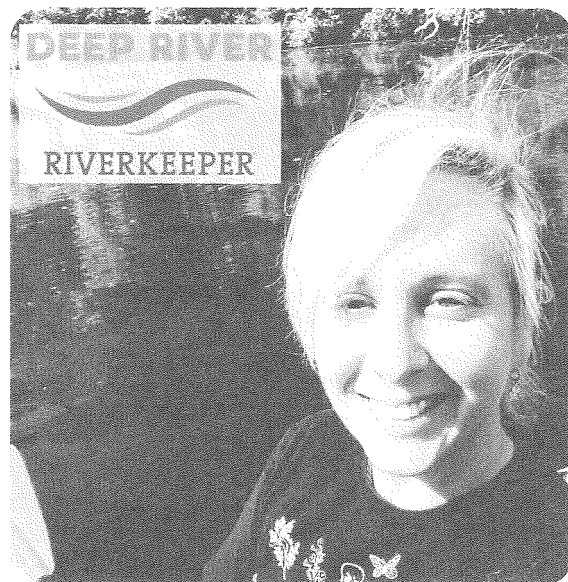
In addition to legislative challenges, the Environmental Management Commission has continued to wield its power to give a pass to dischargers of PFAS and 1,4-dioxane. The commission has proposed developing minimization plans for dischargers of these toxins, however, these plans do not actually set regulatory limits or require regular monitoring to ensure the minimization is effective. The penalty for not minimizing? A new plan must be developed. Having these plans in place without any actual regulatory limits or testing gives the polluters the permission to continue discharging unchecked levels of toxins into our waterways.

In light of these devastating statewide environmental cuts, we are working directly with local county and city officials to push their own water utilities and wastewater utilities to use their existing authority to protect their customers and hold their industrial dischargers accountable.

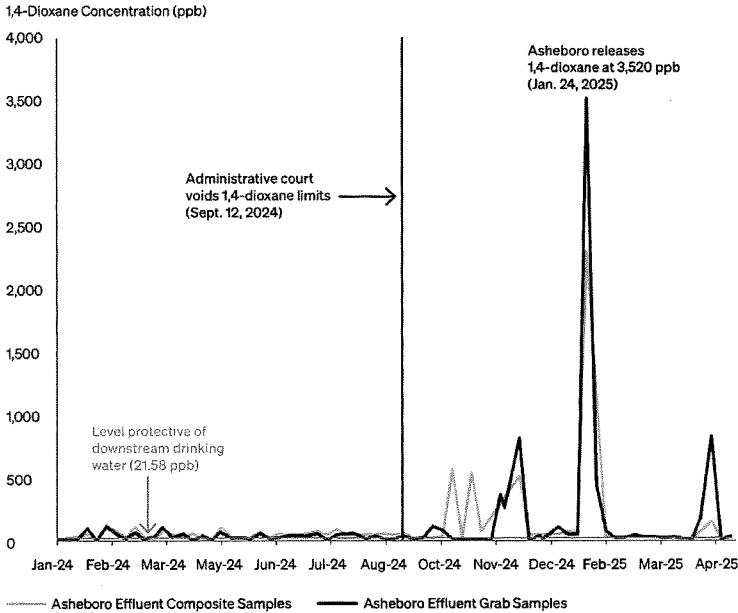
THE CAPE FEAR BASIN: DEEP RIVER RIVERKEEPER FILLS CRITICAL GAP

The DRRK (Deep River Riverkeeper) completes the missing piece of Riverkeeper oversight for the Cape Fear River Basin, the largest watershed in NC. Dr. Patricia Gray is the new Executive Director and Stephanie Stephens is the new Deep Riverkeeper! We congratulate this whole new team and board of directors in Jamestown and look forward to standing shoulder to shoulder with them in our efforts to protect NC waters!

The "New Protector of the Upper Cape Fear Basin" announces its official licensing by the [Waterkeeper Alliance®](#), the international riverkeeper association that authorizes jurisdiction and supports environmental protectors for rivers. The Deep River Riverkeeper (DRRK) is based in Guilford County, and was formed in December 2024 to support the health and well-being of the Deep River and its tributaries, a 125-mile journey through 6 central North Carolina counties (Forsyth County, Guilford County, Randolph County, Chatham County, Lee County, and Moore County).



LITIGATION UPDATES



1,4-dioxane pollution has increased dramatically since North Carolina's administrative court declined to allow the state to impose 1,4-dioxane pollution limits within a new National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit. SELC

LEGAL CHALLENGE AIMS TO STOP INDUSTRIAL POLLUTION AFFECTING 900,000 RESIDENTS

This summer, Haw River Assembly and Cape Fear River Watch sued the City of Asheboro and plastics manufacturer StarPet Inc. to stop their toxic 1,4-dioxane pollution that flows into the drinking water supplies for about 900,000 North Carolinians. 1,4-Dioxane is a cancer-causing chemical and it can't be removed by conventional water treatment technology. That means Asheboro and StarPet's pollution flows from their facilities and into people's homes.

To make matters worse, recent state testing has shown that Asheboro's harmful 1,4-dioxane pollution has reached the highest level seen at a wastewater plant in North Carolina—160 times the level that is protective of downstream drinking water. These obvious spikes of 1,4-dioxane levels (graph above) correspond with the multiple times Asheboro told StarPet, a plastics manufacturer, that it could take its treatment system offline, allowing the industry to dump unlimited toxic pollution into downstream drinking water sources.

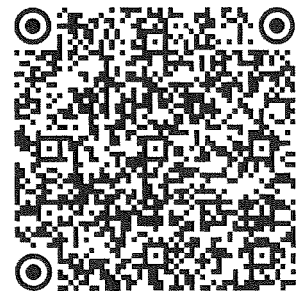
At the same time, Asheboro and other 1,4-dioxane polluters, including the Cities of Greensboro and Reidsville, are fighting against the state's authority to control 1,4-dioxane and are stopping health protective rules from moving forward, taking advantage of a polluter-friendly state legislature and state administrative court system.

The Clean Water Act requires municipalities like Asheboro to control industrial pollution before it reaches the municipal wastewater plants, but the city is refusing to do so. Stopping pollution at the source so that industrial polluters pay is far more cost-effective than treating 1,4-dioxane and other dangerous pollution, like PFAS, at municipal wastewater treatment plants or at downstream drinking water utilities. It also avoids placing the burden of contaminated drinking water on the health and finances of nearby and downstream communities.

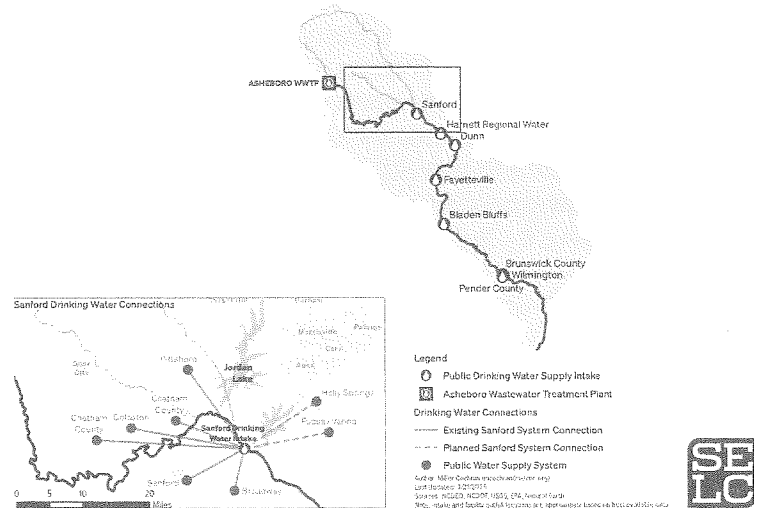
We know cities can stop their toxic pollution because we've seen it done through our legal challenges in Greensboro and Burlington. Asheboro is upstream of Sanford, which pulls their drinking water directly from the Cape Fear. Sanford is also poised to become a drinking water source for all of TriRiver Water in the next several years, which would supply much of Chatham County with drinking water.

Haw River Assembly and our downstream partners at Cape Fear River Watch continue to fight for the protection of our rivers and water supplies in spite of statewide policy that prioritizes the profits of polluters over the health of our communities. This case is ongoing.

Use this QR code to access the SELC press release:



Drinking Water for Nearly 900,000 People Threatened by Asheboro's 1,4-Dioxane Pollution



THE RIVER REVIEW: PH TO 02

NEARLY HALF OF OUR TESTS RETURNED POSITIVE FOR HARMFUL BACTERIA

After Tropical Storm Chantal, we were concerned about well drinking water safety. Flood waters can inundate and damage wells, leading to flood water intrusion. These flood waters can contain harmful pollutants such as E.coli, a bacteria that can make you sick if ingested. Haw River Assembly was able to provide well testing for over 150 residences. We tested these wells for the presence of fecal coliforms and E.coli (a specific species of fecal coliforms). Of the wells tested 83 passed (meaning there was no presence of E.coli or fecal coliforms) and 72 failed (meaning one or both was present). We are grateful to the locations that allowed us to set up our well testing sites: Steel String Brewery - Pluck Farm, Duke Campus Farm, S.A.F.E, Saturdays in Saxapahaw, Eno River Brewing and the Chatham County Library.

FLOOD MAPPING REVEALS COAL ASH & DRY CLEANER SITES LIKELY INUNDATED DURING CHANTAL

Thanks to the help of Northeastern University, we were able to use the map they created showcasing estimated flood extents from Tropical Storm Chantal and overlay it with information we have related to hazardous sites in the Haw River Watershed.

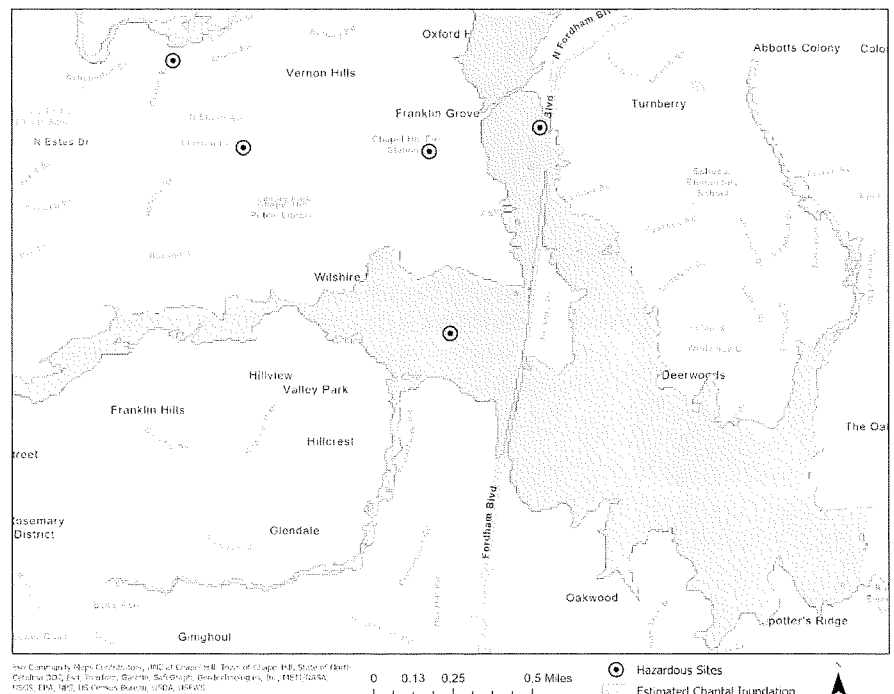
Given the information, it is likely that areas with coal ash and a few dry cleaners may have been inundated. We would expect to find trichloroethylene and perchloroethylene, chemicals used in dry cleaning operations.

High levels of heavy metals are typically found in coal ash, which has historically been used as structural fill. This map can also give us information of where damage and debris clean up may be necessary. (See map.)

2025 SWIM GUIDE: RESULTS SHOW STORM IMPACTS ON THE HAW

The Swim Guide season started back in May in time for Memorial day and will be coming to a close at the end of August with our last sample being taken on August 28th. This year we added Saxapahaw Lake to our Swim Guide program, making the total number of swim/recreational sites we now sample twelve. With Chantal flooding, several of our sites were closed for several weeks, and even now HWY-64 Haw Access and Saxapahaw Island remain closed. This summer we saw that when it rains many of our sites on the Haw have high levels of E.coli. Consistent with prior years, we rarely see high levels of E.coli in Jordan Lake except when sewer overflows occur or if geese are very prevalent at a site.

This year Kaitlyn initiated a weekly monitoring program to survey 7 key sites in the watershed. It has been fascinating to see the seasonal trends occurring so far this year. During this weekly monitoring we test water temperature, specific conductance, conductivity, pH, dissolved oxygen, and turbidity. These parameters allow us to identify when problems may be occurring in our watershed. More detailed information about sampling results from this program and all of our others will be available in the upcoming 2025 State of the Haw Report.



CLARITY & CRITTERS: RIVER WATCH REPORT



HANDS-ON LEARNING: IDENTIFYING STREAM CREATURES BY TAILS, GILLS, AND BODY PARTS

On July 17th we hosted a macroinvertebrate identification workshop at North Park Library in Alamance. We had a great time looking at various macroinvertebrates under microscopes and learning the defining factors of each aquatic macroinvertebrate order. Tails, legs, body segments, and gills can all be important factors in correctly identifying many macroinvertebrates. For example, the number of tails and shape of the tails can help us determine if a critter is a stonefly, mayfly, or damselfly.

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION GROUP EXPANDS RIVER WATCH TO URBAN GREENSBORO STREAM

We would love to give a warm welcome to Triad Wild! to our River Watch Program. Triad Wild! is one of 19 local Chapters of the North Carolina Wildlife Federation (NCWF) that are spread across North Carolina. They proudly serve the Triad region of North Carolina, including Greensboro, High Point and Winston-Salem. Their Chapter ardently supports the conservation and protection of native flora and fauna and their habitats. They advocate for wildlife and their habitats through educational programs, habitat restoration and protection projects, and outdoor recreational activities.

As one of our long-term projects, Triad Wild! is partnering with Haw River Assembly to monitor water quality in Muddy Creek, a tributary of the Haw River. Muddy Creek is an urban stream (much of it flows underground through Greensboro). They are sampling Muddy Creek for invertebrates, water quality and stream characteristics quarterly at Woven Works Park in Greensboro.

The creek emerges from its journey under the city in the Park. TW! also tends to the native plant and pollinator gardens in Woven Works Park on a quarterly basis, in collaboration with the City of Greensboro. They encourage you to join TW! and become actively involved in their wildlife projects and programs.

Watch for upcoming announcements of the dates of water quality sampling and pollinator garden maintenance on their website (www.triadwild.org).



BECOME A WATERSHED GUARDIAN: RIVER WATCH TRAINING AND SOCIAL

Don't miss out! Our next River Watch training will be at Red Slide Park in Alamance County on September 6th from 10am - Noon. We will learn about physical water quality parameters, how and where to find and how to identify macroinvertebrates, and lastly we will go over how to document riparian and habitat information. Your participation in our program helps inform us about water quality trends in our watershed.



5 THINGS YOU CAN DO THIS SEASON TO HELP THE HAW!

JOIN US IN PROTECTING THE HAW RIVER: OUR COMMUNITY'S VITAL RESOURCE

The Haw River is crucial for our community, offering beauty and essential resources. We invite you to join our organization in protecting the river from development, pollution, and climate change, which is vital for preserving drinking water and ecosystems.

Ways to Contribute:

There are various opportunities to help, whether short-term or long-term. Every effort matters in our mission to protect the Haw River. Explore five ways to become a part of our community of water protectors.

****OCTOBER 22** COMMUNITY MOBILIZATION! EPA HEARING ON TOXIC POLLUTION LIMITS**

The EPA plans a public hearing on Asheboro's NPDES permit on **October 22, 2025**, at Randolph Community College. The date is tentative, but a strong turnout is essential to support the EPA's conclusion that the permit should include limits on 1,4-dioxane.

1

Submit comments to oppose the stream crossing permit for the Southeast Supply Enhancement Project. Public hearings are on September 2 and 4, with written comments accepted by NCDEQ until October 6 at 5 PM.

2

Volunteer for our 35th Annual Learning Celebration! This three-week program for 4th graders in the Haw watershed covers crayfish, Indigenous history and river exploration. Community support and donations are essential for its success!

3

Attend a clean up! In the wake of Chantal, we are still working to identify and prioritize locations to remove trash and debris from our river and streams. Check www.hawriver.org for a schedule of our clean-up efforts!

4

Support our Chantal response work by donating for water and soil testing equipment, travel costs for pollution scouting and cleanup equipment. With a donation of any amount, you will become a member of HRA for a year.

5

Be an educated voter and VOTE in the municipal elections. Get to know the candidates who hope to represent you. Learn about where they stand on issues that matter to you. We will hold them accountable!

BEAUTIFUL DESTINATIONS IN THE HAW RIVER WATERSHED

KAITLYN'S FAVORITE: JOHNSTON MILL IN CHAPEL HILL



Johnston Mill Nature Preserve is easily accessible for Triangle residents, offering 296 acres of forest and creeks with well-marked trails. Two parking areas provide convenient access - one off Mount Sinai Road and another off Turkey Farm Road. The preserve features beautiful creek areas where New Hope Creek flows over rapids and around large rock formations, with benches perfectly positioned for resting while overlooking the water. It is ideal for hikers of all levels and nature enthusiasts seeking a quick escape close to Chapel Hill. Kaitlyn loves it because it has some amazing stonefly species and really cool and diverse trails that go through both forest and fields.





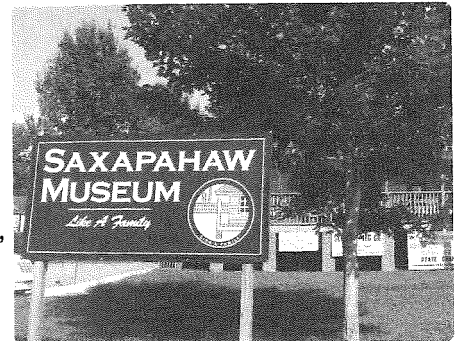
NATURE IS OUR CLASSROOM: WATERSHED EDUCATION

NEW SENIOR PROGRAM CONNECTS HISTORY & ECOLOGY IN SAXAPAHAW

This year has been full of energy, exploration, and exciting new opportunities to connect learners of all ages with the Haw River and its surrounding environment.

In Spring 2025, we launched a new semi-annual senior program at the Saxapahaw Museum. This unique offering blends the ecological story of the Haw River with its rich cultural and industrial history, giving older adults a chance to engage with their local landscape through storytelling, guided walks and hands-on activities.

The next session will take place on Thursday, October 23, 2025, from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at the Saxapahaw History Museum (rain date: Tuesday, October 28).



EDUCATIONAL GROWING: NEW PROGRAMS & PROGRAM REVIVALS



Summer 2025 brought the debut of Stream Splashers, an outdoor nature program for preschool-aged children. Each week featured a different nature theme—stream critters, plant life, or dinosaurs—paired with an engaging, age-appropriate clean water message. Through play, movement, and discovery, Stream Splashers encouraged curiosity and early environmental awareness.

We also hosted several educator workshops this year, including a Stream Investigation for Educators (Summer 2024), Project CATCH and the Project WET Climate Resilience Workshop (Spring and Summer 2025). These sessions equip teachers with tools to bring watershed education into their classrooms and communities.

A cornerstone of this year's work has been the revival and expansion of the Stream Investigation Program, originally developed for 8th graders. It now includes 7th grade and high school Earth science classes, integrating updated watershed data and student-centered learning strategies. This hands-on program continues to grow and evolve to meet the needs of diverse learners across our region.

As we look ahead, we're excited to continue offering place-based programs that inspire curiosity, foster stewardship and deepen our collective connection to the Haw River.

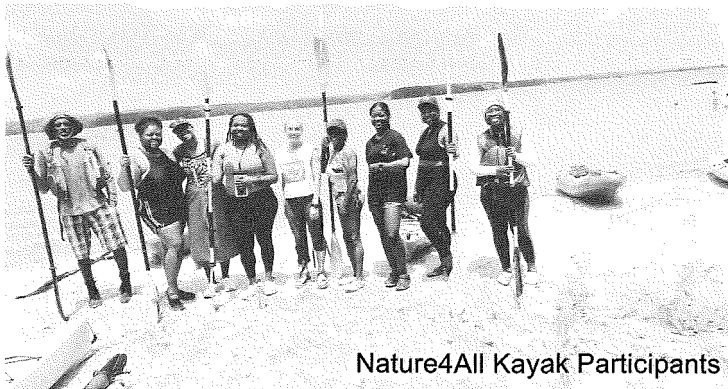
RECENT RIVER ADVENTURES

HAW RIVER FESTIVAL

On May 3rd, we celebrated our 35th Annual Haw River Festival—and what a joyful day it was. The Saxapahaw community came alive with live music from Saludos Compay, A Different Thread, and Travis Williams Group, setting the perfect soundtrack for an afternoon of fun. A lucky individual paddled away with a brand-new kayak, generously donated by Great Outdoor Provision Company, through our annual raffle. Huge thanks to Haw River Canoe & Kayak Co. for offering canoe rides for kids on Saxapahaw Lake—it's always a highlight for our youngest river lovers. The magic continued with a whimsical puppet parade around Saxapahaw led by the incredible team at Paperhand Puppet Intervention, and a peaceful birding hike on Saxapahaw Island guided by Alan Avakian. We're deeply grateful to Heather, Anna, Alfie, and Malik from Haw River Ballroom, as well as all our volunteers, partners, Board members, and HRA staff whose energy and support made this special day possible.



NATURE4ALL: KAYAK & WATER CONFIDENCE WORKSHOP

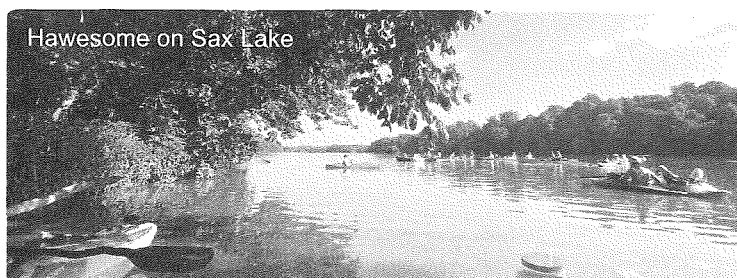


Nature4All Kayak Participants

On June 7, we were proud to host a Water Confidence and Kayak Paddle Workshop at Ebenezer Beach Access, working to ensure that outdoor recreation and water safety education are accessible to all community members, especially those who have been underrepresented in these spaces. Led by Raphael Darden of Xplore Kayak and Stephanie Winfrey of Black Butterfly Swim Club in Winston Salem, participants learned the basics of paddling and engaged in water confidence practices, all in a welcoming, supportive environment. We were deeply honored to welcome Angela White, a powerful advocate for water safety, who shared her story and the legacy of her son, whose life was tragically lost to drowning.

HAWESOME!

On June 20, July 22 & August 17, we were thrilled to be part of Hawesome, a neighborhood benefit series supporting Haw River Assembly and Haw River Canoe & Kayak. Taking place both on land and by paddle, these summer events offered a unique way to connect on the Haw River, including local drinks and live music. A huge thank you to Garrett Bethmann & Flower of Carolina for making these special gatherings possible.



Hawesome on Sax Lake

HAW, HIKE & HISTORY

On July 24, we held our 2nd Haw, Hike, History at Glencoe Mills and explored the historic Glencoe Mill Village! Participants enjoyed an informative tour of the Textile Heritage Museum before hiking along the Haw River and investigating some macroinvertebrates collected from the Haw.



Haw, Hike & History Crew

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT & UPCOMING EVENTS

TRASH TRAP LEADERS LEADING THE WAY!



Trash Trap volunteers are the driving force of our program!

Our Trash Trap Program expanded from one trap in Durham over eight in Alamance, Guilford, Orange and Durham counties. Key leaders include Chris Mattox and Halle Amick in Durham, Courtney Smith in Guilford, Suzy Lawrence and Lauren Nyland in Orange, and Matt Stansbury and Sarah Rose in Alamance. Daphne Vogelsang has led the Pittsboro Trash Trap for the past two years. While Daphne is moving away from the watershed, we are extremely thankful for volunteerism efforts the past three years.

HAW RIVER ISLAND RAMBLE RECAP

On April 12, we hosted the Haw River Island Ramble at the Saxapahaw Island and had over 120 participants and volunteers come together. Special thank you to our Ramble committee, partners and sponsors who helped us celebrate the river while raising money for a great cause. Check out our sponsors below:

- **Amandalin Cannon Real Estate with Keller Williams**, 2280 S Church St, Suite 206, Burlington, NC 27215, acannon.kw.com
- **Ecological Landscape Design**, Tony Mayer Landscapes, 919-444-4187, TonyMayerLandscapes.com
- **Judith Brooks Acupuncture**, judithbrooksacupuncture.com
- **Munson Law Firm**, 9555 US Highway 15-501 N, Chapel Hill, NC 27517, munsonlawfirmnc.com
- **The Eddy Pub** 1715 Saxapahaw-Bethlehem Church Rd, Graham, NC 27340, theeddypub.com
- **The Jester Group at Baird Private Wealth Management**, 1414 Raleigh Rd, Suite 420, Chapel Hill, NC 27517, jestergroup.bairdwealth.com

Mark your calendars for the 2026 Haw River Island Ramble, which is scheduled for April 11th. Stay tuned for registration and early bird specials.



HAW RIVER AMBASSADORS

We are also super thankful to our Haw River Ambassadors who helped us table at community events across the watershed. Haw River Ambassadors included Courtenay Vass, Tilghman Castelli, Maja Kricker, Deb Hanson and Kelsey Bitting!

Interested in being an ambassador?
Email events@hawriver.org for more information.

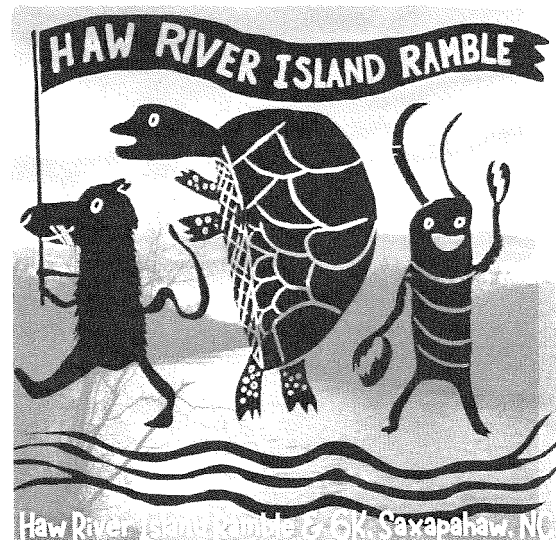
COMMUNITY CLEANUP RESPONSE

After Tropical Storm Chantal, clean-up efforts have been underway. On July 12, volunteers removed litter and debris from Bolin Creek in Chapel Hill.

Additionally, 26 students from the Duke Health and Environment Scholars Program participated in learning and cleaning out the Northeast Trash Trap, emphasizing the importance of starting service young.

STREAM INVESTIGATION VOLUNTEERS

The Stream Investigation Program has returned! We need additional support for educating middle and high school students. A huge thanks to Regina Baratta for enhancing the curriculum and volunteering and to Daphne Vogelsang and David Everage for their assistance with our SIP program. Interested in volunteering? Email jessica@hawriver.org.





UPCOMING EVENTS:

2025 35TH ANNUAL HAW RIVER LEARNING CELEBRATION!

HELP INSPIRE 1,000 FOURTH-GRADERS!

Join us this fall for the Haw River Learning Celebration, where we transform the outdoors into a classroom for nearly 1,000 fourth-grade students.

Over three weeks each fall, students from across six counties—Guilford, Rockingham, Alamance, Orange, Durham and Chatham—visit one of three sites along the Haw River, exploring their local watershed, learning about wildlife and biodiversity, environmental awareness and local history of the Haw.

As a volunteer guide, you'll lead students through forests and along riverbanks, helping them discover the natural world that many are experiencing for the first time. For countless children, this will be their very first hike through a forest or walk beside a flowing river. These moments of wonder help inspire the next generation of environmental stewards.

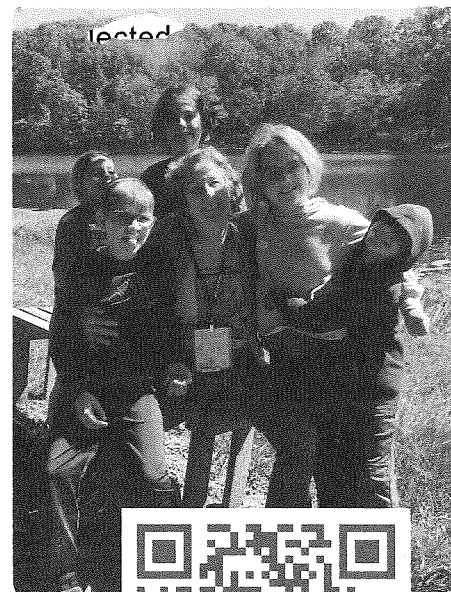
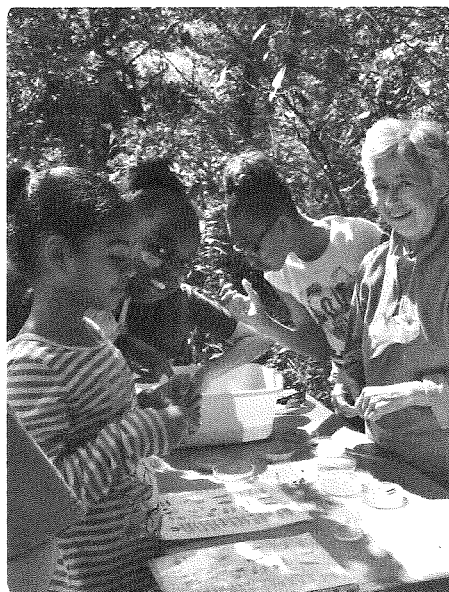
Since the program's inception, hundreds of dedicated volunteers have made this celebration possible, connecting over 49,000 fourth-grade students to the beauty of the Haw River. Some volunteers join us for a single day, while others embrace the full experience by camping on-site for the entire week as part of our "river camp."

2025 SITES AND DATES:

BYNUM: SEPTEMBER 20-26

SAXAPAHAW: SEPTEMBER 27 - OCTOBER 3

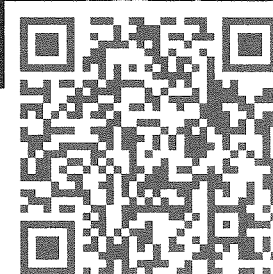
CAMP GUILROCK: OCTOBER 5-10



HOW YOU CAN HELP:

- Volunteer as a guide – We provide all necessary training
- Support weekend logistics – Help with site setup and breakdown (Friday afternoon through Sunday)
- Cook for volunteers – Prepare meals for our hardworking team
- Make a donation – Support our Crowdfunder to keep this program thriving

Get Involved: Visit www.hawriver.org/learning-celebration to volunteer or donate. For questions, contact Learning Celebration Coordinator, Hannah Welborn-Lewis, at events@hawriver.org.



We're excited to welcome back Jason Gabriel as Safety & Logistics Coordinator and introduce Rowan Moss as our new Junior Coordinator for another amazing year of connecting students with nature.

Haw River Assembly
P.O. Box 187
Bynum, NC 27228

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PO Box 12932
Raleigh, NC 27605-2932

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UPCOMING EVENTS AT HAW RIVER ASSEMBLY

One Saturday a month, 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM, **Trash Trap Cleanout** (multiple sites). Volunteer form: hawriver.org/trash-traps

August 15 - September 28, **Paperhand Puppet Show: The Gift**, Performances at the Forest Theatre in Chapel Hill, NC
<https://www.paperhandpuppet.org/thegift>

Friday, September 6, 2025, 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM, **River Watch Workshop** at Red Slide Park. To register: hawriver.org/river-watch

September 20 - October 10, 2025, **Haw River Learning Celebration** at Bynum, Saxapahaw and Camp Guilrock. To volunteer: hawriver.org

Saturday, October 25, 2025, 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM, **Jordan Lake Paddle** Limited kayaks available. Register: hawriver.org/saturdays-on-the-haw

Sunday, November 15, 2025, 3:00 PM - 5:00 PM, **HRA Membership Gathering**. Email events@hawriver.org for more information

Saturday, December 13, 2025, 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM, **Advocacy Training** Location TBA. Learn to write effective comment letters and engage with local officials. Register: hawriver.org/saturdays-on-the-haw



**IT ALL
BEGINS
WITH YOU.**

Your gift is more than a donation! When you make a donation of any size to the Haw River Assembly, you'll join us as a member for a year.



To update your name, address or contact info, visit bit.ly/HRAupdate.

For questions about giving or membership status, email: kim@hawriver.org.