



## **ENO RIVER ASSOCIATION 2013 Annual Report**

### **Land Protection and Stewardship**

The Eno River Association's 47 years of protecting the Eno River is a long legacy, one that we strive to add on to every year. While living up to this legacy can be a daunting task, thanks to the dedication of our volunteers, the generosity of our donors, and the goodwill of our conservation partners, the Association's Land Protection & Stewardship program enjoyed a banner year in 2013, one worthy of the organization's rich history.

#### **Land Protection**

Three projects were completed during the past year, protecting over 105 acres and almost 2.5 miles of stream frontage. The first of these projects was completed on June 3rd when the Association purchased a 4.3-acre property with 500-ft of frontage on the Eno River in Durham County. The property is completely surrounded by Eno River State Park and will eventually be transferred to the State for inclusion in the Park. Once added to the Park, it will become part of an uninterrupted eight-mile stretch of protected land along the river.

In late September, just four months after saving the four riverfront acres of future State Park land in Durham, the Association protected another 101 acres of forestland and stream buffer in Orange County. Approximately 41 acres of this land protects Buckquarter Creek, a major tributary of the Eno River. The Association worked with property owners Ann Bacon Hollowell and Mary Ellen Radziemski to establish a conservation agreement permanently preserving the land while keeping it in private hands. The land adjoins Eno River State Park and other property that is part of the Eno River State Park Master Plan. Given the property's proximity to the State Park and stream frontage, protection of this property provides a vital buffer that protects water quality and wildlife habitat while preventing future development from encroaching on the recreational and natural resources of the Park.

Within two days of finalizing the conservation agreement on the Buckquarter Creek tract, the Association completed another agreement that protects 60 acres of forestland in Cedar Grove. The protected area covers a portion of the Infinity Farm owned by Dr. Robert and Joy Kwapien and has approximately a mile of frontage along the West Fork Eno River. The protected area is a mixture of hardwood forest and a large wetland complex that provides a significant amount of wildlife habitat and buffer for the property's aquatic resources. The property is also just 1,000 feet upstream of Hillsborough's West Fork Eno Reservoir. The

forested buffers will protect against nutrient and sediment inputs to the local drinking water as well as help to regulate water quantity, an acute concern for our region.

These projects would not have been possible without the support of North Carolina State Parks, Orange County's Lands Legacy Program, the Town of Hillsborough, the City of Raleigh, the US Endowment for Forestry and Communities, the Conservation Trust for North Carolina, Eno River Association supporters, and the landowners. The Eno River Association has protected 6,730 acres in the Eno River basin since its founding in 1966.

### **Stewardship**

The Eno River Association has further expanded its land stewardship efforts over the past year. A total of 20 stewardship workdays were held in 2013, involving over 280 volunteers and 1,000 volunteer hours. These workdays involved a variety of activities, including the construction of over 2 miles of the North Carolina Mountains-to-Sea Trail, connecting the Penny's Bend Nature Preserve to River Forest Park in Durham. Other workdays helped in the removal of over 50,000 lbs of materials through various cleanups. The largest of these clean-ups was at the Association's Coulter Conservation Area, a former nursery that the organization is slowly restoring to native floodplain habitat. In addition to our workday volunteers, over 80 additional volunteers participated in two initiatives designed to support efforts at Eno River State Park and along the Eno River in general: the Eno River Trail Stewards Program and Eno River Hydrilla Monitoring Project. The Trail Stewards Program assigns volunteers to trails within the State Park in order for them to perform regular monitoring and maintenance activities that are necessary for Park hiking trails. For the Hydrilla Monitoring Project volunteers performed both photo monitoring at various points on the river as well as monitoring surveys all along the river in order to document and track the expansion of hydrilla (*Hydrilla verticillata*), an invasive aquatic plant species from Asia, which has invaded into the Eno and is posing a threat to native species. A big thank you goes out to the volunteers who gave up their time to help in all of these endeavors, as well as to our various conservation partners (including the staff at Eno River State Park, the North Carolina Plant Conservation Program, North Carolina Botanical Garden, and City of Durham) for their support.

## **Eno Education**

### **School Collaboration**

Educational outreach to schools continues year-round. In the spring Liz Stabenow worked with the Friends of State Parks again to conduct lessons at Eno River State Park through a program that brought students from Y. E. Smith Elementary School to the park to learn about landforms and ecosystems. Fourth grade classes from New Hope Elementary School visited the park for animal adaptations lessons. In the spring and fall, Liz and education volunteers met Orange County High School students in Hillsborough to sample macroinvertebrates and study water quality. This fall, high school students visited the Eno from Orange County to study macroinvertebrates as part of their Environmental Studies class. Liz also worked with two elementary schools/ gifted education program as they investigated pollution in their watershed. Fifth grade students from Cameron Park Elementary in Hillsborough took a trip to the State Park to study plants and aquatic life in the river. This year, students at nearby Easley Elementary visited the Eno by walking to the

office on Guess Rd and taking an interpretive hike or conducting water quality studies in the river. Afterschool, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> grade classes visited this year, and have already made plans to return. The Association office on Guess Rd. also hosted Envirothon training for small groups of middle and high school students in cooperation with Durham Soil & Water. The popular Environmental Field Days for Durham Co. third grade students was cancelled due to rain.

Activity	School/Grade	Students*	Adults*	Total*
Friends of State Parks field trips	Y. E. Smith/5th	80	20	100
Field trip assistance /State Park	Cameron Park/5th	25	5	30
Classes in river at Hillsborough	Orange Co HS/11th -12th	100	10	110
Field trip to outdoor classroom at ERA office	Easley/ K- 5th	125	10	135
Gifted student project on trash & pollution	Grady Brown & Efland-Cheeks/4th & 5th	40	2	42
Envirothon training at ERA office	Orange County MS & HS/various	25	5	30
Earth Day presentation	Hillandale/5th	100	20	120
Science Night/Math Night	Various ES/K-5th	300	50	350
iWalk Field Trip	Various/3rd-5th	70	10	100

\* attendance sheets not used at events, numbers are best head count possible **897 in 2012**

### **iWalk the Eno Afterschool Outdoor Science Labs and Science & Nature Summer Camp**

In an expansion of the iWalk the Eno Science & Nature summer day camp, Liz worked with instructors and site directors of the Outdoor Science Labs in the Orange County Community Learning Centers after school programs at three elementary schools and all three middle schools. Lessons were conducted outdoors on school grounds with instructors each week, with a site visit to each school made by Liz to conduct water studies. 70 students and teachers from 3 elementary school participated in the program, which included a day long field trip to Eno River State Park. 30 students are currently enrolled in the year-long middle school program.

iWalk the Eno Summer Camp finished its sixth year, with two weeks of camp that brought 120 campers to the river for a week of hands-on, inquiry-based science and nature exploration and reaching an additional 1,000 parents, grandparents, and program partners involved in the program. In this sixth year the camp was open to all students in Orange and Durham County, and a sliding scale fee system contributed to the long-term financial viability of the camp. Both the camp and the afterschool programs continue to be supported by the Burroughs-Wellcome Fund's Student Science Enrichment Program.

### **Education Projects**

High school students from the North Carolina School of Science & Math in Durham worked with Liz to build a Natural Play space at West Point- a playground of water, rocks, and wood nestled in the woods. Girl Scouts completed a service project at the ERA office, cleaning and adding to the native plants pollinators garden. A boy scout is working at the office to build an informational kiosk for his Eagle Scout project.

### **Hikes and Events**

New Year's Day Hike was a rain or shine event, and this year we had cold rainy weather, and yet over 100 hikers came out and went on a short hike. Winter hikes and spring Wildflower Hikes continued each week through Mother's Day in May. The Eno River Association Spring Picnic and Stream-In River Day was re-named Big Splash on the Eno and brought over 200 people out into the Eno to explore the wildlife at West Point and celebrate with a picnic on the banks of the river, with live music and food trucks. A planned fall stream-in event at the Eno River Farmer's Market in Hillsborough was cancelled due to poor weather. A Star Party at Eno River State Park was co-hosted by the Eno River Association as part of the statewide NC Science Festival.

### **EEK at The Festival for the Eno**

Despite rains that threatened to wash us all away, the show went on and the Eno Education for Kids area was open for business. Although the river was too high to safely enter, we found a few river creatures to show off and had our collection of reptiles and amphibians to engage the public with. Our tents had a steady stream of Festival-goers both days of the event.

### **2014 Eno River Association Calendar: Hidden Gems of the Eno**

The 2014 calendar took a new look at the river and focused on slightly off the beaten path locations. Calendars include GPS coordinates and information on new places to explore & discover. The Eno River Association website is being expanded to include more information on these places and how to reach them. Calendars are being sold in local stores, at the annual calendar celebration, and are used as an outreach tool to show to sponsors, supporters, and members how much there is to learn about the Eno & these hidden gems.

## **Festival for the Eno**

The 2013 Festival for the Eno was held July 4 and 6 at West Point on the Eno Durham City Park. This year's Festival was two days rather than the recently customary three- a change designed to minimize financial risk and free up monies for increased entertainment and marketing budgets.

Torrential rains and flooding before the Festival created challenges for Festival set-up and necessitated the relocation of several attractions and booths, including the River Stage, Hands-On Clay, and the climbing wall. Because of safety concerns about high water the river was "closed" to waders and swimmers on July Fourth. Despite the pre-Festival storms, the weather for the Festival itself was beautiful and large crowds attended each day with the band the Mountain Goats drawing the largest crowd on the afternoon of July 6.

A notable change to the Festival this year was the addition of a Beer Garden in the lawn around the McCown Mangum House. Sponsored by Sweetwater Brewing and Harris Distributing, the Beer Garden was very popular with attendees and proved to be both lucrative and relatively hassle-free for the Festival.

Advanced ticket sales were at record high levels and sales of on-site tickets, merchandise and drinks were strong as well. The Festival earned more than \$25,000 for the Eno River Association.

We continued to improve the efficiency of our Trash-Free program – diverting over 97% of the waste stream to composting and recycling programs. We also continue to provide “Trash Free” mentoring and technical assistance to other events and organizations including Hillsborough Hog Day and the City of Durham Parks and Recreation Department. **In November the Festival for the Eno was awarded the first ever Green Festival designation granted by the NC Dept. of Environment and Natural Resources.**

The 35<sup>th</sup> annual Festival for the Eno will be held on July 4 and 5, 2014.

## Fundraising

We pursued funding from diverse sources in 2013 to support land protection, stewardship, environmental education, and our back office or general operations:

- Member and Donor Contributions: We implemented several fundraising appeals including quarterly membership renewals and a special Festival appeal. A year-end fundraising appeal will be rolled out in late November.
- Fundraising Events and Community Partnerships: In February, we were Bikram Yoga’s community partner. This spring, we partnered with local painter Freeman Beard to sell original paintings and prints of the Eno. In October, we partnered with Bull City Running Company on the second annual Eno River Run. In November and December, we are in the INDY Week’s Give!Guide! and participating in the Triangle Christmas Tree Challenge.
- Workplace Giving: We continued to participate as an active member of Earth Share North Carolina, and in the spring requested inclusion in the Durham County Cares workplace giving campaign. Though we were declined, Earth Share was not, and so we will receive a portion of contributions through them.
- Grants: Development staff researched dozens of corporate and private foundations, submitting fifteen grant requests during the year (note that these requests do not include proposals submitted by land protection or other staff). Development requests totaled \$170,650 and awards totaled \$75,700. Three requests are still pending.

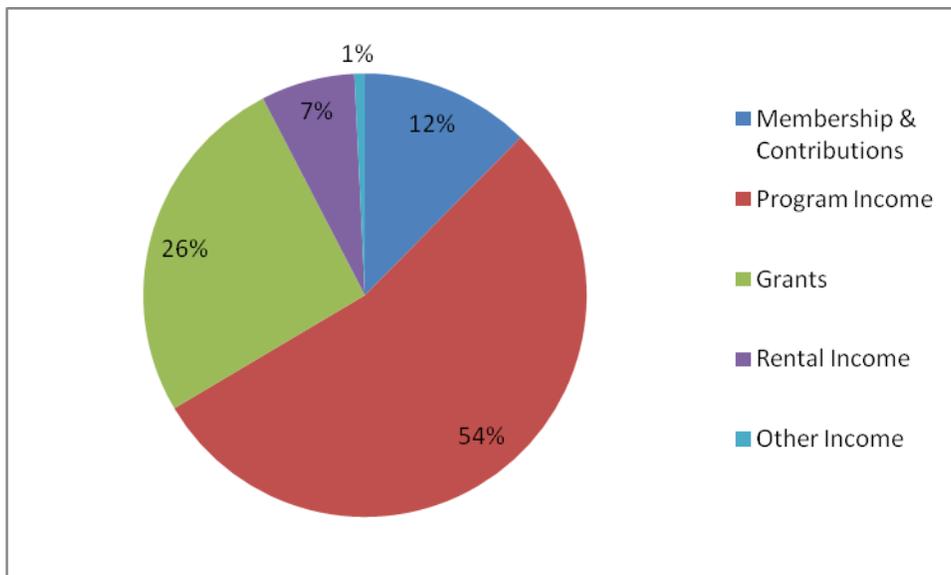
- Business Sponsorships: staff solicited and managed business relationships tied to sixteen cash sponsors who provided a total of \$20,850 for the Festival.

Though they hold the organization and its programs together, operational funds continue to be the most difficult to raise. Restrictions on how our grant funds can be used emphasize the importance of individual contributions, whether they are memberships, general donations, matching gifts from an employer, stock gifts, gifts from a retirement account, or bequests.

While we continue to enjoy strong relationships with our partners in local government, significant funding and public policy changes have been taking place at the state level that are directly impacting land protection. The legislature is ending the NC Conservation Tax Credit, a major incentive for private landowners to permanently retire their development rights, on December 31. After several years of reduced funding, a reorganization of our state’s conservation trust funds will further impact how much money is available for land protection. In response, the Eno River Association is continuing its work with the North Carolina land trust community to research and develop new conservation strategies.

### Income and Expense Eno River Association Audit 2013 Fiscal Year

**Sources of Operating Income**



## Operating Expense

