

Mission: Dedicated to conserving and protecting the nature, culture and history of the Eno River basin



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ANNUAL REPORT 2011

Brief History

The Eno River Association is a non-profit, tax-exempt organization founded in 1966 to protect the Eno River from degradation and its surrounding basin from urban sprawl. A core group, led by Margaret and Holger Nygard, recognized early the unique beauty of the Eno River Valley and the importance of preserving it for future generations. As development in the area threatened to turn the river into a reservoir and its banks into an industrial park, they worked tirelessly to enlist citizen and government support to preserve the river and establish a public park along its banks. Area residents today benefit from these early efforts. The Eno River is still a free flowing stream; its waters are clean enough to support several endangered species.

Our Role in Land Protection

The primary goal of the Association is to conserve lands along the Eno River and its tributaries and within the entire Eno watershed. We concentrate our efforts in the following areas:

Protected Land Acquisition: We focus on the purchase or donation of lands for eventual inclusion into the State Park system, while also acquiring land for other conservation purposes, particularly along the upper and lower sections of the Eno River. These efforts have resulted in more than 6,000 protected acres including five public parks: the still growing Eno River State Park, Occonechee Mountain State Natural Area, West Point on the Eno Durham City Park, Penny's Bend Nature Preserve, and the Little River Regional Park.

Conservation Easements: The Association helps landowners to protect their property without selling it. These legal agreements establish permanent restrictions on certain uses and the development of land while keeping it in private hands. Each easement is unique and tailored to meet the needs and wishes of the individual landowner. Easements can be purchased or donated.

Landowner Resources: The Association also advises landowners who would like to protect their land but do not want to sell it, donate it, or place permanent restrictions on it. We can direct landowners to governmental programs that provide technical and financial assistance for conservation management.

Environmental Advocacy & Education

The Association advocates for parks, open space preservation, wildlife protection and community planning that incorporates efficient and environmentally sound land use, water use, and transportation systems. The goal of these activities is to increase public appreciation for the environment and awareness of environmental threats.

The Association works with government entities as well as other local, state and national conservation organizations to preserve the environment as a whole. Specifically, the Association supports land and wildlife conservation efforts, as well as issues related to the protection of water quality. The Association was the leader in gaining government acceptance of the Northern Durham Parkway concept, an alternative that eliminated the western portion of Eno Drive, thereby protecting the River and parklands west of Old Oxford Highway from the encroachment of a four-lane highway. It was also a key player in the successful effort to eliminate the four-lane, median-divided Elizabeth Brady Road extension in Hillsborough which would have traversed bluffs rising as high as 140 feet above extensive wetlands and floodplains, and destroyed an incredible riverine ecosystem.

Our Environmental Education programs bring people of all ages to the river to learn about the nature, culture and history of the area, with a focus on teaching children about the connectivity between their lives and the Eno, as well as the rest of the natural world. Our biggest outreach program is the annual Festival for the Eno, a three-day event featuring artists, non-profit environmental groups and hands-on fun at the river. We also have weekly winter hike and spring wildflower hike series each year, and in the summer of 2008 we launched a day camp program called *iWalk the Eno* in collaboration with Orange County Schools and the Burroughs Wellcome Student Science Enrichment Program.

Annual Activities & Events

- Guided Hikes – New Year’s Day & Sunday afternoons from January through mid-May
- Spring picnic
- Festival for the Eno – July 4th Weekend
- Annual Membership meeting
- Annual Calendar Celebration
- Stewardship workdays year-round
- Quarterly Newsletter & Monthly email

HIGHLIGHTS OF 2011

LAND PROTECTION

With the help of numerous conservation partners, the land protection program of the Eno River Association has experienced tremendous success over the past 12 months. Included in these successes was the closure of an important missing link in the Eno River State Park. On May 23, 2011 the Scarlett family of Orange County sold their 24-acre property to the State of North Carolina for inclusion in the Eno River State Park. This project was particularly important because it was the final tract of land left to be protected in the former “Missing Links” section of the State Park. With the addition of this property, the Park now stands 4200 acres in size and protects over 27 miles of Eno River frontage.

In addition to our State Park work, we have also continued our work with other local conservation partners. Through the Diabase Partnership, the Association assisted the North Carolina Plant Conservation Program in the acquisition of a 40-acre tract of land which is adjacent to an existing 59-acre Plant Conservation Nature Preserve in Durham County. The conservation of this property helps form an important connection for stream protection, wildlife movement, and rare plant habitat. In addition, the Association worked with the Triangle Land Conservancy to place a permanent conservation easement on the 613-acre Brumley Forest along Stone’s Creek (aka Stoney Creek), a primary tributary of the Eno River in Orange County. Brumley Forest contains over 17,000 feet of stream frontage. In total during 2011 the Association protected approximately 677 acres and 23,125 feet of stream frontage.

LAND STEWARDSHIP

With the help of an active volunteer base, over the past year the Eno River Association was able to make a significant positive impact on our native ecosystems while also enhancing recreational opportunities within the Eno River basin. A total of 19 volunteer workdays were held in 2011, with projects focusing on rare plant enhancement activities within the diabase region of Durham County, invasive species removal and native tree planting in the Upper Eno basin, and trail construction within the Eno River State Park. A total of 182 volunteers contributed approximately 550 hours to make all of this work possible.

In addition to our volunteer workdays, the Association also partnered with the Eno River State Park to create the Eno River State Park Trail Stewards program. This new program engages volunteers to assist State Park rangers in the stewardship of the State Park’s trail system. Stewards are assigned a trail, monitor it for any issues, and then perform any general maintenance that is necessary. The stewards also coordinate with State Park staff to address any larger issues that a steward might not be able to address on their own. At the end of 2011, 35 stewards had been trained to participate in the program and helping steward the nearly 30 miles of park trails.

EDUCATION

We remain committed to connecting people of all ages and walks of life to the Eno River.

iWalk the Eno Summer Science and Nature Day Camp – 2011 was the fourth year of our partnership with Orange County Schools, with funding from the Burroughs Wellcome Fund Student Science Enrichment Program. In 2011, sixty rising sixth grade students, four high school mentors, nine teaching staff, and numerous volunteers participated in the weeklong science and nature day camp based at Fews Ford. Hands-on inquiry activities included exploration of aquatic invertebrates, native trees, invasive species, aquatic food chains, wildlife, and soils & rocks, but there was also time for hiking, canoeing, journaling, songs and skits.

New funding from GlaxoSmithKline and the Duke Energy Foundation for iWalk the Eno will enable us to reach more students in the watershed in 2012.

Hands On / Feet Wet Programs

Each year we are invited to present education and service learning programs to K-12 students. In 2011 highlights included 4th grade field days and high school Environthon team trainings. We also worked with Eno River State Park rangers to provide environmental educational programming, and with Durham Stormwater to help make Durham's Creek Week a success.

A team of thirty volunteers (adults and youth) presented the EEEK! Experience (Eno Environmental Education for Kids) at the Festival for the Eno, providing hands on / feet wet exploration of aquatic life in the river. Liz Stabenow, now the Eno River Association's Education Director, presented her collection of NC amphibians.

Hikes

Our winter and spring hikes are particularly suited to adults, with a focus on history and native flora. Beautiful weather helped us start the year with a bang as 800 people showed up to participate in our annual New Year's Day Hike. Hikes continued each Sunday through the winter and spring.

FESTIVAL FOR THE ENO

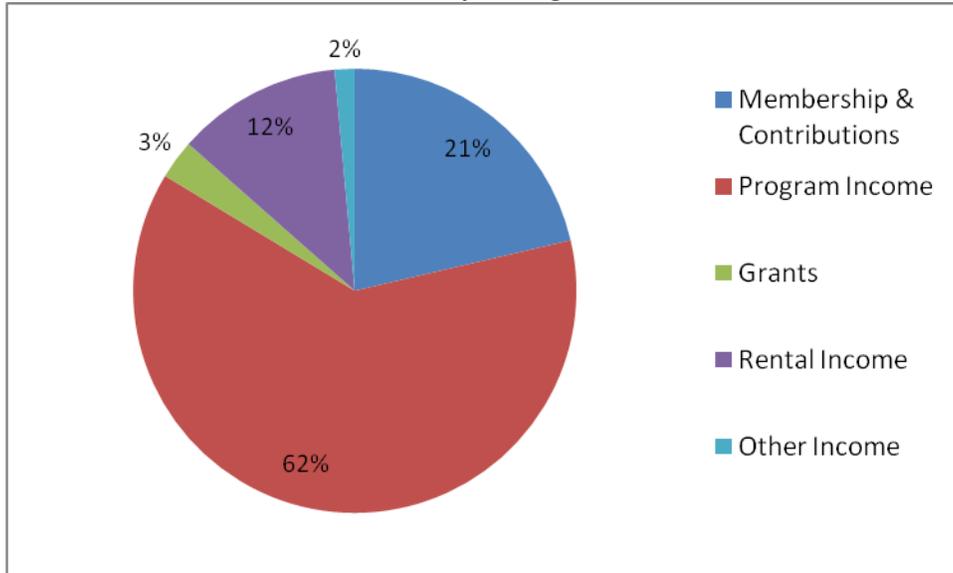
The 32nd annual Festival for the Eno was held July 2, 3 and 4, 2011 at Durham's West Point on the Eno City Park. An excellent line-up of crafters, performers and attractions contributed to bring large crowds to the Festival each of the three days. The Festival earned over \$9,000 for the Association's environmental and education efforts and attained a new record for waste diversion (nearly 96%!).

Eno River Association Board of Directors

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Association for the Preservation of the Eno River Valley, Inc
(Eno River Association)
2011 Fiscal Year

Sources of Operating Income



Operating Expense

