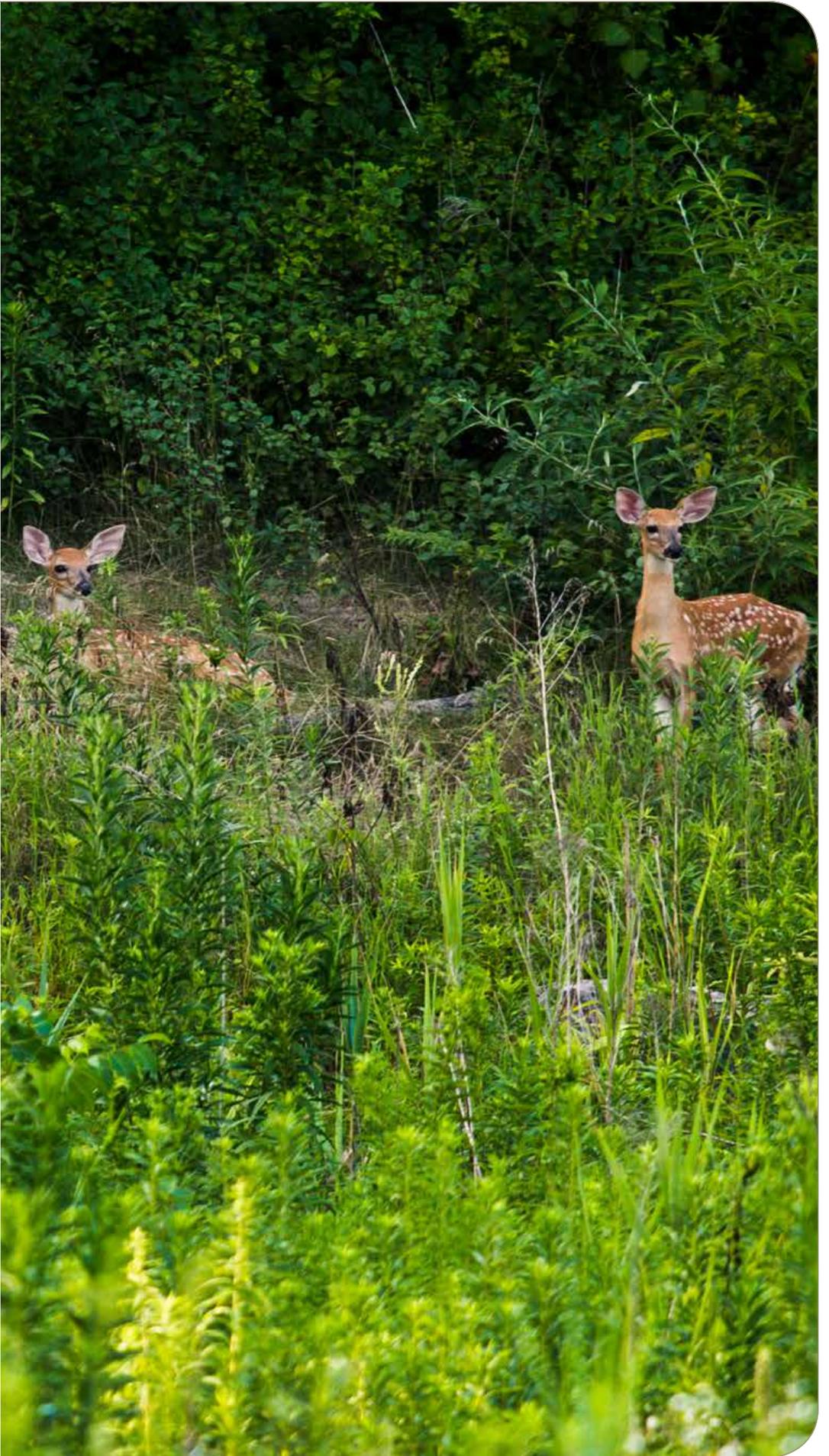




2018
REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY



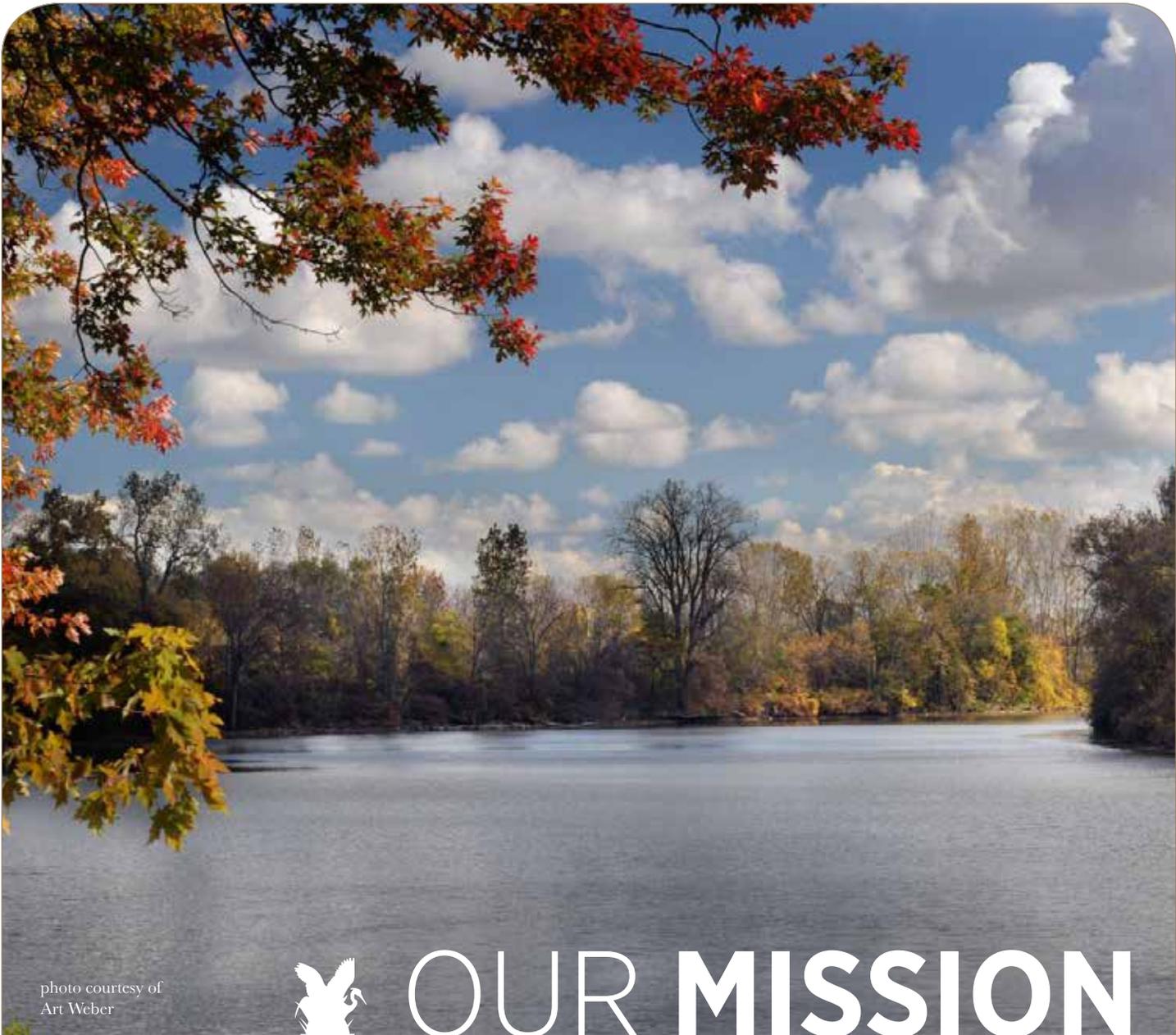


photo courtesy of
Art Weber



OUR MISSION

2018
REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

For 25 years, Black Swamp Conservancy has taken direct action to permanently preserve natural habitats and family farms in northwest Ohio for the benefit of future generations.

With your help, we've protected more than 17,325 acres in 16 counties of northwest Ohio. Together, we are protecting the diverse habitats and important lands of our region so our children and their children will forever be able to enjoy Clean Water, Good Food and Wild Places in our region.

As a nonprofit organization, Black Swamp Conservancy relies on the support of landowners, donors and partnerships with other conservation organizations. We strive to be a wise investment for our supporters, whether they are giving us their land, time or money.



2018
REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

Dear friends,

In 1993, a small group of local residents came together with the mission of permanently conserving and providing stewardship for lands cherished by our community – from shoreline to marshes, from farmlands to woodlands – for the education, use and enjoyment of this and future generations. Twenty five years later, Black Swamp Conservancy is a nationally accredited organization and its mission is more important than ever, as we continue to protect the natural beauty and rural character that has long defined our region.

Where the organization is today is the result of the collective efforts of so many passionate people. Thank you for the role that you have played in getting us here. I'm excited by the prospect of what we'll be able to accomplish together in the next 25 years!

Thanks for all you do.

Rob Krain | Executive Director



GROWING THE NEXT GENERATION OF FARMERS



2018
REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

The American Farmland Trust says that Ohio is losing an estimated 50 acres of farmland a day. At the same time, the average Ohio farmer is 55 years old, while new and aspiring farmers face barriers of high land prices and access to available farmland to begin their careers.

The Conservancy is creating a farmland preservation program that will match properties with aspiring farmers who will produce food for local or regional consumption, using sustainable farming practices. This initiative will help us continue ecological restoration efforts in this region, protecting our land and water resources. We have assembled regional experts for an Advisory Committee to guide us in launching this program and identifying aspiring and active sustainable farmers. Thanks to generous grants from the Toledo Community Foundation and Stranahan Foundation, we're able to set this first-of-its-kind program into motion, and identify the new farmers who will produce tomorrow's sustainable foods.



IMPROVING OHIO'S RIVERLANDS



2018
REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

A 48-acre site along the Maumee River in Paulding County has begun its transformation from agricultural land to streamside forested wetland. When completed, it will help improve the water entering the nearby Maumee River. Thanks to funding from the Ohio EPA and the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, the Conservancy will soon begin a full restoration of this area, which is a newer addition to our Forrest Woods Nature Preserve.

The Preserve has received lots of attention in recent months. Area Rotary Clubs donated 1,000 trees to help the Conservancy celebrate Earth Day with a day of planting, which earned TV and newspaper coverage. Rotary members from 7 clubs, students from two Toledo area high schools and other volunteers participated in the event. The trees will help to stabilize the soil along the floodplain, while ultimately filtering nutrients and sediments from water entering the Maumee River, where paddlers can now access the newly-designated Maumee River Water Trail.



photo credit:
Andrew Cole



PRESERVING COASTAL RESOURCES



2018
REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

You may be familiar with our first land protection project, the Harris Nature Preserve along Lake Erie near Oak Harbor. You may have joined the thousands of birders watching the annual migration pass through Cedar Meadow or Meadowbrook Marsh. Or maybe you enjoyed wandering the Pearson Metropark Wetland, kayaking out to Middle Bass Island East Point Preserve, or sitting on the beach at Port Clinton Lakeshore Preserve just to take in the view.

With your support, we have been able to protect almost 700 acres of coastal properties like these along western Lake Erie. Thanks to our forward-looking landowners and local partners, these properties are protected forever to serve their purpose as critical coastal habitats. These protected lands provide crucial homes for migratory birds, eagles, Blandings turtles, rare snakes and other wildlife.



PROVIDING ACCESS TO THE GREAT OUTDOORS



2018
REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

Although the Sandusky River runs through the city of Fremont, so does a floodwall - and there are very few places where you can access the water for a day of fishing or boating. Soon the former River Cliff Golf Club, on the south side of the city, will offer that access to the river, including native habitats and floodplains as well as boating and fishing. The Conservancy acquired the property in 2017 and gifted it to the Sandusky County Park District.

We recently had a chance to visit the property, and were amazed by the changes happening in only a year. The fairways have been replaced by walking paths that meander through meadows near the river. The eagles' nests are flourishing. Visitors are now able to walk through the property all the way to the blue banks area of the river. And, just now we are finishing up engineering and design of a coming habitat restoration.

In the future, this treasure will be open for anglers and boaters to enjoy, but it will also be a tool for teaching the community about conservation. We're proud to be a part of it.

CELEBRATING CONSERVATION

From nature walks and paddles, to educational and community events, you have shared our love of northwest Ohio's natural lands and visited our spaces throughout the year. More than 2,000 of you have celebrated with us at more than 20 events and activities this year. Thanks for joining us for:



2018
REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY



nature walks & photography field trips

exploring our unique examples of the Great Black Swamp and other special places

canoe & kayak paddles

along the Maumee, Toussaint and Sandusky Rivers

presentation of the film

"Call of the Scenic River: An Ohio Journey" in Maumee, Ohio

debut of

The Great Black Swamp photo exhibit at Secor Metropark (which has also traveled to the Toledo Zoo and Maumee Bay State Park)

informational displays

at community programs, farmers' markets and other events throughout the year

Bluegrass & Green Acres

celebration drawing 250 people to the Toledo Zoo

A Stewardship Retreat for

land trust professionals from three states

presentations

to community groups and students



MAKING CONSERVATION WORK

2018
REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

Volunteers are the backbone of any organization. At the Conservancy, our volunteers step in to help with all aspects of caring for our protected properties. Some help with management of invasive species, seed collection, property clean up and tree planting - at special events or on a regular basis. Others have been trained to monitor Conservancy protected properties, and help with important office and event projects.

Special thanks to the many community groups for your help with projects throughout the year, including seven Rotary District 6600 Clubs, students from Toledo St. Francis and Cardinal Stritch high schools and the ZOOTeens.

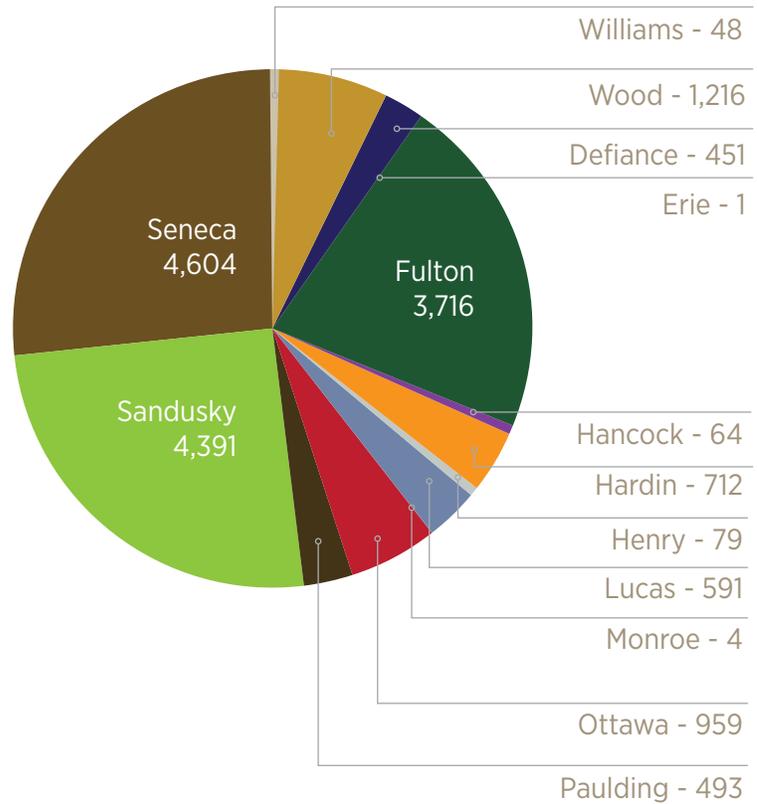
And thank you to our college interns for providing daily assistance at all levels of our organization. Environmental interns in the past year included Jordan Penkava (UT), Mitch Williams (BGSU), Spencer Nash (BGSU), McKenna Adams (UT), Joe Shaull (BGSU), Ben Clark (OSU) and Cori Byrge (BGSU); and communications interns have included Ashley Browning (BGSU) and Samantha Nicholas (BGSU). You're all the best!



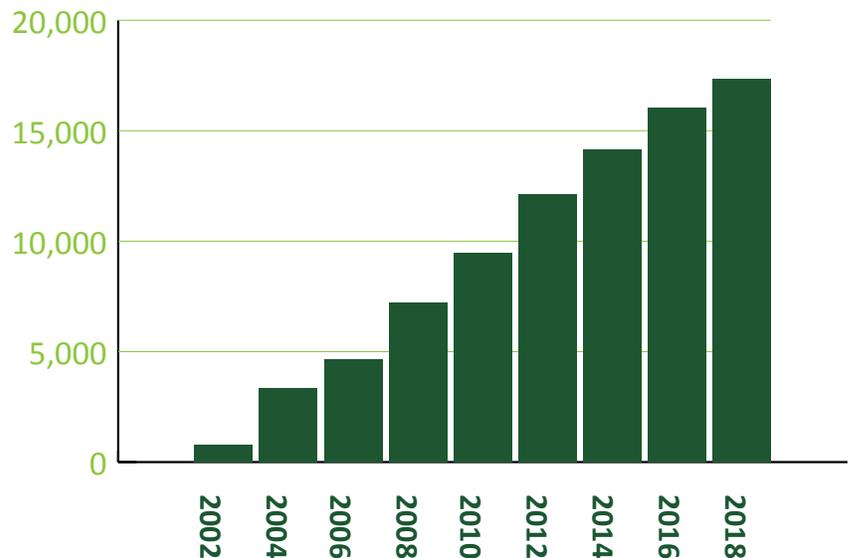
2018
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OUR LAND

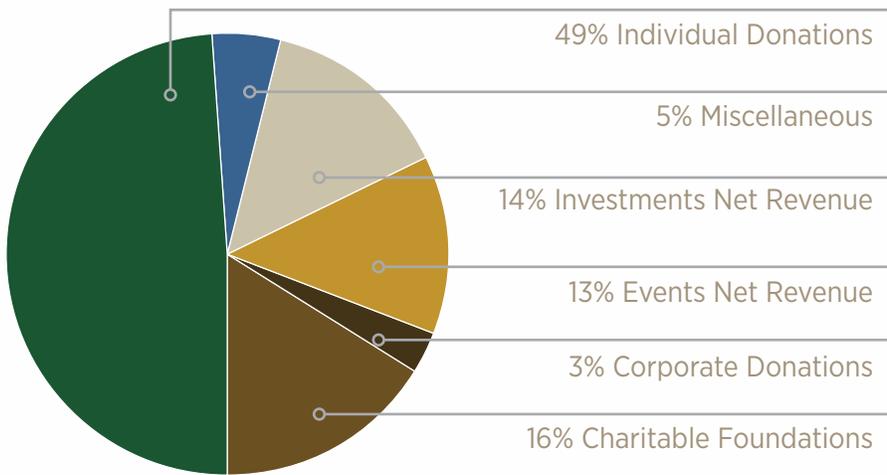
Acres protected by county



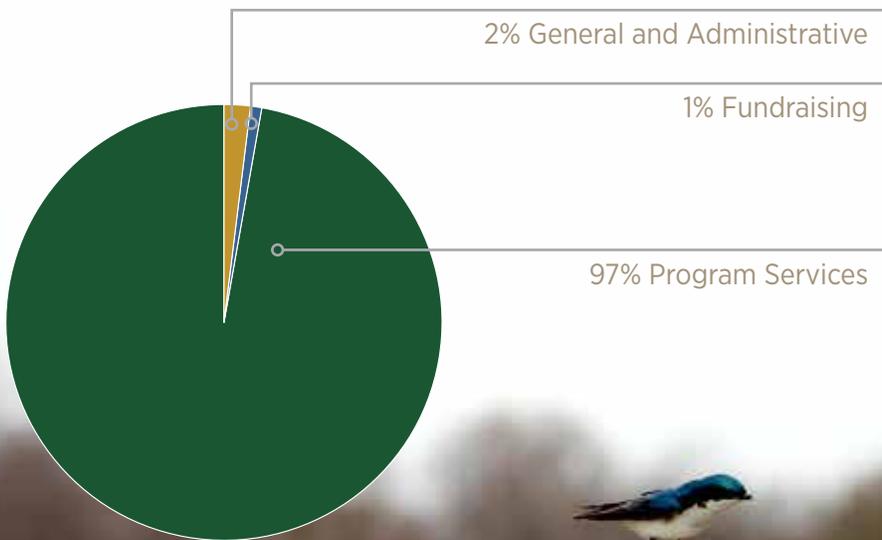
Acres protected by year



2017 Operating Support & Revenue



2017 Expenses





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BlackSwamp.org

photo courtesy of Kristi Shepler
front cover photo courtesy of Andrew Cole



CLEAN WATER. GOOD FOOD.



WILD PLACES.

2018
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2018-2019 BOARD TRUSTEES

Officers

Anne Yager, President
Steve Bowe, Vice President
Tim Minning, Treasurer
Virginia Keller, Secretary

Advisory Council

Sara Jane DeHoff
Don Leary
Clint Mauk
Steve Pollick
Stephen Stranahan
Deke Welles

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Dani Kusner
Tom Reed
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Conservancy Staff

Rob Krain
Chris Collier
Melanie Coulter
Chris Dickey
Julie Pompa
Linda Wegman

Mary Krueger, Immediate Past President