



ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT



"There is something infinitely healing in the repeated refrains of nature—the assurance that dawn comes after night, and spring after winter." - Rachel Carson

2020

CEO'S STATEMENT

To say 2020 was a challenging year is an understatement. When our world effectively shut down in March, we experienced new but unfamiliar struggles physically, financially, and socially. However, within a few weeks after quarantine began, we also saw a new but familiar return to the natural places we were still allowed to go, places like our beautiful James River.

More than ever, 2020 reminded us that our green and blue spaces are there for us - for our enjoyment, solace, unity, and connection. When social distancing kept us apart, the James offered a sense of belonging. When events were canceled, the River offered fun and adventure. When stress got the best of us, our watershed offered sights and sounds that calmed us.

As an organization, we faced our own challenges including shifting our educational programs to virtual learning, pivoting our restoration work, and the cancelation of our biggest fundraiser. But we also reached more students than ever before, planted more than 37,800 trees, and saw a record amount of clean water funding passed in the State Budget.

We not only survived but thrived, thanks to the incredible commitment of our supporters, volunteers, and staff, but also thanks to our River. The James may have brought us together through our shared mission to protect it, but the James kept us together during a global crisis by a shared understanding of the connection it provides us.



Thank you for being there for the James, and thank you for being James Changers.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Bill Street', is positioned above the printed name.

BILL STREET

CEO, James River Association

2020 STAFF

BILL STREET, CEO

JAMES ABBOTT
AARON BOUCHARD
JAMIE BRUNKOW
CATHERINE BUCHANAN
ROB CAMPBELL
JULIA CARSON
JUSTIN DOYLE
NAT DRAPER

AMBER ELLIS
BRITTANY FELTENBERGER
KATIE FERRELL
TRACY HENDERSON
ERIN HILLERT
EMILY HINSON
CHARLES JOHNSON
ANNA KILLIUS

KRISTEN MILLER
ELYSA MILLS
CHASE OISHI
SHAWN RALSTON
KATIE RANGER
ERIN REILLY
ANNE MARIE ROBERTS
GAIL ROBINSON

CONNOR SCHROEDER
JOEY SHELTON
CARON STERLING
GENEVIEVE WALL
RYAN WALSH
ANGIE WILLIAMS

FY20 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

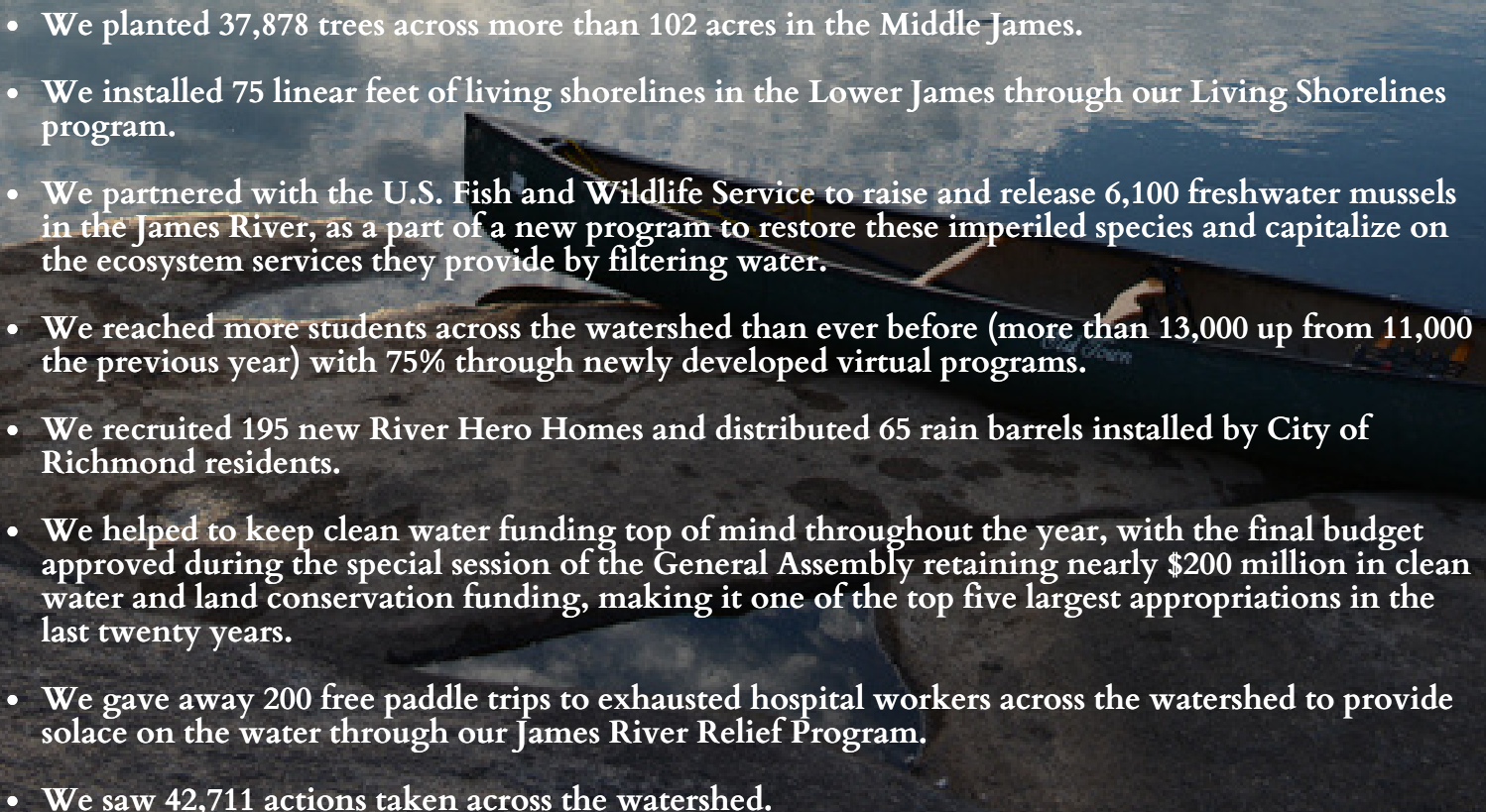
CHAIRMAN: JAMES A. BUZZARD
VICE-CHAIRMAN: ANDREA F. ERDA
SECRETARY: MARGARET S. VAUGHN
TREASURER: DANNA B. FLAHERTY

CHRISTOPHER R. BEAL
DORENE S. BILLINGSLEY
B. RANDOLPH BOYD
THOMAS A. CARDWELL, III
PATTERSON H. CUNNINGHAM
GREGORY R. DAVIS

J. WILSON ENOCHS, III
FREDERICK S. FISHER, III
J. MATTHEW GOTTWALD
LAWRENCE L. GRAY
GEORGE A. HARRISON
THOMAS N. INNES

T. GAYLON LAYFIELD
ALASTAIR S. MACDONALD
POLLY P. MCCONNELL
CHRISTOPHER L. MCLEAN
MATTHEW J. MLOT
JOHN B. MORGAN, III

L. KIMBALL PAYNE
F. SCOTT REED, JR.
ANNE MCCRACKEN ROGERS
BROOKE G. TILLER
MEGAN A. WITHERSPOON

- 
- We planted 37,878 trees across more than 102 acres in the Middle James.
 - We installed 75 linear feet of living shorelines in the Lower James through our Living Shorelines program.
 - We partnered with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to raise and release 6,100 freshwater mussels in the James River, as a part of a new program to restore these imperiled species and capitalize on the ecosystem services they provide by filtering water.
 - We reached more students across the watershed than ever before (more than 13,000 up from 11,000 the previous year) with 75% through newly developed virtual programs.
 - We recruited 195 new River Hero Homes and distributed 65 rain barrels installed by City of Richmond residents.
 - We helped to keep clean water funding top of mind throughout the year, with the final budget approved during the special session of the General Assembly retaining nearly \$200 million in clean water and land conservation funding, making it one of the top five largest appropriations in the last twenty years.
 - We gave away 200 free paddle trips to exhausted hospital workers across the watershed to provide solace on the water through our James River Relief Program.
 - We saw 42,711 actions taken across the watershed.

2020 HIGHLIGHTS



RIPARIAN BUFFER RESTORATION

Restoring riparian forest buffers is one of the most critical actions to improve the health of local streams and the James River. JRA is leading the charge through two collaborative efforts including the James River Buffer Program (JRBP) and the Upper and Middle James Riparian Consortium (Consortium).

The JRBP is a partnership in which JRA and Virginia Department of Forestry have been working with landowners in the Middle James to restore or create riparian forest buffers.

In 2020, JRA planted 37,878 trees across 102 acres. Since its launch in 2019, JRA has installed 43,972 trees on almost 130 acres and plans to install 338 more buffer acres by the end of 2024. The JRBP will be expanding to the Upper James watershed in 2021 through a partnership with the Chesapeake Bay Foundation.

The Consortium launched in 2019 and continues to expand its network of partners that share a common vision of “growing partnerships to create healthy streamside ecosystems for clean water in the James River today and tomorrow.” The mission is to increase implementation and raise awareness of riparian buffers across the Upper and Middle James watersheds.

JRA has secured over \$4 million so far from the Virginia Environmental Endowment and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to support our riparian forest buffer efforts.



LIVING SHORELINES

Living shorelines help address shoreline erosion, which clouds the river with sediment, while also providing vital intertidal habitat. In 2020, JRA launched the Living Shoreline Collaborative with a group of local and state partners. Over the summer, JRA kicked off two living shoreline demonstration projects and a floodplain restoration project, and began taking applications this past fall for a new living shoreline cost-share program. Over the next three years, JRA's cost-share program will install 1,800 linear feet of living shorelines in the Lower James River watershed, as well as 1,061 linear feet of living shorelines in the Elizabeth River (a James River tributary) through the Elizabeth River Project's cost-share program.



ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

The hallmark of JRA's environmental education programs has always been getting students on the river for hands-on experiential learning, which gives students a personal connection to the James that they can carry with them their whole lives. While the closing of schools for the pandemic also meant the cancellation of all field-based education programs for the spring, JRA forged forward and explored ways our programs could adapt and be accessible to help school systems, as well as our students and parents, during this time of remote learning.

JRA's education team created a Virtual Classroom and offers educational videos and resources to teachers. We also have been providing virtual lessons, partnering with local school systems to introduce state-of-the-art technology and interactive experiences, and offered outdoor recreation after-school programs to students in the Richmond area.



OUTDOOR EXPERIENCES

During the summer of 2020, we were able to run a number of summer education programs with appropriate safety precautions in place, including five summer camp sessions for students in Lynchburg. We also completed the 10th year of James River Expedition trips on the Upper, Middle and Lower James River. In Richmond, we partnered with the Salvation Army's Boys and Girls Club to provide four weeks of river-based fun and education. In Williamsburg, we partnered with James City County Parks and Recreation to offer two free weeks of camp for elementary and middle school children.

CLEAN WATER FUNDING & POLICIES

As introduced, the 2021-2022 State Budget included record-breaking funding for protecting our natural resources, with over \$400 million in clean water and land conservation investments. As passed, the budget currently maintains \$95 for agricultural conservation practices, \$50 million for wastewater upgrades and \$50 million for assisting localities with stormwater projects – the largest single-year investment in this program to date.

Throughout 2020, our advocacy team continued to advance the following policy initiatives critical to the success of the Chesapeake Bay Cleanup Plan and our goal of a Grade A James by 2026:

- Legislation to advance key agricultural practices like fencing cattle out of streams by 2025;
- Legislation to promote the use of more living shorelines in flood prone coastal areas;
- Regulations to require better wastewater treatment technology within the James River basin;
- Legislation to assess and regulate contaminants of emerging concern within our rivers and drinking water;
- Legislation to put Richmond on a 15-year timeline for ending overflows of untreated wastewater from the city's combined sewer system.

Additionally, we continued to build on our successful RiverRats, James River Watch, and RiverReps volunteer programs, which empower concerned citizens to monitor and report pollution problems, or to actively engage in clean water advocacy.

Website traffic
more than doubled

AWARENESS



JAMES RIVER VIRTUAL REALITY EXPERIENCE

In June 2020, we introduced our James River Virtual Reality Experience through an online webinar launch. The Experience employs state-of-the-art technology to take the viewer underwater in the James, beginning 400+ years ago with a pristine James before the first European settlers, to the highly polluted river of the 1970's, and ends with the improved B- river of today.

While we always hope people can enjoy the James in person, the VR Experience provides a unique opportunity that brings a Grade A James to life in a visually impactful way so that viewers can understand the importance of continuing to work towards the healthiest and cleanest river possible.

JAMES RIVER RELIEF

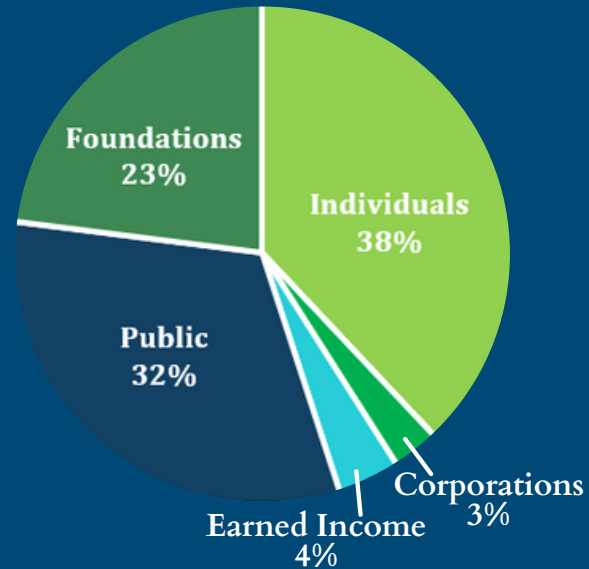
Also in June 2020, we launched our James River Relief program in partnership with several river outfitters across the watershed to provide solace and relaxation on the water (and help our small business partners) by giving away 200 free paddle trips to hospital workers. The response was amazing, with registrations for the first 100 trips "sold out" in less than 24 hours and 8 news outlets picking up the story. We will continue and hopefully expand the program in 2021.

2020 SUMMARY OF FINANCIALS

REVENUE

Membership Fees and Contributions	\$1,485,170
Program Grants	\$1,897,835
Campaign Revenue	\$1,252,877
Miscellaneous	\$1,857
Fees For Services	\$184,324
Investment Revenue	\$(16,388)
TOTAL REVENUE	\$4,805,675

FUNDING SOURCES

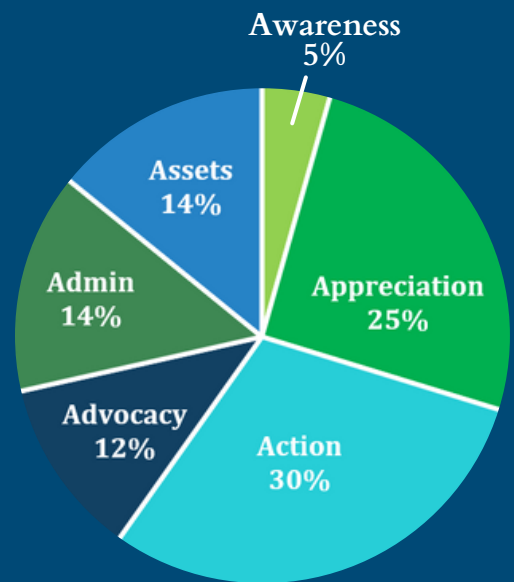


EXPENSES

Program Activities	
Awareness	\$134,358
Appreciation	\$771,384
Action	\$915,154
Advocacy	\$355,328
Subtotal Program Expenses	\$2,176,224
Administration	\$437,565
Asset Development	\$431,190
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$3,044,979

Change in Net Assets	\$1,760,696
Net Assets at the Beginning of the Year	\$2,913,616

NET ASSETS AT THE END OF THE YEAR \$4,674,312



EXPENSES

RICHMOND

211 Rocketts Way, Suite 200
Richmond, VA 23231

SCOTTSVILLE

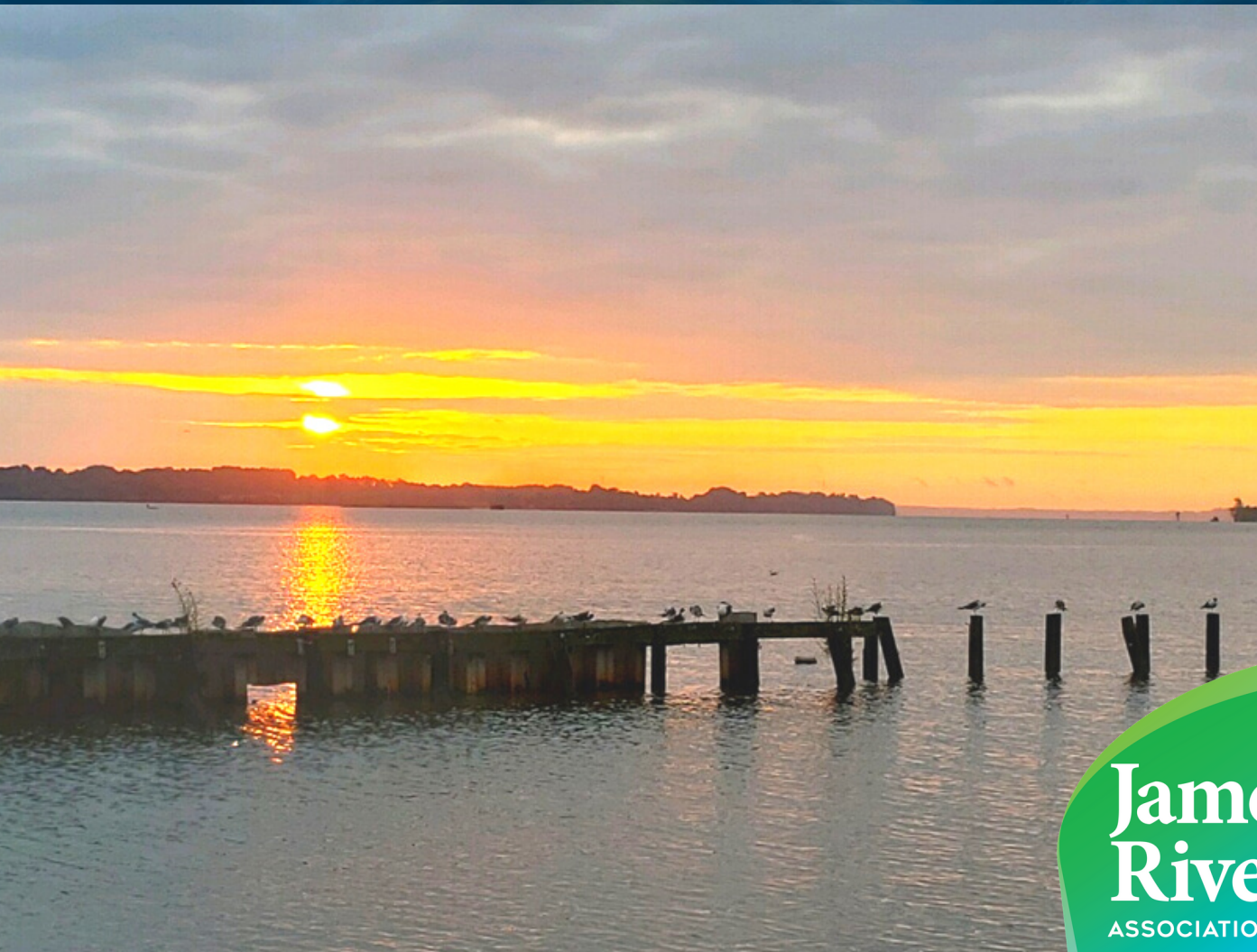
531 Valley Street
Scottsville, VA 24590

LYNCHBURG

150 Rocky Hill Road
Madison Heights, VA 24572

WILLIAMSBURG

1335 Colonial Parkway
Williamsburg, VA 23185



**James
River**
ASSOCIATION