



2021 Annual Report

2021 was a year of important developments for the WATeR organization. Due to prevailing concerns about COVID, the Shoreline Cleanup was not conducted, but otherwise WATeR has continued to provide diligent attention to the issues facing the watershed and the surrounding environment. WATeR volunteers are involved in maintaining the East Lakeshore National Recreation Trail (ELT) by participation in the Adopt-a-Trail program and/or the trail work crew, and by picking up trash at specific sites along the trail. Another 15 volunteers have been very busy on issues with the Water Quality Improvement Committee.

Economic development continues at a rapid pace in the area, and WATeR provided environmental assessments of several projects affecting the Tellico watershed:

- Proposed update to the TVA Tellico Reservoir Land Management Plan – This document revises a similar document issued in 2000.
- US Army Corps of Engineers & TVA Draft Evaluation of Shoreline Effects of the Sequoyah Lodge & Resort – Proposed RV resort along shoreline in Vonore near the 411 bridge.
- TVA draft Environmental Assessment of the Battery Energy Storage Station (BESS) – Proposed location is across Hwy. 72 near the entrance to Rarity Bay.

Also, discharge reports from permitted industries and treatment plants in the Watershed are routinely monitored to assure compliance with environmental standards. If frequent violations are noted, they are referred to TDEC for enforcement or penalties.

Although somewhat constrained by pandemic social distancing, WATeR continued to perform water sampling to identify potential environmental and health concerns throughout the watershed. One example is WATeR's Citizen Lake Monitoring begun about three years ago to track trends of plankton, algae, and visibility throughout the lake. WATeR's data complements data routinely collected by TVA and TDEC at limited sites at yearly intervals to provide more spatial and temporal resolution. Other sampling was performed to target types and primary sources of pollution, and to identify effective control strategies. Sampling for bacteria under various conditions at a local children's swim beach is a recent example.

WATeR continues to support local agencies and the UT Extension Service who are assisting farmers to improve farming practices which will both improve profitability and the environment.

Administratively, WATeR remains an entirely volunteer organization supported by member donations. We did make some investment last year in marketing which resulted in new logo designs and presentation materials which should help us going forward with effective outreach. Our cash reserves are in a stable position representing approximately two years of budget spending, and we continue to maintain a pontoon boat and a tools trailer, primarily for use in trailbuilding activities.

There were several changes to the composition of the Board of Directors, and we now have five new Board members, who are listed on our website. There are four open Board positions, and we are currently seeking representation from Watershed communities such as WindRiver, Foothills Pointe, the City of Vonore, and Kahite. We would welcome contact from interested candidates.

Speaking of our website, there is a wealth of information about WATeR available at www.tellicowater.org. We are evaluating the site and will be making changes to improve the user experience. We encourage your feedback, and if you wish, your engagement in our activities.

Most importantly, Thank You for your support! WATeR is a 501(c)3 corporation, and all donations are tax deductible.