2025

IMPACT REPORT











LETTER FROM LEADERSHIP

DEAR SUPPORTERS,

Our lakes make Greater Madison a special place to live, work, and visit. Economically alone, **these waters contribute more than $220 million annually to Greater Madison**, a value that rises and falls with water quality. They provide countless benefits and remind us why stewardship is so important.

In 2025, Clean Lakes Alliance stayed focused on turning our community's love for these waters into meaningful action. We continued to bring people together, strengthen partnerships, and advance proven solutions for a healthier watershed. This Impact Report reflects the remarkable reach of that collective effort. Through our programs, events, and communications, **168,000 direct connections were made with community members**. Highlights include:

- A six-year high of **758 volunteers donating 2,081 hours**, including a record number of trained LakeForecast monitors reporting real-time water quality conditions.
- More than **40 government and nonprofit partners joining our Renew the Blue Council**, taking a collective impact approach to tackle the watershed's most pressing needs.
- A new **partnership with Public Health Madison & Dane County** to begin pinpointing the sources of *E. coli* contamination at some of our most popular but closure-prone swimming beaches.

These accomplishments belong to a dedicated team of staff, donors, volunteers, board members, and partners. Your support is why more beaches are being tested, more volunteers are in the field, and more partners are at the table. Clean Lakes Alliance is stronger and closer to our vision of a community renowned for its healthy lakes, lands, and waters.

Thank you for helping turn a growing culture of stewardship into shared progress. Together, we are building a healthier future for the lakes we all love.

In Partnership,

Sopen Shah
Board Chair



James Tye
Founder & Executive Director





ABOUT US

VISION

We envision a community renowned for its healthy lakes, lands, and waters.

MISSION

Our mission is to champion the lakes and watershed stewardship for the benefit of all.

STRATEGIES

The strategies below are organized into four guiding pillars, each outlining a path to achieving our Vision and Mission.

People	Lands	Shorelines & Lake Parks	Organization
Cultivate a love of the lakes	Lead and inspire care of the land impacting our waters	Support the creation of vibrant lakeshores	Continue building an effective and enduring organization
Offer fun, educational, and enriching experiences that connect people, businesses, and organizations to the lakes	Provide stakeholders with the motivation, guidance, and support to act	Celebrate, showcase, and nurture stewardship and legacy placemaking where land meets water	Sustain a thriving workplace and high-impact organization by living our values as team members and partners
Invite the community to celebrate, connect with, and care for our lakes, lands, and waters	Champion recommendations in *RENEW THE BLUE: A Community Guide for Cleaner Lakes & Beaches in the Yahara Watershed*	Focus public attention on reimagining and investing in our lakeshore spaces	Continue to grow and diversify a sustained base of support while fostering a rewarding, values-based culture

From Strategy to Action

We advance each strategic pillar through three focused objectives.

ENGAGE

Events and multimedia outreach invite people into the Alliance, connect them to the watershed, and build a strong base of support. We spark community energy while keeping supporters informed and inspired to get involved.

EMPOWER

Unique programs and learning experiences expand volunteerism and cultivate watershed stewardship. We turn awareness into meaningful engagement, advocacy, and action.

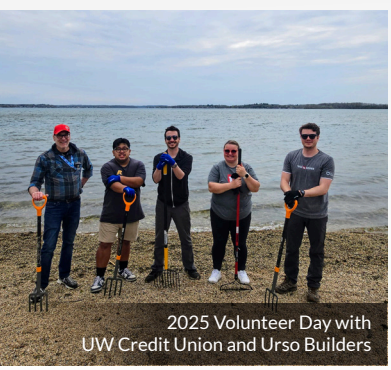
ACTIVATE

A strong, informed Alliance advances accountability and progress toward shared goals. Through targeted grants, strategic partnerships, and selective lobbying, we keep critical initiatives moving forward.

HISTORICAL MILESTONES


2025 boat tour and science day


2025 LakeForecast Training


2025 Volunteer Day with UW Credit Union and Urso Builders


2025 Loop the Lake


2025 tour of Kellercrest Holsteins conservation practices

BEFORE CLEAN LAKES ALLIANCE

NO NONPROFT FOCUSED ON THE HEALTH OF THE YAHARA CHAIN OF LAKES

NO NEARSHORE WATER QUALITY MONITORING

NO COMMUNITY LAKE CLEANUP PLAN

NO LAKE HEALTH PROGRESS REPORTING

NO FARMER-LED CONSERVATION GROUP

BECAUSE OF CLEAN LAKES ALLIANCE

A growing alliance of nearly 2,000 donating individuals and groups, guided by a 50-member Community Board, with lake-centered festivals and events drawing thousands of participants each year

Real-time water quality conditions are shared through LakeForecast.org and the free app, with close to 80 monitoring stations reporting across the five Yahara lakes

RENEW THE BLUE: A Community Guide for Cleaner Lakes & Beaches in the Yahara Watershed was formally adopted by the 19 cross-sector organizational members of the Yahara CLEAN Compact

Release of the annual *State of the Lakes* provides transparency around watershed health, lake conditions, and community progress toward water quality goals

Clean Lakes Alliance helped create and continues to financially support the farmer-led Yahara Pride Farms, a nonprofit facilitating the adoption of farmland conservation practices to protect water quality

BEFORE CLEAN LAKES ALLIANCE

NO YAHARA LAKES-FOCUSED GRANT PROGRAM TO LEVERAGE PARTNER ACTION

NO ORGANIZED BUSINESS INVOLVEMENT

NO CLEAN LAKES ALLIANCE PROGRAM & EVENT IMPACTS

NO LAKE-SCIENCE PRESENTER SERIES OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

NO ORGANIZED ADVOCACY SPECIFICALLY FOCUSED ON IMPROVING OUR LAKES

BECAUSE OF CLEAN LAKES ALLIANCE

Since 2010, more than $1.5 million in Clean Lakes Grants have been awarded to help fund programs, buy equipment, perform land restorations, and move projects forward

Involved businesses and organizations include close to 250 donating members, with many employees regularly participating in Clean Lakes Alliance-hosted Volunteer Days, Lunch & Learns, and community events

In 2025 alone, Clean Lakes Alliance made 168,586 direct connections through our various programs, events, and communications

Clean Lakes 101s draw an average of 75 attendees each month

Lake protective policies and budgets are promoted through targeted advocacy campaigns, including those related to manure treatment, stormwater utilities, and beach testing


2025 Volunteer Day with Affiliated Engineers Inc and community members


Stand up paddleboarding at Marshall Park


2025 Volunteer Day with CG Schmidt & Sprinkman Real Estate

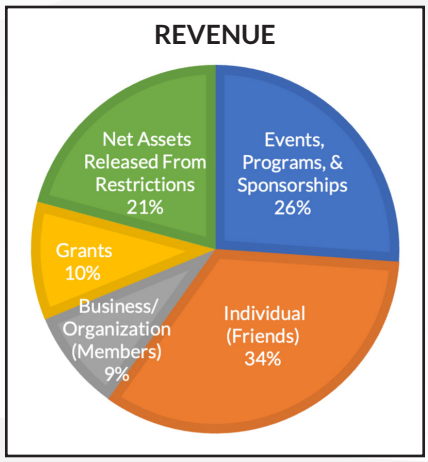


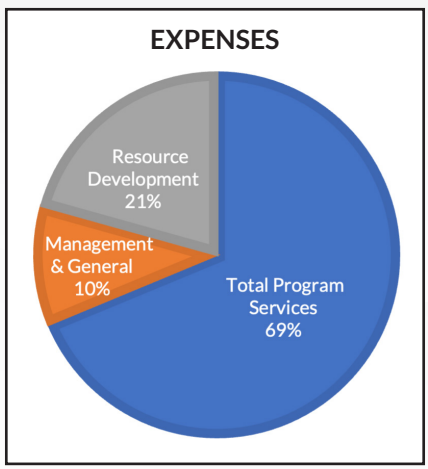
2025 LakeForecast Training


2025 Community Coffee

2025 FINANCIALS

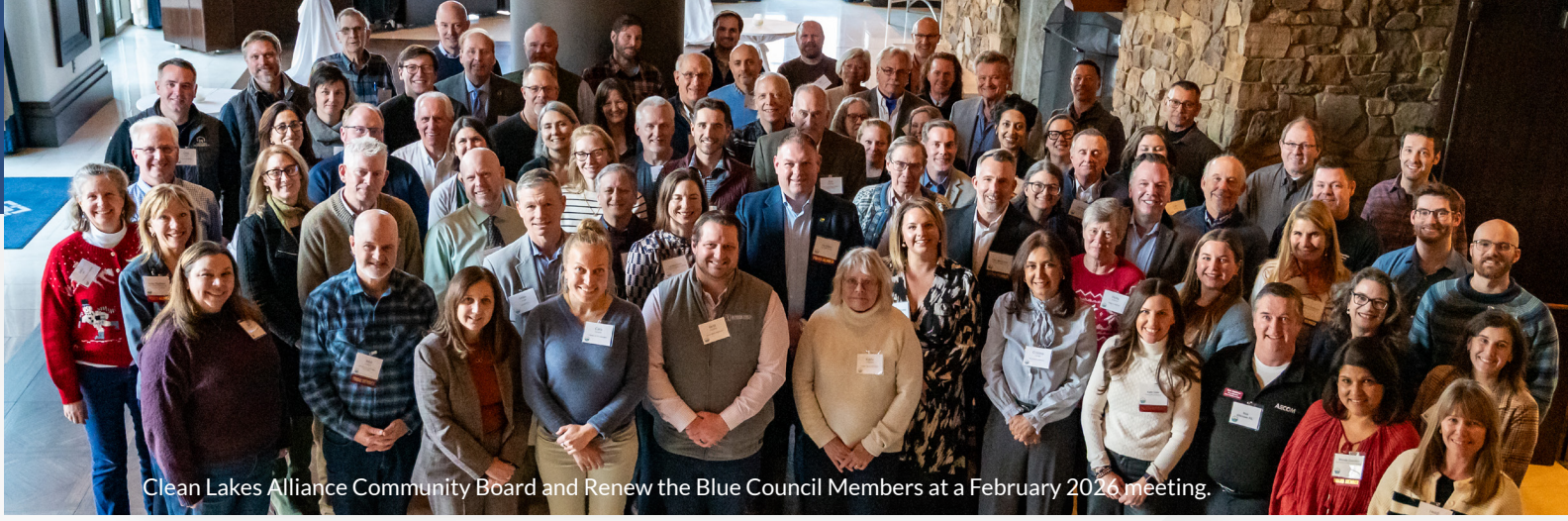
NET ASSETS WITHOUT DONOR RESTRICTIONS	2025	2024
Support and Revenue		
Events, Programs & Sponsorships	$ 374,485	$ 204,156
Individual (Friends)	484,608	489,269
Business/Organization (Members)	127,836	128,005
Grants	148,865	109,326
In-Kind		
Occupancy	68,694	192,378
Legal	0	0
Professional Services	6,825	126,872
Program Supplies and Services	21,312	40,706
Investment Return - Net	15,026	12,954
Change in Beneficial Interest in Assets at Madison Community Foundation (MCF)	4,249	2,861
Sale of Advertising Space	11,500	29,500
Interest	16,621	6,594
Total Support and Revenue Without Restrictions	**$ 1,280,021**	**$ 1,342,621**
EXPENSES		
Program Services		
Education and Outreach	$ 575,702	$ 712,540
Watershed Programming	553,245	662,090
Total Program Services	**1,128,947**	**1,374,630**
Supporting Activities		
Management and General	173,798	169,637
Resource Development	339,180	382,149
Total Expenses	**1,641,925**	**1,926,416**
Net Assets Released From Restrictions	298,733	484,957
Change in Net Assets Without Donor Restriction	**$ (63,171)**	**$ (98,838)**
NET ASSETS WITH DONOR RESTRICTIONS		
Contributions	$ 235,856	$ 235,916
Net Assets Released from Restrictions	(298,733)	(484,957)
Change in Net Assets With Donor Restriction	(62,877)	(249,041)
Change in Net Assets	**(126,048)**	**(347,879)**
Net Assets at Beginning of Year	**577,812**	**925,691**
Net Assets at End of Year	**$ 451,764**	**$ 577,812**
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION - December 31st		
ASSETS		
Cash	$ 155,632	$ 186,541
Unconditional Promises to Give	313,039	403,673
Prepaid Expenses	20,136	22,931
Frozen Assets Fund, held by MCF	38,771	34,522
Investments	185,185	128,127
Operating Lease Right-of-use Asset	98,214	0
Financing Lease Right-of-use Asset	31,890	42,347
Total Assets	**$ 842,867**	**$ 818,141**
LIABILITIES		
Accounts Payable	$ 49,812	$ 41,121
Accrued Payroll	20,871	30,820
Deferred Compensation	185,185	123,316
Deferred Revenue	300	2,000
Operating Lease Liability	101,834	0
Financing Lease Liability	33,101	43,072
Total Liabilities	**$ 391,103**	**$ 240,329**
NET ASSETS		
Undesignated	$ 99,954	$ 167,374
Designated for Agency Endowment held at MCF	38,771	34,522
Total Net Assets Without Donor Restrictions	**138,725**	**201,896**
Net Assets With Donor Restrictions	313,039	375,916
Total Net Assets	**451,764**	**577,812**
TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	**$ 842,867**	**$ 818,141**





Statement of activities for the years ended December 31st, 2025 and 2024.

The 2025 and 2024 Statements of Activities and Statements of Financial Position have been audited by Wegner CPAs. Copies of the complete Annual/Impact Report are available at Clean Lakes Alliance's offices or online at cleanlakesalliance.org.



Clean Lakes Alliance Community Board and Renew the Blue Council Members at a February 2026 meeting.

CURRENT BOARD MEMBERS & STAFF

EXECUTIVE BOARD

Sopen Shah, Chair
Eimer Stahl LLP

Jim St. Vincent, Vice Chair
Yahara Lakes Association

Scott Ducke, Treasurer
Lake Ridge Bank

Laura Skilton Verhoff, Secretary
Associated Bank

James Tye, Executive Director
Clean Lakes Alliance

Pam Christenson
Madison Gas and Electric

Zach Osman
Johnson Financial Group

Courtney Searles
BMO Wealth Management

Trey Sprinkman
Sprinkman Real Estate

COMMUNITY BOARD

Bruce Briney
WKOW-TV 27

Jordan Corning
Epic Systems

Kate Dale
Destination Madison Inc.

Susan Dibbell
Wisconsin Union

Hilary Dugan
University of Wisconsin-Madison Center for Limnology

Sarah Dunn
CG Schmidt

Bill Fedun
TruStage

Kyle George
Lake Ridge Bank

Steven Greb
Dane County Towns Association

Jeffrey Hanson
Alliant Energy

Cody Jaworski
Mad-City Ski Team

Tamara Knickmeier
Lake Waubesa Conservation Association

Dan Lee
First Weber Inc.

Aaracgeį Sarah Lemieux-White Eagle
Ho-Chunk Nation District 3 Legislator

Kyle Lyne
Weed Man Lawn Care

Rod Martin
Yahara Pride Farms

Michael Moss
Friends of Lake Kegonsa Society (FOLKS)

Jessica Niekrasz
Niekrasz Consulting LLC

Darren Port
Tota Vita Financial Associates

Brian Potts
Husch Blackwell

Rebecca Prochaska
Potter Lawson

Rory Rhinesmith
Community Advocate

Gerald Schmidt
Dream House Dream Kitchens

Kimberly Shaul
National Guardian Life Insurance Company

Jay Sodey
Associated Bank

Susan Thomson
ActionCOACH Business & Executive Coaching

Claire Varrelmann
The Edgewater

Brian Vigue
Audubon Great Lakes

Tom Wilson
Community Advocate

Dr. Jana Gyurina, Director Emerita
Oak Park Dental

Courtney Kruger, Director Emerita
Fiore Companies

Brenda González, Ex Officio
University of Wisconsin - Madison

Martin Griffin, Ex Officio
Madison Metropolitan Sewerage District

Laura Hicklin, Ex Officio
Dane County Land & Water Resources Department

Patrick Miles, Ex Officio
Dane County Board of Supervisors

Mark Riedel, Ex Officio
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

Senator Kelda Roys, Ex Officio
Wisconsin State Senator, 26th District & OpenHomes Realty

Jason Valerius, Ex Officio
Capital Area Regional Planning Commission (CARPC)

STAFF

James Tye
Founder & Executive Director

Paul Dearlove
Deputy Director & Chief Science Officer

Tiffany Hoffman
Administrative Specialist

Jason James
Associate Director of Membership

Caitlin McAleavey
Watershed Programs Associate Director

Brian Shorey
Finance & Business Senior Manager

Mike Smale
Watershed Programs Specialist

Karin Swanson
Marketing & Communications Manager



Loop the Lake 2025

CELEBRATING & GROWING THE ALLIANCE

Thanks in large part to our beautiful lakes, Greater Madison communities are routinely ranked among the most desirable places in the nation to live and visit. We also know how to have fun while connecting to these natural amenities. Popular events like the **Frozen Assets Festival and 5K**, the **State of the Lakes Community Coffee**, and **Loop the Lake** draw thousands of participants while helping to raise awareness and money for the lakes in every season.

Loop the Lake in 2025 saw 1,291 people biking, walking, or running around Lake Monona to support our lakes. We were especially grateful for the record level of annual **Friends of Clean Lakes** contributions, with 1,663 individuals generously donating to help us reach this high-water mark. Favorable numbers were also attained on the digital media front compared to recent years, with a record 16,229 social media followers and 7,962 unique users of LakeForecast.org.

15,535
Program/event participants & volunteers

1,663
Friends of Clean Lakes donors

ADVOCACY

Clean Lakes Alliance is advised by an Advocacy Committee of the Community Board on matters related to policy positions and selective lobbying. Whenever appropriate, we push for action on specific issues, policies, or budget items that could materially impact lake and watershed health.

In 2025, we continued to advocate for progress around ***Renew the Blue*** recommendations. This included recruiting government and nonprofit partners to join a **Renew the Blue Council** — a group of partners committed to advancing the 12 highest-impact action needs. It also included a new initiative to expand beach testing and *E. coli* source tracking in partnership with Public Health Madison & Dane County.

1,423
Community Talk attendees

40+
Renew the Blue Council partners


2025 Community Coffee

CLEAN LAKES GRANTS

More than $1.5 million in Clean Lakes Grants awarded since 2010 have helped catalyze partner action and moved important projects forward. In 2025, $13,598 in grants went toward:

- "**Conserve an Acre**" funding to increase the adoption of agricultural conservation practices
- Ongoing support for a Precision Agriculture Specialist to help farmers convert unproductive cropland into perennial cover, improving water quality and habitat
- Indigenous effigy mound awareness and education programming

73%
of Clean Lakes Grants since 2010 have supported agricultural best practices

$13,598
in grants distributed in 2025



Effigy Mound Guide tent at 2025 Loop the Lake

VOLUNTEERISM

Passionate volunteers drive many of our initiatives, magnifying our capacity to affect positive change. It is through their time, talent, and expertise that we can closely track water quality conditions, host large community events, and perform watershed-improvement work all year round.

Thanks to volunteerism, a six-year high of 439 individuals from 23 different businesses and organizations rolled up their sleeves as part of our weekly **Volunteer Days**. Volunteers also served on our boards and committees, powered our **LakeForecast** monitoring, and supported the **Frozen Assets Festival** and **Loop the Lake**.

758
Volunteers (6-year high)

2,081
Volunteer hours

23
Businesses and organizations joining Volunteer Days



2025 volunteer day with Perkins Coie, EcoWash, Park Hotel, and community members

MONITORING

In 2025, a record 117 trained **citizen scientists** were reporting real-time conditions across all five of the Yahara lakes. Through interactive maps on the LakeForecast app and website, the public had free access to the latest changes in water clarity, temperature, algal bloom presence, and beach closures from Memorial Day to Labor Day.

Thanks to our network of LakeForecast monitors, lake users were able to quickly identify the best spots to enjoy the water on any given day. These efforts also served as an early warning system for when and where potentially toxic cyanobacteria blooms were forming. Data are used for research and help inform Clean Lakes Alliance's *State of the Lakes*.

1,755
Condition reports

79
Monitoring stations

7,962
LakeForecast.org Users (4-Year High)



2025 LakeForecast training with new monitors at B.B. Clarke Beach

EDUCATION

Raising awareness about our lakes, lands, and waters helps transform stakeholders into inspired watershed stewards. We host **Clean Lakes 101s**, **Lunch & Learns**, educational field trips, and other fun events to connect as many people to the lakes and our work as possible. We also engage our partners and supporters through **Lake-O-Gram** newsletters and the **Greater Madison Lake Guide**, featuring our annual *State of the Lakes*.

In addition to providing our own educational programming, Clean Lakes Alliance regularly partners with other groups to combine resources and maximize impacts. Our **Clean Boats, Clean Waters** partnership with Dane County and the Wisconsin DNR is one example, resulting in 3,861 one-on-one boater interactions during the 2025 season alone. Through boater education, an important line of defense is established to prevent new aquatic invasive species introductions.

3,861
Boater interactions

3,990
Education hours delivered


Clean Boats Clean Waters educator talking with a boater



Clean Lakes 101: Deciphering the *State of the Lakes*


2025 Loop the Lake


2025 Frozen Assets



2025 volunteer day at Marsh Woods Conservancy

OTHER HIGHLIGHTS

2025 successes also included:

- Publication of a first-of-its-kind valuation assessment, titled ***Economic Impact of the Yahara Chain of Lakes to Greater Madison***. Commissioned by Clean Lakes Alliance, the study quantified the added value our lakes bring to the surrounding region, amounting to over $220 million on an annual basis — a number shown to rise or fall depending on prevailing water quality conditions.
- An **Imagine a Day Without Water** media event and **Renew the Blue Council** delegate kickoff celebration. Hosted at the Lussier Center, the event featured keynote addresses from leaders such as Ho-Chunk Nation President Jon Greendeer and Dane County Executive Melissa Agard. We also thank the Madison Community Foundation for awarding a three-year, $75,000 Community Impact Grant in support of the Council. The grant recognizes Clean Lakes Alliance's backbone organizational role to convene, launch, and facilitate the coalition's ongoing work.
- Sponsorship of a national, PBS television release of **An Invitation to Wonder: Waubesa Wetlands**. The documentary by filmmaker Ben Albert explores the ecological significance, beauty, and hidden mysteries of this unique marsh. Guided by his grandfather, wetland scientist Calvin DeWitt, the film highlights the deep, intergenerational connection between humans and nature.
- For the second time, Executive Director James Tye was included as part of **In Business magazine's "Power 100"** for his outstanding dedication to nonprofit excellence and significant community contributions.

To learn more about these programs and the other good work of Clean Lakes Alliance, visit **cleanlakesalliance.org**.

Charity Navigator ✦ FOUR-STAR ✦

1% FOR THE PLANET

Platinum Transparency 2025 Candid.