The Georgia Conservancy is a statewide, member-supported conservation organization. Our work for environmental advocacy, land conservation, coastal protection, sustainable growth and outdoor stewardship recognizes the connection between the environment, the economy and our quality of life.

FRONT COVER
On February 25, 1967, the Georgia Conservancy is founded at the mill ruins along the banks of Sweetwater Creek. The protection of the surrounding acres as a State Park would be one of the organization’s first successful endeavors.
Our Mission Is To Protect & Conserve Georgia’s Natural Resources Through Advocacy, Engagement & Collaboration.

WHAT WE DO

The Georgia Conservancy’s five programmatic areas work throughout the state to advance our mission and conserve Georgia’s land and water.

ADVOCACY  SUSTAINABLE GROWTH  LAND CONSERVATION  COASTAL GEORGIA  STEWARDSHIP TRIPS
OUR GOALS FOR THE FUTURE

1. Protect, conserve, and restore Georgia’s land, water, and biodiversity.

2. Promote and implement sustainable practices throughout Georgia.

3. Remain Georgia’s leading conservation organization.

4. Acquire the resources needed for long-term financial viability.

Photo by Julian Buckmaster
For one day in August 2017 it seemed like the entire nation descended upon a narrow strip of America from coast to coast to experience a once-in-a-generation opportunity. A total solar eclipse brought together millions of strangers to witness one of the planet’s greatest natural phenomena.

As I sat watching the jaw-dropping solar eclipse in my hometown of Toccoa, Georgia, it was a reminder of the beautiful power of the natural world to bring together people from all walks of life and from all political persuasions. Just a few weeks later, the entirety of our state’s 39 million acres was impacted by Hurricane Irma. Once again, I was inspired by the coming together of Georgians – this time to support their neighbors in need. Both of these natural events reaffirmed for me the important work that we are doing here at the Georgia Conservancy. It’s work that we’ve been doing every day for 50 years.

Since 1967, our goal has been to build a consensus around the pressing needs for conservation in our state. Like the amazing diversity of our geography, so too is our population. Our many differences, whether political, racial or religious, contribute to a dynamic Georgia, one with a vast variety of visions for our future. The conservation space is where work to find a shared vision, one that doesn’t have to sacrifice our land and our water for progress, one that doesn’t pit the environment against the economy, and one that provides all Georgians with a healthy future. To do that, though, we must all come together to find a common path forward.

We know this because of our long and consistent engagement with leaders and citizens across this state in our effort to tackle Georgia’s conservation challenges. While our differences are many, we can all agree that every man, woman and child wants and deserves clean water, clean air and land – elements that are all essential to our livelihoods.

As you will see in our 2017 Impact Report, our programmatic work is focused on finding this common path forward. Through our Stewardship Trips program, we’ve led nearly 3,000 people into nature this year, from our barrier islands to the Cumberland Plateau, turning adventure seekers into advocates for our state’s most precious places. Our Advocacy efforts have led to bipartisan actions at the State Capitol to provide more stringent guidelines for any future petroleum pipeline construction, as well as providing leadership in the Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Coalition. Our Sustainable Growth program is considered a go-to resource for communities across the state that are seeking a conservation-minded approach to economic growth. Through our Land Conservation Initiative, we have provided guidance and expertise to landowners across the state who are interested in seeing their land placed into permanent conservation. And on Georgia’s beautiful Atlantic Coast, our Savannah-based Coastal Office is hard at work finding solutions to this region’s unique conservation challenges, both on land and at sea.

This past year, and for the five decades before, the Georgia Conservancy has helped to push the conversation around conservation, bringing diverse voices and interests together for a common cause: conserving and protecting our shared natural resources. And, with your support, we will continue to champion our natural resources into the next decade and beyond, collaborating and engaging with fellow Georgians to meet the challenges of tomorrow.

Robert Ramsay, President
1960s

- The Conservancy acquires a one-year option to buy Panola Mountain for $200,000 as the first act of preservation by the new organization.
- The Georgia Conservancy advocates, first locally, then in Washington, for the designation of the majority of the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge as federally-protected Wilderness. These efforts pay off in 1974, as Congress adds nearly 344,000 acres of the Okefenokee to the National Wilderness Preservation System.
- The Georgia Conservancy forms a “coastal action” group to examine the best use of each of Georgia’s barrier islands.

1970s

- Supports the passage of the 1970 Coastal Marshlands Protection Act.
- Opposes a proposal for dam building on the Alapaha River in south Georgia. The proposal is withdrawn and the dam is never built.
- Persuades the Federal Bureau of Outdoor Recreation to match Georgia’s $500,000, enabling Sweetwater Creek State Park to become a reality.
- Promotes the establishment of the “Smithsonian of the South” in Fernbank Forest.
- Georgia Conservancy champion and charter member Jimmy Carter is elected President of the United States.

1980s

- Congress passes the Coastal Barrier Resources Act protecting Georgia’s precious coastline by removing subsidies which promote development in high-hazard areas.
- Formulates a land use plan for Jekyll Island which designates significant natural areas for conservation and environmental education.
- With several other citizen groups, the Georgia Conservancy fights successfully to save the Flint River from a dam at Sprewell Bluff.
1990s

- Green Peaches, now Generation Green, establishes themselves as the Conservancy’s organization for environmentally-aware young professionals
- Encourages the Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games to consider making green choices when planning activities and events for the 1996 games
- Launches “Blueprints for Successful Communities”
- The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission accepts the Conservancy’s Tallulah Gorge Task Force’s recommendations for seasonally-based water flows for Tallulah Falls to better balance needs for hydropower, lake levels, and recreation
- GC, Urban Land Institute and the EPA host a two-day Smart Growth Conference at the Carter Center

2000s

- Endorses the Georgia Water Bill of Rights, a set of nine principles that will make rivers, streams and lakes fishable and swimmable
- Persuades the 2000 General Assembly to criteria program to encourage the state’s fastest growing counties to set aside 20% of their land as protected green space
- Hosts a conference on global warming
- Successfully advocates for the passage of the Georgia Land Conservation Tax Credit
- Works closely with the communities in the Westside Study Group Area participating in redevelopment planning related to the Atlanta BeltLine project

2010s

- Launches its new Land Conservation Initiative (2011)
- Begins developing training curriculum around the EPA’s School Siting Guidelines
- Introduces Georgia Legacy (now GOSA) legislation with partners to create a dedicated source of funding for statewide land conservation and recreation lands
- Through staunch advocacy, a bill to legalize deadhead logging on the Altamaha, Flint, Ocmulgee and Oconee is defeated
- The Stewardship Trips program hosts 30 trips across the state with 2,402 participants (2015)
As Georgia’s population and economy continue to grow, so will the pressures upon our state’s limited and precious natural resources. More than ever, the responsibility of the stewardship of our land and water lies with every citizen, every business and every official in Georgia.

For fifty years, the Georgia Conservancy, our members and our partners have dedicated our efforts to the conservation of Georgia’s natural resources. As we enter a new decade and face new challenges, we will continue to advocate for a state where people and the environment thrive. We hope that you will join us in this pursuit!
In 2015, the Georgia Conservancy engaged with Ernst & Young to establish a baseline carbon assessment for our work.

### 2015 Greenhouse Gas Emissions
(excluding trips)

- **Scope 1** (Propane): 1.3 metric tons of CO2
- **Scope 2** (Electricity): 99.3 metric tons of CO2
- **Scope 3** (Employee commutes and business travel): 68.4 metric tons of CO2

**169 Total Metric Tons of CO2**

**GC Employees Emit on Average 2.54 Metric Tons of CO2 Annually.**

**The Average American’s Commute Emits 3.46 Metric Tons of CO2 Annually.**

**That’s 0.92 Less Per Person!**

### How Can You Help Us Lower Our Emissions?

- Let us know how you traveled to any of our events, and, if possible, please carpool!
- Ask staff about carbon offsets for events and/or trips
- Ask staff about sustainability measures at our events
- Check back on our website for more information on greenhouse gas measurements and reduction possibilities
ADVOCACY

The Georgia Conservancy has a long history of advocating for the protection and conservation of Georgia's natural resources at the local, state and federal levels.
IN FYE2017

570+ HOURS AT THE CAPITOL
ADVOCATED FOR PASSAGE OF LEGISLATION TO INCREASE THE STATE HUNTING AND FISHING LICENSE FEES - THE FIRST LICENSE FEE INCREASE SINCE 1992, AND WILL BRING IN APPROXIMATELY $9 MILLION EACH YEAR FOR GEORGIA’S DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES.

50 YEARS
IN A JOINT RESOLUTION, THE HOUSE AND SENATE RECOGNIZED THE GEORGIA CONSERVANCY FOR 50 YEARS OF ADVOCATING FOR THE PROTECTION OF OUR STATE’S NATURAL RESOURCES.

PASSED PETROLEUM PIPELINE LEGISLATION TO REGULATE THE SITING, PERMITTING AND CONSTRUCTION OF PETROLEUM PIPELINES IN GEORGIA.

MONITORED MORE THAN 50 PIECES OF LEGISLATION THAT COULD IMPACT GEORGIA’S NATURAL RESOURCES. 2017 BEING THE FIRST YEAR OF A TWO-YEAR SESSION, MANY OF THESE PIECES OF LEGISLATION WILL BE ELIGIBLE FOR PASSAGE IN 2018.

The Georgia Conservancy has a long history of advocating for the protection and conservation of Georgia’s natural resources at the local, state and federal levels.

Our advocacy team has decades of experience in state politics and is dedicated to using the political process to help protect our state’s precious natural resources. We’re at the State Capitol every day of the legislative session pushing for conservation-minded bills and fighting against legislation that would roll back advancements we’ve already made.

The Georgia Conservancy’s advocacy work doesn’t stop at the Capitol steps. We’re working year-round on key issues such as transportation, energy, water resources, land conservation and development to make Georgia a place where people and the environment thrive.

If you have any questions about our Advocacy Program or would like to learn more, please contact Advocacy Director Leah Dixon at ldixon@gaconservancy.org.
SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

The Georgia Conservancy’s mission is to protect Georgia’s natural resources. But in today’s world, that means more than just protecting critical lands and habitats from development. It also requires that built spaces - our cities, towns and neighborhoods - grow and develop in a more sustainable fashion.
The bottom line: Better planning helps the environment, enabling communities to grow while using fewer resources and disturbing less open space.

The Georgia Conservancy’s Sustainable Growth program works to foster smart, sustainable development across the state through the following initiatives:

- Blueprints for Successful Communities
- Good Urbanism
- School Siting Workshops
- Small Town Sustainability

If you have any questions about our Sustainable Growth Program or would like to learn more, please contact Senior Director Katherine Moore at kmoore@gaconservancy.org.
Georgia is richly blessed with natural resources and a varied landscape of spectacular beauty, from the Blue Ridge Mountains to the stately pine forests of the Coastal Plain and the barrier islands and sweeping marshes of our coast. Land Conservation help keep our rivers flowing clear for all Georgians.
In FYE2017

Fielded landowner inquiries from 23 Georgia counties which led to 20 site visits in 10 counties resulting in 12,500 acres conserved by LCI program and partners in five counties.

“2 of every 3 raindrops that falls in the state of Georgia falls on a well-managed forest”

- Wesley Langdale of the Georgia Forestry Commission, stated at the Georgia Conservation Summit

With the population of our state at 10 million, development is putting more pressure on our rivers and streams, and poses a threat to our biodiversity. The Georgia Conservancy believes that land conservation is a key to protecting our water resources, our plants and animals, and our citizens. It is for that reason that we have made land conservation a cornerstone of our work.

In fall of 2016, we hosted our first Georgia Conservation Summit in Macon to further cultivate a “culture of conservation” in our state. Topics included the Gopher Tortoise Initiative and the Savannah River Clean Water Fund. Our next summit will be held in 2018 - please check our website for updates.

If you have any questions about our Land Conservation Initiative or would like to learn more, please contact Coastal Director Charles McMillan at cmcmillan@gaconservancy.org.
COASTAL GEORGIA

Georgia’s coast stretches for a little more than one-hundred miles and features some of the nation’s most pristine beaches, remote salt marshes and protected maritime forests.

Photo of Sapelo Island by Julian Buckmaster
The coast of Georgia is always changing and we must be ever vigilant. From spaceports to shipping ports to oil exploration on our shoreline, we have a number of issues to research, review and advocate for environmental sustainability.

Protecting our coast has been a priority of the Georgia Conservancy for more than 40 years. We maintain an office in historic downtown Savannah, headed by Coastal Director Charles McMillan, and we are working on a range of projects to protect this precious natural resource.

If you have any questions about our Coastal Program or would like to learn more, please contact Coastal Director Charles McMillan at cmcmillan@gaconservancy.org.
STEWARDSHIP TRIPS

We are in the business of conservation, yes, but to succeed, we must also be in the business of love. Love for the rivers, the barrier islands, the marshes, the plains, the canyons and also the urban parks and the cities that surround them. We want folks breaking bread on Georgia’s riverbanks or singing songs around a campfire, from the mountains through the coastal plain and to our amazing salt marshes and barrier islands.
Our goal is simple: Create a connection between some of Georgia’s most underutilized, stunning natural places and the people we need to help us protect them. In 2017 we led trips to the Ogeechee, Altamaha, Ocmulgee, Oconee, Flint, Ochlockonee, Chattahoochee, Satilla, Suwannee and Conasauga Rivers; to Ossabaw, Sapelo, Cumberland, Blackbeard, Jekyll and Little St. Simons Islands; to the Okefenokee Swamp, Cloudland Canyon, Howard’s Waterfall Cave, Panola Mountain, Broxton Rocks, Radium Springs, the Len Foote Hike Inn, Augusta Canal, Ebenezer Creek, Sweetwater Creek, Spring Creek, and the mighty Cohutta Wilderness.

If you have any questions about our Stewardship Trips Program or about any upcoming trip, please contact Stewardship Trips Director Laura Buckmaster at lbuckmaster@gaconservancy.org
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to the individuals, corporations, foundations and organizations who generously supported the Georgia Conservancy and its leadership role in managing statewide environmental initiatives to protect Georgia’s natural environment and resources. Due to space limitations, we are pleased to acknowledge gifts of $250 or more from the following individuals, foundations, corporations and organizations in FYE17. We thank you for your generous support of the Conservancy’s programs, projects and operations. Every effort was made to correctly list these donors from July 1, 2016 - June 30, 2017. If you notice an omission or error, please contact the development team at 404-876-2900 or mail@gaconservancy.org.

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Turner Foundation Inc.
UPS Foundation
Whitewater Express

IN-KIND SUPPORTERS

All The Locals
American Spirit Whiskey
Barbaritos - Columbus
Beautiful Briny Sea
Café Campesino
Cathy Sakas - The Coastal Naturalist
Coca-Cola Company
Doggy Dog ATL
Erica Davis Low Country Catering
Federal Home Loan Bank of Atlanta
General Assembly
Georgia Grinders
Georgia Olive Farms
Georgia State Parks
Jake’s Ice Cream
Leapfrog Services
Little Country Giants
Kristina Murray Band
Mermaid Cottages
Montane Sparkling Water
Packway Handle Band
Peachtree Tents and Events
Pie Shop
Preserving Place
REI
Rheos Sunglasses
Sailing to Denver
Sea Island Forge
SouthEast Adventure Outfitters
Springer Mountain Farms
Sweet Grass Dairy
SweetWater Brewing Co.
Three Rivers Outdoors
Uptown Columbus
Verdant Kitchen
Waffle House
White Oak Pastures
Whitewater Express
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Sister Ward, AGL Resources

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Monica Thornton, Vice President
Renee Alston, Community Engagement Manager
Carden Barkley, Development Coordinator (July 2017)
Laura Buckmaster, Stewardship Trips Coordinator
Leah Dixon, Advocacy Director
Brian Foster, Communications Director
Ben Fowler, Stewardship Trips Director
Jonathan Franklin, Design Intern
Johanna McCrathan, Urban Design Lead
Charles McMillan, Coastal Director
Kelsey McNamara, Special Events and Promotions Mgr.
Katherine Moore, Sr. Director of Sustainable Growth
Lisa Patrick, Executive Assistant
Cheri Robinson, Finance Manager
Bryan Schroeder, Sr. Director of Development & Marketing
Alexis Torres, Donor Relations Director
Ermis Zayas, Director of Development

Georgia Conservancy
The Georgia Conservancy is a private nonprofit organization. The Conservancy’s revenues come from a combination of individual memberships, unrestricted gifts, restricted grants, stewardship trip fees, special events and the sale of merchandise. All contributions are tax deductible as allowed by law. A certified public accounting firm audits the Georgia Conservancy annually.

If you have any questions about our Accounting or Financing, please contact Georgia Conservancy Finance Director, Cheri Robinson at crobinson@gaconservancy.org

### Income and Expenses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income</th>
<th>FYE2017</th>
<th>FYE2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contributions</td>
<td>$573,205</td>
<td>$405,743</td>
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<tr>
<td>Membership</td>
<td>$186,432</td>
<td>$160,882</td>
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<tr>
<td>Program Services</td>
<td>$97,558</td>
<td>$102,188</td>
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<tr>
<td>Special Events (net)</td>
<td>$125,460</td>
<td>$235,523</td>
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<tr>
<td>Restricted Contributions</td>
<td>$402,171</td>
<td>$685,991</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Income</td>
<td>$89,271</td>
<td>$18,742</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,474,097</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,609,069</strong></td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenses</th>
<th>FYE2017</th>
<th>FYE2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Outreach, Education and Advocacy</td>
<td>$560,514</td>
<td>$512,055</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sustainable Growth</td>
<td>$325,093</td>
<td>$345,453</td>
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<tr>
<td>Land</td>
<td>$103,798</td>
<td>$117,750</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coastal Program</td>
<td>$134,162</td>
<td>$165,359</td>
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<tr>
<td>Membership</td>
<td>$121,480</td>
<td>$85,373</td>
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<tr>
<td>Administration</td>
<td>$172,440</td>
<td>$181,861</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fundraising</td>
<td>$208,501</td>
<td>$200,207</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,625,988</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,608,058</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**NET INCOME**

- **FYE2017**: ($151,891)
- **FYE2016**: $1,011

### Balance Sheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Balance Sheet</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cash and Cash Reserve</td>
<td>$964,563</td>
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<tr>
<td>Endowment Fund</td>
<td>$150,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Assets</td>
<td>$71,586</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Assets</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,186,149</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Liabilities</td>
<td>$120,004</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unrestricted Fund Balance</td>
<td>$701,897</td>
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<tr>
<td>Temporarily Restricted Fund Balance</td>
<td>$214,248</td>
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<tr>
<td>Permanently Restricted Fund Balance</td>
<td>$150,000</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Equity</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,186,149</strong></td>
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</tbody>
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