

# Water Wanderings Annual Report 2021

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Water Wanderings gained momentum and reached important milestones in 2021. In our second season as a nonprofit, we ran two successful, age differentiated camps and strengthened our curriculum. We were also awarded our first grant, broadened our community through a second year-end fundraising campaign, and laid the groundwork to expand our offerings in 2022.



*Water Wanderings camps were differentiated by age in 2021 and we had our first camp of 13-15 year old's.*

During the spring of 2021, Rei delved into Water Wanderings' curriculum and carefully thought through how to integrate all our learning goals. They collaborated with Sonya to update the staff handbook with lesson plans, songs and readings. Unfortunately, there were some last-minute staffing changes and the counselor training was cut short, so not all of the curriculum was able to be implemented last summer. Nevertheless, Rei's work is a valuable contribution to Water Wanderings that we will implement and refine over the upcoming camp seasons. We are so

thankful to Rei for their hard work on this project and during camp last summer. Rei's experience was crucial for 2021, as they were the only returning counselor.

Erica and Precious joined Rei to form the 2021 Camp Counselor Team, along with Rei's dog Ninja, who was loved by everyone. Precious is a Mechanical Engineer by trade and training (both undergrad and graduate) who loves kids and the outdoors and spent much of his childhood canoeing with his family. Erica is a Special Educator who studied Outdoor Leadership and has extensive outdoor education experience from working at Alford Lake Camp and Kroka Expeditions. Rei, Precious and Erica made an incredible counselor team and led the 2021 campers with strength, resilience and grace. In the words of one camper, they were "kind and competent counselors." Another parent said "I appreciate that this camp offers kids a place to explore nature and topics such as diversity and inclusion as well as valuable life skills like fire building, cooking and outdoor survival. This is all done with the guidance of the amazing counselors!"



Erica Oliver



Rei Baek and Ninja



Precious Jagun

*Water Wanderings' 2021 Camp Counselor Team. Rei returned and was joined by Precious and Erica for their first summers.*

The biggest developments for the 2021 season were fishing and gear and group management. Fishing became an important part of Water Wanderings curriculum under the leadership of Rei and Precious. The patience, skill and reverence for life that fishing and eating wildlife teaches is a wonderful contribution to our curriculum and most of the campers loved it. Erica brought a wealth of knowledge about group dynamics and organizing gear from her work with Alford Lake Camp and Kroka Expeditions. She created efficient systems for organizing and caring for all our new gear and guided group dynamics with great skill. We are excited to have Erica return as lead counselor for the 2022 season. Below are a few photos and a quote from a 2021 camper:



*Photos from the 2021 Camp Season*

Water Wanderings was a recipient of the Outdoor Gear Exchange's 2021 Charitable Grant Fund, which allowed us to purchase \$2,000 of high-quality gear at wholesale prices. It was a game changer for our group gear which had previously been borrowed and scraped together with our small budget from camper registration fees. Thanks to Outdoor Gear Exchange, Water Wanderings now owns most of our gear. Our 2021 campers got to use brand new tents, mess kits, paddles, cooking knives, fishing gear and tarps this summer. Though Water Wanderings is a strong advocate for lending and the circular economy, some things are just better when they're new. Having this equipment makes camp safer, drier, and more convenient, making more space and energy for learning and play. We're so grateful to Outdoor Gear Exchange for making it possible for us to afford gear that would have otherwise been way beyond our budget.



*Outdoor Gear Exchange helped Water Wanderings purchase tents, tarps, paddles, water jugs and other equipment.*

In addition to the OGE grant, Water Wanderings entered the 2021 season with a \$500 unsolicited gift from the Greenstone Fund and \$4,237 in our Scholarship Fund from the 2020 Year-End campaign. These resources proved to be invaluable in a year when our revenue from camper registration fees dropped by \$2,200, highlighting the vital role that donor gifts play in the long-term sustainability of our sliding scale. The Scholarship Fund supplemented the cost of nearly all of the campers and provided one full scholarship, allowing us to continue offering our unique sliding scale without compromising core functions like counselor salaries and food. A successful 2021 year-end fundraising campaign and auction brought in close to \$5,000 from 28 generous individuals for our 2022 Scholarship Fund, which is helping us to expand our camps and continue strengthening our organization.



*Many thanks to our 2021 organizational supporters. Food donations greatly reduced our costs, the grant from Outdoor Gear Exchange revolutionized our gear, and the auction brought in roughly \$1,000 for the Scholarship Fund!*

In-kind contributions also made a big difference in 2021. We received food donations from Cabot Cheese, Bee Haven Honey Farm, Rabble Rouser, Red Hen and Joe’s Brook Farm, which greatly reduced our food costs. We were also supported by Ingrid, Katie, Davis, and Ashley, who loaned us canoes and Jim, who donated several portable chalkboards to use during camp for lessons and logistics. Heidi, Marie, Ingrid, Selebika and Gerette volunteered many hours to help shop for food, coordinate gear pick-up, recruit and support counselors, and check in on campers. Sonya continued to fulfill her role as Executive Director on a volunteer basis, which enabled Water Wanderings to meet all its other financial obligations. However, it is not sustainable for Sonya to continue to volunteer and we are working towards a paid Executive Director position.



*Volunteers played a crucial role in making 2021 camps run smoothly.*

Perhaps the greatest milestone of the 2021 season was that Sonya was almost entirely absent during the camps. Six years ago, it would have been inconceivable for Water Wanderings to happen without Sonya. She has been involved in every aspect of building and running the organization and was the lead counselor for every session up until last summer; Water Wanderings has been her “baby.” However, when Sonya gave birth to a real baby on June 9th, 2021, and she spun into major postpartum

complications only a month before camp started, Water Wanderings went on without her - depending on the leadership of the board and support from family. Despite last minute staffing changes, both camps ran smoothly and 17 campers (there was one cancellation in Session I) had the opportunity to explore the Green River Reservoir, learn and play outdoors.



*Water Wanderings has expanded since we began in 2017 with just four campers, Sonya and Gerette. This timeline of camp photos illustrates our growth over time.*

Since Water Wanderings began in 2017, we have served 61 campers in eight camps, including 8 returners. When we became a nonprofit in 2020, we grew our camps by 60% over previous years, and now we are ready to expand again. We had 12 campers on our waitlist last year, so we are excited to offer four camps in the summer of 2022, including a family camp for people of all ages to experience the unique rhythms and curriculum of Water Wanderings. With full registration, we will serve 37 campers this summer alone, growing our program by 117%. Our curriculum, risk management, equipment and outreach have also improved significantly over the past two years. With Erica returning as a lead counselor in 2022 and taking the helm of logistics, Sonya's energy will be focused on further developing the curriculum Rei worked on to ensure it is accessible and engaging while continuing to serve as Water Wanderings' Executive Director and sole year-round, currently unpaid staff member.

We undoubtedly would not have been able to grow in both quantity and quality over the past two years without the wise guidance of our board, leadership of our new counselors, and the support of our community. We are so grateful to the growing community of people who are bringing vitality and longevity to Water Wanderings' mission of empowering young people through inclusive community building, outdoor adventure and environmental education that nourishes resilience and integrity. We make our greatest impact during

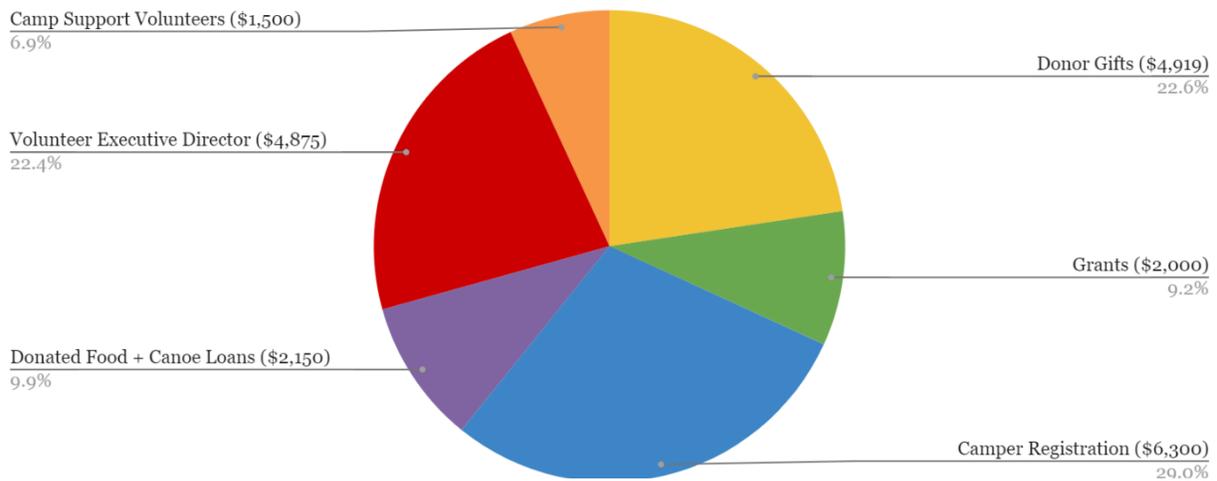
the summer when we welcome campers into our unique program, yet the work that happens throughout the year to prepare for those camps and to resource them is also part of our mission. We strive to center adventure, inclusion, equity and learning in the way we fundraise, market, develop and plan Water Wanderings, and all the people who make it possible for us to do this work help us to create an empowering and enriching summer camp experience.

# Water Wanderings by the Numbers

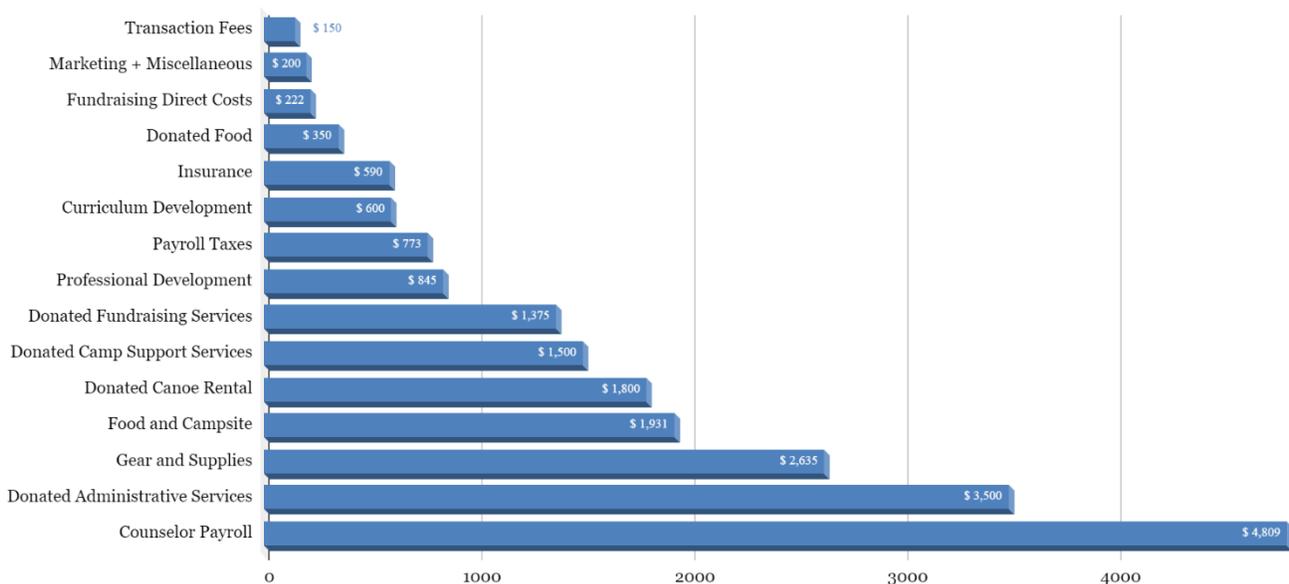
## Financial Statements and 2021 Budget

The following charts, graphs and tables outline Water Wanderings' detailed income and expenses for 2021 and our overall financial statements for 2020 and 2021. It is important to note that we include in-kind contributions in our budget, which refers to services or goods that were donated to Water Wanderings, thus reducing our costs. Though no money was exchanged for these services and goods, in-kind contributions play a crucial role in Water Wanderings' operations. We calculate all volunteered time at the rate of \$25.18 per hour based on the [Independent Sector's](#) recommendation for general volunteer hour value in Vermont.

### 2021 Income and In-Kind Contributions



### 2021 Expenses and In-Kind "Costs"



## Financial Statement 2020 & 2021

Income	2020	2021
Camper Registration	\$9,000	\$6,300
Gifts and Donations	\$4,197	\$4,919
Grants	-	\$2,000
In-Kind Donations	\$8,710	\$8,525
Barter	154.00	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$22,215</b>	<b>\$21,744</b>

Expenses	2020	2021
Program Services	\$10,042	\$13,624
Management & General	\$6,112	\$6,058
Fundraising	\$1,459	\$1,597
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$17,613</b>	<b>\$21,279</b>
<b>Net Profit</b>	<b>\$4,602</b>	<b>\$465</b>

Please note that Water Wanderings uses a January to December fiscal year, so funds raised in the fall are spent the following summer. There is a significant difference in net profit between 2020 and 2021 because we had not established the Scholarship Fund at the beginning of 2020, so no funds were used for the 2020 program expenses. In contrast, we started out 2021 with over \$4,000 in the Scholarship Fund, and though we spent all of that money on scholarships and supplementing the cost of camp for 2021 campers, the fund was replenished in the 2021 Year End Campaign. Thus, we entered 2022 with more than \$465.

In fact, the Scholarship Fund currently has over \$5,600 thanks to everyone who contributed during the fall fundraising campaign, a recurring donation and two generous donors who contributed in January of this year. These funds provide crucial resources that enable Water Wanderings to continue to offer scholarships and our unique sliding scale, which is based on a consistent percentage of family's income, without compromising our ability to make ends meet.

In 2022, our budget will change significantly because we are offering four camps instead of two. We are hopeful that the increased revenue will help Water Wanderings become more financially sustainable and enable us to move towards a funded Executive Director position.



**Water Wanderings**

*Our vision is that young people will disrupt oppression by building healthy and equitable relationships with themselves, each other, and the earth.*



**Thank you 2021  
donors!**

*You know who you are :-)*

Thank you for reading this report! Your interest in Water Wanderings means a lot to us and we're grateful for your support. Check out our new website at [waterwanderings.org](http://waterwanderings.org) for more...