



ALLIANCE *for the*
GREAT LAKES

Growing the Great Lakes Movement

2017 Annual Report



Growing the Great Lakes Movement

Everyone needs water to live. I am passionate about clean water issues because they have the power to unify people. You do not need to convince people that elected officials and public agencies ought to ensure their water is safe. I have listened to enough people in both rural and urban communities around the Great Lakes to understand that while individuals connect to water issues in many different ways, they all can see and feel the value Great Lakes water brings to their lives.

That connection could be a drinking fountain in a school, a green rain garden in a community park, a water bill lying on the kitchen table, a boat so far out you cannot see land, a scorching hot beach in July with your family, and on and on.

We live by the world's largest source of fresh surface water. People here understand how vital that is to our health today, and to the futures of the millions of young people growing up in our region right now.

Yet, this year we learned that in addition to moving Great Lakes protections forward, we still have to fight to defend territory already won.

2017 saw efforts from the White House to roll back hard-fought Great Lakes progress. You could not miss the headlines. This was the most intentional attempt to abdicate federal Great Lakes and clean water leadership I have seen in my two decades of environmental work.

You can read more about how the Alliance responded and how the Great Lakes movement actually grew stronger in our full 2017 annual report at <http://www.greatlakes.org/AnnualReport2017>.

Struggle and conflict are vital parts of public advocacy, especially when the chips are down. These forces permeated our work this year.

But what we did not do is allow our cause to protect the Great Lakes and clean water to be defined by someone else's fight. Our cause is already a winner. We are far greater than this already.

Thanks in part to more than four decades of work by the Alliance and our partners, being known as a Great Lakes champion is a sought-after label. It matters to our elected officials and business leaders.

This is real power. This is how I know that attempts to roll back progress will be met with overwhelming action to stop those rollbacks in their tracks, so we can move on to the real work of solving our most critical clean water challenges. It is a natural reflection of a region with a unifying value for clean water at its heart. **That water is protected because of your support of the Alliance. Your commitment to us sets the bar for what it means to be a Great Lakes champion. Thank you.**

Joel Brammeier, President & CEO

2017

Treasurer's Report

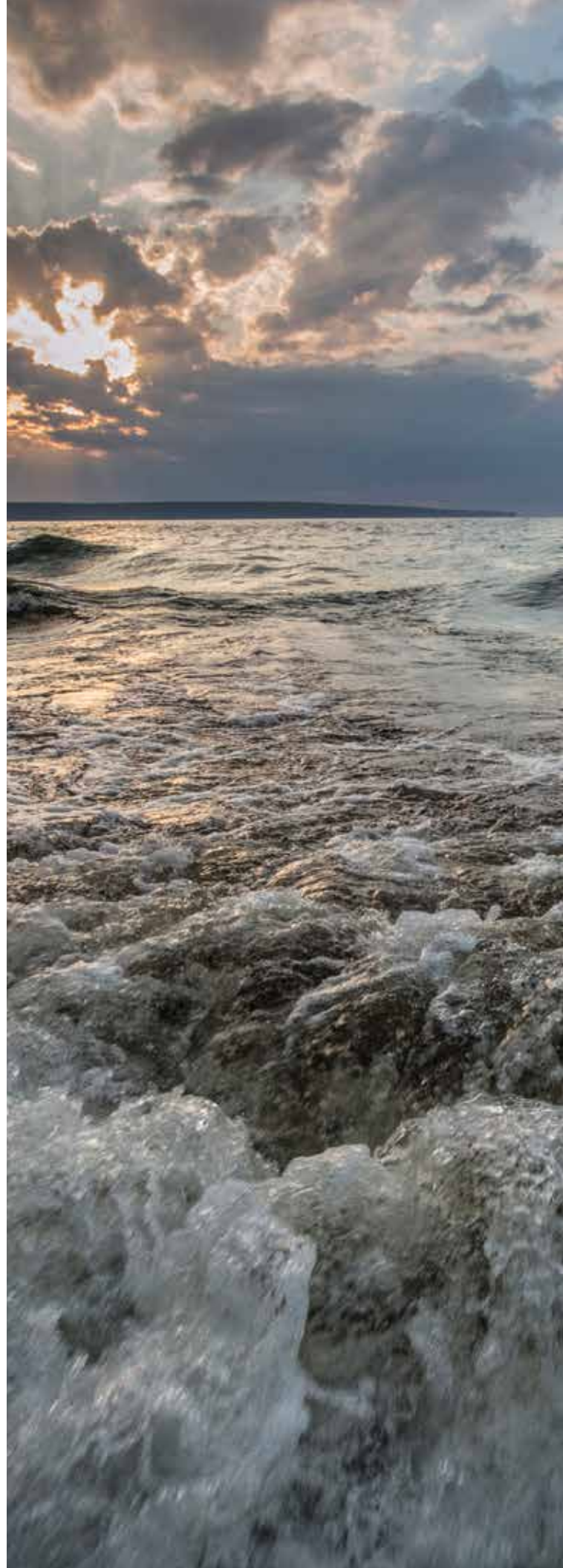
The Alliance has had yet another successful year thanks to financial support from you, our advocates and champions. With your commitment, the Alliance is proud of significant Great Lakes successes at the local, state, and federal levels in 2017. With your help, we faced down one of the most challenging years for Great Lakes protection in history.

From successfully defending against unwise cuts to the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative to holding governments accountable on protecting safe drinking water to connecting thousands of people with opportunities to volunteer to protect the lakes themselves, there is a lot to celebrate. But the Great Lakes and the millions who depend on them continue to face threats like failing water infrastructure, invasive species, and runoff pollution. At a time when the federal government is pulling back on basic environmental protections, the Alliance is able to stay on the forefront of these issues while working with communities across the region, thanks to all of you who lend your voices and provide generous support.

In 2017 we saw our annual fund of small donors grow to become a full 10% of our annual revenues for the first time, demonstrating just how strongly so many people across the region believe in our mission and how powerful individuals can be. With your support, we have maintained the fiscal strength that makes the Alliance an investment that you can be certain will realize a return far into the future. Thank you!

I would also like to thank my fellow members of the 2017 Finance Committee—Paul Culhane, Laura Rubin, Lauren Bigelow, David Schmahl, Sue Conatser and Joe Koop—for their continued efforts and oversight. We remain committed to managing and utilizing the Alliance's resources for the protection and restoration of the Great Lakes. Thanks also to Joel Brammeier, president and CEO, and Janet Hanley, our accountant, for their ongoing support and guidance.

Frank Washelesky
Treasurer



Every Dollar Matters

The Alliance for the Great Lakes would like to extend our sincerest thanks to all the donors who supported our work in our 2017 fiscal year (September 1, 2016 – August 31, 2017). Our work would not be possible without your generosity and we are very grateful for your commitment. Listed below are donors who contributed \$1,000 or more, but **every gift is appreciated and makes a difference.**

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Read the full report online at
www.greatlakes.org/AnnualReport2017

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MATCHING GIFT COMPANIES

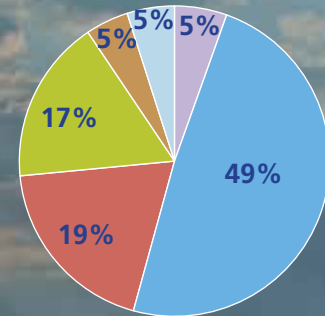
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For the seventh year in a row, the Alliance received **Charity Navigator's** four-star rating—the highest possible. The rating is a recognition of our sound fiscal management, commitment to accountability, and transparency.

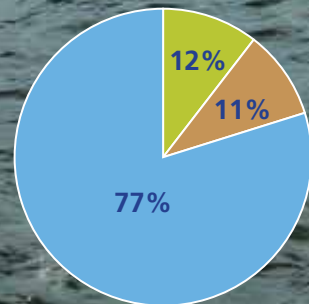
We have set aside and maintained a **\$1.0M** endowment and our balance sheet remains very strong.

Revenue Sources



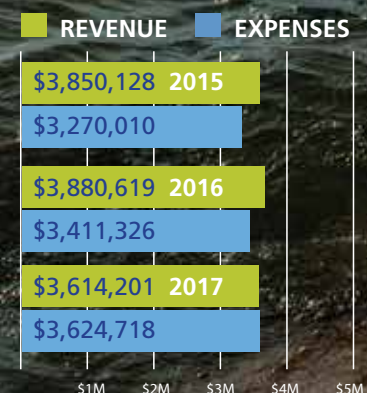
GRANTS	\$1,764,323
INDIVIDUALS	\$694,410
BUSINESSES/ ORGANIZATIONS	\$617,950
EVENTS	\$162,085
GOVERNMENT	\$178,284
OTHER	\$197,149

Expenses



PROGRAMS	\$2,805,161
FUNDRAISING	\$437,531
MANAGEMENT & GENERAL	\$382,026

Revenues vs. Expenses



Thank You For Your Leadership

The Alliance for the Great Lakes would like to thank retiring members of our Board of Directors **Paul Botts** and **Joyce Solberg** for their years of dedicated service. We would also like to extend a warm welcome to our new member **Quentin James**, who was elected in November 2017. The Alliance is grateful for the leadership and commitment of its distinguished Board of Directors.

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ALLIANCE for the
GREAT LAKES

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