

Annual Summary | FISCAL YEAR 2025

CADDO LAKE INSTITUTE IMPACT 2025



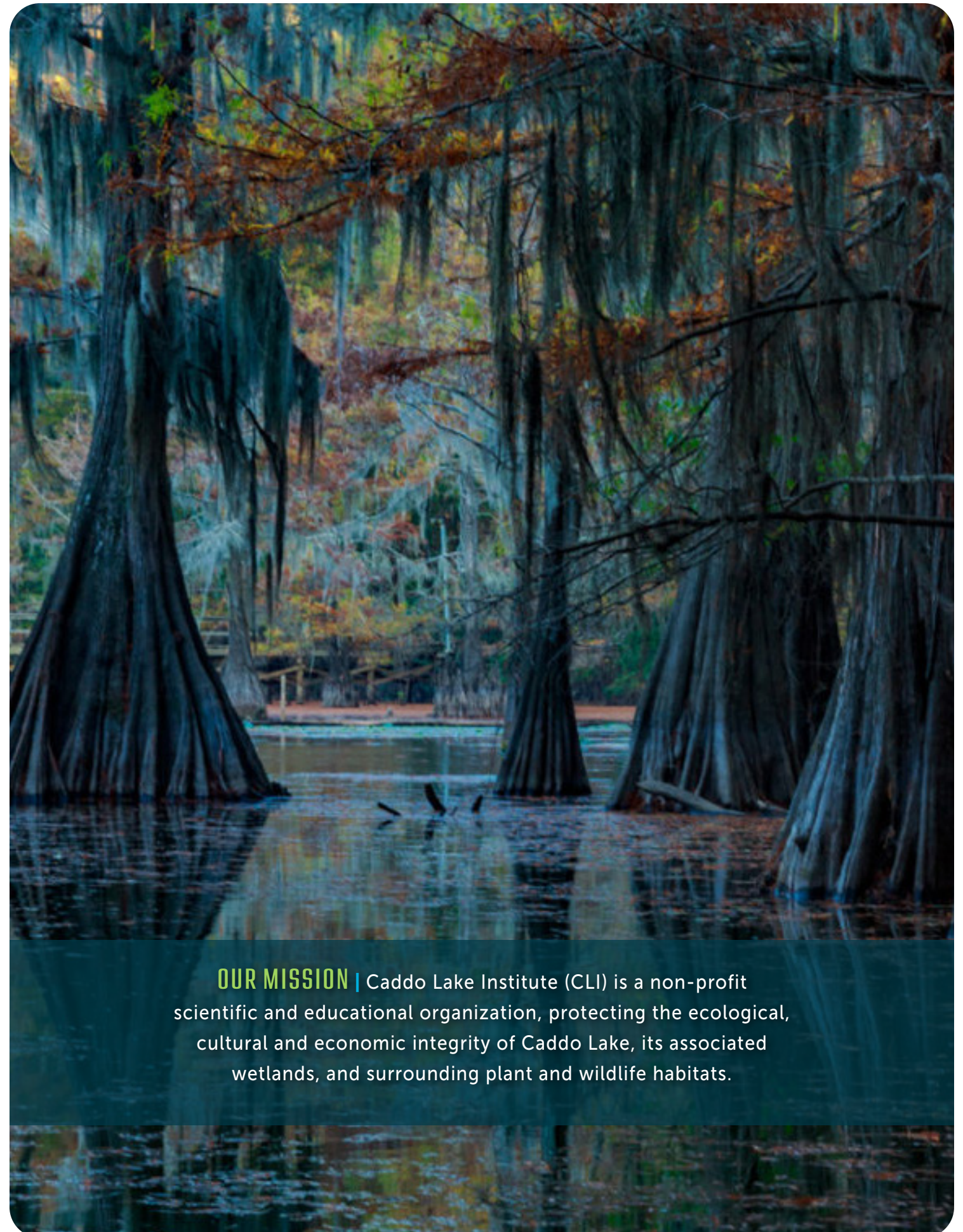
CADDO
LAKE
INSTITUTE

DELIVERING SCIENCE • STEWARDSHIP • ENGAGEMENT

Water Quantity

BIODIVERSITY IN OUR REGION Our region has some of the most biodiversity because it has so many different types of habitat – forests, swamps, bayous, and open lakes. The diversity of plants and animals evolved here with abundant water. They evolved to live in a wet place. This diversity, brought about in large part by the abundance of water, has been recognized by national and international authorities as irreplaceable habitat. Because flows of water are the most efficient and effective way to have positive impact across the landscape, for virtually all plant and animal species, as well as human recreation, “Instream Flows,” has been our most important project. Instream Flows or Environmental Flows means that rivers and bodies of water need the flow of water to keep water (and habitat) healthy. Water that doesn’t flow is stagnant, not oxygenated. Environmental Flows also means releasing the right amount of water at the right time from upstream of Caddo – at the man-made reservoir that dammed up the main

tributary to Caddo. These releases aim to mimic mother nature – though at much smaller volumes of water than what occurred historically. Variations in water releases are key to water quality, fish health, and influence forest health. However, talks are underway for 53.7% of the water above Caddo Lake to be leased for 50 years to the Dallas Fort Worth Suburbs. The increased usage would be 231% more water used upstream than has ever been used upstream of Caddo in history. To apply what is known to try to safeguard Caddo during this increased threat of moving water away, we convened a Science Conference in Jefferson, Texas, in March.



OUR MISSION | Caddo Lake Institute (CLI) is a non-profit scientific and educational organization, protecting the ecological, cultural and economic integrity of Caddo Lake, its associated wetlands, and surrounding plant and wildlife habitats.

Science

WATER MANAGEMENT

The 2-day Science meeting convened 49 participants, ranging from Industry, community members and other nonprofits, to Wildlife and Fisheries experts from 2 states, Corps of Engineers, Water Agencies from the State of Texas, United States Fish and Wildlife, private scientists, and a liaison for the Ramsar Wetlands program. The presentations and discussion centered around water management – especially in times of drought or decreased water availability. Diving deep into historical data of water levels and flows from pre-dam and post-dam, we looked at having to add a new level of environmental flow releases, called “subsistence,” or “extreme low flow,” which can be characterized as “life support.” While experts agreed the system could not be pushed to “life support” conditions at all times, there was a reality that water may not be available from upstream, and therefore, we must look at how to try to avert disaster. While the hydrology (study of water/flows) of extreme low flows is supportable, the biological (fish and forest health) response is not tested. Particularly worrisome would be the temperature of water, as less water heats up more, and less flow also means less oxygen. There is a direct relationship between flowing water and water health. Many species are vulnerable to decreased oxygen and increased temperature that would occur with less water in the system. We continue to refine dynamic guardrails that take into account biology, seasonality, and rainfall, while recognizing that even the best negotiated guardrails can be overridden by political will. We continue to look for innovative solutions and to try to carve out some assurances of water for Big Cypress Bayou and Caddo Lake during this challenging time. We have been putting most of our resources into this program for years, but this threat has required us to increase our consulting team so that we may rely on the best of the best while we navigate the future of Big Cypress/Caddo’s water.



FOREST HEALTH STUDY

Our database of flows is extensive for the past 50 years, and we have some data going back to the 1920s. In 2025, a two tributary controlled study of forest health has been completed, so that we can further refine our understanding of the relationship between flows and forest health. By having forest plots along a natural bayou, Little Cypress, and plots along the one with a dam upstream, Big Cypress, comparisons can be made about how flows relate to the health of the forest. The natural stream is less channelized and releases of water there can reach the bottomlands more efficiently. The bottomland hardwood forests along Big Cypress Bayou are further from the channel, which has deepened over time. With remote sensing data and tree cores, even more will be refined about how flows can be most efficiently used to maintain and improve forest health below the Lake O’ the Pines dam.

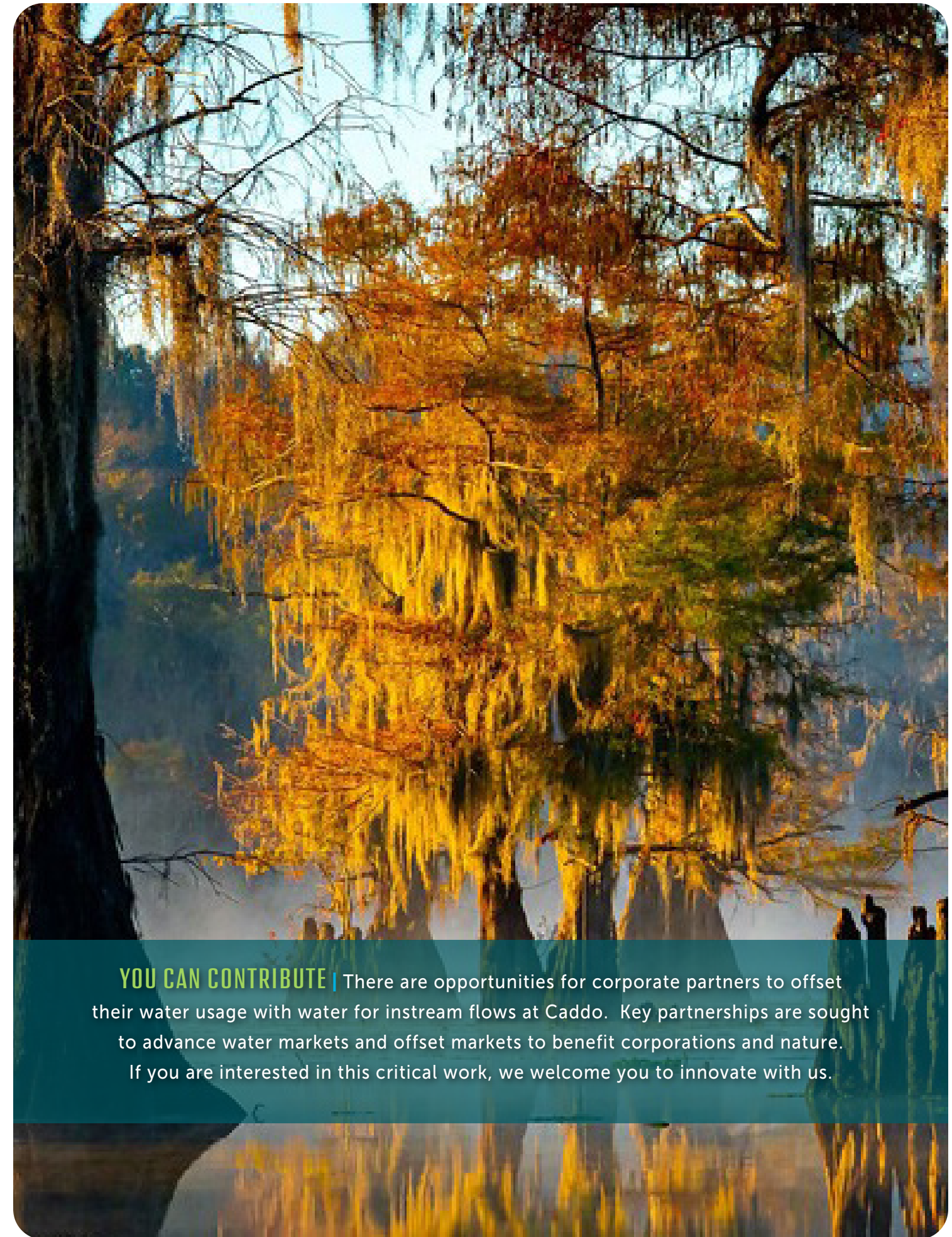
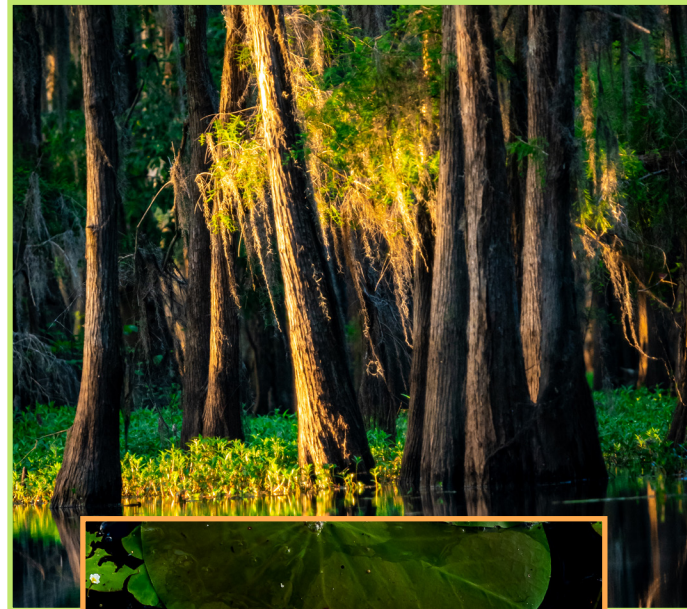


ENGAGEMENT In 2025, 6 county commissioners courts, 8 city councils, elected officials, multiple economic development and regional planning groups, as well as community groups were educated about the Flows Project and the concerns detailed in this year's annual report. News articles informed by this information have appeared in Texas Monthly, the Texas

Tribune, Longview News Messenger, Marshall News Messenger, Jefferson Jimplecute, and on multiple local television stations. Sharing scientific information so that the community and decision makers can make wise use of our natural resources is a role Caddo Lake Institute has provided for decades.

Stewardship

185 ACRES OF CRITICAL HABITAT were transferred to United States Fish and Wildlife Service. The Caddo Lake National Wildlife Refuge, which CLI helped create 17 years ago, has now grown with a new parcel permanently preserved for the United States Public. This tract has high-quality native forest, including 4 imperiled plants; these plants have been recorded less than 10 times across Texas in the past two decades. When the Caddo Lake Institute transferred this land, we provided actionable recommendations and a solid road map for how to best steward these rare plant communities for the benefit of the American people and American landscape. We also provided an orienteering map for visitors – great for outreach with scouts and other visiting groups.



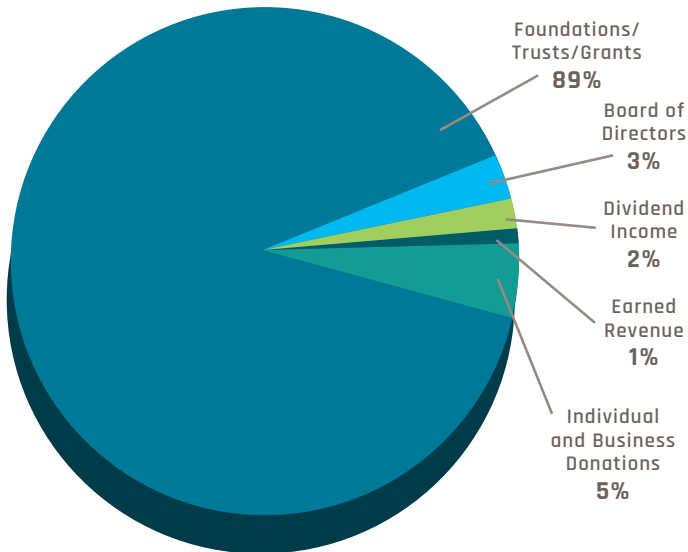
YOU CAN CONTRIBUTE | There are opportunities for corporate partners to offset their water usage with water for instream flows at Caddo. Key partnerships are sought to advance water markets and offset markets to benefit corporations and nature. If you are interested in this critical work, we welcome you to innovate with us.

Financial Stewardship

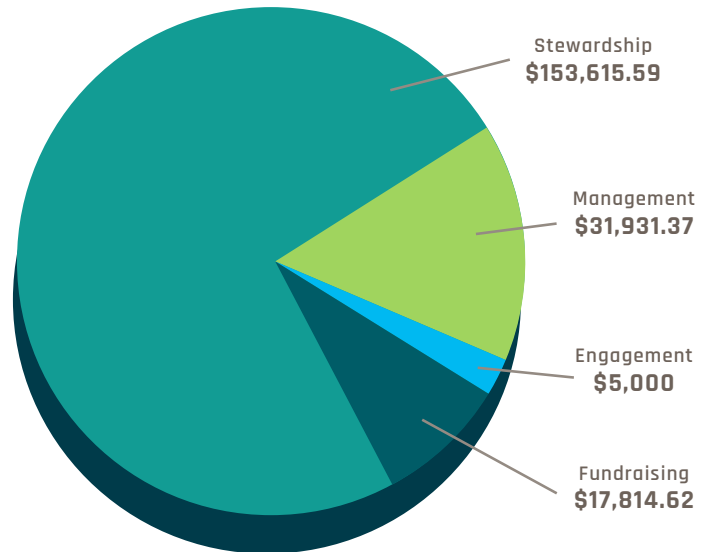
EXPENSES FOR 2025 Expenses surrounding instream flows, especially hydrology and water rights attorneys, increased 19%, from \$182,724 in 2024, to \$216,602 in 2025. With this mission critical feature – water quantity – more imperiled than at any time in our 33-year history, our donors are committed to providing the best experts to protect Caddo Lake and its irreplaceable wetlands for generations to come.

IN 2026, WE WILL CONTINUE to provide the highest quality science to our local community as they face key decisions about the future of our region. The Flows Project has always been about balancing the needs of people, industry, and mother nature. As new industries move into the basin, we will continue to work to implement sound solutions to give our natural resources the water it needs for resilience.

CLI INCOME FISCAL YEAR 2025



2025 EXPENSES



YOU CAN CONTRIBUTE Individuals, corporations and foundations can contribute cash, stocks, or even include Caddo Lake Institute in your estate planning.

ONLINE DONATIONS:

Go to: caddolakeinstitute.org/help
 or mail your check to Caddo Lake Institute:
400 Edwards Street | Shreveport LA 71101

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YOU CAN REACH US:

caddolakeinstitute.org
 Email us at:
info@caddolakeinstitute.org

Or Call our Executive Director,
 Laura-Ashley Overdyke at:
318.541.6923

As a 501(c)3 with a platinum rating from Candid/Guidestar, donations are tax deductible.

