



## Sea Islands Water Wellness Mission

*Restoring Water Wellness On The Sea Islands*

**The Sea Islands Water Wellness Mission**, a member of the Sea Islands Hunger Awareness Foundation. P.O. Box 268, Johns Island, SC 29457-0268

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**Mission Statement:** Providing clean water one 'in need' family at a time on Wadmalaw and Johns Islands. Over 58 families have received new water wells and filtration systems through October, 2018.

**Brief Project Overview:** Living on Kiawah and Seabrook Island is a dream few get to enjoy. It's hard to believe just around the corner from this paradise is Wadmalaw and Johns Islands where children, elderly, and families live without clean drinking water in their homes.

Wadmalaw Island does not have a public water system and there are areas of Johns Island that also depend only on wells. Many homes with existing wells have incurred contamination from poor septic integrity, infiltration from salt water or rusty, old pipes, etc. Recent weather events, i.e. two hurricanes and a 100-year flood, have increased the number of salt-water contaminated wells. Today these families, including elderly, children, and/or medically handicapped individuals, either risk health





issues by going without basic, clean water or they are forced to stretch limited budgets to purchase bottled drinking water for their respective households

**The specific goal** of the Water Wellness Mission is to provide clean, safe water for drinking, and cooking to residents on Johns and Wadmalaw Islands who have contaminated or unproductive wells. The project will impact 700-750 minority, low income socio-economic individuals (approximately 250 homes) on these rural islands. Service is provided by a licensed plumber and/or well contractor. The assessment of need is provided by volunteer Project and Field Coordinators.

**How are donations used?** Our mission cannot be achieved without the generosity of our donors. Over 98% of all donations go to the families in need of clean drinking water. Less than 2% of the



funds are used for accounting and marketing. All administration is voluntary. Each combination water well and filtration system is approximately \$6,000. After each well installation is completed the water will be to assure the water is safe to use for drinking, cooking, etc.

To date in 2018 we have donations from two private foundations, the Town of Kiawah, the Alan Fleming Annual Tennis Tournament fund raiser, the Kiawah-Seabrook Exchange Club, Sea Islands Hunger Awareness Mission, and various private donors. Although fund raising efforts have been successful, many more families can be helped with additional donations.

**Our 501(c)(3)** The Water Wellness Mission project is a perfect complement to our 501(c)(3) non-profit sponsor, the Sea Islands Hunger Awareness' (SIHAF). The other SIHAF efforts primarily focus on hunger and availability of goods for those who have difficulty in attaining food. Water Wellness focuses on potable water in the same geographic and demographic

areas.

SIHAF began in June 2014 and received non-profit status March 12, 2015. The mission is to assist agencies, churches and other organizations in providing a consistent and dependable source of healthy food to seniors, those with disabilities and veterans, who have difficulty providing food for themselves on Johns and Wadmalaw Islands. From growing nutritious produce to picking up donated canned food, to preparing and delivering food and staples, the SIHAF works to improve the lives of our local residents in need.

Water Wellness is also teaming with Habitat for Humanity, [www.seaislandhabitat.org](http://www.seaislandhabitat.org), specifically their refurbishing efforts to fix roofs, windows, and doors for families in need on Wadmalaw Island.

**Demographics of those served by the proposed project:**

While there is increased residential development on Johns Island; there are still areas of intense poverty on Johns and Wadmalaw Islands as the figures below confirm:

- 26.2 % of the population of Wadmalaw (approx. 2,800) is below the poverty level and 8.8% of the population is 50% below the poverty level;
- 14.7% of the population of Johns Island (approx. 20,000) is below the poverty level and 5% of the population is 50% below the poverty level;
- Nearly 90% of the children on the Sea Islands are living below the poverty level

The majority of the families involved are minority, multi-generational with a senior female as the head of the household. Over 58 families have received new wells or filtration systems to date.

**2016 Post & Courier feature story** - For most of us, household water is so readily available that we barely think about it. We take for granted our access to potable water and modern sanitation. We simply assume that everyone in our community has access to these basic necessities. Sadly, this is not the case in some homes on the sea islands. In 2016 the Post and Courier did a feature article on the Wadmalaw home of Ms. Nellie Boykin titled, "New Aid Effort Targets 'Third-World' Conditions on Wadmalaw Island." Until the Water Wellness mission got involved, Ms. Boykin and her six grandchildren relied completely on bottled water. You can read her story linked on our website ([FightIslandHunger.org](http://FightIslandHunger.org)). This family was visited by the Water Wellness Mission team, a well was dug, other water related issues addressed and now this family has clean, safe water in their home.

