

Izaak Walton League of America



2024 Annual Report

*Strengthening Conservation Policy
Mobilizing Volunteer Scientists Nationwide
Leaving a Legacy for Future Generations*

In 2024, the Izaak Walton League of America celebrated the 100th anniversary of our successful campaign to establish the Upper Mississippi River Wildlife and Fish Refuge. That accomplishment serves as an enduring example of the League's leadership and legacy over the past century. We continue to protect the nation's woods, waters and wildlife while enhancing access to the great outdoors for all.

Strengthening Conservation in America

The Izaak Walton League has a long history as a trusted resource for policymakers at federal, state and local levels. In 2024, that policy work continued in a number of areas, including the Farm Bill. That is really a clean water, public health and climate resiliency bill.

Nitrogen and other fertilizers that wash off agricultural lands represent the single largest source of polluted runoff in America. Taxpayers invest billions annually in farm conservation programs. Yet progress in reducing pollution, conserving wetlands and stopping soil erosion have stalled. So we went to work.

- ✓ **To scale up conservation on the nation's 900 million acres of agricultural lands**, reduce polluted runoff and improve soil health, the League met with key congressional staff to advance those priorities in the Farm Bill. We led a sign-on letter that brought together more than 140 conservation organizations, and we hosted biweekly calls to propel grassroots advocacy. While Congress ultimately did not pass a Farm Bill, the League's conservation messages were delivered to key policymakers and cited in the media in key agricultural states.
- ✓ In September and October, League staff hosted a six-part educational series in Illinois to **inform landowners who are not actively farming themselves about the benefits of conservation** and methods to prioritize it on land they rent for production agriculture. Engaging these landowners is one component of our comprehensive strategy to make conservation on the ground the rule—not the exception—on American farms.
- ✓ In addition to managing a rapidly expanding community of dedicated volunteers monitoring water quality across the U.S., the League as created advocacy tools and resources that allow these volunteers to **push for policies that reduce salt, nitrate and other types of pollution** at the source.
- ✓ **Pivoting from data collection to stopping pollution at the source**, the League's Salt Watch staff met with state legislators in Virginia and Maryland to work on legislation to reduce salt application and runoff. Staff worked with a legislator in Maryland to introduce a bill to reduce pollution caused by improper storage of road salt.
- ✓ In July, **the League co-hosted a congressional briefing on grasslands ecosystems** conservation that was attended by more than 50 congressional staffers. Grasslands are one of the most endangered types of our remaining wild places. Our work was rewarded in the fall with the first-ever introduction of the North American Grasslands Conservation Act in the U.S. House of Representatives.



- ✓ After years of efforts by the League, the Good Samaritan Remediation of Abandoned Hardrock Mines Act was signed into law. This clean water legislation will allow **restoration work to begin on targeted abandoned mines that leech heavy metals and toxic contaminants** into streams across the country, particularly in the west.
- ✓ New Izaak Walton League chapters were chartered in New Jersey, Indiana and Wisconsin, underscoring the continuing value of the League as a hub for conservation

Mobilizing Volunteer Scientists Nationwide

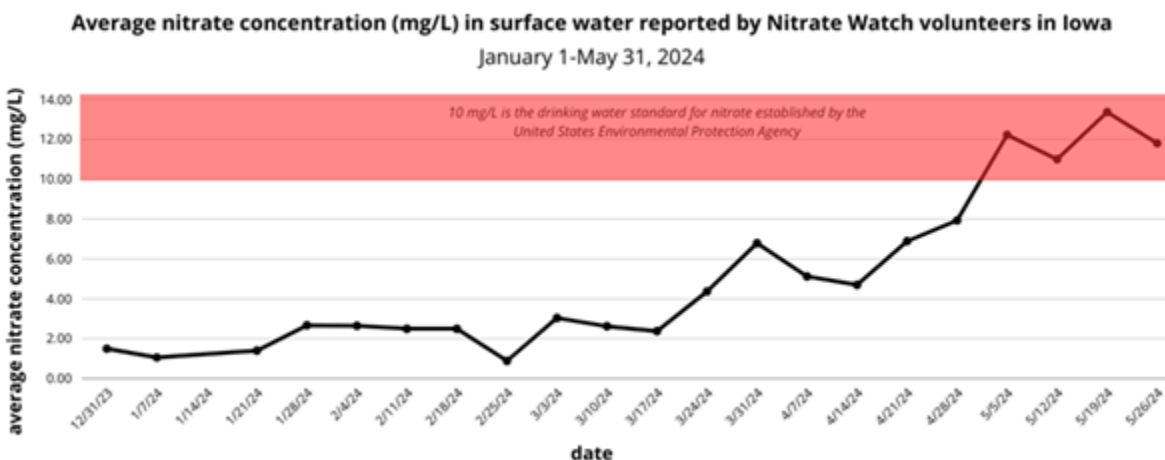
The need to carefully monitor and protect our waterways, including those that supply our drinking water, is paramount as the intensity and variety of threats grow. At the same time, government resources available to monitor water are declining. And sadly, federal laws and institutions that were designed to protect water quality and public health, like the Clean Water Act and the EPA, have been diluted or neutralized.

Those factors highlight the value of the League's water monitoring efforts. Using a proactive approach and strong partnerships, the League has driven dramatic growth of volunteers participating in our signature water programs including Save Our Streams, Salt Watch and Nitrate Watch.



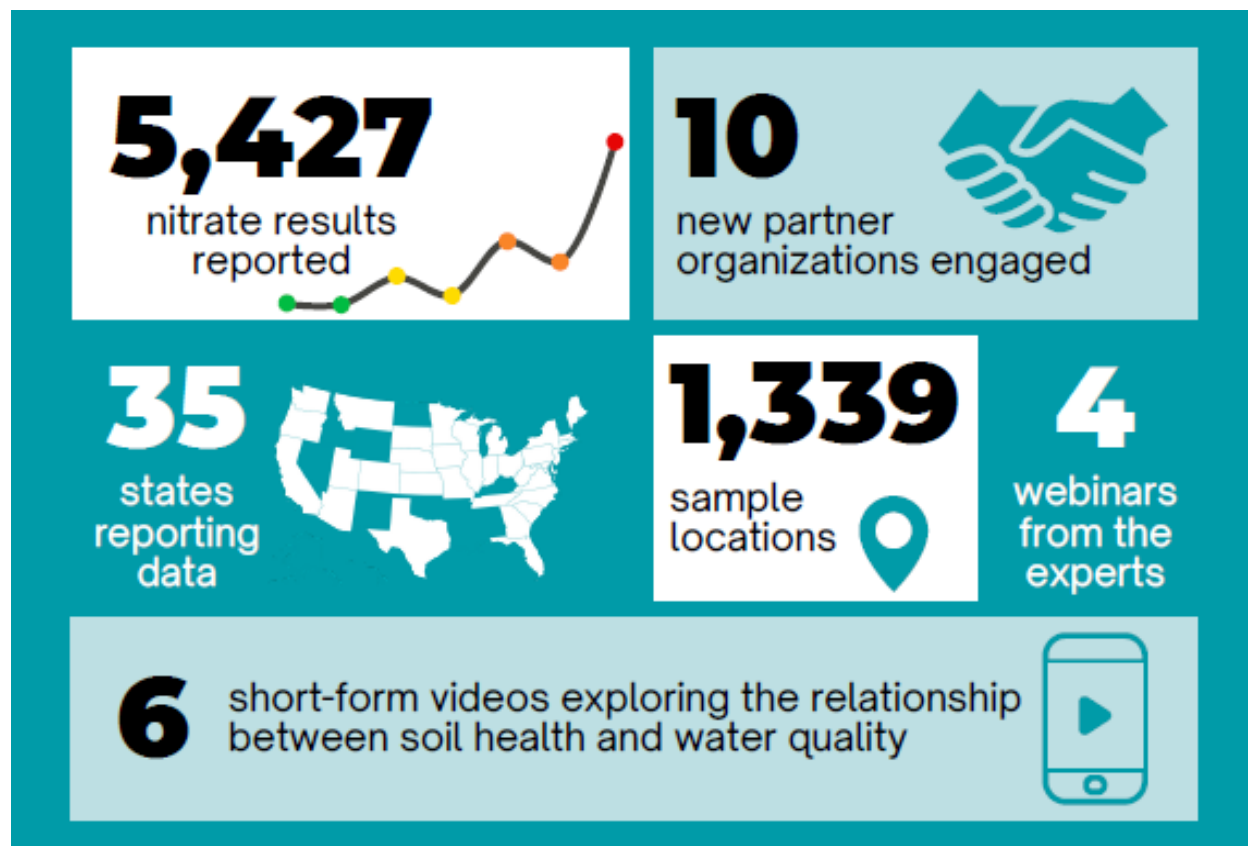
Executive Director Scott Kovarovics welcomed partner organizations and road crews at an event to share information during Winter Salt Awareness Week at League headquarters in Gaithersburg, Md.

- ✓ United by the expanding scientific evidence about cancers and other health threats posed by nitrate in drinking water, volunteer water monitors in our Nitrate Watch program submitted **5,427 test results from 35 states**. The data was reported to Clean Water Hub website, a vital repository for tracking water quality.
- ✓ There was a particularly **sharp spike in nitrate levels recorded by League volunteers** in Iowa during the “spring flush” of fertilizer off of agricultural land. (See chart below.)



- ✓ The League’s Save Our Streams program gathered assessment about stream health from several states including **311 stream health surveys conducted in Virginia alone**. In Iowa, the League added 187 new sites for 314 total sites in the state where volunteers regularly test local waters for pollution. Nearly 4,000 test results were submitted to the League’s Clean Water Hub website.
- ✓ Volunteers submitted 8,188 Salt Watch Results from 29 states, providing essential baseline data for local tracking of chloride pollution in local waterways. Through this program, we describe the **costly damage to infrastructure and human health caused by excessive road salt** application. And we train government and private sector personnel about ways to reduce salt use without sacrificing travel safety on roads and sidewalks.
- ✓ The Izaak Walton League was a lead organizer of the Iowa Water Summit in October held in Des Moines. This event brought together more than 70 professionals, academics, county conservation employees and concerned citizens to discuss volunteer water quality monitoring, share ideas and strengthen relationships.
- ✓ The Izaak Walton League remains **a vital partner within the Chesapeake Monitoring Cooperative (CMC)** and serves as the primary service provider for benthic macroinvertebrate data collection in the lower watershed through Virginia Save Our Streams. In addition to contributing foundational monitoring expertise, the League prioritized integrating crowdsourced monitoring into the CMC’s efforts through Salt Watch.
- ✓

- ✓ Thousands of volunteers nationwide collect valuable local data that supplement and complement government data. And these programs engage people in conservation advocacy as well as science.
- ✓ The graphic below summarizes activities by Nitrate Watch volunteers during 2024, which marked historic highs for participation in water monitoring. See complete results from the League's Clean Water programs at: <https://iwla.org/resource/sos-annual-report-2024>



Leaving a Legacy for Future Generations

2024 marked the 100th anniversary of the League's central role in establishing the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge, which provided the template for conservation advocacy in the 20th century.

Celebrations included an exhibit at the National Mississippi River Museum in the Quad Cities region of Iowa and Illinois, induction of League founder Will Dilg into the National Rivers Hall of Fame, a congressional resolution recognizing the anniversary and Steven Marking's theatrical performance about the Refuge in "A Visit from Will Dilg."



In the fall, the League was featured on “This American Land,” a program aired by PBS television affiliates across the U.S., which focused on the League’s role in creating the Refuge. Another episode featured the League in a segment about the devastating rollback of protections for clean water resulting from the 2023 Supreme Court *Sackett v. EPA* decision.

Today, the Refuge remains cherished, priceless triumph for conservation. The Refuge provides a vital economic resource, drawing visitors and recreation spending, in addition to the priceless acres of wildlife habitat and healthy riverbanks.

But the League’s work is never finished. The Refuge and Mississippi suffer from polluted runoff from farms, soil erosion and sedimentation and threats connected to climate change and invasive species that degrade habitat, water quality and recreational experiences. These are among the reasons why the

League continues to advocate for conservation in the Farm Bill and fighting on-going efforts to weaken the EPA and Clean Water Act protections for wetlands.



The League, led by Will Dilg, convinced Congress to establish the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge in 1924.

2024 Financial Highlights

Combined balance sheet and statement of activities and changes in net assets for the year ending December 31, 2024.

PUBLIC SUPPORT AND REVENUE

Membership Dues	1,684,359
Contributions and grants	842,654
Grants from federal and state government	71,316
Investment income, net	231,743
Charitable remainder unitrust	839,890
Rental income, net	440,647
In-kind services	140,604
Other	<u>23,229</u>
Total Public Support and Revenue	<u>4,274,604</u>

EXPENSES: CONSERVATION AND EDUCATION

Conservation	420,375
Membership	554,422
<i>Outdoor America</i> magazine	234,563
Annual national convention	112,847
Chapter relations	186,483
Communications and media	360,985
Water	709,790
Agriculture	240,575
Missouri River Initiative	<u>92,744</u>
Total Program Services	<u>2,912,784</u>

Supporting and Planning Services	
Management and general	145,929
Fundraising	<u>396,310</u>

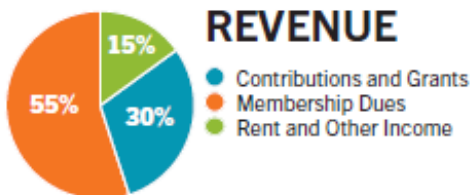
Total Supporting and Planning Services	542,239
Total Expenses	3,455,023

Changes in net assets from operations	819,581
Unrealized (loss) gain on investments	157,750
Changes in Net Assets	977,331
Net assets, beginning of year	<u>11,578,869</u>
Net assets, end of year	<u>12,556,200</u>

BALANCE SHEET

Assets	
Cash and cash equivalents	2,620,364
Grants receivables	14,493
Contributions and other receivables	397
Rent receivable	17,405
Prepaid expenses	25,180
Property and equipment, net	1,626,034
Investments	8,276,405
Rent receivable, net current portion	182,306
Operating leases right to use asset, net	<u>41,184</u>
Total Assets	12,803,768

Liabilities and Net Assets	
Liabilities	
Accounts payable and other	114,464
Accrued expenses	105,029
Refundable advances	-
Security deposits	<u>28,075</u>
Total Liabilities	<u>247,568</u>
Net Assets	
Without donor restriction	10,647,046
With donor restriction	<u>1,909,154</u>
Total Net Assets	12,556,200
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	12,803,768



Investing in Conservation

We thank all of those whose contributions, financial support and volunteer time help protect America's outdoors. We could not list every person whose generosity and unflagging commitment has helped the Izaak Walton League advance our goals.

Individual Philanthropy

\$100,000+

Charles and Leila Wiles
Estate

\$10,000-\$99,999

Donald Cahoon
William Jones
Robert J. Melvin Trust
Jodi and Steve Labs
Donald H. Nelson Trust
Dawn Olson Estate
Charles Stoneback
John Telfer

\$5,000-\$9,999

Joanna Boone
Carey Crane
Duane Hlustick
Scott and Susan
Kovarovics
Jim Piatieski
Howard and Brenda
Sheridan
Joan Strimple
Nancy S. Wiles

\$2,500-\$4,999

Terry Benson
Michael Crane
Phil Hegg
Donald Janes
Margaretta Taylor

\$1,000-\$2,499

L. P. Alt
William Berg
Char Brooker

Rick Cerwick
Helen Coates
Daniel Cooper
Tom DeMund
John Dickel
Kurt Feldmann
Jonathan Fuller
Miles Greenbaum and
Judy Danish
William Houck
Jonathan Hutchison
Bryan Johnson
Timothy Johnson
George and Irene Jones
Stanley Kaczynski
Bill Kelly
Dave Klinner
Scott Meyer
Patty Nunn
Michael Peterson
Richard Rawley Estate
Kathy Rittle
Bernice Selle
Paul Sitz
Richard Sommer
Gregory Taylor

\$500-\$999

Craig Andresen
Susan Bates-Harbuck
Dale Braun
Margaret Cavanaugh
Carol Change
Jeff Clow
Jeff Deschamps
Michael Findley
Glenn Friendt

Rod Frost
Mike Fuge
Richard and Elaine
Graham
Richard Hansen
John Hunting
W. Joseph Jarecki
Jack and Charlotte
Johnson
Frederick Kaiser
John Kern
Dorothy Mayer
Mary Mekosh
Gregory Niverth
Pace Petrella
Elizabeth Peyton
George Stimak
Jim Storer
Thomas Watts
Stephen Whittaker
Dave and Margo Zentner

Friends of the League

*(Members who provide a
monthly gift of \$10 or more.)*

Wayne Berkebile
Gale Brothers
Michael Brown
Marie Cyphert
Merri Johnson
Marc LaComb
Amy Lilliebridge
Mark Makhholm
Alan Paterno
Liz Roy
Jim Sweeney

Waltonian Heritage Society

(indicates continuing support of the Izaak Walton League Trust by a WHS member)*

Kurt Feldmann*
Orange Chapter, IWLA*
Joan Strimple*

Life Members, 2024

Special thanks to those who made a commitment in 2024 by becoming Life Members

Family Life

John and Myrsonia Joly
Elizabeth Roberts and Daniel Freshman
Susan Roberts and Frank Dange
Rodney and Lynette Sather
Michael and Donna Thomas

Life

Rich Clement
Dan Cooper
Barry Drazkowski
Renee Eckhoff
Willis Grayson
Kevin Green

Charles Kern
Stephen Klein
Candace Kleen
Michael McLaughlin
Luann Noll
Thomas Parnell
David Prevar
Thomas Pytel
Michael Reinemer
Charles Robinson
William Williams

Institutional Supporters

(*Indicates a multiyear commitment, a grant spanning two fiscal years or pledge from donor, listed in the category representing the total amount pledged or contributed.)

Gifts of \$50,000 or more

Chesapeake Bay Trust
The Raines Family Fund
Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay – Chesapeake Bay Program

Gifts of \$25,000 or more

Gilchrist Foundation
Iowa Department of Natural Resources

Izaak Walton League of America Endowment
Roy A. Hunt Foundation

Gifts of \$10,000 or more

Commonwealth of Virginia – Chesapeake Bay Restoration Fund

Gifts of \$5,000 or more

Commonwealth of Virginia - Dept. of Environmental Quality
Illinois Division, IWLA
Nebraska Division, IWLA
South Dakota Division, IWLA
Fairfax Water

Gifts of \$1,000 or more

Devon Creek Foundation
Iowa Division, IWLA
Lincoln Chapter, IWLA
Maryland Division, IWLA
McCook Lake Chapter, IWLA
Orange Chapter, IWLA
Rockville Chapter, IWLA

Gifts of \$500 or more

National Philanthropic Trust

The Value of Volunteerism

The League is a shining example of the very American concept of volunteerism – the dedicated tradition of commitment to community and nation. League members spend countless hours working to protect America’s great outdoors. To get a snapshot of their activity, we ask our national directors and officers to estimate the number of hours they volunteered during the year.

Forty-three directors responded to our survey. These directors volunteered 10,967 hours in 2024 to League activities. Imagine what that number would be if we surveyed all of our chapter leaders and members! According to Independent Sector, a coalition of nonprofits, corporations and foundations, a volunteer hour has a value of \$34.79 for 2024. That means their volunteer hours were worth \$381,524. That is a generous donation on behalf of the League toward the stewardship of America’s natural resources.



EARTHSHARE

As a member of EarthShare, a federation of the nation’s leading environmental and conservation organizations, the League is listed in a variety of workplace fund drives including many state and local government campaigns, several United Way campaigns, and a growing number of corporate and foundation campaign drives.

We wish to thank the many individuals who provided vital support for our conservation work in 2024 through these campaigns. For more information about adding a conservation giving option to your company’s workplace giving campaign, call the Development Department at 301-548-0150 or visit our Web site at www.iwla.org for more information.

Nitrate Watch, *Outdoor America*, Salt Watch, Save Our Streams and the League logo are registered trademarks of the Izaak Walton League of America. Visit www.iwla.org

National Leadership and Staff (as of July 2025)

NATIONAL OFFICERS

President: Scott Meyer

Vice President: Jim Storer

Secretary: Anita Stonebraker

Treasurer: Craig Enneking

NATIONAL DIRECTORS

Colorado: Sally McIntyre, Mike Peterson*

Florida: Mike Chenoweth,* Pamela Pierce

Illinois: Ronald Moore, Luann Noll, Garrit Struck*

Indiana: Todd Bryant, Jim Buitter,* Jay Butler, Jeff Farkas, Kim Grodetz, Stephen Grodetz, Kim Russell, Colinda Trevino

Iowa: William Arnold, Dale Braun,* Rick Cerwick, Jack Johnson, Lisa McIntyre, James Meek, Aaron Staker

Maryland: Cherie Aker, Curt Howard,* Rodger Moran, Robert Pavlick, Sr., Jim Piateski

Minnesota: Jill Crafton, Camille Morton, John Siekmeier*

Nebraska: Scott Brummond, Mike Gagghagen,* Wes Sheets, John Wittwer

New York: Leslie Monostory,* Conrad Strozik

Ohio: Rick Graham, Greg Lamb,* Brenda Swartz, Dave Zieverink

Pennsylvania: John Detisch, Don Robertson, Mike Stout,* Gary Swope

South Dakota: Mark Boddicker, Kelly Kistner,* Patrice Kistner, John Monahan

Virginia: Russell Alls, Dan Arico, Danny Brabham, Rachel McBride, Pam Meara, Ernest Padgett, Barbara Pritchett, Herbert Pritchett, Sr.,* Christian Rose

West Virginia: Pat Crouse, Marie Cyphert,* Tom Ditty, Michael Masters, Jr.

Wisconsin: Ron Church, Mike Fuge,*

***Division president**

AT-LARGE DIRECTORS

Bill Kelly, Idaho Falls, Idaho

Rick Sommer, Seneca, South Carolina

EXECUTIVE BOARD

Dale Braun (Chair)

Rachel McBride (Vice Chair)

Rick Cerwick

Mike Fuge

Rick Graham

Jack Johnson

Bill Kelly

Jodi Labs

Luann Noll

Brenda Swartz

STAFF

Scott Kovarovics, *Executive Director*

Maggie Dombroski, *Save Our Streams Coordinator*

Jessica Gordon, *Grassroots Advocacy Manager*

Kate Hansen, *Agriculture Program Director*

Abby Hileman, *Salt Watch Coordinator*

Earl Hower, *Chapter Relations Director*

Matthew Kierce, *Chesapeake Monitoring Outreach Coordinator*

Jared Mott, *Conservation Director*

Samantha Puckett, *Clean Water Program Director*

Michael Reinemer, *Communications Director*

Mary Rubin, *Member Programs Director*

Donna Shriver, *Digital Communications Manager*

Heather Wilson, *Save Our Streams Coordinator*

Founded in 1922, the Izaak Walton League of America is one of the nation's most effective and accomplished conservation organizations. Headquartered in Gaithersburg, Md., our members and supporters promote the sustainable use and enjoyment of natural resources, including the nation's soil, air, woods, waters and wildlife. www.iwla.org

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