

Izaak Walton League of America



2023 Annual Report

*Tackling the Challenges of Our
Second Century of Conservation*



BIG CHALLENGES

In court, in Congress, in the water, on the ground, the League has tackled big challenges to begin our second century of conservation leadership.

Standing up for clean water

After the devastating rollback of protections for streams and wetlands in *Sackett v. EPA* in 2023, the League launched a multi-year campaign to build grassroots pressure on Congress to protect these waters under the Clean Water Act and mobilize our network of volunteer water monitors to report on changing local conditions. In September 2022, the League and six other conservation partners had petitioned the Supreme Court for strong protections of tributary streams and wetlands in an amicus brief filed in *Sackett*. The case underscores the importance of a bold, holistic defense of wetlands and clean water—in the Farm Bill, in EPA regulations, and in state and local policies, including in practices that affect chloride, nitrate and other pollutants in our streams and drinking water.

Now it is even more obvious that defending long-established conservation laws and the benefits they provide for people, communities and the planet will remain an enduring imperative for the Izaak Walton League in the decades ahead.

The League launched a multi-year plan to address clean water priorities after Sackett v. EPA undermined protections for wetlands and streams.

Taking on nitrate pollution

In 2023, the League launched Nitrate Watch to enable local volunteers to test surface water and drinking water for dangerous levels of nitrate, which is proven to elevate the risk of certain cancers, thyroid disease, blue baby syndrome and birth defects. Volunteers submitted more than 4,000 water quality test results from 33 states and representing nearly 300 partner organizations. Some of the surface water results showed nitrate levels exceeding the Safe Water Drinking Act limit of 10 mg/L.

But research suggests that a limit of 10 mg/L may not sufficiently protect human health. Adverse effects have been associated with prolonged exposure to drinking water with concentrations of 5 mg/L or

even less. In 2023, more than 12 percent of the Nitrate Watch tests for drinking water revealed levels greater than 5 mg/L.

With the goal of stopping pollution at the source, the League provides volunteers with information about how to report high levels of nitrate to local authorities and the media to spur action and raise awareness.

Protecting iconic places in court: the Boundary Waters Canoe Area

Continuing our 100-year fight to protect water, habitat and recreation in this unique “canoe country” wilderness, the League won a major victory in September when a federal court ruled in our favor to prevent sulfide mining on national forest land immediately adjacent to the wilderness area. The mine would have threatened the entire watershed.

Setting policy on PFAS, soil health, renewable energy and carbon pipelines

At the annual convention, League members approved policy to:

- protect Americans from PFAS and microplastics,
- incentivize better soil health through participation in farm conservation programs,
- reduce carbon pollution by facilitating small-scale generation of renewable electricity, and
- oppose eminent domain to take private property for construction of carbon dioxide pipelines.

The vision for a second century of conservation leadership

The League envisions a future where:

- Every community enjoys clean air, water and other healthy natural resources.
- We are winning the fight against climate change with clean energy, healthy soil, protected landscapes and abundant wetlands, forests and grasslands.
- Americans rediscover their love for nature beginning in their local communities.
- The conservation movement reflects the diversity of

America—where conservation becomes part of everyday life for everyone.

- Traditions of hunting, fishing and target shooting endure through growing participation by people of all backgrounds.

The Vision taps the League's core strengths: leveraging volunteer science, advocating for common-sense conservation and connecting people to outdoor recreation and traditions. These have been hallmarks of the Izaak Walton League since our founding.

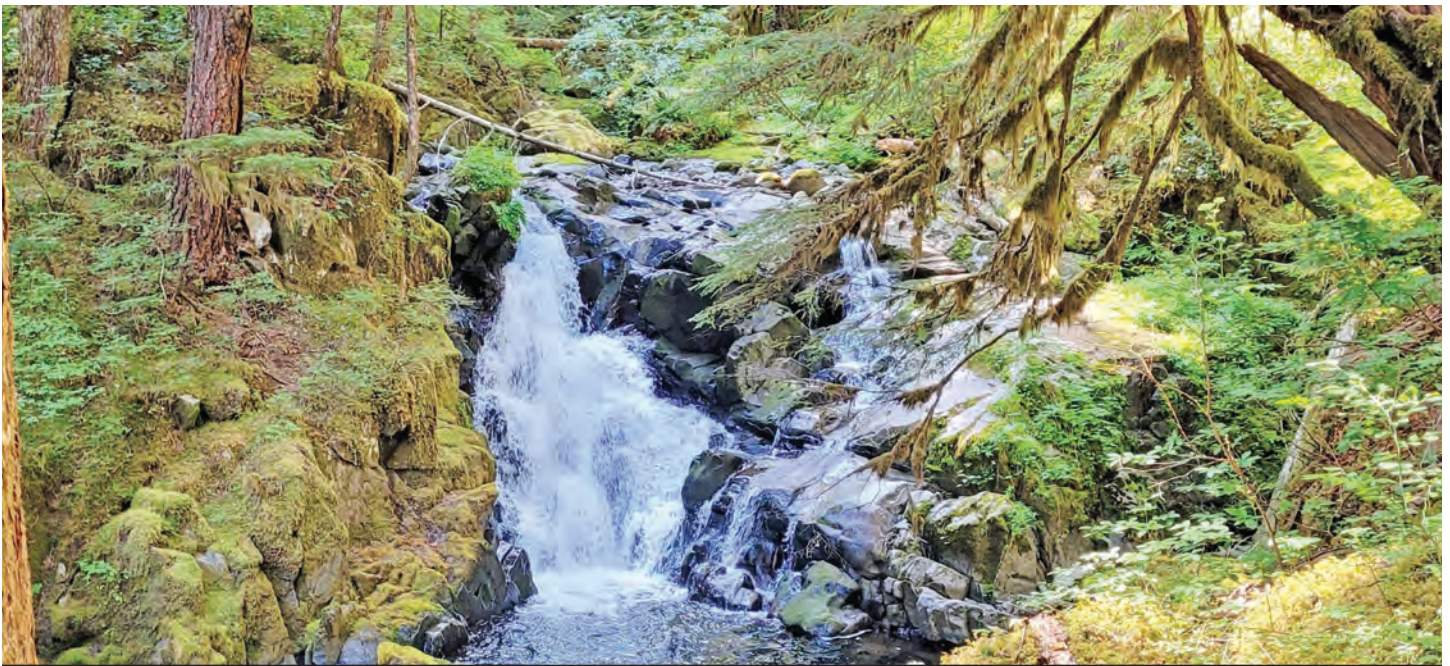


PHOTO: SCOTT KOVAROVICS

With the goal of stopping pollution at the source, the League provides volunteers with information about how to report high levels of nitrate to local authorities and the media to spur action and raise awareness.

ENGAGING YOUTH

During the League's first days in 1922, the founders vowed to protect the nation's woods, waters and wildlife so future generations could experience the benefits and transformative power of the great outdoors. That commitment endures in the League's membership and chapter activities nationwide.



One of many innovative programs across the League is the Green Crew, which emerged from a collaboration between the Minnesota Valley Chapter and Scouting in 2023. Led by the youth, the crew engages young people and the broader community in conservation projects and volunteer science. The crew has sparked interest from Scout units across the United States.

Programs like the Green Crew not only help to make conservationists out of countless youth, they have also made our environment cleaner and healthier for everyone.

PHOTO: GREEN CREW

SHAPING POLICY

During 2023, the Izaak Walton League worked to advance a policy agenda for the 118th Congress that focused on five key goals:

- Transform agriculture to reduce water pollution, safeguard human health and ensure sustainable food production, chiefly through the Farm Bill;
- Strengthen federal rules to protect our drinking water and wetlands, supporting the Clean Water Act of 2023;
- Conserve and restore wildlife habitat, through the Recovering America's Wildlife Act and the North American Grasslands Conservation Act;
- Promote large-scale renewable energy to put the U.S. on a path to net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050; and
- Protect the nation's iconic ecosystems including the Missouri River, Boundary Waters Canoe Area and the Mississippi River.

League met with more than 50 key congressional offices on Capitol Hill to lobby for a better



Farm Bill. The League also co-hosted three summit meetings with stakeholders to build support for essential conservation programs in the bill.

The Farm Bill is actually a clean water, public health and climate-resiliency bill. It represents the largest investment in private land conservation in America. It affects every American—the food we eat, the water we drink, the wildlife we value and the impact of climate change on our communities. Agriculture continues to be the single largest source of runoff polluting our drinking water, streams and lakes. Vital and diminishing wetlands and grassland especially are being plowed under or drained at unsustainable rates.

Throughout 2023, the League pressed for a Farm Bill that would

- Put soil health at the center of America's agriculture policy,
- Invest long term in conservation programs that have a record of success,
- Focus conservation dollars on programs that leverage non-federal funds, like the League's State and Tribal Soil Health Grant Program.

Four states—Maryland, Minnesota, Vermont and Wisconsin—considered legislation to reduce road salt use. While none was passed into law, the League will continue to support efforts at the state level to prevent salt pollution in our waterways.

Now it is even more obvious that defending long-established conservation laws and the benefits they provide for people, communities and the planet will remain an enduring imperative for the Izaak Walton League in the decades ahead.

*Jared Mott, Abby Hileman
and Samantha Puckett
on Capitol Hill.*

PHOTO: IWLA

VOLUNTEERS: MAKING A DIFFERENCE

2023 brought expansion and evolution for the League's Save Our Streams programs, but the core principles remained true—to improve water quality and engage volunteers. Our programs are designed to gather and report water quality data and encourage volunteers to take action when they find pollution or poor stream conditions.

Stopping pollution at its source

The Izaak Walton League's volunteer water monitoring programs are designed to help stop pollution at its source. In other words, keep pollutants out of the water in the first place. Private companies that provide winter maintenance for shopping centers and office parks are major sources of excessive use of road salt during icy weather. Part of the League's comprehensive strategy to reduce chloride pollution involves directly engaging these companies and the property owners who hire them.

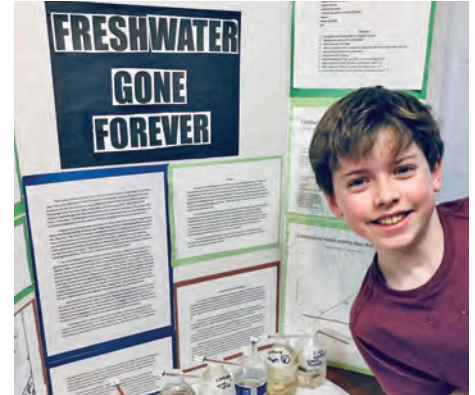
In 2023, the League provided training workshops attended by 80 people who apply salt to pavement as part of their jobs. More than 50 of them passed an exam earning certification in smarter salting practices. The training focused on how to reduce salt use while keeping people safe in parking lots and on sidewalks.

Reaching new places, empowering more people

Whether in our work on clean water, better agriculture practices or engaging volunteers for water monitoring or community-based conservation, the League has grown its network of partnerships and volunteers.



For instance, our Salt Watch program added 16 new partners in 2023. The League engages communities, private applicators and public works departments in comprehensive pollution-



reduction campaigns. We provide ready-to-use templates for grassroots groups and volunteers in any community so they can tailor a campaign to their needs and help them get started.

Creek Critters: Indicators of stream health

In partnership with Nature Forward and the Raines Family Foundation, the League promoted the Creek Critters smartphone app to engage volunteers in monitoring macroinvertebrates, which helps to identify pollution in degraded waterways. Based on the macroinvertebrates found, volunteers submitted 1,572 water quality scores to the app for display in the Clean Water Hub.

Vincent, a middle-school student in Minnesota, used Salt Watch data for a report and science fair entry about the environmental impact of road salt.

Clean Water Hub: Vital window into America's water quality

Water data collected through Save Our Streams programs can be uploaded to the Clean Water Hub, a website which the League helped develop to ensure the public has access to easy-to-understand information about the health of streams and other waters in local communities. By the end of 2023, the Hub boasted 54,000 water quality results from more than 16,000 sites around the U.S.

Programs boost optimism, promote improvements

A 2023 survey by the League found that nearly nine out of ten volunteer water monitors said their experience made them more optimistic about making a difference in water quality. Clean Water Program Director Sam Puckett observed that these volunteers can be changemakers in their communities. They "aren't just filling in data gaps, they are often a first line of defense when it comes to diagnosing the water quality problems that harm our environmental and public health across the county."

Learn more, get involved

Save Our Streams iwla.org/sos

Salt Watch saltwatch.org

Nitrate Watch nitratewatch.org

Creek Critters
iwla.org/creekcritters

Clean Water Hub
cleanwaterhub.org

Virginia Save Our Streams
vasos.org

Chesapeake Monitoring Cooperative
chesapeakemonitoringcoop.org



Missouri River clean-up efforts have removed tons of debris from the river.

PHOTO: PAUL LEPISTO



Conducting stream analysis, these high school students in Virginia were initially reluctant to get into the water but were enthusiastic once they began to explore the aquatic life.

PHOTO: BRUCE INGRAM



Chapters and Membership

At the heart of the Izaak Walton League is an extraordinary network of more than 200 active chapters that offer a pathway to outdoor recreation and conservation work in their communities. For more than 100 years, the League's chapters have shaped national policies while

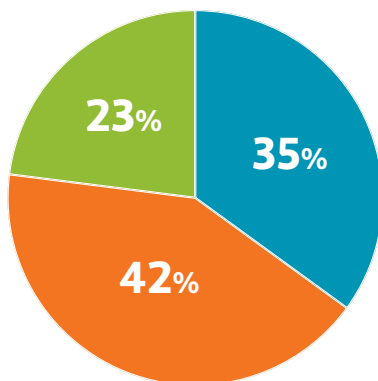
serving as a vital local resource—for volunteer conservation, youth engagement, public education, fishing, hunting or shooting sports.

We ended 2023 with 41,093 members. This put the League in a strong position to meet

2024 goals. We remain focused on recruiting and retaining our unique blend of chapter-based members and national members united by our efforts to find practical solutions to the many conservation challenges of the 21st century.

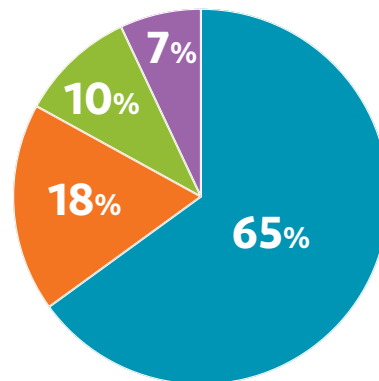
Financial Highlights

REVENUE



- Contributions and Grants
- Membership Dues
- Rent and Other Income

USE OF FUNDS



- Conservation and Education
- Membership and Chapter Relations
- Fundraising
- Support and Planning

Financial Highlights

Combined balance sheet and statement of activities and changes in net assets for the year ending December 31, 2023.

PUBLIC SUPPORT AND REVENUE

Contributions and Grants	1,371,406
Grants from Federal and State Governments	79,143
Member Dues	1,771,149
Investment Income, Net	96,979
Charitable Remainder Unitrust	344,479
Rental Income	411,939
In-Kind Services	197,492
Other	566,136
Total Public Support and Revenue	4,838,723

EXPENSES: CONSERVATION AND EDUCATION

Conservation	498,284
Membership	401,173
<i>Outdoor America</i> magazine	241,435
Annual National Convention	134,714
Chapter Relations	209,835
Communications and Media	329,323
Water	793,704
Agriculture	119,274
Missouri River Initiative	132,128
Total Program Services	2,859,870

Supporting and Planning Services

Management and General	230,337
Fundraising	342,528
Total Supporting and Planning Services	572,865

Total Expenses	3,432,735
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Changes in Net Assets from Operations	1,405,988
Unrealized (Loss) Gain on Investments	305,047
Changes in Net Assets	1,711,035
Net Assets, Beginning of Year	9,761,860
Net Assets, End of Year	11,472,895

BALANCE SHEET

Assets

Cash and Cash Equivalents	3,153,156
Grants Receivables	15,190
Contributions and Other Receivables	153
Rent Receivable	3,282
Prepaid Expenses	33,611
Property and Equipment, Net	1,119,365
Investments	3,954,431
Rent Receivable, Net Current Portion	94,253
Charitable Remainder Unitrust	3,327,755
Total Assets	11,701,196

Liabilities and Net Assets

Liabilities

Accounts Payable and Other	111,769
Accrued Expenses	88,457
Refundable Advances	-
Security Deposits	28,075
Total Liabilities	228,301

Net Assets

Without Donor Restriction	6,170,867
With Donor Restriction	5,302,028
Total Net Assets	11,472,895

Total Liabilities and Net Assets	11,701,196
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Investing in Conservation

We wish to thank all of you whose contributions, financial and volunteer time, helped to protect America's outdoors. Due to space limitations, we could not list everyone whose generosity and unflinching commitment helped us meet our goals.

Individual Philanthropy

\$100,000+

Dawn Olson Estate
Donald A. Nelson Estate

\$10,000-\$99,999

Carey Crane
Jim Piatieski
Joan Strimple

\$5,000-\$9,999

Donald Cahoon
Jodi and Steve Labs
Holly Marshall
Charles Stoneback

\$2,500-\$4,999

Bill Kelly
Michael Peterson
Richard Rawley Estate

\$1,000-\$2,499

Anonymous
William Berg
Char Brooker
Rick Cerwick
Michael Chenoweth
Tom DeMund
John Dickel
Craig Enneking
Kurt Feldmann
Peter Gallo
Miles Greenbaum and
Judy Danish
Phil Hegg
Donald Janes
George and Irene Jones
Charles Kern
Dave Klinner
Scott and Susan Kovarovics
Patty Nunn
Jill and Ernie Padgette
James Ruddell
Jay and Anita Samuelson
Carolyn Shine
Paul Sitz
Brenda Smith
Richard Sommer
Conrad Strozik
Jill Wiercioch

\$500-\$999

Vicki and Bill Arnold
Mark Binder
Dale Braun
Margaret Cavenagh
Jeffrey Clow
Dennis Ehrler
Michael Fuge
Jonathan Fuller
Caroline Grabner
Richard Hansen
Jack and Charlotte Johnson
William and Janet Jones
John Kern
Scott Meyer
Andy Miller
Leslie Monostory
Mary Sears
Stephen Sears
Wes Sheets
Zach Stednick
Jim Storer
Jim Sweeney
Thomas Watts
David Wingenback
Dave and Margo Zentner
David Zieverink

Friends of Izaak Walton League

(Members who make a monthly commitment to support the League's national programs with a pledge of \$10 or more paid automatically each month.)

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

Waltonian Heritage Society

(indicates continuing support of the IWL Trust by a WHS member)*

Kurt Feldmann*
Izaak Walton League Orange
Chapter*
Joan Strimple*

New Life Members

A special thanks to those who made a commitment in 2023 to the League by becoming Life Members

Family Life Benefactor

Amy and Todd Annett

Family Life

Edward and Marilee Kenlon
Daniel Peterson
Jamie and Zachary Traver

Life

Dale Braun
Jim Buiter
Natalie Demski
William Driver
Nazanin Emami
William Grams
Mark Tarr

Institutional Supporters

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

Gifts of \$50,000 or more

The Raines Family Fund

Gifts of \$25,000 or more

Chesapeake Bay Trust - City of Gaithersburg*

Gilchrist Foundation

Iowa Department of Natural Resources

Izaak Walton League of America Endowment

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation - Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay*

Gifts of \$10,000 or more

Aegon Transamerica Foundation
Commonwealth of Virginia - Dept. of Environmental Quality

Commonwealth of Virginia - Chesapeake Bay Restoration Fund*

The Horne Family Foundation

Izaak Walton League Nebraska Division

Izaak Walton League South Dakota Division

National Science Foundation - University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science*

Gifts of \$5,000 or more

Dutton Foundation

Izaak Walton League Charles E. Piersall Chapter

Izaak Walton League McCook Lake Chapter

Gifts of \$1,000 or more

Chesapeake Bay Trust

Des Moines Water Works

Izaak Walton League Maryland Division

Izaak Walton League Orange Chapter

Izaak Walton League Rockville Chapter

Prairie Rivers of Iowa

Gifts of \$500 or more

Izaak Walton League Des Moines Chapter

Izaak Walton League Iowa Division

Izaak Walton League Linn County Chapter

Izaak Walton League Rapid City Chapter

Pershing

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.

Thirty directors responded to our survey. These directors volunteered 15,234 hours in 2023 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 \$33.49 for 2023. That means their volunteer hours were worth \$510,195. 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 the Combined Federal Campaign, 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 2023 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.

National Leadership and Staff (as of July 2024)

NATIONAL OFFICERS

President: Jodi Labs

Vice President: Herbert Pritchett, Sr.

Secretary: Jim Storer

Treasurer: Scott Meyer

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, Stephen Grodetz, Kim Russell, Colinda Trevino

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

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

Minnesota: Jill Crafton, Camille Morton, John Siekmeier*

Nebraska: Gary Dather, Mike Gaghagen,* Rodger Mettenbrink, Wes Sheets

New York: Leslie Monostory,* Conrad Strozik

Ohio: Jim Burkhardt,* Elaine Graham, Rick Graham, Brenda Swartz, Dave Zieverink

Pennsylvania: John Detisch,* Don Robertson, Mike Stout

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

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

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

Wisconsin: Ron Church, Mike Fuge,* Steve Labs

*Division president

AT-LARGE DIRECTORS

Bill Kelly, Idaho Falls, Idaho
Rick Sommer, Seneca, South Carolina

EXECUTIVE BOARD

Dale Braun (Chair)
Rachel McBride (Vice Chair)
Vicki Arnold
Rick Cerwick
Mike Fuge
Rick Graham
Jack Johnson
Bill Kelly
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*

Paul Lepisto, *Missouri River Initiative Conservation Coordinator*

Jared Mott, *Conservation Director*

Samantha Puckett, *Clean Water Program Director*

Michael Reinemer, *Communications Director*

Janette Rosenbaum, *Strategic Communications Manager*

Mary Rubin, *Member Programs Director*

Erica Smith, *Membership 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. 301-548-0150. Website: www.iwla.org.

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Izaak Walton League of America

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