



IKES ON TARGET



PHOTO: JAY CLARK

IWLA Strategic Plan: Baseline Chapter Survey

Our Plan

The Izaak Walton League's Strategic Plan was approved last July by delegates to the IWLA National Convention. To advance conservation and outdoor recreation across America, the League laid out a five-year plan with goals that support our mission: "To conserve, restore, and promote the sustainable use and enjoyment of our natural resources, including soil, air, woods, waters, and wildlife."

Goals to Focus On

Naturally, our chapters with shooting facilities and programs are poised to focus on two of these goals: To "connect more young people to conservation and outdoor recreation" and "engage more people in sustainable outdoor recreation."

Measuring Success

To know if we've made progress, we need a starting point. So the League surveyed all of our chapters in December 2013 about their achievements in several key areas, including youth engagement and shooting sports. About half of the chapters that responded to the survey have facilities for recreational shooting sports – 60 out of 116 – which mirrors the ratio among all League chapters.

Results

These chapters reported that:

- More than 23,500 non-member adults engaged in shooting sports (including archery) at chapters in 2013. A truly impressive number! And it's even more impressive when you add these adults to the number of members engaged at each chapter.
- More than 10,700 youth (age 18 and younger) participated in firearms- or archery-related shooting sports at chapters in 2013. This breaks down to 7,300 at chapter events open to the public; 2,414 chapter-organized teams or youth programs; and 1,056 school-based teams using chapter facilities.

But what would these numbers be if we heard from *ALL* 120 League chapters with shooting facilities, programs, and activities?

Working together, we can achieve our outdoor recreation goals – particularly to provide opportunities for a growing number of people to safely and responsibly participate in recreational shooting sports. Continuing to use the strategic plan as a guide will help League chapters succeed well into the future and stay "on target."

On Target: Featured Chapters

In each issue of *Ikes On Target*, we highlight chapters that promote shooting sports.

Under 500 Members —



Photo courtesy Sioux Falls Chapter IWLA Web site

Sioux Falls Chapter (South Dakota)

With nearly 350 members, this League chapter continues to have a local impact on natural resource conservation, especially the promotion of clean water in the southeastern prairieland region of South Dakota.

They also do their share to promote sustainable outdoor recreation. Several years ago, they joined forces with the Siouxland Youth Shooting Organization. The local Ikes spend Sunday afternoons teaching youth gun safety and target shooting. Instruction with BB gun and air rifle and pistol are provided as the kids learn the skills and habits to become worthy competitors. Their group of 60-plus young participants is associated with the 4-H Shooting Sports Program. So while qualifying for South Dakota's state matches and competitions, they have fun and an educational experience at the IWLA chapter.

The chapter's trap shooting league weekly fields on an average 25 teams of normally 10 shotgunners who come out to the 4 trap fields.

With barely 100 members about eight years, this chapter opted to require that all trap shooters visiting on site join IWLA. This chapter's member count tripled in size — and continues to grow today.

www.iwla.org/siouxfalls

Over 500 Members —

Wildlife Achievement Chapter (Maryland)

Known locally as the Damascus Chapter, it is one in the ever-growing ranks of “over 1,000 member” Izaak Walton League chapters.

Located just outside the Washington, DC, area, they have seen some amazing membership growth during the past 25 years — nearly doubling to a recent count of 1,514 members.

They operate a variety of shooting facilities, including trap and skeet fields, 5-stand clays course, field archery course, and air gun, handgun, and rifle ranges.

Once the annual host of NSSF Chevy Truck Sportsman Team Challenge, the Damascus Ikes continue to host other monthly rifle and pistol competitions. One such event is their well-attended Cowboy Action Shoots and Maryland State Championship (see below photo). While shotgunners come from afar for their North/South Skeet Tournament.

Their enthusiasm continues with plenty of local conservation work, including Patuxent River and roadside litter cleanups, maintaining an American Chestnut tree nursery, and promoting rain barrel construction and use.

The chapter's effort to support the League's conservation mission has not gone by unnoticed: They were a recipient of the IWLA James Lawton Childs Award for most outstanding conservation programs of the year. They've even earned *Field and Stream* magazine's Heroes of Conservation national recognition.

www.damascusiwla.org



Photo courtesy Charles Crooks/Wildlife Achievement Chapter IWLA




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National Hunting And Fishing Day

Since its beginning in 1972, many IWLA chapters have hosted National Hunting and Fishing Day events to educate and introduce the public to hunting, shooting, and fishing.

Over the years, National Hunting and Fishing Day has boasted many public successes, assisted by celebrities who volunteer to help spotlight the conservation accomplishments of sportsmen and women. 2014 is no different: The Honorary Chair is renowned country musician and outdoor TV host Craig Morgan.



This year, National Hunting and Fishing Day will be celebrated on September 27. It continues to be one of the most effective grassroots efforts ever undertaken to promote outdoor sports and conservation. For more details, refer to your *IWLA Chapter Manual* (Unit V, page V-11) or online at www.nhfd.org.



Turn Lead Into Gold (Or Green!)

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle: We've all heard this saying. These are three great ways to eliminate waste and protect our environment. But how do they apply to shooting sports?

Some IWLA chapters with shooting facilities recycle fallen bullet brass. Some even collect and resell empty shotgun shell hulls for reloaders. Others mine spent lead shot from trap and skeet fields and lead projectiles from gun impact berms. All three can be very profitable ventures.

According to the Environmental Protection Agency's *Best Management Practices for Lead at Outdoor Shooting Ranges*, "Lead is a recyclable and finite resource and can be recovered from the active portion of ranges and sold to lead reclaimers. Frequently, reclaimers do not charge range owners/operators to recover lead from ranges, and owners and operators may receive a percentage of the profit from the sale of reclaimed lead. This factor drives recycling efforts at many ranges."

Here's a scenario that is not too far-fetched for some of our chapters with actively used shooting ranges. "Over the course of a year, our chapter's members and their guests deposited spent shot from over 450,000 fired rounds on our trap/skeet courses. That's about 14 tons of lead."

Lead shot that can be collected, recycled, and cashed in for much-needed funds for your chapter's ongoing operations and on-the-ground conservation work.

In 2009, the conservation committee of the Jefferson County Chapter (Kearneysville, West Virginia) contracted with a recovery firm and removed nearly 100 55-gallon drums (or more than 260,000 pounds) of spent lead from its various shooting venues.

More recently, the Pikes Peak Chapter (Colorado Springs, Colorado) recycled enough lead from its shotgunning courses to pay for total refitting all of its trap and skeet fields and installing a few more new fields.

Names of known lead reclamation vendors can be found by searching online: National Shooting Sports Foundation — www.nssf.org, or National Rifle Association — www.nra.org.

Each year, IWLA pays NSSF membership dues for all League chapters that offer shooting sports facilities and related activities for their members.



Those chapter presidents and shooting sports coordinators with an e-mail address can expect to receive electronic updates from NSSF. Printed publications will be sent to the chapter's designated business mailing addresses.

Sportsmen Bill On The Move

This may be the year that a bill reflecting the interests of shooting, hunting, angling, and conservation groups finally makes it through Congress. The Bipartisan Sportsmen's Act of 2014 (S.1996), introduced by Senators Kay Hagan (D-NC) and Lisa Murkowski (R-AK), is a package of measures that reflect the interests of sportsmen and women, including :

- Leaving regulation of lead ammunition and fishing tackle up to individual states.
- Ensuring most federal lands are open to target shooting, hunting, and fishing, including wilderness and near-wilderness areas.
- Permanently authorizing electronic migratory waterfowl (duck) stamps.
- Allocating 1.5 percent of Land and Water Conservation Funds to improving access to federal public lands for outdoor recreation.

***Ikes On Target* is a quarterly publication mailed to current chapter presidents and their designated shooting sports coordinators.**

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Check out www.iwla.org/shootingsports today!

