



2025 ANNUAL REPORT



LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

CUMULATIVE GARBAGE STATS

Dear Friends,

As we wrap up another amazing year, I have taken time to reflect on what truly defines our organization and the work we do. In the past, my year-end messages have often focused on equipment upgrades, milestones, or statistics. This year, however, I want to highlight what lies at the heart of our success – **our people and the hard work.**

Your support is not only an investment in our mission or the tangible outcomes we achieve; it is an investment in **the individuals who make it all possible.** What truly sets us apart is the relentless work ethic and dedication of our team. When you stand beside them, you witness firsthand the commitment and determination that drive us to **continually exceed expectations.**

We are much more than the number of pounds of debris removed or the number of trees planted. Our true impact lies in the daily effort, teamwork, and perseverance that bring those results to life. Over the years, I have had the privilege of working with many outstanding crews, but this year's team stands out as the most cohesive and hardworking we have ever had.

This year has brought both accomplishments and challenges. In 2025, we removed **305,009 pounds of garbage** from our waterways, planted/distributed **175,675 trees**, and educated **1,791 students.** However, we also faced an unexpected setback when our tugboat sank overnight while docked, due to an unknown crack in the hull. Though the damage was substantial and repairs are ongoing, **our morale has remained strong.**

On behalf of myself and our entire team, thank you for taking the time to read this letter and for your consideration of a donation to further support our hard work. The more we have, the more we can do, and as I always say, **"no matter how you choose to contribute, you're always in the boat with us."**

Bags	165,274	Mattresses	147	Portable Toilets	45
Tires	99,668	Boats	170	Tractors	20
Styrofoam (sq ft)	115,819	Duck Decoys	395	Aquariums	1
Barge Line (ft)	71,614	Big Wheels / Kid's Bikes	99	Truck Toppers	3
Balls	25,815	Sunken Barges	4	Oxygen Tanks	10
Milk Crates	2,346	Hot Water Heaters	437	Outboard Boat Engines	9
Mannequin Parts	18	Washing Machines	180	Campers	6
Cars/Trucks/Vans	105	Bowling Balls	131	Sinks	160
Refrigerators	1,004	Clown Shoes	2	Pianos	4
BBQ Grills	188	Toilets	146	Bath Tubs	39
5-Gallon Buckets	10,322	Hot Water Heaters	437	Ammunition (lbs)	5
Stoves	200	Baby Dolls	820	Guns	3
55-Gallon Barrels	13,742	Bags of Police Riot Gear	6	Couches	98
Messages in Bottles	114	Computer Printers	2	Motorcycles	12
Patio Chairs	687	Navigational Buoys	866	Shower Stalls	3
Air Conditioners	74	John Deere Combine	1	Ping Pong Table	1
Trash Cans	1,273	Propane Tanks	1,262	Trampolines	3
Shopping Carts	80	5th Wheel Trailers	1	Typewriter	1
Car Engines	21	Tops of School Buses	1	20th Century	
Computer Monitors	147	Windmills	1	Steam Boat Boiler	1
Lawn Mowers	61	Fire Extinguishers	182	Electric Scooters	19
Televisions	505	Freezers	161	Helipad	1
Civil War Mortar Shells	1	Life Jackets	429	Playstation	1
Prosthetic Limbs	13	Jet Skis	14	Vintage Barbie Doll	
Construction Cones	775	Safes	31	Collection	1
Helmets	88	Electric Guitars	2	Grandfather Clocks	2
Kegs	3	Dishwashers	71	Box of Military Coins	2
Waste Oil (Gallons)	599	Bicycles	149	Laptops	3
Unicycle	1	Hot Tubs	19	Dryers	3
Coolers	1,218	Gas Cans	815	VCR	1



Sincerely,
Chad
Chad Pregracke
Founder & President

MEET THE CREW



CALLIE SCHASER
PROGRAMS MANAGER

CAPTAIN SCOTT
TOWBOAT CAPTAIN

DAVID SOLBRIG
CREW MEMBER

SHELLY HAMM
FINANCE MANAGER

BRIAN CRESS
FLEET MANAGER

KIM GUY
CHIEF OF STAFF

DEREK MITCHELL
OPERATIONS MANAGER

LEAH CAFARELLI
MARKETING MANAGER

ABBIE BRUNS
DEVELOPMENT SPECIALIST

RACHEL LOOMIS
MISSISSIPPI RIVER INSTITUTE MANAGER

DAN BREIDENSTEIN
VICE PRESIDENT

CHAD PREGRACKE
FOUNDER & PRESIDENT

MIKE COYNE-LOGAN
EDUCATIONAL FACILITATOR

CARSON LUND-FULLER
CREW MEMBER

KAITLYN STRICKER
EDUCATIONAL COORDINATOR

SPONSORS & SUPPORTERS



WEST, ALFRED & LORALEE



ARCONIC



ARGOSY
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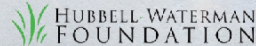


BERT & ANN SHEARER
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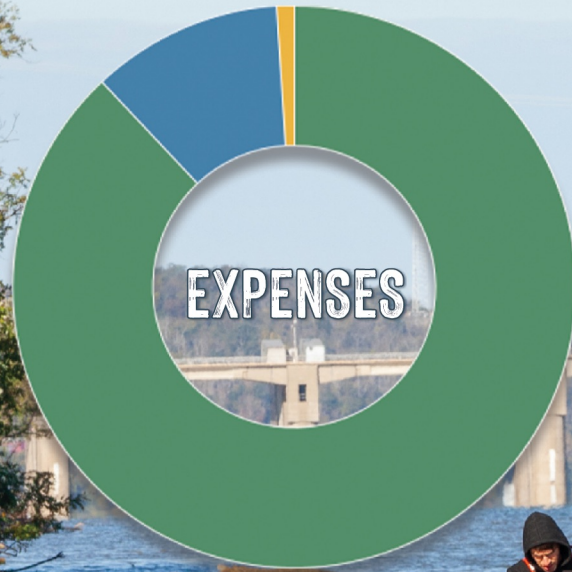
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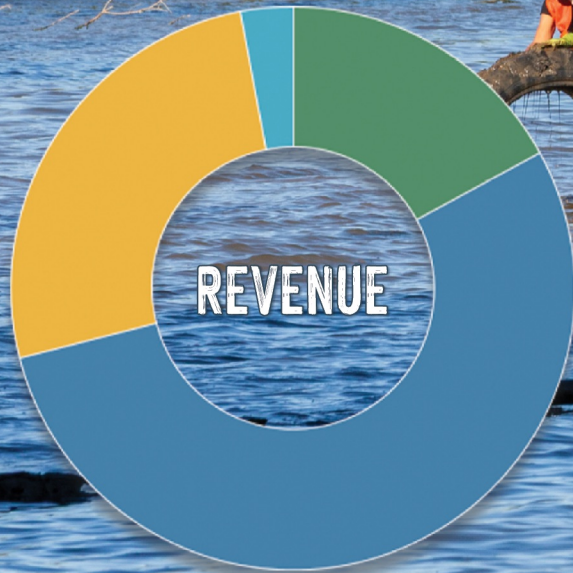
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EXPENSES & REVENUE



88% PROGRAM SERVICES
 11% MANAGEMENT & GENERAL
 1% PUBLIC RELATIONS



CORPORATIONS 54%
 FOUNDATIONS 26%
 INDIVIDUALS 17%
 OTHER 3%
 GOVERNMENT 0%

A WORD FROM THE BENCH

Greetings to all!!

It's hard to believe we've flown through another successful and rewarding year at Living Lands and Waters. Time really does fly when you're working hard and having fun.

As you've read in this report, LLW continues to clean up our nation's rivers, plant trees, and educate people about the incredible value our waterways provide.

When I reflect on this unique effort — launched more than a quarter century ago — one word stands front and center: **People.**

It's the tireless and dedicated people who work at LLW. The incredible volunteers who show up for river cleanups and tree plantings. Our board members who generously share their time and wisdom. And our sponsors — individuals and corporations alike — who fuel this mission with their generous support.

We depend on every one of these groups to advance our work, and we simply could not do it without them. Thank you for all you do!

Cheers,
Rick Calhoun
 Chairman

2025 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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 ARTCo of Archer Daniels
 Midland Company (ADM)
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 Lineboats Manager

RIVER CLEANUPS



Our 2025 cleanup season kicked off in March in Memphis and carried us all the way through November, wrapping up along the Ohio River in Louisville. Just when we thought we were done for the year, our crew squeezed in one final crew cleanup in December in Paducah. A very fitting cherry on top of another busy season on the water.

Together, our crew and volunteers completed **129 cleanup missions** across **11 waterways**: the Mississippi River, Illinois River, Tennessee River, Cumberland River, Missouri River, Ohio River, and Des Plaines River. We also added four new rivers to our

cleanup map: the Little Calumet River, Kansas River, Blue River, and the Detroit River.

With the help of **1,694 incredible volunteers**, we removed **305,009 pounds of trash** from America's waterways this year. These efforts helped push Living Lands & Waters past a major milestone. Since 1998, the organization has now removed more than 14 million pounds of trash from U.S. rivers, bringing the all-time total to **14,080,268 pounds!**



2025 ADOPT A RIVER MILE ADOPTERS
220 MISSISSIPPI RIVER | 214 TENNESSEE RIVER | 43 ILLINOIS RIVER | 14 OHIO RIVER | 126 OTHER RIVERS
GREAT MISSISSIPPI RIVER CLEANUP STATS: 91 VOLUNTEERS | 7,484 POUNDS REMOVED

ALTERNATIVE SPRING BREAK



Alternative Spring Break 2025 delivered another incredible season in Memphis. Throughout the month of March, **140 dedicated college students** from **14 universities** traveled to join our crew on the shores of McKellar Lake, ready to roll up their sleeves and get to work.

Over the course of 12 cleanup days, these students tackled one of the most trash-filled areas along the Mississippi River. Together, they removed an impressive **131,419 pounds** of debris from the lake. That is more than 65 tons of trash cleared from the water and shoreline in less than two weeks!



HOPPER BARGE



In 2025, we completed customization of a **200' x 35' jumbo hopper barge**, expanding the capacity and efficiency of our river cleanup operations. While the barge was added to the fleet in 2024, major modifications this year transformed it into a more effective tool for hauling debris.

Work took place along the banks of Western Rivers Boat Management Inc. in Paducah, where LL&W crew members, alongside skilled partners, led cutting and welding efforts to redesign the barge for direct loading.

The result is a streamlined system that allows our crew to load trash straight into the hopper without relying on cranes or excavators. Fewer unloading stops mean more time spent on the water removing debris. The barge will significantly increase **trash-hauling capacity** while creating more space to sort, recycle, and properly dispose of materials collected from our rivers.



MISSISSIPPI RIVER INSTITUTE



In 2025, the Mississippi River Institute continued delivering hands-on workforce programming along the Mississippi River. Anchored in Memphis in the spring and St. Paul in the fall, the program hosted **43 workshops** that engaged **893 high school and early college students**.

Through interactive activities and real-world river experiences, students explored career opportunities tied to the river. They practiced barge loading and line tying, toured towboats, spotted bald eagles, and sampled buffalo carp and paddlefish caviar provided by a commercial fisherman. River professionals from maritime, transportation, and natural resource fields also joined the workshops, sharing firsthand insight into working on and along the river.

The MRI barge also welcomed **1,362 community members** who hosted meetings and gatherings aboard this unique floating classroom, offering a fresh perspective on the Mississippi River and its role in our environment, economy, and communities.



BEACON HARBOR



In 2025, Beacon Harbor continued its transformation into the **future headquarters** of Living Lands & Waters. Located along the banks of the Mississippi River in East Moline, the site will serve as a hub for LL&W operations while providing direct river access for education and community programs.

With strong community support for the capital campaign, renovation work began in May and progressed steadily throughout the year. Repurposing and reusing existing materials has been a priority, helping keep costs down while pursuing a more sustainable building design.

Once completed, Beacon Harbor will expand opportunities for community engagement, host river-focused educational programs, and increase visibility for our mission along the region's riverfront path. Renovations are expected to be complete with the building move-in ready by **May 2026**.



MILLION TREES PROJECT



The MillionTrees Project continued to expand its impact in 2025, distributing **175,675 trees** to be planted in communities across **24 states**. With the support of many great volunteers and an AmeriCorps NCCC team, we were able to efficiently wrap trees and prepare orders throughout the winter and spring.

A highlight of the year was a two-week residency at The Rust Belt in East Moline, where large-scale tree-wrapping events brought together 552 volunteers to support the program. Additional efforts included three tree-planting events with 64 volunteers from partners, Phillips 66, ADM, and ARTCo, as well as two public tree giveaways that distributed 350 saplings to the Quad Cities and Cedar Rapids communities.

Together, these efforts continue to move us closer to a greener future, one tree at a time.



INVASIVE SPECIES REMOVAL



In 2025, we continued our invasive species removal efforts, working alongside volunteers to restore habitats and improve ecosystem health. Across multiple events, volunteers removed invasive plants such as honeysuckle, buckthorn, and burning bush from several sites.

Efforts included three events at Amowa Forest Preserve in East Moline, where **64 volunteers** from Augustana Alpha Phi Omega and John Deere helped clear invasive growth. Additional work took place along the Detroit River in Detroit, where volunteers from Ford Motor Company removed buckthorn and honeysuckle. And in St. Paul where Cargill employees removed buckthorn and honeysuckle across 2 events.

At Eagle Creek Park in Indianapolis, **more than 400** Future Farmers of America members partnered with Cargill and Tractor Supply Company to remove invasive species, demonstrating strong teamwork and a shared commitment to environmental stewardship.



EDUCATION WORKSHOPS



In 2025, educational workshops reached **3,610 students**, combining hands-on river experiences with lessons in conservation and watershed stewardship. Students also participated in shoreline cleanups, helping to remove **8,579 pounds** of trash from their local waterways!

Programs took place in communities along the Mississippi River and Ohio River, including Memphis, Owensboro, Louisville, Cincinnati, the Quad Cities, and Wayzata.

This year also included several milestones. Students helped launch LL&W's 14-passenger canoes during their maiden voyage at Sunset Marina while learning safe navigation skills. Our largest education week to date reached nearly 400 students in the Owensboro area in just six days, and the first EcoCamp spring workshops at Illiniwek Forest Preserve connected 75 students with the relationship between water and soil alongside fellow QC environmental groups. Educational outreach also included workshops during the first River Roots Festival in Cincinnati, introducing festival attendees to LL&W's river conservation work.



STEWARDSHIP



In 2025, fundraising efforts helped expand awareness of Living Lands & Waters while supporting the work happening on our rivers. During the inaugural **America's River Roots Festival** in Cincinnati, our barge welcomed approximately 1,400 visitors from all over the country for tours and conversations about life on the river and the mission behind our cleanup efforts. Docked in Newport alongside the USS Nightmare, the crew also joined partners from Ohio River Valley Water Sanitation Commission for a river sweep to kick off the festival. Special thanks to the Bob and Jeanne Coughlin Foundation for sponsoring our participation in this amazing festival celebrating America's river cities!

Additional partnerships throughout the year helped turn everyday experiences into **meaningful support** for our mission. Raygun released a "Results, Not Rhetoric" shirt benefiting LL&W during Earth Month, while local favorites like Front Street Taproom, Pour Bros Craft Taproom, and Bent River Brewing Company hosted events and collaborations that raised funds for river cleanups and community programs.





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Living Lands & Waters
17624 Route 84 North
East Moline, IL 61244



SCAN HERE TO STAY UPDATED
ON ALL THINGS LL&W!



OUR MISSION

To aid in the protection, preservation, and restoration of the natural environment of our nation's major rivers and their watersheds.

To expand awareness of environmental issues and responsibility encompassing our rivers.

To create a desire and opportunity for citizens to take an active role in helping to make a cleaner river environment.

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