



Wisconsin
Wetlands
ASSOCIATION

2022 ANNUAL REPORT



Dear wetland enthusiast,



I am continually grateful to members like you whose support bolsters Wisconsin Wetlands Association (WWA) every year. Your dedication as a member allows us to keep growing and strengthening in our efforts to protect and restore our wetlands. WWA has accomplished so much in the last year. New and old place-based projects are reaching communities and decision-makers to show innovative ways to address their water challenges. And WWA continues to bring people together with their programs, events, and on-the-ground work.

The work WWA does with local communities and landowners to ensure we continue to have clean water, protection from flooding, and protective state regulations is unparalleled. I see my support of WWA as an investment in the future of our state's water resources.

I am so very proud to Chair this fine organization. Thank you from the bottom of heart for being an active member of Wisconsin Wetlands Association.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Alison Peña".

-Alison Peña

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We're partnering with DATCP's Agricultural Management Division, including staff from the Conservation Engineering Section, on field trainings and opportunities to promote hydrologic restoration.





Building capacity for wetland restoration in agricultural landscapes

This year we launched an exciting three-year collaboration with the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) with support from EPA. We're working to increase consideration of watershed context as part of the agency's natural resources conservation work with local governments and landowners. We're also promoting wetland and stream restoration practices to achieve soil and water resource management goals. Project deliverables include:

- Field-based trainings for DATCP engineers and county land conservation department staff.
- Policy analysis to identify opportunities to increase eligibility of practices that restore hydrology in projects using state funding.



In our latest video series, we highlighted the many different perspectives that need to come together for effective watershed-scale restoration work, in this case to improve the flow of the Little Plover River.

The work being done by the Tribes in Wisconsin for wetlands continues to inspire us, and we're eager to share more of their stories next spring and for years to come.





Inspiring wetland care by sharing community stories

To accomplish large scale change—a state where wetlands are healthy and plentiful and where people care for and appreciate them—we need to inspire people throughout the state to enjoy, appreciate, and respect wetlands. As part of this effort, we’re continuing to share the stories of communities and people that inspire us through short documentary-style videos.

- Keep an eye out in the spring for a new video series highlighting how the Bad River and Red Cliff Tribes protect and care for their wetlands and watersheds.
- Watch more of these inspiring videos at wisconsinwetlands.org/stories



Fancy Creek partners include town, municipal, and county government offices, state programs, federal agencies, conservation organizations, and both UW-Platteville and UW-Madison, including these Headwaters Program students and faculty surveying the creek.





Demonstrating innovative approaches to restoring hydrology in the Driftless

Reconnecting streams with their historic floodplains is a key strategy for restoring hydrology in the Driftless Area. A partnership in the Fancy Creek watershed in Richland County is restoring flow to the historic and winding channel, demonstrating innovative ways to address floodplain disconnection arising from the artificial straightening of creeks—a common problem in the region.

- Restoring flow to Fancy Creek will improve habitat, water quality, and resilience by slowing flows and increasing flood storage.
- The diverse benefits of the project, along with an engaged and engaging landowner, have multiplied partner interest in this project.



New at the 2022 conference were special virtual discussion spaces designed to mimic the spontaneity of conversation at in-person events. Here, attendees and presenters of the carbon symposium discuss policy priorities and more to encourage carbon storage and sequestration practices in two different, simultaneous, groups.



Bringing wetland professionals together for learning and networking

The 2022 Wetland Science Conference—held virtually—included special symposia on amphibians & reptiles and wetland soils & carbon. Expert researchers and practitioners from around the country shared information and real-world examples.

- More than 500 people from 22 states and Canada, Mexico, and India attended the conference.
- Workshop attendees learned about topics including aquatic plants, dragonflies, and new computer mapping technologies.





Developing the tools to prioritize natural flood management

WWA, Ashland County, and collaborators are in the middle of a multi-year initiative to assess degraded hydrology, infrastructure vulnerabilities, and hydrologic restoration opportunities in the Marengo River watershed of northern Wisconsin. Project work thus far includes:

- Developing tools to help Ashland County prioritize wetland and floodplain storage opportunities upstream of at-risk infrastructure (such as road crossings).
- Identifying strategies to help communities secure and utilize disaster aid funding for natural flood management projects.
- Exporting field-tested assessment methods and policy recommendations to other flood-prone communities in Wisconsin.

Thank You / Yaw^ko



Tony Kuchma, Oneida Nation, and Erin Giese, UW-Green Bay, gave a Wetland Coffee Break presentation on their collaboration to restore habitat and monitor birds on Oneida Nation lands.



WWA Vice Chair Jim Ruwaldt restored a 1941 Old Town wood canvas canoe as the Grand Prize of the Swampstakes.





Expanding our community

Wisconsin's wetlands need people who care about, care for, and speak up for wetlands. With your help, we continue to expand this community of wetland enthusiasts. More than 2,200 people from Wisconsin and beyond have attended Wetland Coffee Break presentations. The *Swampstakes*—our special sweepstakes-with-a-wetland-twist—is attracting new members.

- 650 people joined the Wetland Coffee Break audience this past year
- We'll announce the *Swampstakes* winners at WWA's Annual Membership Meeting in February 2023. Details at **wisconsinwetlands.org/swampstakes**.

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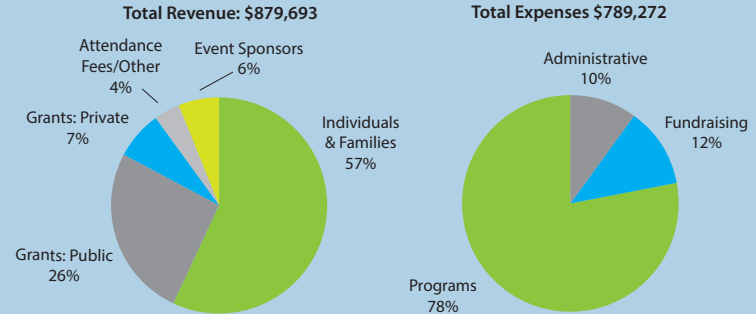
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Fiscal Year 2022 (July 2021-June 2022)



Wisconsin Wetlands Association is dedicated to the protection, restoration, and enjoyment of wetlands and associated ecosystems through science-based programs, education, and advocacy.



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