



2020 ANNUAL REPORT

Garbage pictured was cleaned up in one week in Memphis.

A LETTER FROM *the President*

I hope this letter finds you and your family safe and well. With all the additional challenges this year due to COVID-19, I am thrilled to report that Living Lands & Waters has been able to safely continue to make progress in our mission to clean up America's Rivers.

Our organization has many strengths; one of the most important is the ability to overcome problems. Due to the nature of our work, conditions are constantly changing. Our ability to keep producing results this year despite the pandemic was no different. With all the precautionary decisions and actions taken to keep everyone COVID safe, I would like to think we have exceeded expectations once again!

In 2020, our amazing crew removed **172,004 pounds of trash** without the help of community volunteers. We really missed working side by side with the thousands of volunteers to accomplish our goals of completing community clean-ups. However, when the work's brunt fell on the backs of our crew, they made incredible strides on their own.

In early March, we had over 100,000 trees at our shop ready to be wrapped by schools and AmeriCorps volunteers when the pandemic hit. With schools shut down, and AmeriCorps volunteers called home, the project was left to our crew to complete. They dug in - putting together thousands of orders and devised the safest of plans for distribution. We rented box trucks, loaded them with orders, traveled hundreds of miles to deliver, and spent many nights camping out in the truck cab to sleep. Despite the obstacle we faced, we set a record for our organization by distributing **146,600 trees!**

As a consequence of COVID, we could not have students in our Floating Classroom, but that didn't stop us from doing educational workshops. We conducted them virtually from our classroom, and by the end of last fall, we reached **6,495 students through 71 virtual lessons** - ensuring we make a difference in the way our youth think about their use of consumer goods and disposal of trash.

2020 also gave us the time to do some LONG overdue maintenance on our barges, floating classroom, and LLW shop, which positions us very well as an organization for the future.

We hope you will remain safe through this pandemic and consider continuing to support us and our effort. However, no matter how you choose to contribute, you are always in the boat with us, and we cannot thank you enough for all you do!



Bags of Trash	137,235
Tires	91,981
Styrofoam (sq ft)	94,842
Barge Line (ft)	52,233
Barge Cable (ft)	29,515
Balls	24,785
Milk Crates	1,545
Mannequin Parts	17
Cars/Trucks/Vans	26
Refrigerators	903
BBQ Grills	178
5 Gallon Buckets	7,415
Stoves	195
55 Gallon Barrels	10,543
Messages in Bottles	100
Patio Chairs	424
Air Conditioners	73
Trash Cans	1,430
Shopping Carts	69
Car Engines	20
Computer Monitors	140
Lawn Mowers	59
Televisions	425
Civil War Mortar Shells	1
Prosthetic Limbs	13
Construction Cones	526
Helmets	69
Kegs	3
Waste Oil (gallons)	463
Unicycles	1
Coolers	963
Mattresses	129

Boats	130
Duck Decoys	347
Washing Machines	172
Bowling Balls	121
Clown Shoes	2
Toilets	134
Big Wheels/ Kid Bikes	86
Sunken Barges	3
Hot Water Heaters	375
Baby Dolls	758
Police Riot Gear	6 Bags
Computer Printers	2
Navigational Buoys	747
John Deere Combines	1
Propane Tanks	944
5th Wheel Trailers	1
Tops of School Buses	1
Windmills	1
Fire Extinguishers	135
Freezers	135
Life Jackets/PFD's	373
Jets Skis	9
Safes (Empty)	29
Electric Guitars	2
Dishwashers	71
Bicycles	132

We'll let the numbers speak for themselves. That's right, 10,898,069 pounds and counting!

Hot Tubs	17
Gas Cans/Tanks	654
Portable Toilets	39
Tractors	20
Aquariums	1
Truck Toppers	3
Oxygen Tanks	6
Outboard Boat Engines	8
Campers	4
Sinks	150
Pianos	4
Bath Tubs	35
Bag of Ammunition	5 lbs
Couches	88
Motorcycles	12
Microwaves	17
Shower Stalls	2
Ping Pong Tables	1
Trampolines	1

**10,898,069 POUNDS
REMOVED SINCE 1998!**

MEET THE Crew



CHAD PREGRACKE - FOUNDER & PRESIDENT



TAMMY BECKER - PROGRAM DIRECTOR



MIKE COYNE-LOGAN - EDUCATION FACILITATOR



JOHN BOSTROM - OPERATIONS MANAGER



LEAH CAFARELLI - DIRECTOR OF MARKETING



SHELLY HAMM - FINANCE MANAGER



DAN BREIDENSTEIN - PROGRAM MANAGER



DEREK MITCHELL - SAFETY MANAGER



RACHEL LOOMIS - EDUCATION COORDINATOR



RHIANNON ROGSTAD - DEVELOPMENT MGR.



ANDREW LAYER - TREE NURSERY MANAGER



JASON WENDT - PROGRAM COORDINATOR



PORK CHOP - BARGE POOCH



TRAVIS - BARGE POOCH



KOTA - BARGE POOCH

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JOHN DEERE



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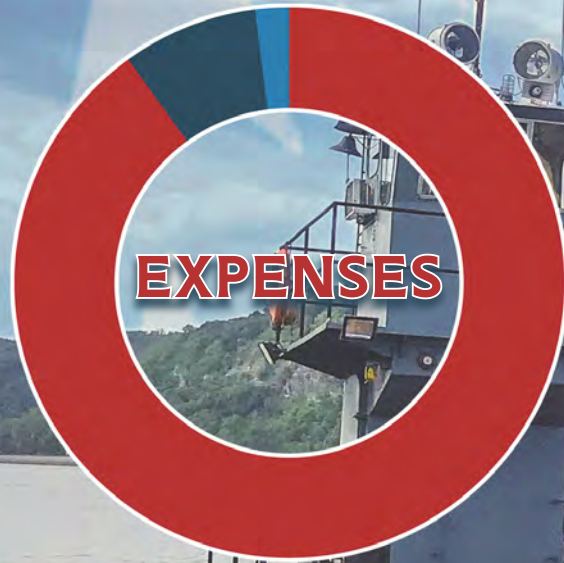
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Patterson, John & Sara
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Pettys, Carol
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Riverlands Marine Surveyors
& Consultants, Inc.
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Searle, Sally B.
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Waterways Journal

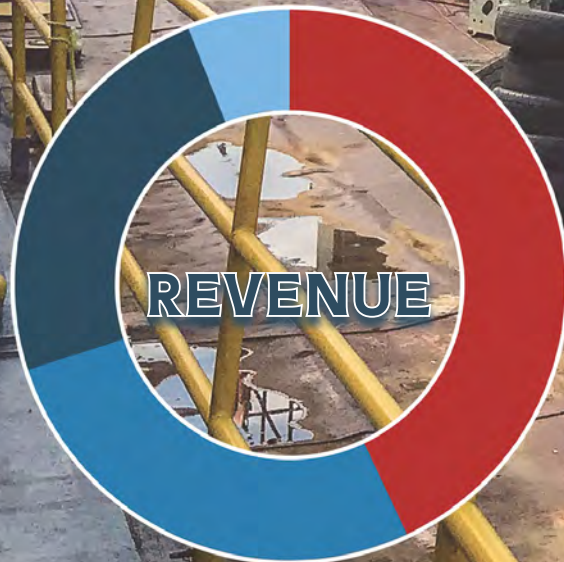
Plus 888 additional donors under
\$1,000.

*Living Lands & Waters is a
non-profit 501(c)(3)
organization. All donations
are tax deductible.*

2020 EXPENSES & Revenue



- ★ 90% PROGRAM SERVICES
- ★ 8% MANAGEMENT & GENERAL
- ★ 2% PUBLIC RELATIONS



- ★ 43% CORPORATIONS
- ★ 27% FOUNDATIONS
- ★ 24% INDIVIDUALS
- ★ 6% OTHER
- ★ 0% GOVERNMENT

A WORD FROM The Bench

I'm sure you, like many of us, have missed the opportunity to personally engage with Living Lands & Waters, its wonderful crew and its many volunteers this past year. However, I can assure you that LL&W is positioned to accelerate out of the pandemic stronger than ever. As you read through the balance of the annual report, you will see how the various programs of LL&W either broke records or found new ways to deliver on the organization's mission. Whether it was the crew wrapping trees for the MillionTrees Project in their garages, providing education workshops via Zoom, performing maintenance on the barge in Chad's backyard where it all started or expanding ideas for the I-80 Restoration Project - LL&W kept the focus on the organization's mission and delivered in 2020.

In March, LL&W, like so many other organizations, had to pivot and adapt to the pandemic's challenges. I would personally like to recognize Chad, the crew, and the Board for the extra work they put in at the beginning of the pandemic. Through input from so many different people and sources, LL&W was able to develop a plan to not only navigate the year safely but to come out stronger. Financially, LL&W was able to offset reduced revenue with reduced expenses and end the year in a stable financial position. The veteran crew stepped up and helped lead all of the programs, even if in different ways. And supporters, old, current and new, stepped up as they could with their support each month. To anyone who has been around LL&W for any length of time, this is not a surprise, but it should not be taken for granted either.

To the crew, volunteers, supporters and Board of LL&W, I'd like to thank you for your commitment to the mission of LL&W. I hope we can all meet in person again soon. Until then, I encourage you to enjoy the annual report. I think you will like what you see.

*Fred Oelschlaeger
Chair, Board of Directors*

2020 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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SAVE THE DATE

**ON THURSDAY, APRIL 22ND,
LL&W WILL BE HOSTING OUR FIRST-EVER VIRTUAL AUCTION FUNDRAISER!**

YOU COULD SNAG SOME ONCE IN A LIFETIME EXPERIENCES & EPIC PRODUCTS LIKE:

- A STAY ON OUR BARGE!
- A BOATING EXCURSION WITH CHAD!
- VIP EXPERIENCES IN THE QUAD CITIES, PADUCAH, ST. LOUIS & BEYOND!
- A PERSONAL TREE PLANTING AT YOUR HOME!
- AND PRODUCTS FROM YETI, PATAGONIA & NAVARRO CANOE CO. & MORE!

**TO INQUIRE ABOUT ATTENDING OR SUPPORTING THIS
EVENT, PLEASE SEND A MESSAGE TO:**

[AUCTION@LIVINGLANDSANDWATERS.ORG!](mailto:AUCTION@LIVINGLANDSANDWATERS.ORG)



RIVER Cleanups

The figures reflected on these pages prove just how much a small crew of 10 can achieve!

In 2020, we performed 131 cleanups on four different rivers - the Mississippi, Illinois, Tennessee, and Rock Rivers. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, we could only work with 440 volunteers throughout the year (2,266 volunteers less than last year).

But still, our rockstar crew was able to clean up a total of 172,004 pounds in 2020! This brings our cumulative total poundage to **10,898,069 POUNDS!**

When our Alternative Spring Break program only lasted four days before COVID-19 sent our volunteers and crew back home, we knew our cleanups would be very different this year. Our staff worked from home for a couple of months and quarantined to get back on the barge and started working on the Illinois River in Peoria. Volunteer-less, the LL&W crew still cleaned up in Peoria and Grafton throughout the summer.

But, seeing no end to the pandemic in sight, we moved our barges to the Quad Cities for the first time in over five years and parked right in Chad's parents' backyard! There we painted our barges, did some maintenance on our equipment, and carpentry renovations in our classroom.

We cannot wait to see what epicness 2021 will bring. Our barges are already waiting for us on the Ohio River in Paducah, and we are ready to hit the ground running this spring!

131
CLEANUPS

4
RIVERS

440
VOLUNTEERS

172,004
POUNDS!

ADOPT-A-RIVER-MILE

To date, we have 368 river miles adopted and 156 adoptees. River stewards unite!

Adopted Waterways: Beaver Creek | Beaver Dam River | Blue River | Calfkiller River | Chicago River | Clear Creek | Colorado River | Conecuh River | Delaware River | Edwards River | First Creek | Fox River | Illinois River | Mississippi River | Ohio River | Pigeon River | Piles Fork Creek | Plum River | Raritan River | Red River | Saline River | South Skunk River | St. Croix River | St. Louis River | Tennessee River | Trim Creek | Wabash River | Waccamaw River | Wapsipicon River | Winnebago River | Wisconsin River | West Branch St. Regis River

MILLION TREES Project

At the beginning of 2020, if you would have told us that we'd have a record-breaking MillionTrees Project season without the help of volunteers - we would have laughed (and then ugly cried) in your face.

But against all odds, we distributed a whopping 146,600 tree saplings to 27 states!

In February, we finished taking orders, and in early-March, we kicked off our tree wrapping events in local middle and high schools. After just 13 days of wrapping, COVID-19 shut down the country and halted our project. Even our Americorps team, which was supposed to work with us for six weeks, departed after only two.

But at the drop of a hat, it was time to rethink and restructure our entire system - so that the tens of thousands of trees in our possession were safely distributed before they dried out and became unplantable. Many tree recipients reduced their orders, but many more canceled their orders altogether. The hustle began, to find new homes for the trees that suddenly became homeless.

But, the LL&W crew persevered and were able to safely get the five species of oaks as well as persimmons to their rightful homes! While some crew members wrapped trees from their homes each day, a select few worked out of the shop to get orders prepped for delivery. In April, a hardy group even camped in the back of pickup trucks, trailers, and the cab of box trucks for days at a time to socially-distance while still making tree deliveries throughout the country!

In the end, every tree was distributed either by delivery, pickup, or mail to 27 states! It was an epic accomplishment, and we are so grateful to everyone who made this achievement possible!



I-80 RESTORATION *Project*

Three years ago, we started working on restoring the land on either side of Interstate 80 as it crosses the Mississippi River on the Illinois side. This project began to take shape after a tornado ripped through, leaving many of the trees uprooted and invasive species to become prevalent. Over 42,000 vehicles pass over the Mississippi River on Interstate 80 daily. We want to leave everyone with a better impression of the "Prairie State."

Since the project began, we've been able to remove 18 acres of invasives with the help of 500 volunteers, as well as plant a unique pollinator mix to help bees and butterflies thrive. In 2020, with the help of our crew and 4 volunteers, we installed a bee box to attract pollinators, and continued to remove invasive plant species. We look forward to continuing this restoration and making it a place for people in the community to take time to appreciate the national treasure right in front of us.

ALTERNATIVE SPRING *Break*

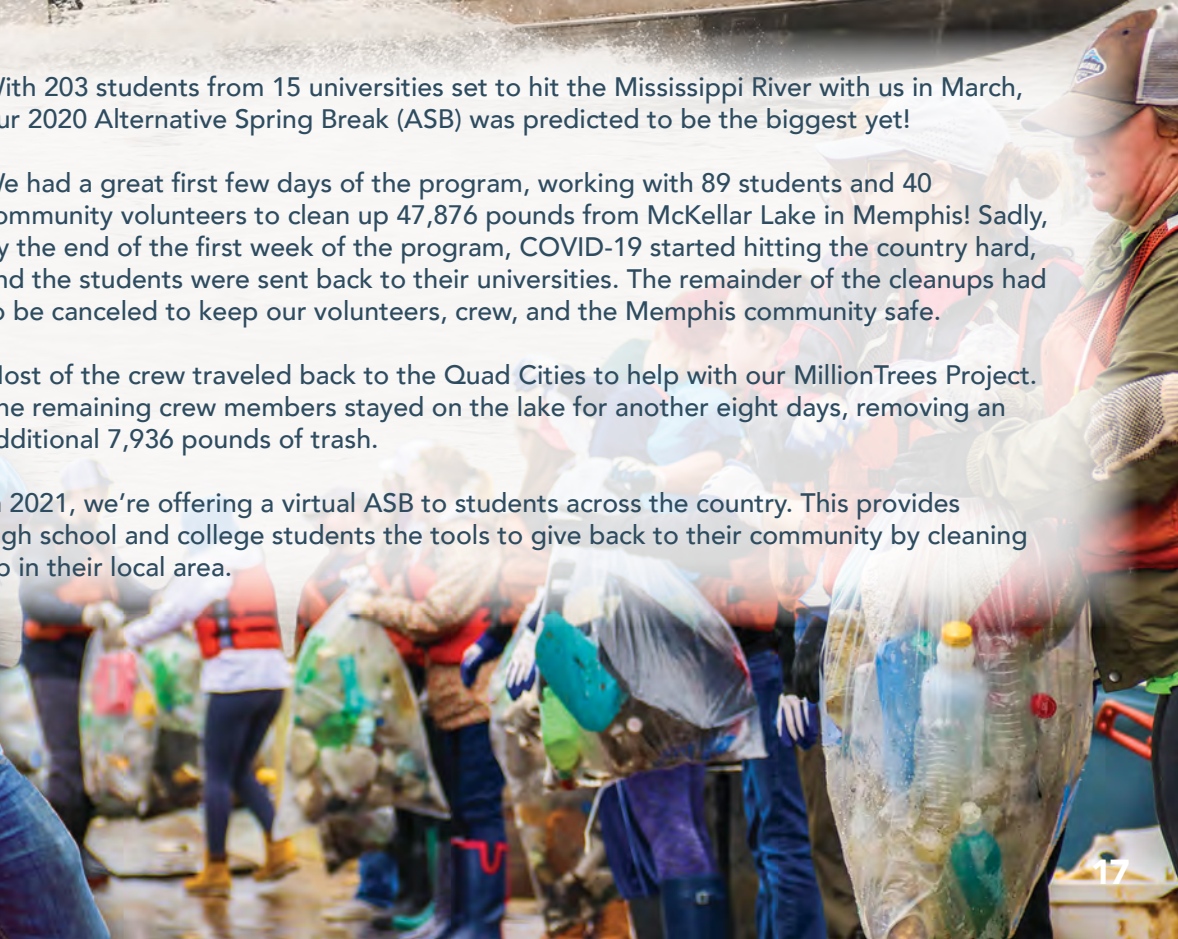


With 203 students from 15 universities set to hit the Mississippi River with us in March, our 2020 Alternative Spring Break (ASB) was predicted to be the biggest yet!

We had a great first few days of the program, working with 89 students and 40 community volunteers to clean up 47,876 pounds from McKellar Lake in Memphis! Sadly, by the end of the first week of the program, COVID-19 started hitting the country hard, and the students were sent back to their universities. The remainder of the cleanups had to be canceled to keep our volunteers, crew, and the Memphis community safe.

Most of the crew traveled back to the Quad Cities to help with our MillionTrees Project. The remaining crew members stayed on the lake for another eight days, removing an additional 7,936 pounds of trash.

In 2021, we're offering a virtual ASB to students across the country. This provides high school and college students the tools to give back to their community by cleaning up in their local area.



EDUCATIONAL Workshops

2020 kept us on our toes, and threw us a few curveballs, no doubt! March came, and COVID-19 quickly created a barrier between the LL&W educators and students. We sent out a questionnaire to teachers all over the country, offering virtual educational opportunities. Within 48 hours, we received 50 responses from 10 different states! We offered unique experiences through live barge features and hands-on presentations to connect students to our operation and America's rivers, while encouraging students to take action in their own community. 2020 gave us an opportunity to adapt, get creative, and still spread the mission for making our world a cleaner place. Education may have looked a little different last year, but connecting with youth to inspire and motivate them continued on and became more accessible than ever!



**6,495 STUDENTS REACHED THROUGH
71 EDUCATIONAL WORKSHOPS**



MARKETING & Outreach



Coronavirus Can't Stop Living Lands & Waters' Cleanup Mission

SEPTMBER 21, 2020 • BY DAVID MURRAY
The coronavirus has thrown some speed bumps into the river cleanup mission of Living Lands & Waters but has not been able to stop it.

When the country shut down, and people were sequestered in their homes and turning to social media - it was our chance to connect with our volunteers and supporters in a new way. We began engaging through videos, virtual challenges, and uplifting social media content. For example, our "See 10 Clean 10 Challenge" empowered folks to safely go outside and clean up ten pieces of trash in their neighborhood, and our "Cooking with the Crew" videos acted as a humorous distraction to people's everyday challenges during the pandemic. We even managed to do a few live Facebook events with Chad and our educators. Becoming virtual was a new challenge for us since we're very much a hands-on and face-to-face organization (we love when you're able to get muddy with us). Still, we embraced it and had fun in the process!

We also had some great media opportunities this year, including working with National Geographic, ETown, and very positive stories in the Waterways Journal and local media. We even made it to the front page of Reddit, driving over 17,000 people to our website that day!



#SEE10CLEAN10 CHALLENGE

HAMMER TIME MUSIC VIDEO

31.2k
TIL about Chad Pregracke, who, when he was 23, after witnessing immense levels of trash on the Mississippi River in IL, started a nonprofit to address it. Since then, they have removed 5,000 tons of trash from the Mississippi and it's tributaries.

livinglandsandwaters.org/

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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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SCAN ME