



Beaver Watershed Alliance

ANNUAL REPORT

2024



Mission:

**To proactively protect, enhance and sustain the water quality of
Beaver Lake and the integrity of its watershed.**

A Message from our Director

Contact

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Stakeholder Groups represented on our board include
Agriculture, Business, Conservation,
Construction/Development, Drinking Water,
Government, Recreation, Technical and At-Large

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Becky Roark, Executive Director
Larry Berry, Program Director
Daniel Hagood, Sr. Ecologist
Stephanie Bolin, Outreach Coordinator
Emily Finley, Urban Watershed Specialist
Sue Morrison, Finance Manager
Kindle Hon, Watershed Specialist

Dear Friends of the Beaver Lake watershed,

I am honored to serve alongside you in “protecting, enhancing, and sustaining Beaver Lake and the integrity of its watershed.” This mission remains our priority—not just for the lake, but for the residents, farmers, businesses, and industries relying on clean water, the wildlife depending on healthy ecosystems, and the region’s overall ecological health. Watershed work spans farms, forests, urban areas, and rural landscapes, and we cannot do it alone. It truly is the people that drive this effort, and we are grateful for another successful year with our colleagues, landowners, volunteers and partners.

This past year, five new projects were launched to advance the Beaver Lake Watershed Protection Strategy. Of note, over the next three years, assessments will identify streambank erosion areas and evaluate 150+ stream barriers. These efforts will assess risks to infrastructure, analyze sediment and nutrient loads and guide improvement projects. We are also excited to partner with the AR Dept. of Agriculture – Forestry Division and the Arkansas Forest and Drinking Water Collaborative to launch the “CommuniTree” initiative - a community-assisted tree nursery, to be established at Beaver Water District. Volunteers will help pot thousands of native trees and shrubs, supporting floodplain restoration. Our major landscape-scale initiatives continue progressing, including multiple projects focused on the War Eagle Creek watershed, such as the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP), America the Beautiful, SARP, and US Fish and Wildlife projects. These projects represent a \$10 million investment into the impaired War Eagle watershed to improve water quality, aquatic and terrestrial habitat and assist landowners. The Smart Growth for Source Water Protection program will host a conference in April 2025, and urban restoration efforts are ongoing at Spout Spring Branch in Fayetteville. Through these projects, we have also increased landowner engagement by 15% and expanded conservation capacity through workforce development.

In 2024, we adopted the US EPA’s Pollutant Load Estimation Tool (PLET) to measure sediment, phosphorus, and nitrogen reductions from watershed projects. This tool will establish a baseline to track impacts annually. Impacts are now included in this Annual Report, along with a participation map of the watershed.

As we enter another year of watershed protection, I extend my gratitude for your support, volunteerism, and dedication. Your commitment makes this watershed a truly exceptional place to live, work, and play.

With gratitude,



Becky Roark
Executive Director



**Thank you for your efforts to help improve and sustain water quality in the Beaver Lake Watershed!
We look forward to working with you in 2025!**

YOUR IMPACT BY THE NUMBERS



99

**Site Visits
Completed**

The Alliance offers free site visits to landowners to provide technical assistance, management plans, and information on cost-share programs to reduce the costs of conservation implementation. Our objective is to make best management practices accessible to any landowner in the watershed. Your support will help keep these services low-cost or free of cost.



224

**Best Management
Practices**



68

**Management
Plans**



41,821

**Linear Feet Waterways
Improved**

The Alliance works with many partners to implement voluntary conservation practices, also called Nature-based Solutions. Our focus is primarily riparian and streamside work, along with agricultural, urban and forestry projects. Nature-based Solutions offer co-benefits to the land, water, people, plants and animals.



20

**Acres of Riparian
Area Improved**



15

**Acres of Invasive
Plants Removed**



2,702

**Participants Attended
Programs**

Education and outreach are vital tools for the Alliance. We work across Northwest Arkansas providing residents and professionals with the tools necessary to help engage in the protection of Beaver Lake and its watershed. Educational programming is important to share tools and expertise to better manage and prevent pollution to our local waterways and drinking water sources. With your continued support, the Alliance provides these opportunities free for attendees.



24,373

**Landowners Received
Alliance Mailers**



14

**Alliance-Led
Workshops Held**



19,505

**Hours of Volunteer
Stewardship**

Stewardship success relies on volunteers. In 2024, the Alliance hosted multiple stewardship activities including invasive plant removals, trash cleanups, riparian plantings, and more.



8,935

**Pounds of Trash
& Recycling**



\$724,900

**Volunteer Stewardship
Contributions**

2024 Partner Impacts in the Watershed:

The Alliance is proud to work closely with a number of amazing partners. Northwest Arkansas is fortunate to have a robust conservation-oriented community. Thank you to the following partners for making a positive, lasting impact on the Beaver Lake watershed!

**14 landowner contracts
obligated in the Beaver Lake
watershed (Washington County),
totaling \$329,268**
*- US Dept. Of Agriculture, Natural
Resources Conservation Service*

**2,466 acres under conservation
easements on 20 properties in
the Beaver Lake watershed**
- Northwest Arkansas Land Trust

**41 landowner contracts
obligated in the Beaver Lake
watershed (Madison County)**
*- US Dept. Of Agriculture, Natural
Resources Conservation Service*

**\$139,380 in aid distributed to
homeowners for
9 septic remediation
76 acres remediated**
- H2Ozarks

**7,500 feet of stream restoration
completed in the Beaver Lake
watershed**
*- Watershed Conservation
Resource Center*

Watershed Success Stories



“434 miles of stream will be reconnected.”



“71% of landowners being awarded financial assistance were beginning farmers”

Projects on War Eagle Creek

Stream re-connection, streambank restoration, wetlands, habitat structures, flood reduction and more

FAST FACTS: 434 miles of stream on War Eagle Creek to be reconnected, enabling aquatic passage

Segments of War Eagle Creek are listed on the 303(d) list for nonattainment due to turbidity, pathogens and pH and twenty-seven Species of Greatest Conservation Need occur in the creek, making this stream barrier removal and restoration project a win-win for water quality and wildlife. The Alliance is working with Arkansas Game and Fish Commission, US Fish and Wildlife, Southeast Aquatic Resource Partnership (SARP) and others to utilize \$10 million+ in funding to continue towards efforts to remove four barriers, restore 5,500+ linear feet of streambank, establish 6.5 acres of riparian, install 15+ instream/grade control structures, establish 4 acres of wetlands and improve two stream crossings. In 2024, biological monitoring also took place with the collection of over 3,000 mussels from the project site to protect, propagate and replace them once work is completed.

Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) for War Eagle

Technical assistance to landowners and producers to install practices that improve water quality in the War Eagle Creek watershed

FAST FACTS: \$2.4 million for landowners, with \$2.6 million in matching funds to aid in efforts

The RCPP initiative is now in year three of a five-year program to landowners and producers in the War Eagle Creek watershed. RCPP partners include the USDA-NRCS, Beaver Water District, Watershed Conservation Resource Center, Northwest Arkansas Land Trust, Farm Bureau, AGFC, H2Ozarks, Conservation Districts of Washington, Benton, and Madison County, Arkansas Department of Agriculture - Natural Resources Division, Arkansas Archaeological Survey, and Hispanic Women's Organization of Arkansas and others that working together to install best practices for improved farm, forest and pasture lands, provide technical assistance, improve water quality, protect land, monitor water quality and restore streambanks within the watershed.

Since 2023, over \$1.4 million has been obligated via 46 financial assistance contracts to landowners and farmers to install practices through the cost-share program. Of note, in 2024, four modified ponds and 13 low-tech erosion control structures were installed, three workshops/field tours were held with 113 participants, five fact sheets developed, 8 targeted mailers were distributed to 4,896 landowners, 85 landowners assisted, 65 additional BMPs installed, 42 Management Plans developed, 18 new FA contracts awarded providing \$923,139 towards cost of implementing 32 conservation practices, and 71% of signups were from beginning farmers. In 2025, a large river restoration project will be installed, which will reduce over 3,500 tons/year of sediment and 2,700 lbs/yr of phosphorus from entering War Eagle Creek. We look forward to 2025 and continuing the success of this program.

Watershed Success Stories



Urban Forestry Work in South Fayetteville

Restoring urban streams, removing invasive plants and engaging the community along Spout Spring Branch, a tributary of the Town Branch subwatershed

FAST FACTS: 4.7 acres of invasives removed along Spout Spring Branch, new Conservation Corps established

The Watershed Conservation Resource Center (WCRC) was awarded \$2.6 million in federal funding through the Inflation Reduction Act and the USDA Forest Service, Urban and Community Forestry Program to restore an urban stream and forest in Walker Park. The “Connecting Community to Urban Streams and Forests in a Low-Income Neighborhood at Walker Park, Fayetteville, AR” grant supports the restoration of 3,300 feet of Spout Spring and its associated riparian area, as well as 22 acres of forest at Walker Park, a 73-acre park in a federally designated disadvantaged community.

The Alliance is proud to be a main partner for technical assistance and educational outreach. In 2024, American Youth Works (AYW) established a presence in NWA, creating the Arkansas Conservation Corps (ARCC) and increasing conservation capacity for this project. The Alliance worked directly with ARCC and the community for invasive plant removal training. We were able to remove 4.7 acres of invasives along the creek. The Alliance hosted four educational events with 60 community and ARCC members attending. We look forward to 2025 to continue with restoration efforts and engage the community of South Fayetteville in education and stewardship.



Riparian Establishment at Bunch Park, Elkins

FAST FACTS: 160 native trees and shrubs were planted along the East Fork - White River by 70+ volunteers.

In 2024, the Alliance partnered with the City of Elkins to establish a riparian along the East Fork - White River segment, located in Bunch Park. Thank you to all the volunteers, including Elkins High School and Master Gardeners, along with City staff, that made this project thrive!

Urban Floodplain Project in Fayetteville

FAST FACTS: 60 acres of urban floodplain improved to reduce stormwater runoff from adjacent neighborhood.

The Watershed Conservation Resource Center (WCRC) and BioDesign developed a design to restore a portion of a 60-acre floodplain site, adjacent to the West Fork - White River. This site was once home to a lowland prairie landscape and utilized prairie features to absorb runoff. The project was started in 2023 and completed in 2024.



A Look into 2025...

The Alliance is looking forward to several Best Management Practice (BMP) projects in 2025, including continued efforts to install innovative practices such as modified ponds and low-tech erosion control structures, remove stream barriers, restore streambanks and riparian buffer areas, restore historic prairie sites, kick-off a local tree nursery for the CommuniTree project and continue stewardship around the watershed. At least five workshops will be held to educate landowners on land management and learn how to engage/participate in cost-share conservation programming, Water Webinars are continuing with partners, and two major conferences will be held, including a Smart Growth for Water Resources Conference in April and the Annual Arkansas Ag, Forest and Water Conference in July. Monitoring will continue as we work with partners to evaluate and assess eroding streambanks and stream barriers, monitor stream quality with StreamSmart, and assist with efforts on major projects. The Alliance is also working to address workforce development needs in the region to increase capacity to implement conservation projects by working with the American Youth Works, SARP surveying crews and through hosting stewardship events that provide hands-on training.

The Beaver Lake Watershed Protection Strategy has underwent an update. It will be submitted to the US EPA in 2025 for review. The Strategy guides our actions and provides insight into adaptive watershed management.

GRANT PROGRAMS IN THE BEAVER LAKE WATERSHED

Thank you to our funding partners for continuing to invest in source water protection for the Beaver Lake watershed.

2024 Grant/Funded Projects – Current:

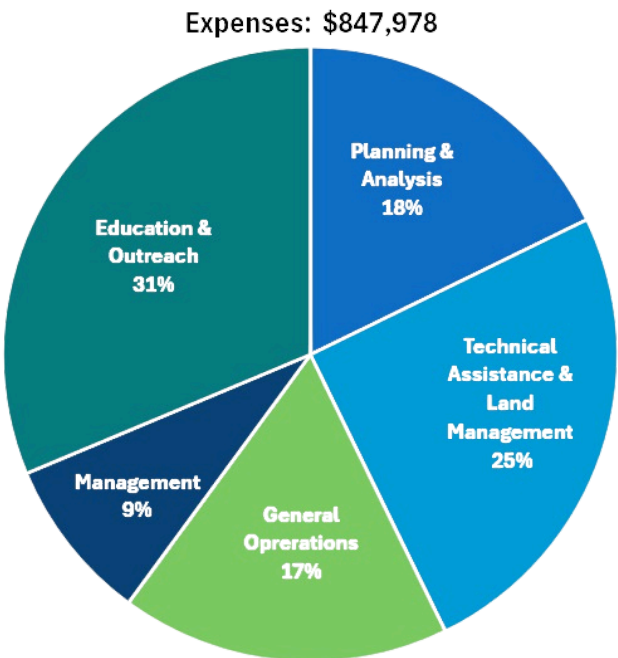
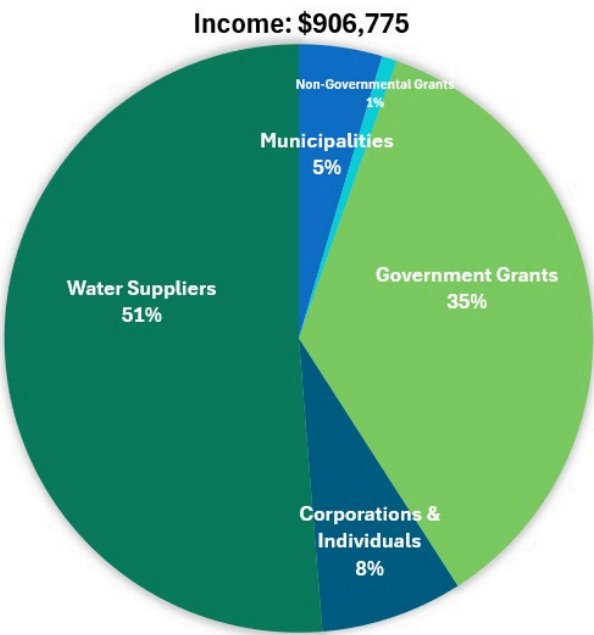
- America the Beautiful Challenge Grant: “Collaborative Restoration Initiative” (2023 – 2027)
- Arkansas Dept. of Agriculture; Natural Resources Division 319 program: Smart Growth for Source Water Protection (Oct 2022 - Sept 2025)
- Arkansas Dept. of Agriculture; Natural Resources Division 319 program: Stream Assessment and Stream Barrier Assessment for the Beaver Lake Watershed (Oct 2024 - Sept 2027)
- BassPro (Nov 2024 – Nov 2025)
- Beaver Water District – Source Water Protection Services (Sept 2024 – Sept 2025)
- CommuniTree, funded by USDA and AR Dept of Ag – Forestry Division (Sept 2024 – Sept 2027)
- Connecting Community to Urban Streams and Forests in a Low-income Neighborhood at Walker Park, Fayetteville, AR (Nov 2023 – Nov 2028)
- SARP: War Eagle Creek Barrier Removals and Stream Restoration for Aquatic Organism Passage (Sept 2024 – Sept 2027)
- US Fish & Wildlife Service: War Eagle Creek Watershed Conservation Implementation (July 2023 – Oct 2027)
- USDA Forest Service: Participating Agreements between the Beaver Watershed Alliance and the USDA, Forest Service Ozark-St. Francis National Forest (July 2024 – July 2026)
- USDA Regional Conservation Partnership Program: War Eagle Creek Watershed Initiative (Aug 2022 – Oct 2027)
- Walmart/Sam’s Club: Source Water Protection Support for the Beaver Lake Watershed (May 2024 – May 2025)

2024 Grant Projects – Successfully Completed in FY24:

- Boatsetter: Mind Your Wake Grant (April – Dec 2024)
- Pick Me Up Project (Oct 2023 – March 2024)
- TEGNA/ KFSM Town Branch Initiative (April 2023 - March 2024)
- US Fish & Wildlife Service: Restoration for Recovery in the War Eagle Watershed (March 2023 – Oct 2026)
- US Fish & Wildlife Service: Conservation and Restoration in the War Eagle and East Fork Watersheds (Aug 2019 – Sept 2024)

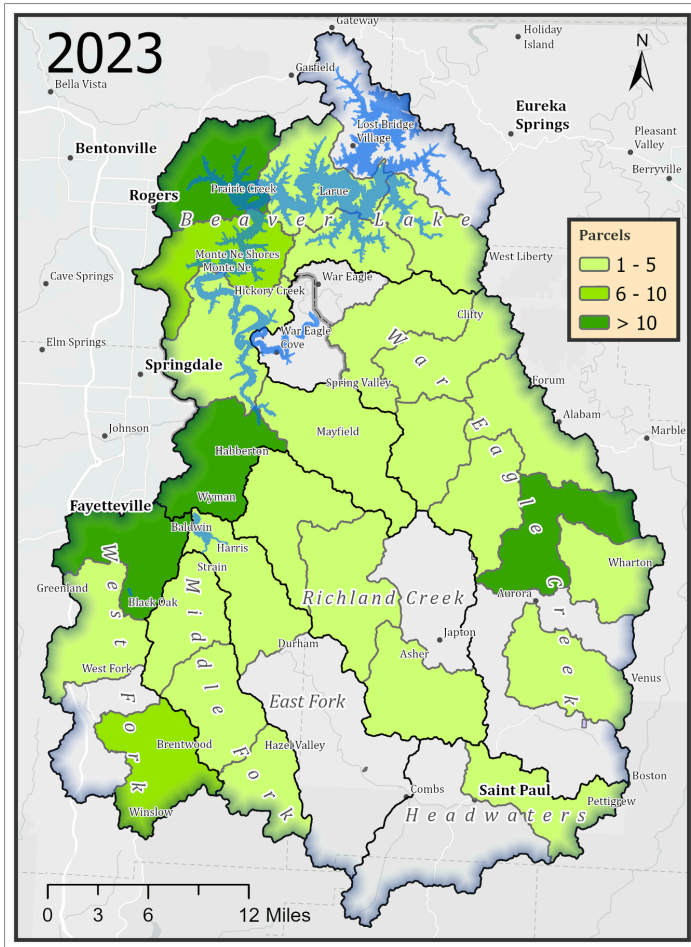
2024 Statement of Financial Activities

Calendar year 2024, unaudited.

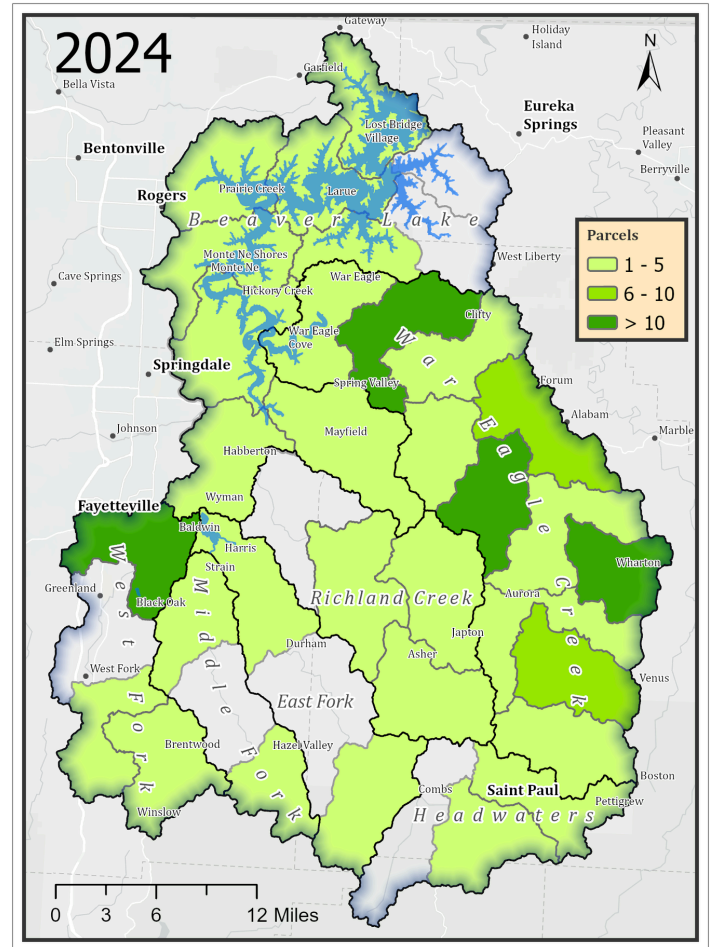


2024 Landowner Participation Map

The Alliance provides free, direct technical support to all landowners in the Beaver Lake watershed. In 2024, the Alliance assisted **155** landowners, a 15% increase in landowner engagement. Through grant initiatives and cost-share programs, the Alliance seeks to assist and support landowners willing to implement voluntary conservation practices on their farms, forest, pasture, streamside and urban properties.



2023 Landowner Participation Map



2024 Landowner Participation Map



Landowners are the backbone of our work. Thank you for your stewardship and leadership in watershed improvement and protection.



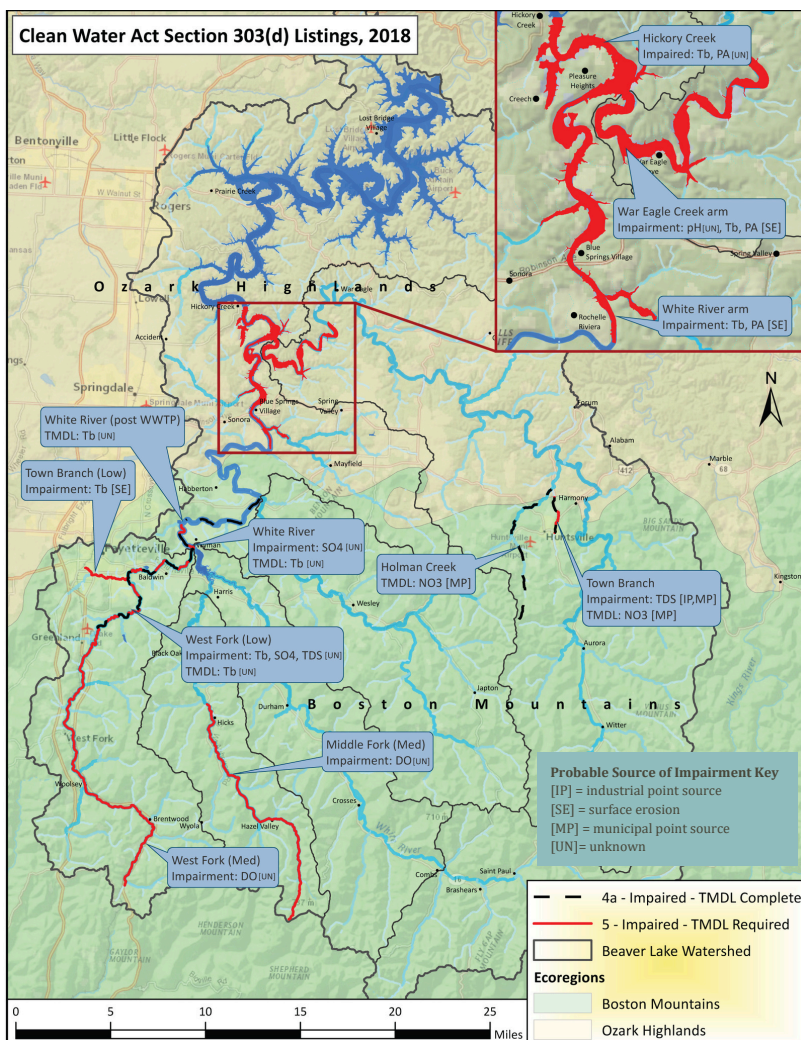
Load Reduction Estimates & 303(d) List

Pollutant Reduction	Nitrogen (lbs./yr)	Phosphorus (lbs./yr)	Sediment (tons/yr)
Load Reductions, Sep 30, 2023 - Sept 15 th , 2024	29,433	15,023	33,936
Cumulative Load Reductions, 2011 to Sep 15 th , 2024	65,402	34,740	67,035
	(lbs.)	(lbs.)	(US tons)
Cumulative Total Pollutant Reduction, 2011 to Sep 15 th , 2024	402,712	208,952	308,904

Pollutant Load Estimation Tool

In 2024, the Alliance adopted the US EPA's Pollutant Load Estimation Tool (PLET) to evaluate the estimated load reductions from conservation practices implemented in the Beaver Lake watershed.

The table summarizes estimated load reductions achieved by the Alliance and partners.



The Federal Pollution Control Act (Clean Water Act), section 305(b) requires Arkansas to report water quality to the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) every two years. Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act, requires Arkansas to rank waterbodies which do not reach water quality standards and require the use of total maximum daily loads (TMDL) or other actions.

The most recent accepted year for the 303(d) list was 2018. Waterbodies are assessed based on whether they meet water quality criteria and whether the waterbodies designated use is protected.

Water quality criteria developed for the 303(d) list are based on average concentrations of a constituent in least-disturbed waterbodies within a given Ecoregion. Once assessed, water bodies are put into 5 assessment categories with sub categories to further describe current or future actions.

During the 2018 reporting year, 6 stream segments and the riverine zone of Beaver Lake were considered impaired under categories 4 and 5 of the 303(d) list. Categories 4 or 5 indicate that waterbodies assessed do not support water quality criteria and one or more designated uses.

Great Partners = Clean Water

Thank you to the following partners for your financial support!



Thank you to the following partners for your in-kind support!



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