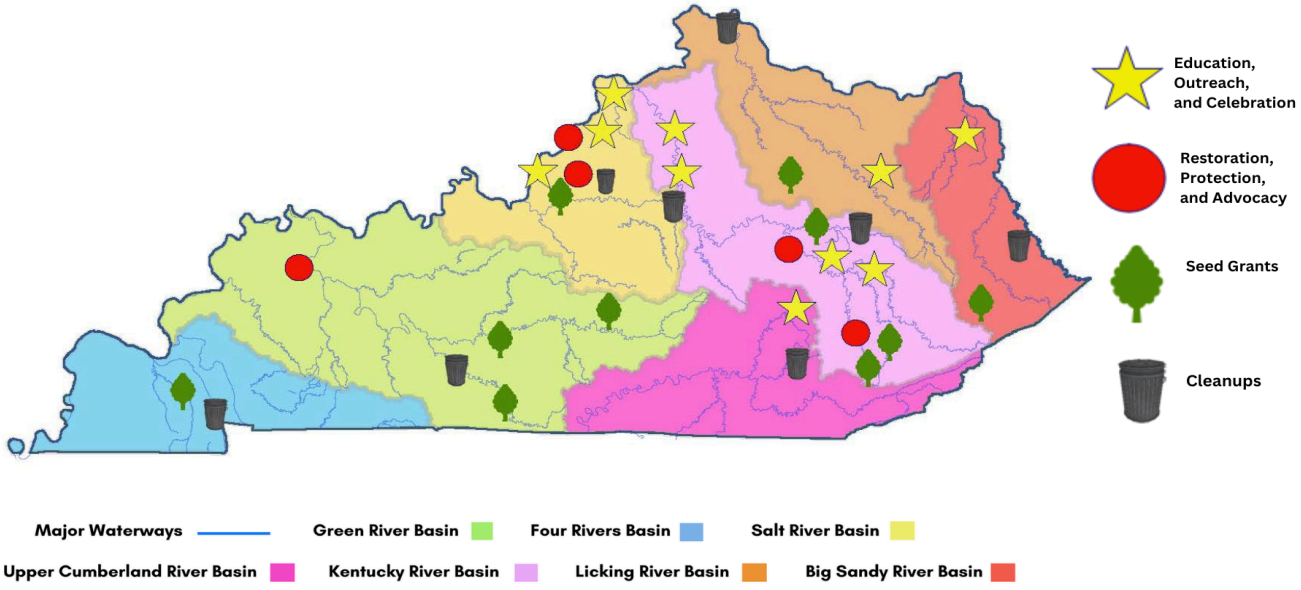
KWA 2024 Impact Report: Our Top Accomplishments



MISSION: Kentucky Waterways Alliance is a membership organization working to protect, restore, and celebrate Kentucky's 90,000 miles of lakes, streams, and rivers since 1993.

Protect & Restore

✔️ Protected the Green River basin and all their downstream neighbors when we and our partners halted the illegal discharge of 4.5M gallons of coal-polluted wastewater into the river.

✔️ Protected all river basins across the state by helping to suspend the state "off-permit" authorization program under which the Green River discharge was permitted, which was a clear violation of the Clean Water Act.


Green River, Spring 2024

✔️ Advocated for the restoration of the Ohio River resulting in the introduction of the **bipartisan Ohio River Basin Program Restoration Act** to congress by Representatives Morgan McGarvey (D, KY-3) and Erin Houchin (R, IN-9). For the last two years we have worked with the Ohio River Basin Caucus (chaired by McGarvey and Houchin), the National Wildlife Federation, and a coalition of organizations from 14 states to advocate for federal funding to protect and restore the beautiful, but **endangered** Ohio River.



✔️ Helped to coordinate a press conference and listening session for stakeholders with the Ohio River Basin Caucus Co-Chair Representatives Morgan McGarvey (D, KY-3) and Erin Houchin (R, IN-9) who announced their bi-partisan support for an Ohio River Restoration Plan.

✔️Protected an Ohio River State Wildlife Refuge in the Salt River Basin when we helped to halt the construction of a barge repair facility near its shores.

✔️ Expanded our restoration work in Eastern Kentucky in both the Red Bird River and Red River watersheds where our efforts are focused on bettering public health through septic repair, replacement, installation, and education.

✔️ Began the next phase of the Red River Watershed Plan implementation that includes expanding our capacity with the hiring of a new, local, Red River Watershed Coordinator to manage the project in 2025-2026.

✔️ Helped to coordinate a press conference and listening session for stakeholders with the Ohio River Basin Caucus Co-Chair Representatives Morgan McGarvey (D, KY-3) and Erin Houchin (R, IN-9) who announced their bi-partisan support for an Ohio River Restoration Plan.

✔️ Reinvigorated our Water Policy Program, deepening our commitment to safeguarding and enhancing the state's water resources. As part of this initiative, KWA hired a new Water Policy Director. The program focuses on critical issues affecting Kentucky's waterways, including pollution control, permitting, conservation efforts, wetlands protection, and sustainable water management practices. We will work collaboratively with stakeholders, communities, and policymakers to promote effective water policies that benefit both the environment and public health.

✔️ Awarded seed grants to fund community-led projects to reduce nonpoint source pollution in each of the seven Kentucky river basins; projects were evaluated, in part, through the lens of environmental justice.

✔️ Began work with partners towards the removal of the Great Crossing Dam on Elkhorn Creek which has caused several deaths in recent years. The removal of the dam will restore the ecosystem of the river and prevent further human tragedy.

✔️ Secured grant funding a second year in a row from Patagonia for general operating support following a nomination by Quest Outdoors to further fund our protection and restoration work.

✔️ Held waterway cleanups in all seven river basins in partnership as part of our 2024 Commonwealth Sweep program funded by a Hydro Flask Parks for All grant. KWA partnered with 28 different organizations, non-profits, city officials, and communities. 208 volunteers contributed 847 hours to remove thousands of pounds of trash and large objects (such as tires, appliances, and furniture) from our watersheds.


Barren River Cleanup
Summer 2024

✔️ Managed the Kentucky Aquatic Resources Fund (KARF) for the 16th year in a row to conserve and recover threatened and endangered aquatic species, in partnership with the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

✔️ Collaborated with the National Wildlife Federation (NWF) and regional partners on the creation of a coalition to support a federally funded Ohio River Restoration Plan.

✔️ Participated as the NWF Kentucky affiliate in the 2024 NWF Annual Meeting, crafting, and voting on climate, wildlife, and environmental policy resolutions.

✔️ Signed on to letters of support related to water quality issues including the Farm Bill, coal wastewater treatment standards, water and wastewater infrastructure on tribal lands, Appalachian flood policy, the Clean Water Act, *Sackett vs. EPA,* toxic pollutants regulatory lists, and more.

✔️ Hosted a meeting of MSD, Louisville Metro government representatives, and numerous other stakeholders in support of Beargrass Creek Restoration.

Educate & Celebrate



✔️ Held a Participatory Science Day for 140 Humana employees who spent the day catching fish at the Falls of the Ohio State Park to support research on the presence of pollutants in the Ohio River. The fish caught are being tested for PFAS and other pollutants. This data will support ongoing research and advocacy for cleaner water policies helping to ensure the health of the river that is the source of drinking water for millions of people.

✔️ KWA's Kentucky Watershed Network (KWN) program held the 2nd annual KWN Collaborative Summit to educate new and experienced watershed professionals, volunteers, and stakeholders from all seven of Kentucky's major river basins about resources for their communities to improve the health of our waterways. The focus of this year's conference was flood mitigation and included the following educational opportunities:

- Planted trees in a hands-on stream buffer planting workshop
- Discussed flood mitigation with a panel of experts
- Participated in a seminar about flood permitting and oversight
- Received certification in water sampling

- Toured Cave Run Lake Dam to learn how it is used for flood mitigation
- Toured Triplett Creek flood mitigation site
- Toured Minor E Clark Fish Hatchery



✔️ Held an environmental education day for 240 students in the Red Bird District of Kentucky.

✔️ Hosted an educational Belle of Louisville cruise focused on Ohio River Restoration.

✔️ Met with congressional leaders in Washington DC and members of the Ohio River Congressional Caucus as part of the Ohio River Basin Alliance Day on the Hill to advocate for the health and restoration of the Ohio River.



✔️ Developed and distributed a free Cleanup Toolkit to guide individuals and organizations in planning their own cleanup events.

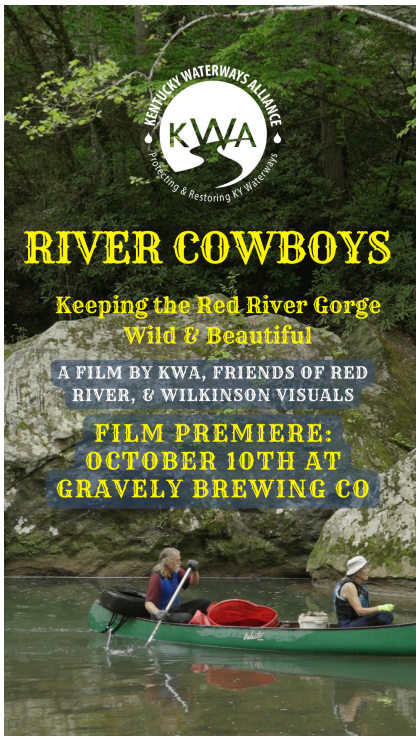
✔️ Published articles and served as a local expert for media interviews to bring attention to the toxic waste tire pollution, the impact of Sackett vs. EPA, and the Clean Water Act.

✔️ Co-sponsored a photo contest for students, Ripple Effects: Exploring Water, to encourage students to consider what water-related issues are important to them.

✔️ Hosted two watershed education workshops in Oldham Co.

✔️ Supported Kentucky Rural-Urban Exchange microgrants for watershed projects that provide education and foster connection to waterways in Campbellsville (Green and Taylor Cos.), Stanton (Powell Co.), and Hyden (Leslie Co.).

✔️ Provided resources and information to community members who reported concerns about water quality and requested assistance.



✔️ Hosted screenings of filmmaker Morgan Atkinson's documentary, "*This is The Ohio*" and panel discussions in river cities across the commonwealth including Louisville, Ashland, Frankfort, Milton, and in Boone County to engage and build support for the Ohio River Restoration Plan to be introduced in 2025.

✔️ Produced a video with Charles Booker and Will Oldham to highlight the role of the Ohio River in their lives, both as inspiration for their work and their connection to home.

✔️ Premiered at Gravely Brewing in Louisville and Sky Bridge Station in Powell County the KWA produced *River Cowboys* documentary made in partnership with Friends of Red River and Wilkinson Visual. Both events

offered a panel discussion followed by an opportunity for a question-and-answer session with the audience.

✔️ Published expanded print newsletters with cultural and literary content from authors outside of our organization to celebrate Kentucky's waterways.

✔️ Hosted a Rock Skipping Competition at West Sixth Farm to raise funds and awareness.

✔️ Chosen as the Kentucky beneficiary of Aveda Earth month and received funding from Omagi Salon & Spa's Hair Jam event.



✔️Co-hosted with Friends of Red River the Wild & Scenic Red RiverFest in Powell County which included a two-day lineup of local musicians who performed next to the Red River in Clay City Park, a paddle on the Red River for guests to experience the beauty of the river firsthand, alongside environmental education opportunities.

✔️ Awarded KWA's Kentucky Watershed Group of the Year Award to the Friends of the Tug Fork River organization to celebrate their ongoing efforts to clean and restore the Tug River.

✔️ Chosen to benefit from Copper & Kings' Brandy on the Banks event celebrating clean water.

