

# Wisconsin Waterfowl Association 2017 Annual Report



*The Wisconsin Waterfowl Association is a 501(c)(3), membership-based, non-profit organization, founded by hunters in 1984, acting exclusively in Wisconsin, with this stated mission: The purpose of the Association shall include: work to further restoration and conservation of Wisconsin's waterfowl and wetland resources, the implementation of education programs for Wisconsin youth that heighten awareness of our wetland resources, and promotion of legislation that protects Wisconsin's resources and the rights of citizens to hunt and fish.*

## Fulfilling Our Mission of Habitat, Education and Legislation/Regulation

2017 was an immensely successful year for the Wisconsin Waterfowl Association during which we saw our membership continue to grow to over 6,500 members by year end. We continued our works in our habitat, education and legislation/regulation programs, restoring hundreds of acres of wetland habitat throughout the state, working directly with local youth and adults on environmental- and hunting-based educational programs while also keeping a finger on the important issues decided in our legislature. Thank you to each and every one of you who supported WWA in 2017, the waterfowl and wetlands of our state thank you as well.



See you on the water...  
Don Kirby, Executive Director

## Habitat Programs

In 2017, WWA continued our works with Wisconsin landowners and federal, state, county and private agencies to restore both public and private wetland & upland habitats in Wisconsin. Our field restoration team utilized our historic-ecosystem based technique, which has received international attention and acceptance. The wetlands we restored not only provide important habitat for waterfowl and thousands of other species, but they also provide the many-fold benefits of all wetlands; including cleaner water & flood control impacts, to name a few.



2017 saw the expansion of our volunteer-based Adopt-A-Wildlife Area program in cooperation with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. To date, WWA volunteers have adopted seven wildlife areas across the state, including: Rome Pond, Jackson Marsh, Paradise

Valley, Lake Mills, George W. Mead, Mud Lake and Big Muskego Lake. Volunteers have put in hundreds of hours combined on these properties through clean-up days, invasive species removal, wood duck and mallard nesting box maintenance and installation to name just a few of the completed projects.

In 2017 WWA completed wetland restoration projects in 10 counties, completing 9 projects totaling 100 acres of restored wetland habitat in the state of Wisconsin, including Wild Rice seeding through our partnership with three high schools classes engaging 30+ students. Additionally, our volunteers





built, placed, maintained & distributed several hundred wood duck boxes, providing vital nesting opportunities for waterfowl. By the end of 2017, we had completed \$70,000 in project work, funded through federal NAWCA grants and State waterfowl monies, across the state in the past 30 months.

## Educational Programs

In 2017 WWA's educational outreach efforts took on several forms: hosting a review of our habitat restoration program, open to the public, at our annual meeting, assisting the WI Wetland Association with wetland landowner sessions in Door County, supporting Learn to Hunt Waterfowl programs



in north-eastern, and south-central Wisconsin, our continuing Abrams Long-



Term Project Property educational opportunities, numerous environmental & aquatic invasive species control educational efforts at a number of our sport show & fundraising events, encouraging participation in WDNR waterfowl banding efforts

for ducks & geese, several hosted groups during the Youth Waterfowl Hunt weekend, participation in the WDNR Warden Recruit "Duck School" field day, hosting a session of the Wisconsin Wingshooting Program, and our Waterfowl Weekend program; including the State Duck & Goose Calling Championships and the inaugural Decoy Carving Contest & Exhibition, at UW Stevens Point.

## Legislation/Regulation Program

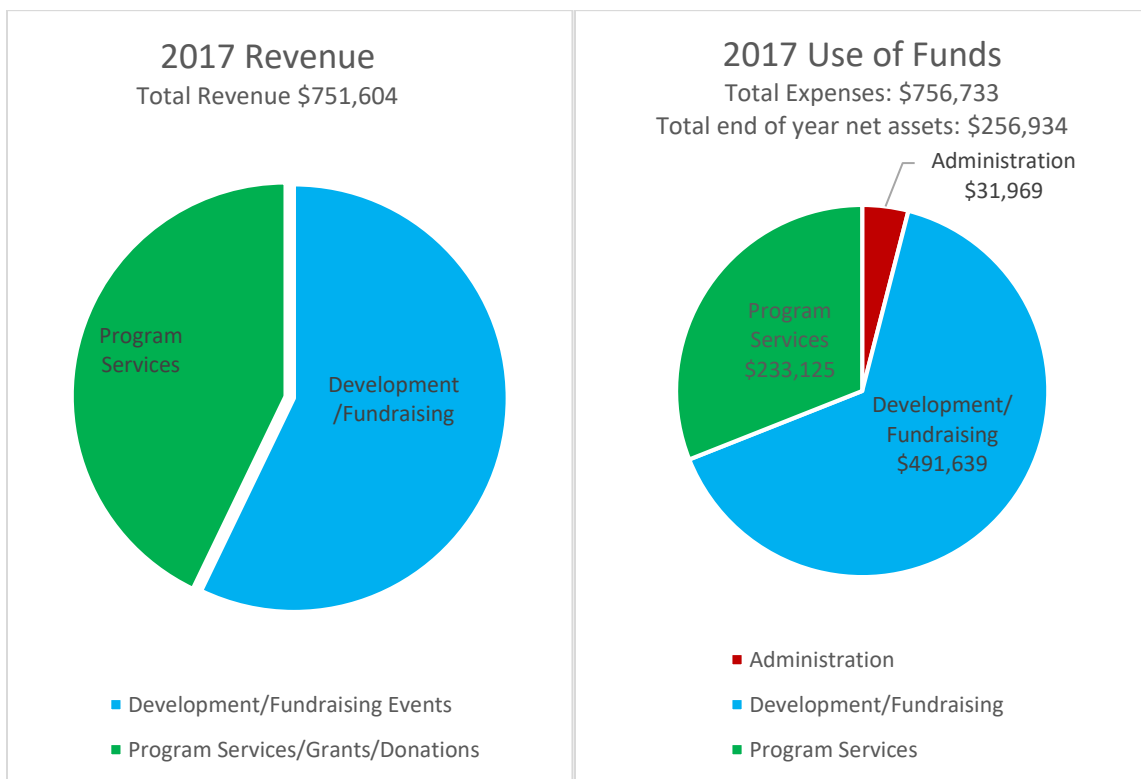


The Wisconsin Waterfowl Association consistently works to stay up-to-date and involved in those legislative & regulatory issues most important to our membership and our mission. In 2017, WWA worked to represent our membership in the annual hunting season setting process by serving on the WDNR's migratory bird committee, the ad-hoc "early teal" season committee, and on the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation's migratory committee, while also serving on the

WDNR Wild Rice advisory team (an important food source for migrating waterfowl in the

northern half of our state), and the "Cherish Wisconsin" fund (overseen by the WI Natural Resources Foundation) initial project determination committee, as well. We also drafted & hosted an on-line hunters' survey, following the closure of Wisconsin's 2017 waterfowl hunting seasons, to help determine public opinions on a number of important current issues within our regulatory framework. The results of this survey were shared with WDNR staff, to assist in decision making processes. WWA joined its conservation partners in testifying against the "Warden Bill" during the summer of 2017, resulting in it not emerging from committee. Additionally, WWA partnered with a broad coalition of outdoor conservation groups during the second half of 2017, working to educate lawmakers on the important issues, and seeking to find solutions for problems encountered by stakeholders, in opposition to proposed legislation which would have removed protections from non-federal "isolated" wetlands in Wisconsin.

## Financials



## 2017 Board of Directors

Bruce Urben – *President*  
John Regan – *Vice President*  
Russell Olson – *Treasurer*  
Randy Helbach – *Secretary*  
Patrice Evers  
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Peter Strenn  
Eric Urben

## Staff

Donald P. Kirby – *Executive Director*  
Peter Ziegler – *Project Director*  
Tom Seibert – *Regional Director*  
Kelcy M. Boettcher – *Director of Administration*



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