

GREAT OUTDOORS

FOUNDATION



2024

ANNUAL REPORT





2024

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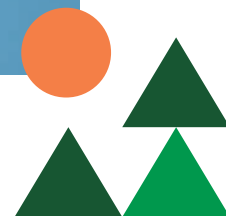
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ADVANCE
CONSERVATION
THROUGH
INNOVATION,
COLLABORATION,
AND
STEWARDSHIP.



LETTER FROM THE CEO

You may not know this, but when I started in my role, one of our primary fundraising initiatives included selling \$5 firewood bundles for Polk County Conservation camp sites. Our strategy and implementation have changed slightly since then, but the essence of our work has not. This year, the Great Outdoors Foundation celebrates 30 years as an organization, and it's created the perfect opportunity to reflect on our origin.

On June 22, 1995, the articles of incorporation for the Conservation Foundation for Polk County, Inc. — what is now the Great Outdoors Foundation — were filed with the Iowa Secretary of State. In Article III, which outlines the purpose of the organization, it reads:

“To do any and all acts to bring about the conservation of natural resources, the enhancement of outdoor recreation opportunities, wise land use, conservation education, protection of open spaces, and the promotion of environmental ethics.”

Three decades later, we're proud to continue doing the work laid out by the dedicated individuals who founded our organization. In the last year we have:

- Increased staff capacity through team development and professional trainings.
- Celebrated with partners at ground breakings, ribbon cuttings, and dedications for Great Outdoors Foundation-supported projects.
- Activated more than \$28 million in water quality investments through the Conservation Acceleration Fund.
- Bolstered organizational policies and procedures to lay the foundation for continued growth.

- Overhauled our branding, complete with a fresh website.
- Hosted record-setting events including our Annual Golf Outing and Wild Prairie Showdown.
- Crossed \$100 million in funding secured for ICON Water Trails.
- Shared Great Outdoors Foundation thought leadership at 10 different conferences and events with attendees totaling nearly 3,000.
- Resourced partner organizations undergoing transitions.
- Drafted and approved our strategic plan, outlining key goals in alignment with our organizational values.

From developing the Conservation Acceleration Fund to leading the capital campaign for ICON Water Trails, providing backend support for projects like the Athene North Shore Recreation Area or sharing thought leadership with other conservation partners, our vision remains the same. And while this looks a little different from our firewood bundle days, our donors, volunteers, and staff are committed to doing any and all acts that bring about conservation.

In other words, whatever is earthly possible.

Thank you for your support over the last thirty years. What we've been able to accomplish together is inspiring, but I believe it pales in comparison to what we'll do together in the decades ahead.



Hannah Inman
CEO, Great Outdoors Foundation

OUR STAFF



RHILEY BINNS • Development Specialist



JEN CROSS • Vice President of Strategic Partnerships

HANNAH INMAN • Chief Executive Officer



MICHELLE FLATTERY • Director of Operations

MELISSA CAMPBELL • Senior Project Manager



KAITIE HARTMANN • Director of Marketing



JAKE MORRIS • Administrative Coordinator







BOARD OF DIRECTORS

BEN ARATO, Wandro & Associates, P.C. • **ABIGAIL BOGAARD**, Farm Bureau Financial Services • **CHRIS COSTA**, CHAIR, Knapp Properties, LLC • **STEPHANIE FLECKENSTEIN**, Sherwood Design Engineers • **EMILY KESSINGER**, Paslay Group • **GRANT KVALHEIM**, Athene USA • **TOM MAHONEY**, Retired • **GENE MEYER**, Retired • **KURT MUMM**, Cushman and Wakefield Iowa Commercial Advisors • **JULIAN SEAY**, North High School • **CORY SHARP**, FEH Design • **JOEY TAYLOR-MOON**, PAST-CHAIR, Hubbell Realty Company • **GEORGIA VAN GUNDY**, Iowa Workforce Development

LETTER FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

If you've ever championed a nonprofit organization before, you've probably had to answer some iteration of the question, "Why care?" at least once.

When it comes to the work of the Great Outdoors Foundation, I could give you a statistic like "88% of individuals will continue to do business with companies who invest in environmental sustainability."

Maybe you'd be more motivated by performance metrics — the Great Outdoors Foundation has secured more than \$200 million in funding for conservation and recreation over the last few years alone.

If I had to guess, even if you're a numbers guy like me, you're more captivated by impact. The Great Outdoors Foundation's mission to advance conservation is captured in the following pages, demonstrating the tremendous reach of the organization. What started as a volunteer-led fundraising group has transformed into a force for nature, locally, and beyond.

We're excited to share with you all that we've accomplished together over the last year, and even more than the data, I hope you notice the wins. We're not just celebrating dollars raised. We're celebrating improvements to water quality. We're celebrating access to green space. We're celebrating a growing conservation ethic. We're celebrating 30 years of innovation, collaboration, and stewardship.

Thank you for being a part of our shared vision. I'm confident that the Great Outdoors Foundation and its impact will outlast us all.

And that's something to care about.



Chris Costa

President & CEO, Knapp Properties, LLC





Canoe donated
by ... GREAT
OUTDOORS
FOUNDATION

Big Boys Toys
MARINE, RV & TRUCK ACCESSORIES
Greenville, LA 647-782-8184

OUR VALUES

The Great Outdoors Foundation does **whatever is earthly possible** to preserve and protect this planet.

Where others see problems, the Great Outdoors Foundation sees possibility. Open-minded and optimistic, we are **creative stewards** of environmental issues, providing **innovative solutions** to help conserve our natural resources.

We are **collaborative thought leaders** in the conservation and outdoor recreation sector. Together, we activate meaningful, accessible initiatives that enhance our environment and improve quality of life.

INNOVATION

We unlock creative solutions to create generational environmental impact.

COLLABORATION

We partner across the aisle and develop apolitical allies to get the job done.

STEWARDSHIP

We punch above our weight class, solving big issues with finite resources.

EXCELLENCE

We are optimistic with a "never settle" attitude.

STRATEGIC GOALS

TRANSFORM Iowa into an innovative water quality leader. • **UNDERSTAND** and master the business model for conservation. • **DEVELOP** the Great Outdoors Foundation as long-term, viable organization that can act as a best-in-class thought leader within the conservation space. • **UTILIZE** recreation as a catalyst for conservation. • **ESTABLISH** the Great Outdoors Foundation as an innovator in the nonprofit sector.

2024 HIGHLIGHTS

JANUARY

Great Outdoors Foundation CEO, Hannah Inman, speaks on the "Business Case for Conservation" at the West Des Moines Chamber of Commerce INSPIRE Luncheon.



FEBRUARY

Great Outdoors Foundation Board member, Grant Kvalheim, shares the significance of the Conservation Acceleration Fund at Making Retail Conservation Real: A National Meeting to Advance Conservation Agronomy in the Private Sector.



APRIL

Great Outdoors Foundation CEO, Hannah Inman, attends the Conservation Drainage Network Annual Meeting and leads a session entitled "Creative Conservation: Maximizing Investments in Water Quality."

The Branding Steering Committee meets for the first time with the Great Outdoors Foundation's agency, Spawn Ideas, to begin facilitating conversations about the upcoming brand refresh.



MAY

Great Outdoors Foundation CEO, Hannah Inman, delivers another thought-leadership session on "Creative Conservation" at the Midwest Regional Sustainability Summit.



Polk County Conservation hosts a dedication for the Athene North Shore Recreation Area.



JUNE

The Great Outdoors Foundation joins partners at Iowa Agriculture Water Alliance and ICON Water Trails on WHO Radio's The Big Show for "Clean Water Wednesday," a program highlighting water quality initiatives across the state.

Jake Morris joins the Great Outdoors Foundation team as Administrative Coordinator.

JULY

Google announces a \$1.3 million investment in the Conservation Acceleration Fund, activating a 47-site portfolio of grade stabilizations in southwest Iowa.



Great Outdoors Foundation CEO, Hannah Inman, attends the Soil & Water Conservation Society's International Annual Conference and leads a session on "Creative Conservation: Advancing Through Innovation, Collaboration and Stewardship."

AUGUST

The Great Outdoors Foundation Board of Directors meets, reviews, and approves the organization's new strategic plan.



A record-setting thirty foursomes play in the Great Outdoors Foundation Annual Golf Outing, raising more than \$25,000 for the organization and its mission.



Representative Zach Nunn announces a \$1 million investment in ICON Water Trails via the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2024.

OCTOBER

The Great Outdoors Foundation unveils its new brand at a successful Wild Prairie Showdown with 400 of our closest friends.

The event raised more than \$160,000 for conservation and recreation, including support for ICON Water Trails.



Later in the month, partners and donors involved with the Conservation Acceleration Fund attend a site visit and Catalyst Dinner, creating momentum for further funding and collaboration opportunities.

DECEMBER

Donors, partners, and volunteers join the Great Outdoors Foundation for its annual Holiday Breakfast. Staff presented a recap of the year, and attendees received a limited-edition copy of a photobook celebrating the organization's 30th Anniversary.



NOVEMBER

Great Outdoors Foundation staff attends the Sustainable Agriculture Summit to learn from industry leaders and connect with potential partners.

The City of West Des Moines hosts a ribbon cutting for the Athene Pedestrian Bridge.





IMPACT PROFILES

The Great Outdoors Foundation's mission to advance conservation doesn't just impact the environment, it impacts people, too. We're fortunate to work with hundreds of donors, volunteers, and partners to enact change, and their stories are foundational to our mission's success. Get to know a few of the incredible individuals who made our work possible in 2024.



- Single Site Project
- 47-Site Portfolio

GOOD FOR THE NEXT GENERATION

Meet Joe Jardon (left), a multi-generation farmer and veteran. Joe is also benefiting from our recent partnership with Google, activating 47 grade stabilization sites led by the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship. Joe, like many farmers, has had a desire to implement conservation practices, but hadn't been able to until his project received gap funding from the Conservation Acceleration Fund. Even with the significant time and resource investment, Joe said of conservation, "I guess I'm old enough [that I know] **it's not just good for me, it's good for the next generation.**"

ICONIC PARTNERSHIP

Since its incubation, ICON Water Trails and the Great Outdoors Foundation have thrived as symbiotic partners with shared vision and goals. The two organizations continue to grow and evolve, demonstrating the efficacy of innovation, collaboration, and stewardship across the nonprofit sector. Highlights from 2024 include surpassing **\$100 million** in total funding secured and **supporting organizational growth** to include two new staff members.



"All my life I've felt Des Moines should **capitalize on the rivers running through our city**. At last, after lots of planning, fundraising, and hard work, **ICON Water Trails will add recreation and excitement for residents and visitors**. Then, the big plus is the **important water quality and conservation work** now also being guided by the **Great Outdoors Foundation**." - **Joyce Chapman**, Great Outdoors Foundation Donor



ACCELERATING CHANGE

John Swanson (left), Water Resources Supervisor for Polk County Public Works, eats, sleeps, and breathes conservation. Over the course of his tenure, he's overseen successful initiatives implementing critical conservation infrastructure via the coined "Batch & Build" method. Since its inception, the Conservation Acceleration Fund has played a critical role in providing gap funding for partners, like John, across the state. **"The Conservation Acceleration Fund has been instrumental in expanding our wetland and stream restoration programs,"** John said. "Notably, it has brought flexibility and **creates the opportunity to match local, state, and federal dollars to their maximum potential.**"

"Each and every one of you in this room is really the creative conservationist. And here's why: I have tried for a very long time to grow the conservation choir and yet meeting after meeting, event after event, room after room, I knew everybody in the space for years. And here we are, 400-strong — a sell-out crowd. So don't take this wrong, but I'm glad to say I don't know half of you. **It says to me that the work of the Great Outdoors Foundation and ICON [Water Trails] is truly what's creative.**" — Patricia Boddy (below), the Great Outdoors Foundation's 2024 Creative Conservationist



CREATIVE CONSERVATIONIST

This year at the Wild Prairie Showdown, the Great Outdoors Foundation presented its inaugural Creative Conservationist Award to Patricia Boddy, founding Great Outdoors Foundation board member, current ICON Water Trails board member, and Councilmember for the City of Urbandale. The Creative Conservationist Award recognizes an individual that has gone to extraordinary lengths to champion the Great Outdoors Foundation and exemplify its values — innovation, collaboration, and stewardship. Jan Herke, Parks and Recreation Director for the City of Urbandale, shares this, "I think of Pat when I read the quote by Nelson Henderson, who said, **'The true meaning of life is to plant trees under whose shade you do not expect to sit.'** Pat is not worried about getting credit or accolades for her efforts. **She is just interested in the end result of making a difference.** That, in my opinion, deserves **applause** and our **appreciation.**"

WHATEVER IS
EARTHLY POSSIBLE.



30TH ANNIVERSARY VIDEO

For nearly thirty years, the Great Outdoors Foundation has had the privilege of investing in conservation and recreation. We've worked with a variety of both public and private partners to activate meaningful, transformative initiatives impacting everything from wildlife to water, parks to people. As we poise ourselves for the next season, we're rallying around a phrase that describes our approach perfectly: whatever is earthly possible. Our work is unconventional, and we'll stop at nothing to innovate new solutions, collaborate with unlikely partners, and steward our natural resources. Years ago, a stakeholder described us as "happy disrupters." We claim that title proudly, and our guess is, you do too. **Scan the QR code to watch our 30th Anniversary & Rebrand Launch video.**

CONSERVATION ACCELERATION FUND

\$6M+

IN PRIVATE FUNDING
SECURED TO DATE

1.2M+

POUNDS OF MITIGATED
NITRATE BY 2024 PROJECTS





8:1

PUBLIC-PRIVATE MATCH
FROM 2024 PROJECTS

\$28M+

IN FUNDING LEVERAGED BY
2024 PROJECTS

DONOR RECOGNITION

Angela & Thomas Connolly

Angela McKenzie

Ann Mowery & Al Powers

Anna Minner

Anne Tochka

Ashley & Brian Aust

Athene

Atlantic Bottling Company

Bank of America Charitable Foundation, Inc.

Barbara Nish

Bayer Crop Science

Beisser Lumber Company

Belin McCormick Attorneys at Law

Ben & Rachel McLean

Ben B. Sun

Ben Richter

Ben Sinclair

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Betts Foundation

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Boeing

Bolton & Menk

Brad Pfaltzgraff

Bradley Miller

Brian Kinney

Brianne Sanchez

Brightside Aleworks

Bruce & Susy Kelley

Bruce Bernard & Arlene Dabill

Bryan Schutte

Bryce Colston

Businessolver

Caleb Rasmussen

Cara & Kurt Heiden

Carrie Johnson

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Cathy & Steve Lacy

Celia & Tom Mahoney

Cesar Marfal

Charles Powell

Cheryl Moore

Chris & Breanne Costa

Chris Kramer

Chris Nelson

Christina Moffatt

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Claudette & PJ McDonald

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Connie Boesen

Connor Hodges

Cornerpost Marketing

Cory & Abby Sharp

Costco

Craig Mackaman

Cushman & Wakefield

Dan & Joanie Houston

Daniel Bohner

David & Winonah McCluskey

David Ling

David Maier

Dean Chally

Deanna Jackson

Debra Salowitz

Delta Dental of Iowa Foundation

Dennis Shull & Sue Coppess

Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization

Diana Briggs

Douglas & Deana Romig

Dr. Richard Deming

Dwaine & Kay Francis

Elizabeth Coonan

Elizabeth Lidgett

Ellen & Bruce Nelson

EMC Insurance

Emily & Mason Kessinger

Emily Rademacher

Emily Williams-Bouska

Eric Tabor & Mike Youngstrom

Eric White

Erin Kistler

Erin Netteland-Sandvig

F&G

Feed Energy Company

FEH Design

First Interstate Bank

Fleet Feet Des Moines

Flix Brewhouse- Des Moines

Forrest & Laura Ridgway

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G. David Hurd & Trudy Holman Hurd

Gabriel Nelson

Gary & Joan Kirke

Gene & Kathleen Meyer

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Gerardo Duron

Gerry & Mary Louise Neugent

Giselle Guardado

Google

Grant Kvalheim

Grant Taylor

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Hannah & Mike Inman

Hannah Krause

HDR, Inc.

Helen Eddy & Dave McNeill

Holmes Murphy

Hubbell Realty Company

Hy-Vee, Inc.

IBM

Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship

ISG Inc.

ITA Group Foundation

Jacob Lundgren

Jacobsen & Company, LLP

James Altamirano

James Gilbertson

James Henderson

James Sarcone III

Jane Kearnis

Janel Allison

Jason Parker

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Jeff & Louisa Perry

Jeff Rommel

Jeff Shepard

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Jennifer McCoy

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Jester Insurance Services Inc.

Jill Trobaugh

Jim and Susanne Bollard Charitable Fund

Jim Spevak

Joe & Sheri Corfits

Joe Feldmann

Joe Gatto

John & Julie Schreurs

John Ruan Foundation Trust

John Tentinger

Jorge Castillo

Jose Flores Aguilar

Joseph & Jenny Ruddy

Josephs Jewelers

Justin Biddle

Justin Wyckoff

Kaitie Hartmann

Karen King

Karen Swalwell

Kari Boyens

Karlina Bakken

Kate Courtney

Kate Mead

Katherine & Andrew Hauser

DONOR RECOGNITION

Katherine Harrington

Kathleen Statz

Kathleen Till Stange & Jeff Stange

Kathryn Kunert

Kathy & Mark Larson

Katie Scanlan

Katy Swalwell

KCCI

Keith Foglesong

Kelli Huser

Kemin Industries

Kerty & Frank Levy

Kevin & Beth Nordmeyer

Kevin Geiken

Knapp Properties

Kurt Mumm

Kyle and Sharon Krause Family Foundation

Kyle Gamble

Kyle Munson

Kyle Woods

Lacy Miles

Landus

Lara McAdams

Lara Mollett

Larry & Kathi Zimpleman

Laura Digman

Lauridsen Family

Laurie Mardis

Laurie Sloterdyk

Leann Noble

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Michele & John Stevens

Michelle & Craig Mahoney

Michelle Flattery

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Patrick & Susan Lang

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Paul Richardson

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Pete Cutler

Peter Sloterdyk

Phoukham Baccam

Polk County Board of Supervisors

Polk County Conservation

Prairie Meadows

Principal Foundation

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Rachel Antonuccio

RDG Planning & Design

Rebecca Johnson

Renae Leann Salaba

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Sally Wisner

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Staci Krier

Staci Williams

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Steve & Melissa Chapman

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Steve Laudick

Stuart Higgins

Suku & Mary Radia

Susan DiMezza

Susan Judkins Josten

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Susanne Kennedy

Syngenta

Tarun Yenna

Telligen Community Initiative

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The Weitz Company

The Wellmark Foundation

Theresa Powell

Thomas Ackerman

Thomas Broadbooks

Thomas Ruan

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Tiffany Berkenes

Tim & Julie Fuller

Tim Urban

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Tina Hoffman

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US Bank

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VisionBank

Walton Family Foundation

Wandro & Associates, PC

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West Hill Brewing Company

Whitney Cowman

Wildflower

Will Brown

William C. Knapp Charitable Foundation

William Lambertz

Williams & Jensen

Wittern Family Charitable Foundation



SAVE THE DATE

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 18

Birthday Breakfast & Site Tour

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 20

Annual Golf Outing

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 16

Wild Prairie Showdown

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 18

Holiday Breakfast



“To do any and all...acts...to bring about the conservation of natural resources, the enhancement of open spaces, and the promotion of environmental ethics.” Article III, 1995 Great



ment of outdoor recreation opportunities, wise land use, conservation education,
t Outdoors Foundation Articles of Incorporation

Great Outdoors Foundation
5000 Westown Parkway
Suite 225
West Des Moines, IA 50266