

# 2025



# Annual Report

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*Beaver Lake  
Photo Credit: Carrie Byron*



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PROGRAM DIRECTOR

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PROGRAM MANAGER

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ACCOUNTING SPECIALIST

### **AYLA GRACE**

PROGRAM COORDINATOR

### **OLIVIA SCHAAP**

CONTENT COORDINATOR

### **JULIA PURK**

PROGRAM ASSISTANT

### **JESSE DEETS**

OPERATIONS MANAGER

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ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

### **LORI CLAY**

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## Greetings from the President,

As we recap our work in 2025, I'm filled with gratitude for every partner, volunteer, donor, and community member who has joined H2Ozarks in our mission to protect and improve water quality across the Ozarks.

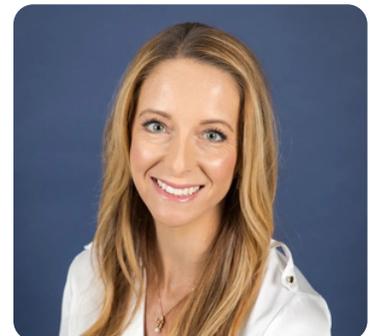
This year brought several big milestones. We celebrated 25 years of Shoreline Cleanups in Missouri, with 521 volunteers joining us for this significant anniversary. The Arkansas Septic Remediation Program reached its 100th install. Together, our Missouri and Arkansas programs now divert over 70,000 gallons of untreated wastewater from our waterways *every single day!* Our StreamSmart citizen scientists completed their 12th year of water quality monitoring, and we published a decade-spanning water quality report with significant findings about changing conditions in the Beaver Lake Watershed.

Among these significant accomplishments, the Upper White River Watershed Management Plan was accepted by the EPA — a major achievement that opens the door to future conservation funding that can protect 1.4 million acres of Ozark land and water in Arkansas.

These 2025 successes have coalesced out of years of continuous dedication and a building momentum; I am excited to carry this momentum forward into 2026 and onward. We'll continue expanding our programs, building partnerships, and working for both our communities and our beloved water resources.

None of this happens without your commitment to creating *Cleaner Water Together*. Thank you for your support.

Warm regards,  
Carin Love  
President & CEO



# 2025 Impact Numbers



## 1.4 Million Acres of Land

covered in the 2025 with the completed Upper White River Watershed Management Plan.



## \$1.88 Million Granted to Homeowners

in 2025 to replace failing septic systems



## 70,590 Gallons of Wastewater

prevented from entering our waterways untreated *every day* thanks to septic repairs.

## 12 Years of Data Collected

by our StreamSmart volunteers on water quality at 15 sites in the Beaver Lake watershed.

## 14,005 lbs. of Trash Removed

by volunteers in litter cleanups in 2025.

### Missouri Office

P.O. Box 636  
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Kimberling City, MO 65686

### Arkansas Office

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**About:** H2Ozarks is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization dedicated to protecting and improving water quality throughout the Ozarks of Arkansas and Missouri. Established in 2001, we work collaboratively with communities, landowners, and partners to promote and support sustainable practices and environmental stewardship.

**Mission:** To protect and improve water quality in the Ozarks of Arkansas and Missouri by promoting community commitment, public policy, research, and local solutions.

**Vision:** Safeguarding water — our greatest natural resource.

# StreamSmart Citizen Science



## 2025 Stats

 **37** volunteer citizen scientists (active)

 **13** teams (active)

 **15** stream sites (active)

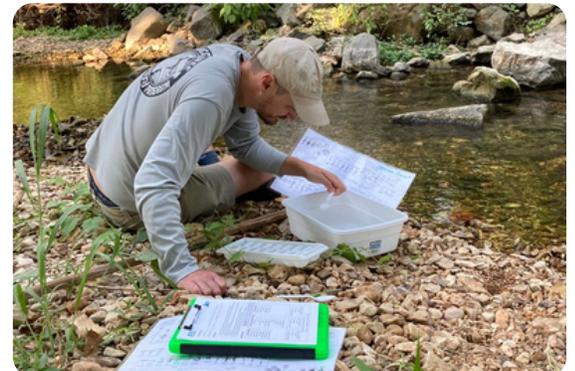
 **25** total sites with data

 **6,410** laboratory results

StreamSmart is a volunteer-powered water quality monitoring program where trained volunteers collect quarterly water samples at 15 sites across the watershed – smaller creeks and streams not covered by other monitoring agencies. Operating under a quality assurance project plan (QAPP), volunteers contribute to one of the longest, highest-resolution tributary datasets for Beaver Lake, revealing early warning signs of water quality problems and guiding restoration efforts.



*Holman Creek volunteers  
Pat, Care, Ken, and Charlotte*



*Daniel from Beaver Watershed Alliance  
sampling for macroinvertebrates*



*Volunteers Jane, Rita, and  
Karan on the West Fork of the  
White River*

In late 2025, we published a [Water Quality report](#) using over 10 years of StreamSmart monitoring data to highlight trends in water quality at our monitoring sites. The report documents significant relationships between land use and water quality, and finds that increasing nutrient levels in some tributary streams reflect nonpoint source pressures from both agricultural and urban areas across the watershed.

More broadly, the report showcases how dedicated volunteers, strong partnerships, and rigorous science all work together in the StreamSmart program to produce actionable data that informs how we protect Beaver Lake, the drinking water source for over 600,000 Arkansans.

# Volunteer Events & Community Outreach



**562**

Students  
Educated



**4,664**

People  
Reached



**797**

Volunteers  
at all events



**14,005**

Lbs. of  
Trash



Beaver Water District,  
H2Ozarks, and Army  
Corps staff members



A group of volunteers at  
Beaver Lake Volunteer Day

## Beaver Lake Volunteer Day

- 174 volunteers
- 1 couch
- 12 tires
- 300 bags of garbage
- 1,500 lbs of bulky trash
- **6,300 lbs total trash collected!**



West Fork Community Cleanup Volunteers

## West Fork Community Cleanup

- 65 volunteers
- 13 tires
- 1 refrigerator, 1 chest freezer, 1 couch
- **2,240 lbs. total trash collected!**



Dogwood Canyon Kids Camp students  
exploring our watershed table

## Arkansas Outreach Events

- Master Naturalist Water Quality Class
- Jasper Job and Information Fair
- West Fork Elementary Earth Day Field Trip
- War Eagle Appreciation Day
- Master Naturalist Volunteer Fair
- Elkins Community Septic Night
- *And more!*

## Missouri Outreach Events

- MO Dept. of Conservation Kids Fishing Fair
- Dogwood Canyon Kids Camp
- Nature Day with Reeds Spring 7<sup>th</sup> Grade
- Wilson's Creek Homeschool Day
- Mayfly Project Macroinvertebrate Training
- Agriculture Field Day
- *And more!*

# 25th Anniversary Missouri Shoreline Cleanup



## The Impact of 25 Years of Shoreline Cleanups!



In September we hosted our 25th Shoreline Cleanup! Every fall since the year 2000, we've organized volunteers who pick up trash and litter along Table Rock Lake, Lake Taneycomo, and Bull Shoals Lake. This well-attended event is a wonderful opportunity for the community to get outdoors, create meaningful experiences together, and leave a positive impact on our local lakes and water resources. We're proud of the history we've established through this event, and thank our many volunteers and sponsors who make this event possible. Look forward to our 2026 Shoreline Cleanup, to be held from September 25-28, 2026!



*H2Ozarks staff members cleaning up around Table Rock Lake*

## 2025 Cleanup Stats

- 521** Volunteers
- 1,394** Volunteer Hours
- 3** Appliances
- 30** Tires
- 385** Bags of Trash
- 5,465** Lbs. of Trash



*Volunteers contributed on both land and water!*



*A team of volunteers from Table Rock Lake Community Bank*

## Thank you to our 2025 sponsors and donors!



# Septic Remediation Programs

## Missouri Onsite Wastewater Treatment System Program

The Missouri Onsite Wastewater Treatment System program made significant strides in 2025, completing 61 total installs. We were granted a one-year extension by the Missouri Department of Natural Resources to disperse any remaining funds through 2026.



Aerial footage of a septic install in progress in Arkansas. Photo credit: Trevor Hutton

MISSOURI STATS	All Watersheds
<b>Completed projects (2025)</b>	<b>55</b>
Completed Projects (lifetime)	73
<b>Funding Dispersed (2025)</b>	<b>\$1,482,554</b>
Funding Dispersed (lifetime)	\$1,981,794



This diverts **30,810 gallons** of untreated wastewater from entering our waterways every day!\*

\*Using a standard calculation of individuals served times the average daily water use in the United States

## Arkansas Septic Tank Remediation Program

This Program hit a major milestone with our 100th install in late 2025! This marks significant progress in our goals of assisting homeowners, providing access to safe sanitation services, and protecting water quality.

With ongoing demand and additional funding from the Arkansas Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Division, this program will continue through 2026. We appreciate our strong partnership with the Arkansas Department of Health who support and promote this program.

ARKANSAS STATS	Beaver Reservoir Watershed	Buffalo River Watershed	Total
<b>Completed Projects (2025)</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>23</b>
Completed Projects (lifetime)	80	22	<b>102</b>
<b>Funding Dispersed (2025)</b>	<b>\$264,478</b>	<b>\$136,632</b>	<b>\$401,111</b>
Funding Dispersed (lifetime)	\$1,157,371	\$366,868	\$1,524,239



This diverts **39,780 gallons** of untreated wastewater from entering our waterways every day!\*

# Septic Education and Policy Research

## Septic Education and Outreach

Our work with septic systems extends beyond the assistance programs provided to homeowners. We strive to provide educational resources to wide-ranging audiences and stakeholder groups to increase understanding and awareness of proper septic system management and their impacts on water quality.

In 2025, we spoke to several groups of realtors, quorum courts, and public officials about our work remediating septic systems. We also spoke on the challenges we face in the region, like aging septic infrastructure, gaps in current policies, or regulations that may be needed to support homeowners and their property.



**15–40 Years**

Expected  
lifespan  
of a septic  
system

**42 Years**

Average  
system age in  
Northwest  
Arkansas\*

**34 Years**

Average  
system age in  
Stone County,  
Missouri\*\*

## Septic Impact Study, Arkansas

We continued an ongoing study of the impact of septic systems the Beaver Lake Watershed, thanks to our partnership with Beaver Water District. Erin and Ayla collected water samples at around 30 sites throughout the Beaver Lake Watershed, ranging in septic system characteristics like density and proximity to waterways.

Further data analysis in 2026 will fill an important knowledge gap in understanding how septic system density and locations might influence nutrients and bacteria flowing into Beaver Lake.

\*Based on program data in the Upper White River Watershed

\*\*Based on septic impact study in Stone County, Missouri



*Stefanie presenting at the NWA Board of Realtors Meeting, Sept*



*Jerry teaching a workshop to realtors receiving CEU credits, July*



*Stefanie speaking at a community outreach event in Elkins, Sept*

# Other Projects

## Septic Impact Study in Stone County, Missouri

In Missouri, we completed our initial impact study of septic systems and stream pollution in Stone County. Through an American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) grant provided by the Stone County Commission, we were able to sample 21 streams three times over the course of 18 months, and provide baseline sampling data.

In addition to the stream sampling study, the grant afforded H2Ozarks to partner with the Ozark Environmental Water Research Institute (OEWRI) to develop an interactive online county map that details septic system densities at various distances from waterbodies. It also includes map locations of permitted wastewater systems, wastewater and stormwater outfalls, Stream Team sampling sites, Lake Monitor Volunteer Program sampling sites, animal feeding operations (AFO's), gaining/losing streams, sinkholes, and springs. This resource will serve as a valuable resource to decision-makers in the County.

## Mill Creek Landowner Cost-Share Program, Arkansas

This program is a partnership between local landowners and H2Ozarks to improve landowner operations while benefitting water quality in a priority subwatershed in the Buffalo River Watershed. The project area covers Mill Creek, commonly known as Flatrock Creek, which is a high-priority for nonpoint source pollution control for the Arkansas Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Division (ANRD). It includes the Dogpatch Springs recharge area of the Crooked Creek subwatershed.

The program seeks to lower financial barriers by providing 80-100% of cost share expenses for participating landowners. Landowners can receive up to \$7,500 per eligible conservation project.

In early 2025 we launched the program and began accepting applications. There are four enrolled landowners in the process of implementing conservation practices, with more in progress for 2026.

*Funding provided from the Arkansas Department of Natural Resources 319 Non-Point Source Pollution Program and the Environmental Protection Agency, along with many other valued partners.*



*Prescribed fire, and eligible conservation practice*



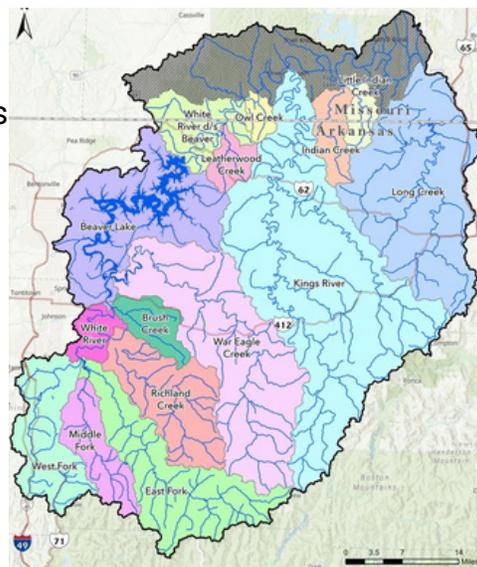
*Livestock fencing, an eligible conservation practice*

# Watershed Management Plans

## Upper White River Watershed

The Upper White River Watershed Management Plan was completed and formally accepted by the Environmental Protection Agency in November of 2025! This plan provides a strategic roadmap for protecting our water resources across more than **2,700 miles of streams** and **over 1.4 million acres of land** in the Ozarks.

Now that the plan is accepted, additional funding programs are available to implement the plan's recommendations for nonpoint source pollution control. We thank everyone who contributed, including over 26 partner groups, and 89 individual stakeholders who gave their time, effort, and expertise to shaping this plan.



**69** HUC12 Subwatersheds assessed



**135** miles of impaired streams



**89** Stakeholder Participants



**26** Partner Groups

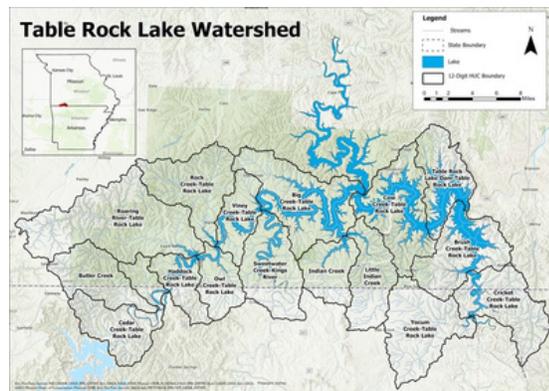


Project funding provided by the Arkansas Department of Natural Resource's 319 Program for Nonpoint Source Pollution Control, supported by the United States Environmental Protection Agency.

## Table Rock Lake Watershed

Progress continues on the Table Rock Lake Watershed Management Plan. In 2025, we held multiple outreach events to gather input from our stakeholder advisory groups and the public to ensure that the plan reflects the needs and priorities of our communities. Ozarks Environmental Water Resources Institute (OEWRi) of Missouri State University began drafting the plan in late 2025, and anticipates completion by late 2026.

The draft plan is expected to be available for public comment in the spring of 2026.



Project funding provided by the Missouri Department of Natural Resource's 319 Program for Nonpoint Source Pollution Control, supported by the United States Environmental Protection Agency.



# Grants and Funding Sources

As a nonprofit, H2Ozarks relies upon grants and other funding to achieve our work. We are greatly appreciative of the following funding agencies and grants that empower our projects:

## Current grants:

- **Arkansas Septic Tank Remediation Grant**, funded by the Arkansas Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Division (ANRD) Clean Water State Revolving Fund.
- **Missouri Onsite Wastewater Treatment System Grant**, funded with pass-through funds from the USEPA Clean Water SRF Capitalization Grant to the Missouri Department of Natural Resources.
- **Table Rock Lake Watershed Management Plan**, funded by the Missouri Department of Natural Resources Section 319 Nonpoint Source Pollution Control, supported by the United States Environmental Protection Agency.
- **Arkansas Septic Policy Analysis & Research**, funded by the Beaver Water District.
- **Missouri Septic Policy and Analysis Research** Onsite Wastewater Treatment System Pollution Assessment, Table Rock Lake Watershed, funded by Stone County Commission 2023 ARPA Grant Funding.
- **Mill Creek Cost-Share Program**, funded by the USEPA and the ANRD 319 Non-Point Source Pollution Program.
- **StreamSmart Water Quality Monitoring Program**, funded by the Beaver Water District.

## Individual donors:

- Peter & Jan Herschend, Silver Dollar City
- John Twitty
- Raeanne Presley
- Carin Love



# Sponsors and Partners

H2Ozarks also thanks our many partners, project sponsors, volunteers, in-kind supporters, and other collaborators. Without your partnership, we couldn't achieve the work we do every day.



Southwest Missouri Solid Waste Management  
Barry County Missouri Commission