

ANNUAL REPORT



2024

Ranchers gather for a track & sign workshop put on by WLA in northern Arizona. Instructor Casey MacFarland crouches to diagnose a track with the group.



Seeding New Mexico's Legacy

We secured \$300M for land and water.

At the urging of our coalition, the New Mexico state legislature and the governor invested an additional \$300 million in the Land of Enchantment Legacy Fund. Established in 2023 with a \$100 million appropriation, the now-fully funded Legacy Fund is expected to generate approximately \$15 million in interest annually. Those funds are already supporting programs and projects across New Mexico's agriculture, environment, wildlife and natural resource agencies. Funds are addressing urgent problems such as critical water shortages, devastating wildfires, the loss of soil to wind erosion, and the loss of more than a quarter million acres of agricultural production annually.

This WLA initiative resulted in a permanent source of funding for conservation and restoration of watersheds, wildlife habitats and working lands and equitable access to outdoor recreation.

On private land near the U.S.-Mexico border, restoration with gabions and other rock structures has rejuvenated this seasonal wetland, or cienega.



A pond on a private ranch in New Mexico glows while showing off its native cottonwood gallery at dusk.



Adapting to a Drying West

Ensuring landowners are well-informed about water resource issues

In 2024, landowners' engagement with WLA's water-focused resources far exceeded expectations, reflecting the growing urgency around water management in the West. Across two seasonal webinar series, targeted newsletters, and feature stories in *On Land* magazine, WLA delivered relevant, timely information on water stewardship to an audience of over 18,000. Topics ranged from irrigation efficiency and flood irrigation to water rights, process-based restoration, and transitioning to less water-intensive crops. The webinar series drew more than 2,330 registrants, with an additional 2,950 views of the recordings on YouTube—demonstrating sustained interest in practical, landowner-led solutions to complex water challenges.

Helping ranches thrive in a drier West

Driving collaboration and funding for healthy watersheds

WLA is partnering to create resilient, functioning headwaters and driving investment into high-impact conservation efforts that sustain both agricultural productivity and ecological integrity.

WLA provided critical support to landowners and watershed groups across the Upper Colorado River Basin, helping to plan, organize, and apply for more than \$12 million in funding for watershed health and restoration. Efforts focused on irrigation modernization, fish habitat restoration, and improving watershed function on private lands. Key accomplishments include:

- \$346,729 grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to support San Juan Cutthroat Trout habitat restoration in the Little Navajo River, in partnership with the Chama Peak Land Alliance.
- \$25,000 from the Colorado Water Conservation Board to implement a restoration project on Tongue Creek, working directly with local landowners.
- \$156,000 from the National Forest Foundation to fiscally sponsor the Headwaters of the Colorado Initiative, which is advancing science-based, landscape-scale watershed restoration in the Little Snake and Yampa River headwaters of Colorado and Wyoming.

WLA provided support to the Headwaters of the Colorado Initiative, the Animas Watershed Partnership, and the Natural Damages Trust Fund allowing for increased coordination to secure funding for key tributaries of the Colorado River.

Post-assisted log structure (PALS) buried themselves in retained sediment at a restoration site on private land in Arizona.



\$12M

to support watershed health and restoration projects on private lands in 2024.



Sharing the landscape with wolves and bears

Riding for Resilience: Landowners Gain Tools to Reduce Wildlife Conflicts on Working Lands

Across the West, landowners are proving that people, livestock, and wildlife can flourish on shared landscapes. In 2024, WLA helped ranchers adopt practical, non-lethal tools that reduce losses and build trust between neighbors, agencies, and conservation partners.

Through six hands-on workshops featuring experienced producers, NRCS staff, and expert partners like Rae Nickerson of Utah State University and Casey McFarland of Cyber Tracker North America, WLA delivered vital field knowledge and connections. These workshops were possible with support from two USDA Regional Conservation Partnership Programs, that WLA and partners are administering to direct \$22 million over five years to landowners working to implement non-lethal conflict reduction tools. (More about this on page 6.)

Top: Ranchers and agency staff learn together during a range riding workshop in Oregon.

Stewardship on the Rocky Mountain Front

Investing in healthy soils for thriving rangelands.

Across Montana's Rocky Mountain Front, a new three-year initiative is helping producers build more resilient lands and livelihoods. The effort will reach 180 ranchers and farmers—supporting at least 15 in developing conservation plans that address key resource concerns and open doors to NRCS and Farm Service Agency programs. The focus: improving soil health, enhancing forage, and increasing biodiversity across one of the West's most iconic working landscapes.

Backed by a \$434,240 award from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, NRCS, Nestlé USA, and Cargill, the project is led by Western Landowners Alliance in partnership with the Rocky Mountain Front Ranchlands Group. Together, we are providing hands-on technical assistance to producers—including Tribal land stewards on the Blackfeet Reservation—to advance a shared vision for the future of the Northern Great Plains.

Rocky Mountain Front rancher and WLA partner Trina Jo Bradley poses with her cow herd.



A herd of elk graze on a private ranch in the Big Hole Valley of Montana.



Building on Habitat Leasing Success

Habitat leasing protects more working lands habitat in the Northern Rockies than ever before

Habitat leasing is a powerful tool to keep working lands productive while supporting wildlife and their habitats. By compensating landowners for the ecological value they provide, habitat leases recognize and reward the essential role of private stewardship in sustaining Western landscapes.

91,145

acres enrolled in the habitat leasing pilot in Wyoming's big game priority zone.

To date, the partnership generated \$13 million in conservation easements, \$11.3 million for habitat improvement projects, and \$3.9 million in habitat leases, impacting over 635,000 acres.

WLA has been a driving force in expanding habitat leasing, particularly through the Grasslands Conservation Reserve Program (G-CRP). This work continues to demonstrate that conservation and agricultural productivity can go hand in hand—benefiting both rural communities and the landscapes they sustain.

Western Landowners Alliance played a key leadership role in the USDA-Wyoming Big Game Initiative, helping landowners conserve thousands of acres of crucial big game migration corridors through long-term habitat leases.

Programs like Grassland CRP, Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), and Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP) support the producers and working lands that keeps these habitats intact.

The USDA invested an initial \$22 million in Wyoming and committed an additional \$40 million to expand the program into Montana and Idaho, based on the success of the Wyoming pilot.

WLA is actively partnering with USDA agencies in both Montana and Idaho to support program outreach and landowner enrollment in these new geographies. Additionally, WLA successfully advanced Farm Bill language in both House and Senate versions to enhance Grassland CRP provisions, ensuring the program better meets the needs of landowners and wildlife across the West.

Conflict Solutions Built into NRCS Programs

Getting ranchers the tools they need to succeed alongside wolves and grizzly bears.

Predator conflicts can take a heavy toll on ranching operations, but WLA's National Conflict on Working Lands Conservation Innovation Grant (CoW-CIG) is changing this. The project achieved major wins to integrate conflict prevention tools into NRCS programs. As a result, range riding is now eligible for cost-share under Prescribed Grazing (528) and Upland Wildlife Habitat Management (645). Carcass management, led by Montana NRCS, is advancing under a new interim standard, and wildlife-friendly fencing is supported through existing Fence and 645 practices.

Building on the success of this work, WLA was awarded two Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) grants—one in collaboration with Heart of the Rockies Initiative—to deliver \$22 million over five years to landowners in Montana, Oregon, Colorado, New Mexico, and Arizona. This funding will help ranchers implement proven, non-lethal tools of electric fencing, fladry, carcass management, and range riding for reducing livestock-predator conflict. Landowner sign-ups began in 2025.



WLA events like the Land Talk Lounge at Old Salt Festival brought us together to stand up for stewardship.

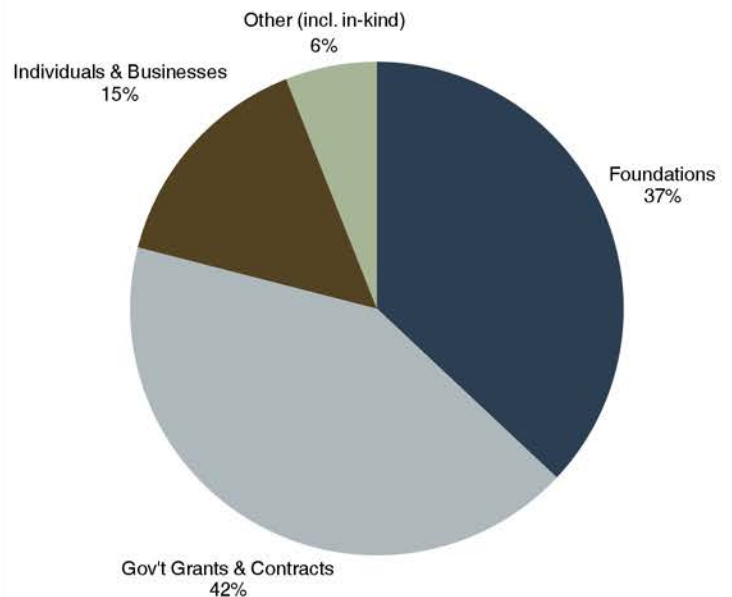
United for What Matters

*Western Landowners Alliance
doubles membership again in
2024!*

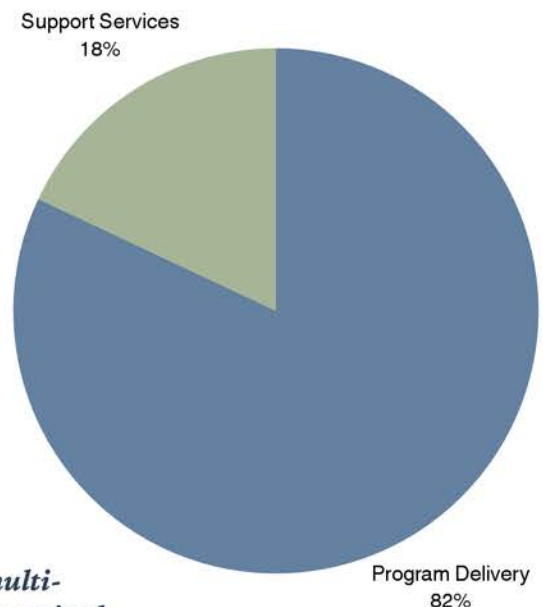
Membership more than doubled in 2024, reflecting the urgency and relevance of our mission. More land stewards than ever are joining the movement to advance conservation solutions that sustain both livelihoods and the land. This surge in membership not only broadens our collective voice in policy and public discourse—it also deepens our capacity to share knowledge, foster collaboration, and scale impact across the West.

2024 Financial Overview

Sources of Revenue	
Foundations	37%
Govt Grants & Contracts	42%
Individuals & Businesses	15%
Other (including in-kind)	6%
Total Revenue \$3,421,295	



Expenses	
Program Delivery	82%
Support Services	18%
Total Expenses \$4,093,141	



In 2024, expenses exceeded revenue due to the planned use of multi-year grant funds received in prior periods. These funds were recognized as revenue when awarded but support programming over multiple years. The organization remains financially sound and operated within budget.



With Gratitude to Our Supporters

Every success we share in these pages is a direct reflection of your generosity and dedication to the West. This year, your gifts turned vision into action—restoring habitats, protecting vital water resources, and creating opportunities for communities to connect with the natural world.

Whether you gave for the first time or have stood with us since the beginning, you are part of a dedicated community that believes in a future where people and nature thrive together. Your contributions—large and small—are making measurable change possible every single day.

In the past year, we:

Impacted over 635,000 acres through habitat leasing.

Secured an additional investment of **\$300 million for New Mexico conservation.**

Facilitated \$12 million in grant applications for watershed health and restoration projects on private lands.

We are humbled by the trust you place in us to carry out this work. Your support fuels innovation, sustains our programs, and ensures that our mission continues to grow in reach and impact.

To each donor, volunteer, and partner who stood with us this year—thank you. You are the reason our story is one of hope, resilience, and progress.

Together, we can save the West we love.

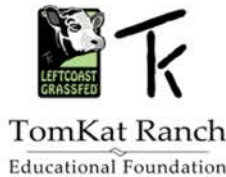


Funding Partners

We gratefully recognize the funding partners whose support made this year's impact possible. Foundations listed supported work carried out during the reporting year, regardless of when the gift was made.



**Frederick B & Pamela A
Rentschler Foundation**



**Gretchen Swanson
Family Foundation**

**THE NEW-LAND
FOUNDATION, INC.**



**Allen Wyoming
Foundation**



**Chicago Community
Foundation: MLE Fund**

Sarah and Daniel Rueven Foundation

Funding Partners



Contact Us



(505) 466-1495



westernlandowners.org



info@westernlandowners.org



P.O. Box 27798, Denver, Colorado 80227

Facebook: @westernlandownersalliance

Instagram: @westernlandowners

X/Twitter: @voiceofWLA

Linkedin: @westernlandownersalliance

YouTube: youtube.com/c/westernlandownersalliance

Thanks

to all the landowners in the West who, despite all the technical barriers, economic pressures and social headwinds, care for the land and native wildlife of our home each day. We are proud to be your voice and grow your impact through our work.



WESTERN
LANDOWNERS
ALLIANCE