



Wisconsin
League of
Conservation
Voters
Institute

2013 Annual Report

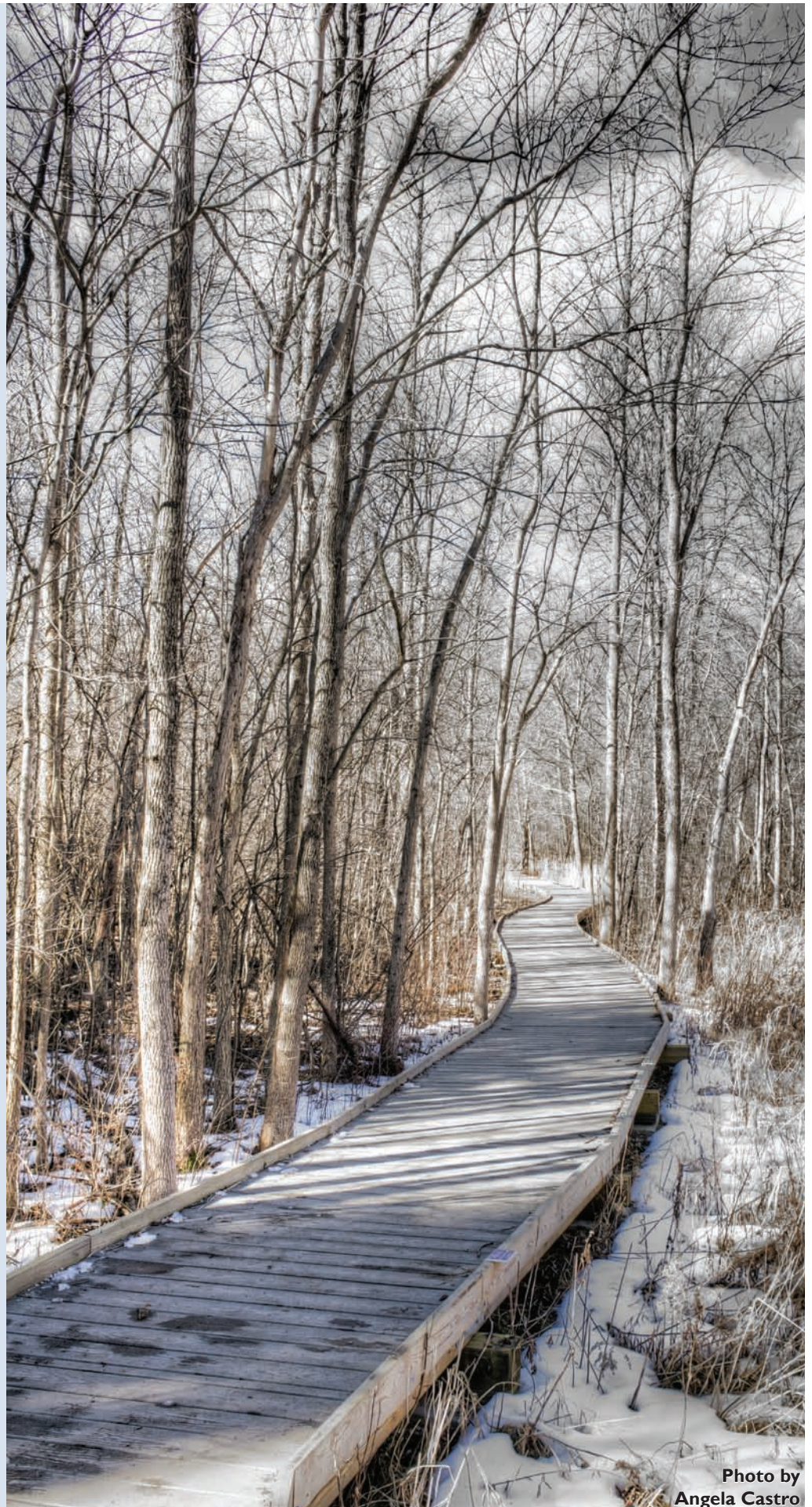


Photo by
Angela Castro

Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters Institute

Bringing People Together to Protect the Wisconsin We Love

Conservation voters from all walks of life look to Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters Institute to protect our natural resources – and the health benefits they provide. Again in 2013, we were there for them and *with* them. From frac sand mining debates to critical budget negotiations, and dozens of conservation-related bills, Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters Institute was inside and outside the Capitol, standing up for Wisconsin’s air, land, and water. Along the way, we expanded our networks and deepened relationships that will continue to serve our community for the long-term. Our on-the-ground and at-the-table approach resulted in several important conservation successes.

Program Highlights

REDUCING POLLUTED RUNOFF

Every day, County Conservationists are on the front lines, working to prevent runoff that pollutes water and leads to stinky lakes. They implement critical programs that prevent manure, fertilizer, sediment, and other chemicals from entering our waterways. The Governor’s budget proposed a devastating cut (nearly \$1 million!) to their critical work. Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters Institute sprung into action, generating more than 32,000 letters opposing the cuts. We were successful in restoring the funding so County Conservationists can continue to keep polluted runoff from contaminating our waters.

OPEN-PIT MINING BILL

The notorious Open-Pit Mining Bill allowed waterways to be filled with mining waste, prevented citizens from having input on proposed mines, and subjected our water to toxins like arsenic, lead, and mercury. It was arguably the worst environmental bill in Wisconsin’s history.

By the Numbers – Citizen efforts to stop the Open-Pit Mining Bill:

- 24,508 citizens sent letters to legislators
- 830 citizens attended public hearings
- 2,126 citizens called their legislators



Photo by Joel Austin

Opposing the Open-Pit Mining Bill was the largest campaign ever mounted by Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters Institute. This historic campaign came up just one vote short. Despite the outcome of the vote, we still have a lot of reasons to be proud. Because of our efforts – and those of Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters Institute’s supporters – the conservation community is stronger, more united, and better prepared for future campaigns to protect Wisconsin’s natural resources.

FRAC SAND MINING

Preventing Frac Sand Mining Along the Lower Wisconsin Riverway



Our beloved Wisconsin River faced a significant threat when Pattison Sand Company, an out-of-state mining company with a history of environmental violations, sought a permit to mine for frac sand along the banks of the Lower Wisconsin Scenic Riverway. Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters Institute rallied supporters, generating over 22,000 letters to the Lower Wisconsin State Riverway Board demanding protection for the river and packing the hearing room with engaged citizens. In the end, the board cast a decisive 6-2 vote to reject the mine.

Partnering with Local Groups:

Partnering with local groups was key to successfully protecting the Lower Wisconsin Riverway. Timm Zumm of Friends of the Lower Wisconsin Riverway (pictured right, testifying at the public hearing) recalls, “Our local knowledge complimented Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters Institute’s statewide advocacy reach and ability to get comments generated quickly. We helped prepare testimony and through this partnership, the message got out and spread quickly.”



Protecting the Voices of Local Communities

Frac sand mining has been booming – unchecked – across western Wisconsin, and local communities are already seeing impacts to their air and water. That’s why we jumped into action when we were confronted with an aggressive bill meant to make it harder for communities to protect their own public health and safety when it comes to polluting practices in their own backyards.



Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters Institute had to respond to this threat quickly. We provided a comprehensive bill analysis for citizens, generated more than 2,600 letters to decision makers, submitted a letter of opposition signed by dozens of local elected leaders, and recruited and prepared citizens for the public hearing. Although legislators attempted to pass this proposal two separate times, our work successfully stopped it both times.

Victories for Wisconsin’s air, land, and water are made possible by the support of dedicated citizens and generous donors like you. Thank you for supporting Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters Institute.

Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters Institute thanks the following organizations and individuals for their generous support in 2013:

A special thanks to our Legacy Circle supporters:

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 Wisconsin Voices

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Mission

Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters Institute protects public health and natural resources in Wisconsin by enhancing the capacity of the conservation movement.



Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters Institute is a proud member of Community Shares of Wisconsin and Community Shares of Greater Milwaukee.

Cover photo by Angela Castro

Financial Summary for fiscal year 2013 (January 1, 2013-December 31, 2013)

