

Annual Report

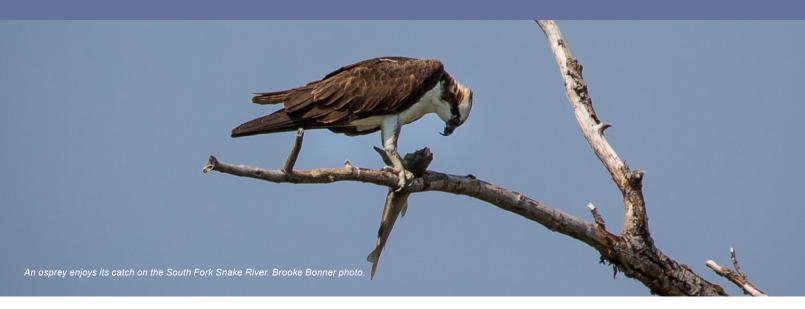


#### FEATURING

One Bite at a Time - 1 Strides for Conservation in Idaho - 3 The Business of ICL - 18

Snowshoers find solitude in the Scotchman Peaks. Jim Mellen photo.

## FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



## One Bite at a Time



Together, we have big goals.

We must tackle climate change. To this end, Idaho must become carbon neutral, which means, we need to stop using fossil fuels to generate electricity and power vehicles.

**Justin Hayes** 

We will restore salmon to true abundance in Idaho. One of the most important things to get us there is removing the four dams on the lower Snake River in Washington State.

We are protecting Idaho's precious lakes and rivers, working to make the Snake River as it flows through southern Idaho fishable and swimmable and to protect and restore the health of Idaho's great northern lakes.

Our public lands must be sustainably managed and large connected landscapes permanently protected to ensure that we have healthy landscapes for nature and for people.

These big, audacious goals can feel daunting. Can we really get it done?

Desmond Tutu once wisely said, "there is only one way to eat an elephant: a bite at a time." What he meant by this is that things that seem daunting, overwhelming, and even impossible can be accomplished gradually by taking on just a little at a time.

Formed in 1973, the Idaho Conservation League is a homegrown, statewide conservation organization. We are not the local chapter of some national organization. We work on the issues and in the special places that you, our members, tell us are the most important to you.

All across Idaho we are securing victories both large and small. These successes add up, making our communities stronger and healthier and nature more resilient. Together we are making a difference and making real progress on our audacious – and urgent – goals.

ICL celebrates its 50th anniversary in 2023. As we reflect on all that we have achieved together, for Idaho, in these last 50 years, we also look to what lies ahead of us. Our broad programs and aspirational goals unite all Idahoans in conservation, and together we are succeeding by taking one bite at a time.



Justin Hayes Executive Director jhayes@idahoconservation.org





## **Ripple Effects**

A few weeks ago on a beautiful winter day in North Idaho, I was invited to snowshoe with a group of new friends. During our post-adventure meal of pizza and apple crisp dessert, we discovered that

Rebecca Patton

all seven of us are devoted ICL members. This made for a lively dinner conversation about ICL's new North Idaho Lakes and Wildlife Programs that just launched this past year, as well as ICL's work in so many areas that matter for Idaho.

It was a gratifying reminder of ICL's deep and growing influence across the state. ICL's membership base, now 10,000 strong and growing, is at the heart of our ability to work, year in and year out, for 50 years now, on the issues and values that are important to us all.

Todd Wilkinson's latest book, *Ripple Effects*, gives insight into how our actions, both positive and negative, "ripple" to have collective and transformative impact. Although he writes about the Greater Yellowstone region, the point applies to ICL too. Our ripples as individuals matter, and ICL staff, board, members, supporters, and partners all play critical roles to create common cause and influence.

You will see this in the achievements of 2022 described in this year's annual report, which also reflect the dedication, expertise, and savvy of ICL staff who lead this collective effort that shapes Idaho's future.

As we begin a new year that marks 50 years for ICL, we not only thank you for your unwavering support to get us to where we are now, but we look forward to the next 50 years of ICL protecting the air we breathe, water we drink, and lands and wildlife we love.

"Our ripples as individuals matter, and ICL staff, board, members, supporters, and partners all play critical roles to create common cause and influence."



#### **Rebecca Patton** Chair Idaho Conservation League Board of Directors

# Strides for Conservation in Idaho



Marie Callaway Kellner

ICL's conservation programs are primarily organized under 4 campaigns: a carbon neutral Idaho, restoring Idaho's wild salmon and steelhead, a swimmable and fishable Snake River through southern Idaho, and protection and responsible management of Idaho's

public lands. Our work on these 4 BHAGs (Big, Hairy, Audacious Goals) continued apace in 2022. Yet, the impact of our work reached far beyond these campaigns.

#### **Steps Toward a Carbon Neutral Idaho**

ICL's Climate Campaign goal of a carbon neutral Idaho is geared at doing what we can, as Idahoans, to reduce Idaho's contribution to the global climate crisis. Increasingly longer hot and dry summers remind us that we are playing catch-up, but the good news is that, in addition to our on-the-ground advocacy, the federally enacted Inflation Reduction Act and Investment in Infrastructure and Jobs Act are sending tens of millions of dollars to Idaho for climate related projects.

In 2022, ICL worked with the Idaho Office of Energy and Mineral Resources (OEMR) to prioritize existing funding to expand electric charging stations across Idaho. With more federal funds on the way, we will continue to work with OEMR, the Idaho Department of Transportation, and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to accelerate distribution of funds with a focus on rural areas. Increasing Idaho's electric vehicle charging network remains a top priority for ICL in 2023.

Recognizing that climate action commitments better situate communities to receive and implement climate funding, ICL worked with the city of Moscow to secure a climate action commitment in 2022, and will expand that work to other communities in 2023.

This year was a busy one for ICL at the Public Utilities Commission (PUC). ICL participated in cases there that led to Idaho Power committing to exit and decommission its Valmy coal plant by 2025. Our intervention also led Idaho Power to accelerate its timeline for conversion and/or closure of several units of the Jim Bridger coal plant in Wyoming. Coal burning at Jim Bridger is now expected to cease in 2028, making Idaho Power's portfolio coal-free two years earlier than expected.





ICL also intervened in the PUC case that will establish the rates homeowners pay and are paid related to their rooftop solar systems. Thanks to the financial support of our members, ICL was able to secure expert analysis to rebut Idaho Power's assertions in that case, helping us advocate for everyone in Idaho Power's service area who seeks to install solar. Across the state, ICL is being strategic in advancing clean energy in Idaho.

## Securing Commitments to Save Wild Salmon and Steelhead

Born in Idaho's lakes and rivers, wild salmon and steelhead migrate to the ocean and then return to their native waters where they spawn and die, and the cycle begins anew. More than two million of these fish once returned to Idaho each year, but that abundance is no more. ICL's Salmon & Steelhead Campaign seeks to change that.

For several years, ICL has championed Rep. Mike Simpson's (R-ID) Columbia Basin Initiative, a plan that could prevent extinction by removing the four lower Snake River dams in Washington State, while reimagining the Pacific Northwest's energy and transportation grids. But without the support of our downstream sister states, this effort won't succeed. So earlier this year, ICL launched our Salmon Mobilization Team in Seattle, WA. Led by ICL's full-time salmon grassroots coordinator based in Seattle, the team contacted over 20,000 people across the region, putting grassroots pressure on elected officials in Washington and Oregon. The team engaged new supporters through digital advocacy, contacting elected officials over 107,000 times – urging them to take action.

We are especially focused on Senator Patty Murray (D-WA) and Washington's Governor Jay Inslee. ICL provided them with information on both the status of salmon and steelhead, and how the region will be stronger and better positioned if we replace the energy generation and bargefocused grain transportation services with new fish-friendly systems. After lengthy study, Murray and Inslee issued a report, expressing their support for replacing the dams' services in advance of breaching the four dams on the lower Snake River to save wild salmon and steelhead.

Recognizing that these fish would already be gone if it weren't for the work of Northwest indigenous Tribes, ICL remains steadfast in our support of Tribes and their calls for action, and we use our platform to share the vital work of Tribes with the public.





#### **ICL'S FOUR MAJOR CAMPAIGNS**



## Protecting Idaho's Public Lands and Wildlife

I often say that – while audacious – our Climate, Salmon & Steelhead, and Snake River Campaign goals are measurable and achievable. They may not be achieved in my working lifetime, but we'll know when we get there. However, ICL's public lands work is different; it goes on forever. We know we are successful because there are still healthy public lands to protect.

Through our work with the Idaho Forest Restoration Partnership, in 2022 ICL helped secure funds to support local forest restoration collaboratives throughout the state. These groups play an important role in helping increase the pace and scale of forest and watershed restoration. Projects developed collaboratively can achieve things for all parties – reducing hazardous fuels around communities, restoring forest health and resilience, providing a sustainable source of timber from suitable areas, restoring wildlife habitat, improving water quality and fisheries, and enhancing recreation opportunities.

In our West Central Idaho Office, collaboration has become a hallmark of our lands work. ICL continues to play a leading role in United Payette (UP), a



grassroots organization formed to permanently conserve state endowment lands around McCall for the public and ecosystem health. When one of the most prized of these lands, Payette Lake's Cougar Island, went up for auction last summer, UP's work over the past two years of identifying easement opportunities for state endowment lands came into play – resulting in permanent development restrictions on key portions of the island.

Whether working in collaboratives or alone, compromise is often involved. However, if threats to our values are too great, we rely on litigation – like with the Sage Hen Project in the Boise National Forest. We felt strongly that fish and terrestrial species were being needlessly negatively impacted in this timber harvest project, and when our concerns were ignored, we responded with litigation. We won – as did the fish, wildlife, and water of this area. Similarly, in North Idaho, our litigation led the Army Corps of Engineers to revoke a wetland fill development permit at the confluence of Trestle Creek and Lake Pend Oreille, which is critical habitat for threatened bull trout.

Also in North Idaho, we sat down with snowmobilers, backcountry skiers, outfitters, guides, county commissioners, and other conservation groups to help draft a proposed winter recreation



plan for the Bonners Ferry, Priest Lake, and Sandpoint Ranger Districts. ICL served as a voice for wildlife, and advocated for approximately 270,000 acres to be closed to snowmobile use all winter to protect wildlife such as wolverine, mountain goat, and lynx. Snowmobile use would also be restricted to designated trails annually starting in April on the remaining 622,000 acres of the planning area to protect grizzly bears when they emerge from hibernation. Final approval of the plan is expected in late 2023.

Mining is another area of focus for our public lands team. Idaho is a mineral rich state, and as a clean energy future becomes increasingly important in combating climate change, the demand for minerals that power clean energy and electric vehicles also grows. ICL recognizes that many of these minerals are found in Idaho, and that there is a responsibility to not export the harms of mining to countries with few to no environmental or labor protections. That being said, no one gets a free pass. Mining is not a sustainable endeavor, but it can be done responsibly and ICL is doing our part to ensure mining projects that proceed in Idaho conform with all applicable laws and have bonding sufficient to remediate the land and water after mine closures.

For example, Jervois Mining's Idaho Cobalt Project near Challis opened in fall 2022. Cobalt is



an essential ingredient in making electric vehicle batteries, moving us forward in our clean energy goals. ICL will continue to keep a close eye on this mine moving forward, as well as continue our lead role in the Conservation Action Partnership. Through this cooperative agreement between ICL and Jervois, Jervois voluntarily funds \$150,000 worth of conservation projects in the upper Salmon River watershed, ensuring that they are not just taking from the land, but also giving back.

Not far from Jervois' mine is another cobalt exploration project located west of Salmon along the Salmon River Road, which ICL filed an Objection to in 2022. This project initially included numerous drill sites within the Main Salmon River Wild & Scenic Corridor, but ICL's involvement led the Forest Service and the mining company to remove all proposed drill sites within the river corridor as well as sites that would have been visible from the Middle Fork Salmon River. The project will also now include a more comprehensive wildlife impacts analysis.

Another mine requiring ICL's focus is the proposed Stibnite Gold Project – a massive open-pit cyanide vat leach mine in headwaters of the East Fork South Fork Salmon River. After we successfully pushed for additional environmental review when the initial

#### **ICL'S FOUR MAJOR CAMPAIGNS**



mine plan was announced two years ago, late 2022 brought a Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the project in central Idaho. Working with NGO partners, volunteers, and hired experts, ICL is once again reviewing the proposal with a fine-tooth comb, doing all we can to ensure this project, if it proceeds, is as protective as possible of the values we all cherish.

The Kilgore Gold Mine in eastern Idaho's Centennial Mountains will have its day in court in early 2023. This comes after ICL filed litigation when our concerns about impacts to groundwater and grizzly bears were not resolved in the environmental review phase. ICL also spoke up for clean water and fisheries this year in response to the harms of instream suction dredge mining, with Idaho's U.S. District Court ruling in ICL's favor holding that such dredge mining does, indeed, involve discharging pollutants into rivers, and thus requires Clean Water Act protections. This case resulted in a \$150,000 fine for the polluter, representing the largest Clean Water Act violation fine ever waged against an individual in Idaho history.

Like our public lands, wildlife is part of Idaho's natural heritage. Recognizing this, ICL renewed our focus on wildlife in 2022 with the launch of a new Wildlife Program. Our program prioritizes species that don't already have strong, dedicated



advocates in Idaho – nongame species – by having professional staff advocating for migration corridors, habitat connectivity, and funding for the agency management that will allow those things to happen. In just the few months this program has been up and running, ICL is contributing to management plans and building key relationships in ways we didn't have the capacity to do until now. And we are just getting started!

#### Clean Water Across Idaho: Snake River, North Idaho's Lakes, and More

The Snake River's headwaters in eastern Idaho host world-renowned trout fisheries, but across the state at Hells Canyon, the same river consistently hosts toxic algae outbreaks – rendering it unsafe for people, pets, and wildlife. This is why ICL's Snake River Campaign works to restore the Snake River through southern Idaho to a swimmable, fishable, safe condition.

The greatest legal tool available to clean up the river is the Clean Water Act, so ICL staff have diligently and actively participated in setting what is called the Mid Snake TMDL (or, total maximum daily load of pollution) for years. The TMDL is as close to the finish line as it's ever been, due in no small part to ICL staff's dogged engagement in the

#### **ICL'S FOUR MAJOR CAMPAIGNS**





process. Why does it take so long to set pollution limits on a river when Idahoans collectively value clean water above many other values? Politics. This makes an equally important element of this work strengthening the will of people to create change. That's why much of ICL's Snake River work in 2022 involved getting people out along and on the river, showing them why it is so worthy of better treatment.

The Snake River isn't the only body of water that ICL champions. In 2022, ICL began its first-ever North Idaho Lakes & Waterways Conservation Program. Dedicated to advocating for the beautiful lakes and rivers of North Idaho, this program provides a voice for clean water in the face of legacy mining pollution and increasing development by holding government agencies, elected decision makers, and developers accountable.

Additionally, and with much less fanfare, is ICL's regulatory work. Every Clean Water Act permit issued in the state of Idaho is reviewed by an ICL staff member, with the goal of ensuring that the most stringent protections available are implemented on behalf of Idaho's amazing rivers and lakes and the people and animals that depend on and cherish them. A staffer also reviews each water right application sought in Idaho, and

engages when fish or healthy river flows stand to be negatively impacted.

In 2022, ICL issued another Wastewater Treatment Plant Report, highlighting which wastewater treatment plants (WWTPs) are in compliance with clean water standards and which are not. Communities and large industrial users of water are the entities that typically have WWTPs, and it was gratifying to see that several cities who were once atop the list of violators have cleaned up their act. For those not in compliance, the report provides a starting place for ICL to play a key role in forcing them to do so.

From North Idaho's lakes, to the Snake River in southern Idaho, to the streams and waterways in between – ICL serves as a voice for clean water, and will continue to do so with your support.



Marie Callaway Kellner Conservation Program Director mkellner@idahoconservation.org

## In it for the Long Haul



Jonathan Oppenheimer

As ICL rounds the corner into a new year, it's a time to reflect back on the accomplishments of 2022.

The External Relations Team at ICL focuses on spreading ICL's message through communications, marketing, and government relations,

and by connecting our supporters to decision makers through outreach and engagement. We support Idaho's conservation community by providing our members and supporters with the means to make a difference and advocate for change, and we find ways to amplify these messages through collaboration with both new and longstanding partners.

In 2022, Idaho and the rest of the planet returned to some semblance of normalcy as the Covid pandemic subsided. ICL returned to the Statehouse, walking in the footsteps of advocates who have walked those marbled hallways ever since our founding in 1973. We returned to Stanley for our annual Wild Idaho! Conference. And we were pleased to be able to participate in and host events across the state focused on restoring the Snake River, recovering salmon and steelhead, safeguarding public lands, addressing the root causes of climate change, advocating for wildlife, and more!

By the numbers, 5,000 ICL advocates sent 21,000 messages to Idaho decision makers in 2022. Whether it was expressing concern with a mining project, promoting lower Snake River dam breaching, advocating for electric vehicles, supporting energy efficient building codes, or asking for a legislative resolution in support of the Sawtooth National Recreation Area's 50th anniversary, our collective voices made a difference. We were pleased to support and table at events including electric vehicle fairs in Boise, Pocatello, and Moscow, Sawtooth Salmon Fest in Stanley, Treefort Music Festival in Boise, Spirit of the Waters Totem Pole Journey in Pocatello and Lewiston, and the Salmon Orca Summit in Washington, DC. In October, ICL met with Administration officials, Congressional staff, and visited the U.S. Supreme

Court for a hearing on an important wetlands case that involves Priest Lake, covering all three branches of government in one day! Finally, our Youth Engagement Coordinator attended the UN climate summit in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt. To say we're getting out there would be an understatement.

Our successful Wilderness Stewards Program continued in the Sawtooths and Boulder-White Clouds and expanded into the Payette National Forest this year. Stewards completed 124 patrols on 2,374 miles of trail, cleaning up trash, fire rings, and educating backcountry travelers on the importance of Leave No Trace practices along the way.

ICL's voice was amplified by effective media coverage with over 210 stories featuring ICL. This included a cover story in The Atlantic, a feature story in Popular Science, and a lengthy front page story in the Idaho Statesman, all focused on the development of a cobalt mine near Salmon. ICL's Snake River Campaign has been featured in the Idaho Press Tribune on the front page of their Outdoors Section on a regular basis, and TV news coverage saw a significant uptick in 2022. ICL also continues to make significant strides with the addition of a marketing manager, helping attract new supporters and meet engagement and membership goals alike.

In the realm of government relations, I look forward to returning to the statehouse for my 8th consecutive session as ICL's lobbyist. What excites me most is knowing that you have my back. For the past 49 legislative sessions, ICL has advanced the cause of conservation in the hallways and meeting rooms of the statehouse. As the Twin Falls Times-News noted in 1976, "like the fly on the belligerent mule, the Idaho Conservation League seems to have become a permanent addition to the Idaho State Legislature... From the beginning the ICL has polished an image as a non-partisan, well-educated hardworking bunch." Entering our 50th year as Your Voice for Conservation in the Statehouse, one thing is clear: because of your support and engagement, we're not going anywhere, and we're in it for the long haul!



### **Our Donors**

Our donors and supporters make our work possible! Below is a listing of ICL members, donors, and supporters who contributed \$250 or more in the 2022 fiscal year, from October 1, 2021 - September 30, 2022. Gifts include financial. in-kind, and pledge payments to the It's My Idaho campaign. Please accept our heartfelt gratitude for investing in our mission and your Idaho!

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#### In Memoriam

The following ICL supporters passed away in the 2022 fiscal year, from October 1, 2021 to September 30, 2022. ICL honors their passion for Idaho. This listing is complete to the best of our knowledge. We sincerely apologize for any oversights.

Carol Blackburn Chris Davidson Carol Davis **Stephen Drinkard** Jim Grossman Allen Jackson Ann McBride Carl Nellis **Ray Newcombe** John Platt Clem Pope **Doug Presler** Curt Ries Marjory Stage **Roger Steiner** Janet Ward Chris Yoder

#### STAFF AND BOARD MEMBERS

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## **Join ICL's Legacy Partners**



**Diana Burrell** 

Legacy

Thanks to our generous supporters, ICL is celebrating its 50th anniversary in 2023! Every one of ICL's victories – past and future – is thanks to your shared passion for our mission. As we reflect on our successes, we look to the work still to be done in

the next 50 years. We invite you to leave a legacy gift to ICL to ensure future generations will enjoy clean air, clean water, and access to healthy, biodiverse public lands. By leaving a legacy gift to ICL in your will or estate plan, you can help build ICL's long-term financial strength. Your planned gift will shape Idaho's conservation community for generations to come. If you would like to learn more about including ICL in your estate plan, contact me at 208.345.6933 x 217.

With your help, we will continue to protect Idaho's wild places – now and for the next 50 years.



**Diana Burrell** Development Director dburrell@idahoconservation.org

#### ICL's Legacy Partners have made provisions to support our conservation efforts after their passing.

Eileen Atkisson & Lawrence Blakey Judy Baker Cynthia Billings Dede & Larry Binder Alida Bockino Ed Bottum Stefanie Buckbee Michelle Bumgarner Ed Cannady Tiffany & Christopher **Bill Clark** Jeanne Clothiaux Audrie Cudahy Paul & Heidi Cunningham Nancy & Jim DeWitt David & Mary Dudley Bryan DuFosse & Shanna Kittell Terrie & Dennis Dunn Joyce Fabre & Craig Randle **Gregory Farmer** 

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#### If ICL is in your will, please let us know.

## The Business of ICL



Julia Rundberg

As this annual report details, ICL grew in fiscal year 2022, adding new program areas to our portfolio. This meant our expenses grew as well. Fortunately, donors led the way, providing financial assistance to start these new areas of work. Meanwhile, the turbulence of the economy

impacted ICL's endowment, and the overall value of our investments declined. While this trend is concerning, ICL should be well positioned, with reserves in place for just such times, and a broad base of donors and supporters whose ongoing giving gives us confidence that our growth is sustainable.

## **Statement of Activity**

(for the year ending Sept. 30)

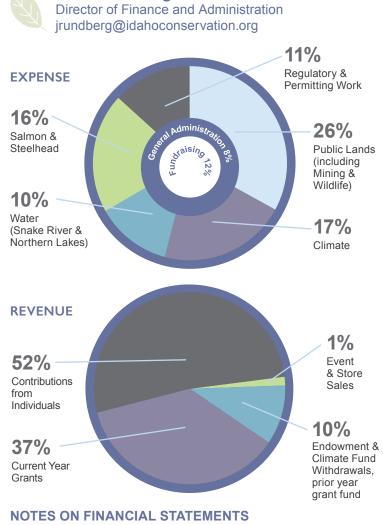
#### **REVENUE AND OTHER SUPPORT**

Direct Contributions Non-Government Grants Program Sales & Fees Special Events	\$1,536,585 \$1,078,020 \$16,094 \$25,657
Endowment, Climate / Water funds withdrawals & funds released from prior year grants	\$296,935
Total Operating Funds	\$2,953,291
United Payette fiscal sponsor gifts Endowment, unrealized loss Gifts designated to Endowment	\$102,140 (\$736,905) \$234,856
EXPENSES Public Lands (including Mining & Wildlife) Climate Water (Snake River & Northern Lakes) Salmon/Steelhead Regulatory/Permitting Work	\$770,411 \$498,505 \$293,763 \$467,461 \$314,935
<b>Total Program Expense</b> General Administration Fundraising	\$2,345,077 \$240,128 \$341,467
Total Expense	\$2,926,670

In turn, ICL strives to operate professionally and efficiently, and is pleased to report that eighty percent of our spending directly supported program work.

We continue to seek ways to align our operations with our mission and values, purchasing carbon offsets for our travel, and this year, an unexpected gift enabled ICL to purchase several hybrid vehicles for staff use. As ICL celebrates its 50th year, we are grateful for the support and dedication of so many people over the years. Thanks to them, ICL continues to be financially healthy, and empowered to step up and work for Idaho in conservation areas new to ICL.

Julia Rundberg



• The Idaho Conservation League is a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization under 501(c)3 of

the Internal Revenue Code, and uses accrual basis accounting.

• Multi-year grants are counted as income the date they are awarded.

• Fiscal sponsor expenses were minimal, and included with ICL's total expenses.

 Audited financial statements, prepared by Harris CPAs., are available on our website. If you have questions or comments about finances, call Julia Rundberg, director of finance and administration, 208.345.6933 x 218

Idaho Conservation League – 2022 Annual Report



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208.345.6933 PO Box 844 Boise, ID 83701

#### **Electronic Service Requested**

From all of us at the Idaho Conservation League, we wish you a happy 2023! Thank you for your continued support as we all work together to protect the clean water, clean air and special places that make Idaho, Idaho for the next 50 years.

Thank you for supporting us in this milestone year and may your New Year bring you many beautiful adventures in wild Idaho.

