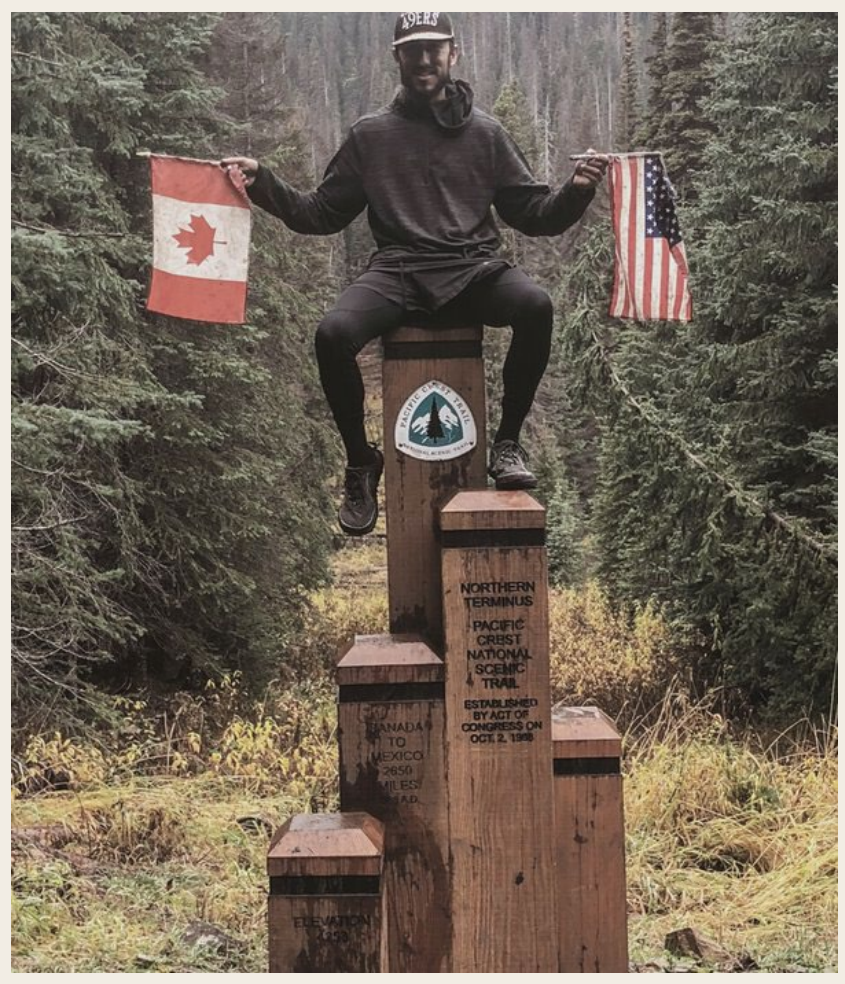
Backcountry Hunters & Anglers

Partnering with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on stewardship of public lands and waters

Bryan Jones
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About BHA



The voice for our wild public lands, waters, and wildlife

The mission of Backcountry Hunters & Anglers is to ensure North America's outdoor heritage of hunting and fishing in a natural setting, through education and work on behalf of wild public lands and waters.

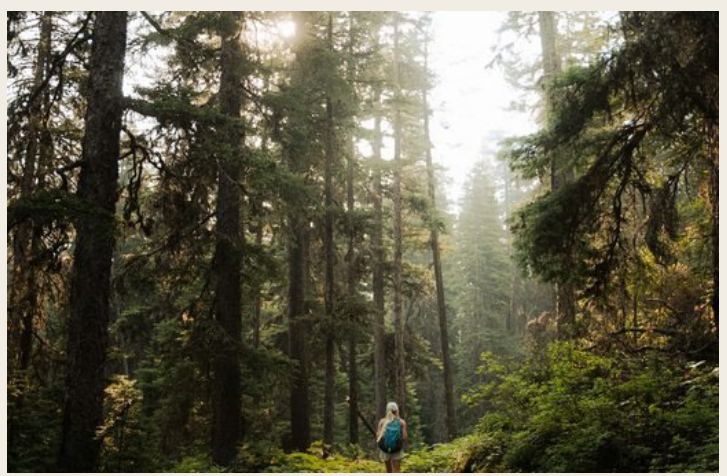
Founded in 2004 around a campfire in the Cascade foothills of Oregon, BHA is a non-partisan 501(c)(3) whose members are young, politically diverse, and actively engaged in the issues that affect our shared natural resources. BHA was founded by service members representing nearly every branch of the military.

Our Focus Areas



Access & Opportunity

Lack of access is the No. 1 reason hunters and anglers say they quit. Keeping public lands and waters open and usable is a priority for our members.



Public Lands & Waters

Every citizen owns a share of America's public lands and waters. It is up to us to care for that heritage and hand it down intact.



Fair Chase

Hunting should involve skill, woodsmanship, and challenge. BHA chapters lead a grassroots movement to uphold fair chase principles.

A National Network of Local Volunteers

146,000 members and supporters across North America

49 states with BHA chapters, plus Washington, D.C., 2 Canadian provinces, and 1 Canadian territory

~50% of members are 45 or younger. 33% Independent, 26% Democrat, 25.5% Republican

19% of members are active-duty service members or veterans





How We Operate

1. **Grassroots**
   Volunteer-led state and provincial chapters plan and run most of our on-the-ground work.

2. **National staff support**
   Program staff help chapters with partner coordination, project planning, grants, and reporting.

3. **Not species specific**
   Our members care about whole landscapes: uplands, wetlands, forests, rivers, and reservoirs.

4. **Younger, diverse members**
   A younger, bipartisan base brings energy and new faces to agency projects.

5. **Storytelling**
   Project stories reach about 568,500 followers, members, and subscribers, building public support for your sites.



BHA Programs That Bring Volunteers



Armed Forces Initiative

Connects service members, veterans, and Gold Star Families with public lands through hunts, fishing trips, and stewardship work. 19% of BHA members have served or are serving.



Collegiate Program

College clubs and student leaders across the country, a ready source of volunteers and future natural resource professionals.



Hunting for Sustainability

Recruitment, retention, and reactivation of hunters and anglers, often paired with hands-on habitat work.

Our Partnership with USACE

A national framework for volunteer stewardship on Corps lands and waters



The BHA and USACE MOU

SIGNED

August 2023

TERM

9 years

RUNS THROUGH

August 2032

SCOPE

12 million acres of USACE lands and waters

What the MOU says

- Promotes shared stewardship through volunteerism and service on Corps lands and waters
- Shared goals: more outdoor recreation access and more volunteer opportunities for local communities
- Engages families, youth, veterans, and underserved communities in recreation and stewardship
- Specific projects are set up locally, through supplemental partnership agreements where needed
- Non-binding: it does not obligate funds, but it opens the door for local cooperation

Who Does What Under the MOU

BHA will strive to

- Meet with USACE at least annually
- Help identify, plan, and carry out projects that fit both agencies' priorities
- Recruit and lead volunteers for stewardship, education, and outreach
- Raise awareness of the MOU to generate new project proposals
- Make sure projects are reported in the USACE volunteer database

USACE will strive to

- Meet with BHA at least annually
- Coordinate projects and set up supplemental agreements locally
- Encourage local staff to partner with BHA chapters
- Provide project oversight and logistical support for each volunteer project on Corps lands and waters

Stewardship Work We Can Bring to Your Site

Habitat

- Invasive species removal
- Timber stand improvement
- Glade and grassland restoration
- Native plantings and tree protection

Wildlife & Fish

- Wood duck and nest box builds
- Fish habitat structures and reef balls
- Guzzler and water catchment work
- Fence removal and wildlife-friendly fence

Access & Recreation

- Shoreline, river, and lake cleanups
- Trail clearing and maintenance
- Campground and range improvements
- Fishing and hunting access clearing



Our Work on USACE Lands, 2025 to 2026

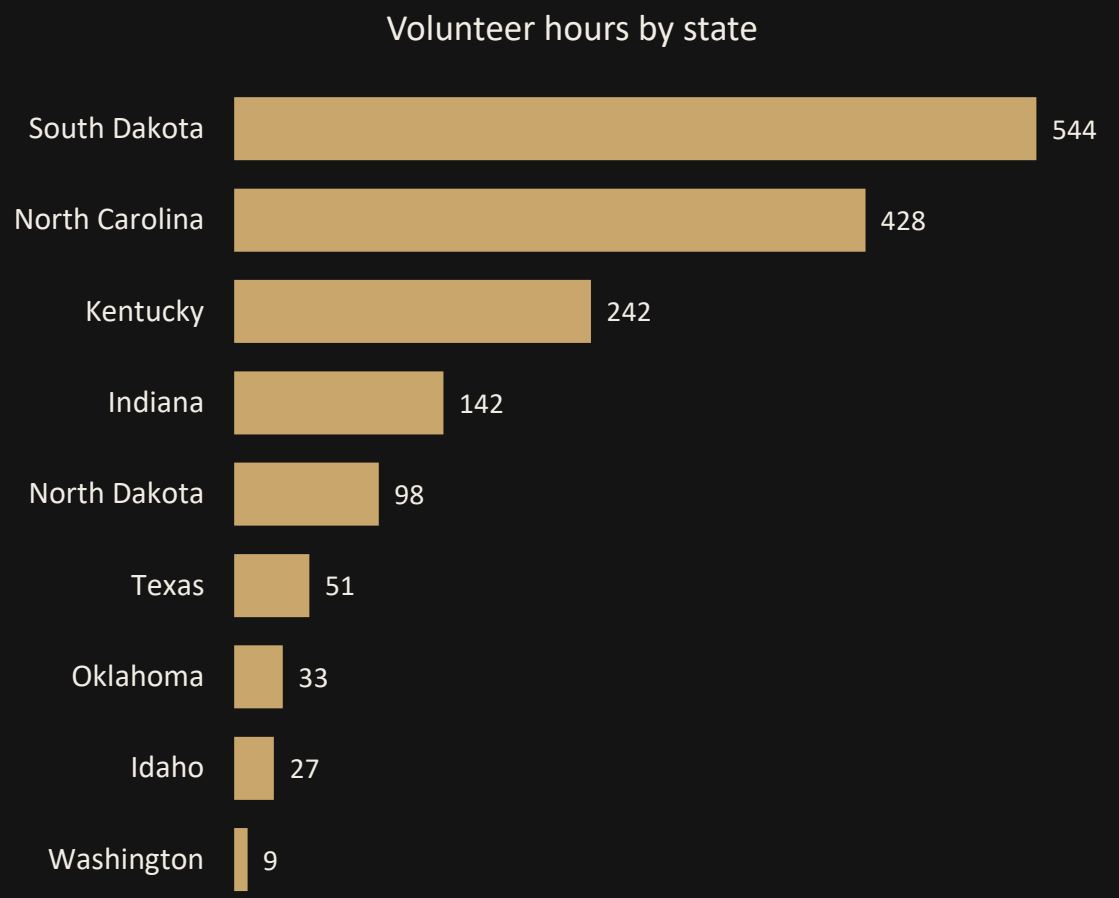
20
projects

9
states

317
volunteers

1,574
volunteer hours

About $56,900
in donated labor, at the Independent Sector value of $36.14 per volunteer hour



2025 Projects on USACE Properties

Date	Project	Location	Vols	Hours	Results
Jan 15 to Feb 15	Trashy Squirrel Hunt (4 sites)	Statewide, NC	26	416	750 lbs of trash, 26 tires, 50 propane canisters
Mar 8	J.E. Roush Lake Wood Duck Box Day	Huntington, IN	16	52	20 wood duck boxes installed, existing boxes checked
Apr 26	Feathered Ambitions	Hazard, KY	9	45	9 bird boxes built and installed
May 24	AFI Mud Mountain Dam Trail Cleanup	Enumclaw, WA	3	9	3 miles of trail brushed and cleaned
Jul 26	Taylorsville Lake WMA Hack & Squirt	Taylorsville, KY	7	14	About 9 acres of timber stand improvement
Aug 9	Taylorsville Lake WMA Glade Restoration	Taylorsville, KY	11	22	1.5 acres of invasives removed, 500 yds of fire break
Aug 23	Pipestem Reservoir Fence Removal	Jamestown, ND	14	98	1 sq. mile of predator fence removed
Sep 13	Clark Fork Public Land Pack Out	Clark Fork, ID	9	27	10.8 miles of shore and trail cleaned
Sep 27	Chestnuts and Campsites	Hazard, KY	6	18	15 chestnut cages, 7 lantern poles, 2 fire pits
Sep 27	Grapevine Lake Pack-Out	Grapevine, TX	3	27	About 500 lbs of flood debris removed

2026 Projects on USACE Properties

Date	Project	Location	Vols	Hours	Results
Jan 17	Mississinewa Duck & Bluebird Box Build	Peru, IN	13	39	21 duck boxes, 20 bluebird box kits
Feb 7	Trashy Squirrel Hunt, Jordan Lake	Durham, NC	3	12	8 bags of trash plus 200 lbs of debris
Feb 21	J.E. Roush Lake Wood Duck Box Build	Huntington, IN	17	51	20 wood duck boxes built
Apr 25	Granger Lake Clean-up	Granger, TX	4	24	10 bags of flood trash, 3 tires, 1 water heater
Jun 3	Buckhorn Lake Stillhouse Trail	Buckhorn, KY	4	16	26 bags of flood trash
Jun 6	Buckhorn Lake Fish Habitat	Buckhorn, KY	12	72	72 reef balls placed
Jun 27	AFI Illinois River Clean Up	Tahlequah, OK	11	33	100 lbs of trash removed
Jul 8	Missouri River Cleanup (16th annual)	Pierre, SD	136	544	1,800 lbs of trash removed
Aug 15	Taylorsville Lake Archery Range Work Day	Taylorsville, KY	10	40	Range targets rebuilt, new sign hung
Oct 3	Buckhorn Lake Tailwaters Invasive Removal	Hazard, KY	3	15	13 truckloads of invasives, new fishing access

Project Highlights

Missouri River Cleanup

Pierre, SD

136 volunteers, 544 hours, and 1,800 lbs of trash in the 16th annual event, with SD Game, Fish & Parks and USFWS.

Buckhorn Lake

Kentucky

Four projects in 2026: 72 reef balls for fish habitat, trail cleanup after floods, and invasive removal that opened new tailwater fishing access.



Taylorsville Lake WMA

Kentucky

Timber stand improvement on about 9 acres, glade restoration, and archery range upgrades, working alongside KDFWR staff.

Pipestem Reservoir

Jamestown, ND

With Pheasants Forever and NEON, 14 volunteers removed a square mile of 8-strand electric predator fence that blocked wildlife and hunters.



Ways We Can Partner



Volunteer work days

Single-day or recurring events led by a local chapter, with your staff providing oversight.

Supplemental agreements

Cooperative and cost-share agreements or SPAs set up by your district for larger or funded projects.

Chapter funds

Chapters can sometimes contribute funds for materials, tools, or volunteer meals.

Joint grant applications

Grant writing support, project management, and added capacity from BHA staff.

What We Have Learned

Mind the calendar

Avoid opening days and big local events. Our Grapevine Lake turnout dropped on archery opener and State Fair weekend.

Clear communication

Volunteers need the meeting spot, gear list, and timing well ahead. Good handoffs between agency and chapter leads make the day run smoothly.

Annual events grow

Repeat projects build a following: Pierre is in its 16th year, and Clark Fork its 3rd.

Floods create need

Several 2025 and 2026 cleanups followed flood events. Chapters can respond quickly when you call.



Getting a Project Started

1

Reach out

Contact BHA with your site, the need, and the season.

2

Scope it together

We connect you with the nearest chapter and agree on the work and any agreement needed.

3

We recruit

The chapter posts the event and signs up volunteers.

4

Work day

Your staff provide oversight, tools, and logistics. Our volunteers do the work.

5

Report it

We share results and log hours in the USACE volunteer database.

How Can We Help You?



- What projects on your lands could use volunteer help?
- What challenges do you face in planning or carrying out projects?
- What has worked, or not worked, with volunteer groups in the past?
- Who is the best point of contact at your office?
- What do you look for in a partner?

Thank You

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