

A photograph of a rocky waterfall with white water cascading over large, brown boulders.

# 2008 Annual Report

Dear Members,

American Whitewater has a great story to tell, 2008 was an outstanding year for your river stewardship organization. Your membership support allowed American Whitewater's River Stewardship Team to work on important projects in their respective regions. The River Stewardship Team consists of professional staff, board members and volunteers from communities across the country. This regional approach to project work is focused on the American Whitewater mission, "To conserve and restore America's whitewater resources and to enhance opportunities to enjoy them safely." Staying true to the mission, this Annual Report highlights stewardship projects taking place around the country.

As good as 2008 was for American Whitewater, we cannot look backwards. The winds of an economic downturn are blowing hard and non-profit organizations are being forced to examine their business models. Fortunately, the American Whitewater board and staff have been creative in finding ways to live within the means of the organization. New technologies have assisted; board meetings are done as a conference call with a web-enabled presentation tool rather than having face-to-face meetings that require flying folks in from around the country. Additionally, our reserve fund was invested very conservatively and as a result American Whitewater did not incur financial loss due to the market downturn in 2008.

With economic adversity comes opportunity, and this recession will be no different. As we all adjust to fundamental

shifts in our national economy, flowing rivers provide a welcome and affordable refuge. Whitewater paddling provides many outlets to the stresses of daily life and deepens our relationships with paddling friends, family and the places that are most important to us. Protecting treasured whitewater assets for future generations takes on new meaning and significance in troubled times.

As we move through the coming year we will be taking the long view, looking for ways to work smarter and continuing to be a leader in advocating on behalf of whitewater rivers and the appropriate management of public lands. Taking the long view means that you, the American Whitewater member, are the key to future success. Without your membership support the American Whitewater River Stewardship Team could not do the work reflected in the following pages. There has never been a better time to support these projects through American Whitewater membership.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Don Kinser.

Don Kinser  
President

Handwritten signature of Mark Singelton.

Mark Singelton  
Executive Director



North Fork San Joaquin, CA ©Darin Mcquoid

## 2008 River Stewardship Report

Our River Stewardship Program is lead by a small diverse staff that spends their time in the complex world of negotiations and legal wrangling. The fuel to our fire though is time spent on the water, with the paddling community. The passion that we share for exploring rivers, our technical expertise, and the incredible volunteerism and activism of the paddling community allow us to be effective river advocates on the local and national scale. We would like to share a few detailed examples of the work

that we conducted in 2008, along with a list of the projects in our work plan. Our goal is always to do the most good for rivers and paddlers that we can, and to seek a good geographical mix of projects. We prioritize projects that have strong local support from paddlers, that are winnable, and that we can play a vital role in. On many of our projects, if paddlers were not there, the river would fail to be protected or restored. Thank you for your support of these efforts!



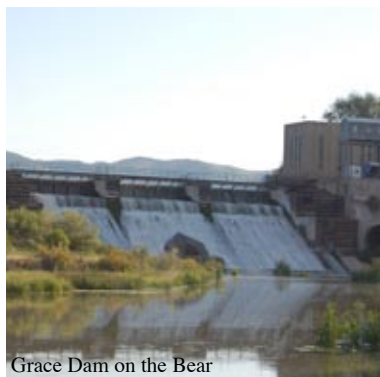
© Doug Vanhouten

## Flow Restoration Below Dams

### Spotlight: Bear River (ID)

On its way from the Caribbean blue depths of Bear Lake to the pelicans and brine shrimp of the Great Salt Lake, the Bear River flows through a patchwork of Idaho potato fields. Once a dynamic and wild river, the Bear has been tamed and put to work as an irrigation conveyance system and a generator of power.

For decades the Black Canyon of the Bear was tamed: dewatered by massive pipes that diverted water around the Canyon to a powerhouse at the canyon mouth. Except for a miniscule base flow and an occasional accidental spill of water, the Canyon was left essentially dry. Sediment built up in the channel, vegetation took root, species changed, and fish were blocked by a downstream dam.



Grace Dam on the Bear

Enter American Whitewater. As we have done on dozens of other rivers across the country, we got involved when the federal license for the dams was being reconsidered. Working closely with local volunteers to represent paddlers and the dynamic nature of rivers that we love, we advocated for restoration of water to the Black Canyon and for the removal of the downstream dam. In 2002, after several years of conflict and negotiations, American Whitewater and other stakeholders signed a settlement agreement with the power company. The Federal

Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) issued a new license in 2004 and river restoration began. The downstream dam was removed, land was protected, base flows were instituted, and studies begun that would prepare for pulse flows. American Whitewater has attended regular planning meetings since the settlement was signed to support restoration, and continues this role. American Whitewater recognized our Regional Coordinator Charlie Vincent as the 2008 River Steward of the Year for his tireless work on this project.

On April 20, 2008, the Bear River was treated to its first ever planned pulse flow. Paddlers came from around the region to enjoy the Bear River, despite the sub-freezing temperatures, howling winds, and snow. That release, and four others in 2008, marked the beginning of decades of releases to come and restored a more natural river channel. The releases were carefully monitored to assure that no significant environmental impacts were caused. While monitoring will continue for two more years, so far it appears that the flows are providing vital ecosystem maintenance while not having any unintended or unacceptable impacts. American Whitewater attended regular meetings in 2008, analyzed data, negotiated study protocols, and pushed for river restoration. Through our stewardship program American Whitewater is on the cutting edge of the science of river restoration, and is able to restore rivers while reconnecting people with long forgotten and special places like the Black Canyon of the Bear River.

# Protecting the Last Great Rivers

## Spotlight: Skagit River (WA)

In 2008 we celebrated the 40th Anniversary of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. Throughout the year, we worked on projects to designate additional rivers while advocating for responsible management of those rivers that have been designated. We also celebrated the introduction of the Omnibus Public Lands Act of 2009 which resulted in the designation of 86 new Wild and Scenic Rivers. American Whitewater participated in the creation and passage of the Act, widely recognized as the most significant environmental legislation in decades.

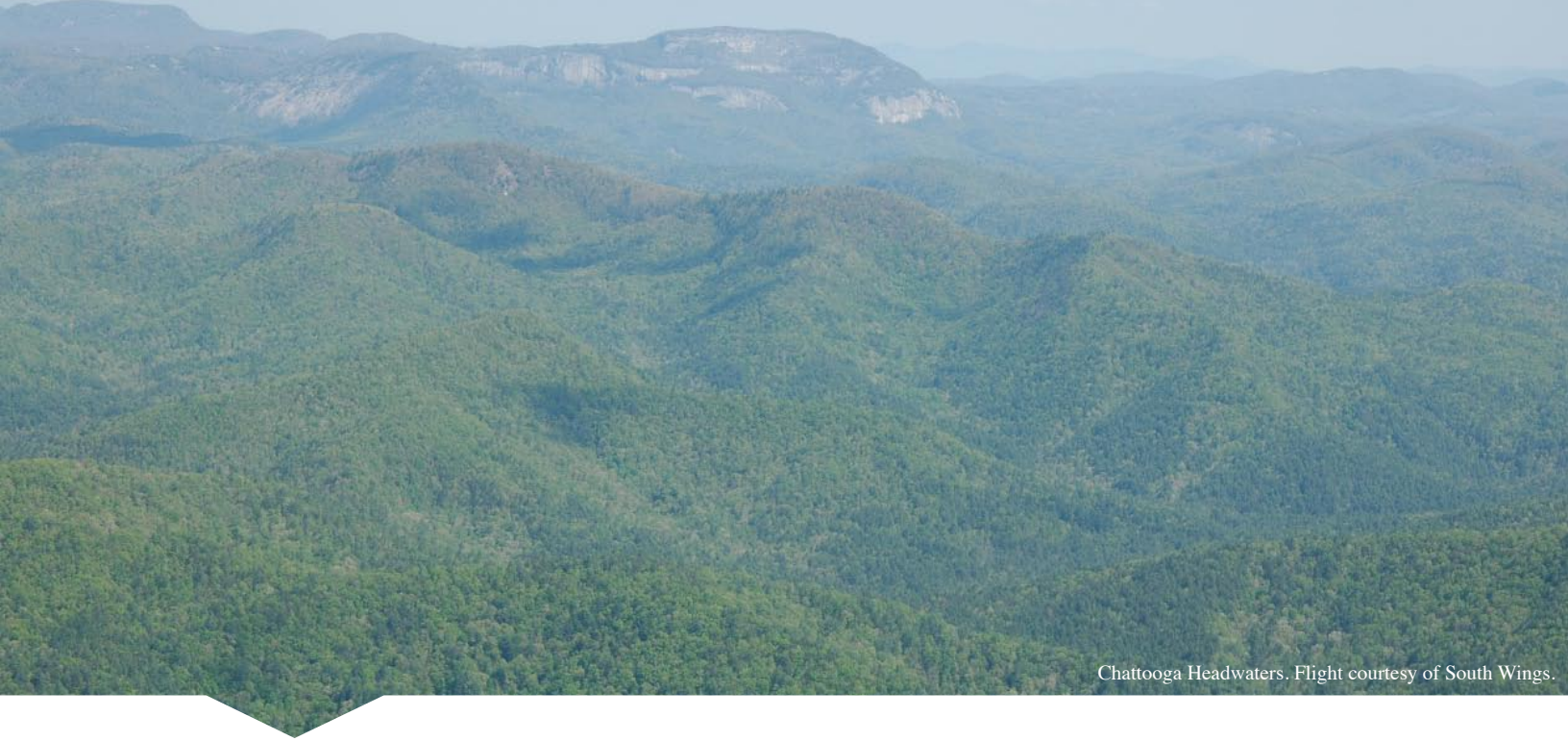
On the Skagit River in Washington State, we requested that the National Park Service conduct an eligibility and suitability review of the most popular whitewater section of the river. While the downstream section of the Skagit, which is popular for eagle floats, is designated as Wild and Scenic, what many paddlers do not know is that the well-known whitewater run upstream through the S Bends has no such protection. In fact, this section was originally the site of a massive dam and hydropower project proposal in the 1970's, which would have inundated this run. Whitewater paddlers were well represented in the public scoping meetings and we will continue to push for long-term protection of this great river.

In 2008, we worked on several Wild and Scenic River bills. Our members were actively working to designate the Snake River and tributaries in Wyoming, the Owyhee River in Idaho including key tributaries popular for whitewater paddling, and the rivers of Mount Hood in Oregon. Through our partnerships with organizations like Idaho Rivers United, American Rivers, and local paddling clubs and businesses we proved to be an effective force for river protection. As several bills moved to completion towards the end of 2008 we were hard at work identifying key opportunities for more Wild and Scenic designations. Among these opportunities was the bill to expand the Alpine Lakes Wilderness that focused on the Pratt River valley. While this bill did not receive a hearing, we will be working hard to build support for this legislation.

In addition to our Wild and Scenic work, American Whitewater also works to remove dams that are outdated, unsafe, or impose significant environmental or economic costs. These projects represent significant river restoration opportunities as well as unprecedented scientific opportunities to investigate how rivers respond to restoration of flows. Through 2008, we worked to keep two important projects in the Pacific Northwest moving forward including efforts to remove two dams on the Elwha River, and Condit Dam on the White Salmon. During 2008, more dams on the Rogue River were removed including Gold Hill Dam on the Nugget Falls run and Elk Creek Dam on Elk Creek which is a major tributary.



Eric Myren on the Skagit, WA



Chattooga Headwaters. Flight courtesy of South Wings.

# Engaging in River Management Decisions

## Spotlight: Chattooga River (NC/SC/GA)

When rivers are managed right you don't even know they are managed. There just happens to be good river access, water quality, and plenty of water and native wildlife. In reality, all of these are the result of decisions made by landowners and government agencies. American Whitewater works with these landowners and agencies to influence these decisions and to assure that rivers are protected and enjoyed by the public. Perhaps the most iconic recent example of our river management work is that southeastern gem, the Chattooga River.

For over 30 years the US Forest Service has banned boating on the upper 21 miles of the Wild and Scenic Chattooga. At the same time the US Forest Service have artificially increased angling use through stocking 50,000 exotic trout each year and have allowed all non-boating uses unlimited and unmeasured access. At American Whitewater, we think Wilderness Areas and Wild and Scenic Rivers deserve careful management to protect the landscape from recreational overuse or maintenance neglect, while equitably supporting diverse and appropriate uses. Lastly, we believe that the public should have the right to float down public rivers through private lands. This is something that the owners of a private land parcel on the Chattooga are currently forbidding with the Forest

Service's support.

2008 marked the thirteenth year that American Whitewater sought responsible management for the Upper Chattooga River. This year we maintained continuous pressure on the Forest Service to release their long overdue analysis of the issue. In the fall, they finally released their analysis and proposal complete with many critical flaws. We drafted lengthy critical comments and encouraged paddlers to submit comments of their own. Roughly 1,500 paddlers sent in comments requesting responsible and rational river management. We expect that our 2008 technical analysis and grassroots advocacy on the Chattooga will help us secure protective and nationally consistent management for this very special river, and hopefully many others.



Our work on the Chattooga is an important and nationally precedent setting project. At American Whitewater, we pride ourselves on working collaboratively with managers ranging from private landowners to the National Park Service, with which we co-manage access on the Gauley River. In 2008, we also successfully advocated for adequate funding for the federal agencies responsible for managing rivers. We share a belief with the federal land and river management agencies that paddling rivers is a societal benefit that should be supported. In 2008, we crafted a Memorandum of Agreement with several federal agencies recognizing that shared belief. Through active participation in river management, AW helps connect people to rivers and ensure that connection is mutually beneficial – and fun!

# Driving Cutting Edge Science and Policies for River Restoration

## Spotlight: California

American Whitewater has consistently been transforming the way we restore ecological and recreational values on rivers impacted by dams through our work in California. Ten years ago we were fighting for a seat at the table. Through persistence and collaboration we have been able to gain credibility and recognition. Today, whitewater recreation flow studies are considered standard as part of any dam relicensing process. Armed with these studies, AW has been able to restore whitewater recreation on over one hundred rivers around the country. In fact, American Whitewater probably works on more rivers across the country than just about any other organization or agency.

Working on so many rivers has given us a unique perspective on what is happening on rivers across the country. Because of this perspective, American Whitewater staff are often looked upon as valuable resources that can bring in examples and information from other projects. In 2008, our California Stewardship Director, Dave Steindorf, became the Steering Committee Chairman of the California Hydropower Reform Coalition. This coalition is made up of the largest state and national river conservation organizations that work in California.

As whitewater paddlers we understand that healthy rivers have seasonal flow patterns like gradually decreasing flows following the spring snowmelt peak. Dammed rivers often lack these patterns and this can cause problems for their ecosystems. Frogs lay their eggs during high spring flows, only to have these flows cut off and their eggs left high and dry on the exposed cobble bars. Vegetation often encroaches into the river channel because there are no high flow events to keep them at bay. Impacts abound. American Whitewater has recognized this problem and has been at the forefront of restoring more natural flow regimes in California for the past decade. In 2008, we partnered with the Department of Watershed Sciences at University California Davis to scientifically explore and document the important seasonal flow patterns in California's rivers.

In 2008, American Whitewater crafted a new flow schedule on the Cresta reach of the North Fork Feather River. This flow schedule represents the best available science which we have helped to hone over the past decade through our advocacy work. The flow schedule has been accepted by the resource agencies, Pacific Gas & Electric, and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. This new flow schedule has peak spring flows that are twenty times higher than what Pacific Gas & Electric had released previously. These flows will gradually taper off into the summer, giving a much more predictable flow pattern: good for paddlers, fish, and frogs. American Whitewater hopes to see the pattern replicated on rivers across California and across the West.



Ryan Knight. South Branch Feather, CA ©Darin Mcquoid

# Protecting Flows in Iconic Rivers

## Spotlight: Colorado

American Whitewater had a meaningful impact in how Colorado shapes water policy in 2008. Our Colorado Stewardship Program introduced new strategies in the fight to protect wild rivers from a massive water development process that threatens some of the great river canyons in the Southern Rockies. In the Yampa, Dolores and Upper Colorado River watersheds, American Whitewater has used the Hydropower Reform Coalition's methodology for recreational flow studies to identify flows that are optimal for kayaking and rafting, and that enhance critical aquatic habitat. Recreational flows are not protected under Colorado water law on most rivers. American Whitewater's strategy will include ensuring that resource management plans offer the highest protection for flows that sustain the state's whitewater rivers and opportunities for their enjoyment.

In 2008, the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management began evaluating the eligibility of Colorado's most iconic rivers for protection as Wild and Scenic Rivers. Water providers and others have mounted an aggressive response to

the threat of Federal protection of Colorado's river flows. They are attempting to negotiate local alternatives to Wild and Scenic river management that would allow water providers flexibility in how they capture and manage water in the Upper Colorado River, Yampa, and Dolores River basins. While supportive of flexibility, American Whitewater is fighting to protect the nationally significant values of these rivers to an extent consistent with the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. American Whitewater has served as the only recreation representative in these negotiations, and has fought to protect what little water remains in Colorado's River systems. To form a basis for our negotiations, American Whitewater worked with private and commercial recreational interests to scientifically quantify the range of flows necessary to support paddling on Gore Canyon, Glenwood Springs, Yampa River Canyon, and the Dolores River.



American Whitewater not only established recreational flow targets for Colorado's rivers in 2008, but also our staff and partners have defended these dynamic spring flows in nearly 100 stakeholder meetings and negotiations. American Whitewater has created a compelling case for maintaining dynamic flows that are vital for recreation and the environment alike.

Regional government councils, water conservation districts, watershed scientists, and conservation groups support our ongoing efforts. Without American Whitewater's participation, Colorado's water development policies would fail to account for recreational and environmental water needs, and state and federal resource management planning would leave our rivers shorthanded.



Green River, Lodore Canyon, CO © Stuart Perillo

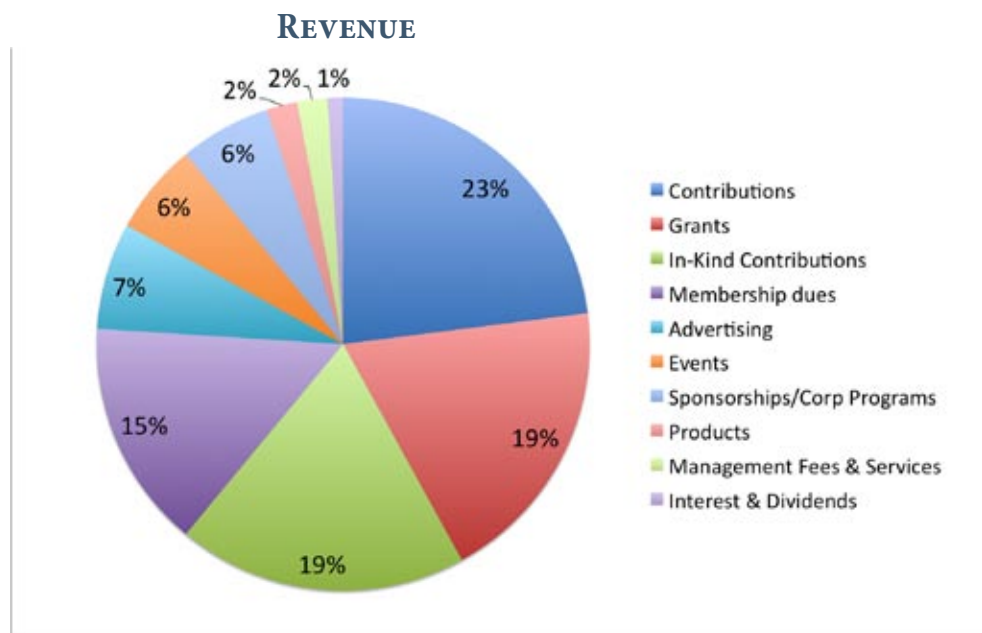
# 2008 Statement of Activities

REVENUE AND SUPPORT	UNRESTRICTED	RESTRICTED	TOTAL FUNDS
Contributions	\$251,947	\$21,213	\$273,160
Membership Dues	\$180,494		\$180,494
Advertising	\$84,560		\$84,560
Grants	\$20,582	\$206,216	\$226,798
Events	\$77,568		\$77,568
Sponsorship/Corp. Programs	\$67,076		\$67,076
Products	\$27,071		\$27,071
Management Fees & Services	\$30,008		\$30,008
In-Kind Contributions	\$224,618		\$224,618
Interests & Dividends	\$6,164		\$6,164
Misc. Income	\$3,241		\$3,241
Net Assets Released from Restriction	\$173,198	\$(173,198)	
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$1,146,527</b>	<b>\$54,231</b>	<b>\$1,200,758</b>

STEWARDSHIP EXPENSES	UNRESTRICTED	RESTRICTED	TOTAL
Access & Conservation	\$420,318		\$420,318
Public Education	\$464,361		\$464,361
<b>Total Stewardship Expenses</b>	<b>\$884,679</b>		<b>\$884,679</b>

SUPPORT EXPENSES	UNRESTRICTED	RESTRICTED	TOTAL
General & Administration	\$97,606		\$97,606
Fundraising	\$95,517		\$95,517
<b>Total Supporting Services</b>	<b>\$193,123</b>		<b>\$193,123</b>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$1,077,802</b>		<b>\$1,077,802</b>

CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	UNRESTRICTED	RESTRICTED	TOTAL
	\$68,725	\$54,231	\$122,956

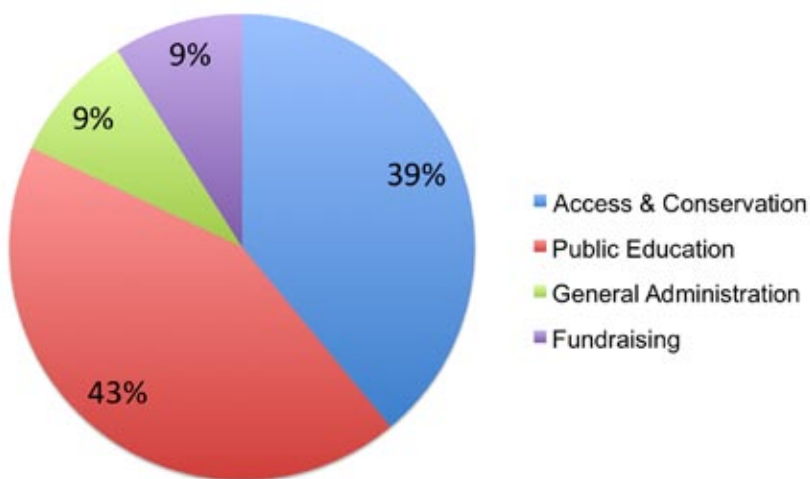




# 2008 Assets and Liabilities

<b>ASSETS</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>+ / -</b>
Cash	260,442	160,594	99,848
Accounts Receivable	20,333	39,435	-19,102
Grants Receivable	31,087	26,699	4,388
Investments	243,593	188,848	54,745
Prepaid Expenses	13,221	19,127	-5,906
Other Prepaid Assets	15,949		15,949
Inventory	5,714	11,844	-6,130
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>590,339</b>	<b>446,547</b>	<b>143,792</b>
<b>LONG TERM ASSETS</b>			
	<b>2008</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>+ / -</b>
Lands Held for protection	63,256	63,256	0
Computer Equipment, net	8,086	10,093	-2,007
<b>Total Long Term Assets</b>	<b>71,342</b>	<b>73,349</b>	<b>-2,007</b>
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>661,681</b>	<b>519,896</b>	<b>141,785</b>
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>			
	<b>2008</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>+ / -</b>
Accounts Payable	37,733	16,592	21,141
Other Liabilities	6,343	8,288	-1,945
Payroll Liabilities	15,947	16,314	-367
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	<b>60,023</b>	<b>41,194</b>	<b>18,829</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>			
Unrestricted Net Assets	396,975	328,250	68,725
Restricted Net Assets	204,683	150,452	54,231
<b>Total Net Assets</b>	<b>601,658</b>	<b>478,702</b>	<b>122,956</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; NET ASSETS</b>	<b>661,681</b>	<b>519,896</b>	<b>141,785</b>

## EXPENSES



\*American Whitewater is a registered charitable corporation under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Service Code. Financial statements are audited by Corliss & Solomon, PLLC. You can receive a copy of AW's 2008 audit by emailing your request to [mark@americanwhitewater.org](mailto:mark@americanwhitewater.org).

# 2008 Honor Roll

## Industry Partners

### **Class V - \$20,000**

KEEN

### **Class IV - \$15,000**

NOC

### **Class III - \$10,000**

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Kayak Session  
Kokatat  
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Exact Target  
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Pyranha Kayaks  
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### **Wave - \$2,500**

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Colorado Kayak Supply  
Smith Glasses  
Waldies  
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### **Eddy - \$1,000**

Blue Sky Outfitters  
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Girls at Play  
Outdoor Play  
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### **\$750**

GAIA Paddlesports

### **\$500**

Snap Dragon Design  
Zoar Outdoor

## In-Kind Donations

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### **\$10,000+**

Confluence Holdings  
Crane Associates, LLC  
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Groth Consulting, Inc.  
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### **\$5,000+**

ExactTarget, Inc.  
Smith Sport Optics

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Go to [americanwhitewater.org](http://americanwhitewater.org) > **Community** > **Industry Partners** to see AW's current list of industry supporters. We hope you'll consider a company's commitment to river stewardship when making your next purchase.

# 2008 Honor Roll

## Donations

### **\$5,000+**

Anonymous Donor  
Yvon and Melinda Chouinard  
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Washington Recreational River  
Runners  
Watauga Paddlers  
West Virginia Wildwater Association  
Western Carolina Paddlers  
Whitman College Whitewater Club  
Willamette Kayak & Canoe Club  
Zoar Valley Paddling Club

## Events and Festivals

American River Festival  
Deerfield River Festival  
Feather River Festival  
French Broad River Festival  
Gauley Festival  
Moose River Festival  
National Paddling Film Festival  
Ohiopyle Over the Falls Festival  
Potomac River Festival  
Wenatchee River Festival

## Active Projects

### Southeast

Cheoah River (NC)  
Chattooga River (NC, SC, GA)  
Nantahala and Tuckasegee rivers  
(NC)  
Catawba River (NC, SC)  
Saluda River (SC)  
Wilson Creek (NC)

### Mid Atlantic

Susquehanna River (PA)  
Ohiopyle Falls (PA)  
Savage & NB Potomac Rivers (MD)  
Gauley River (WV)  
Lehigh River (PA)

### Northeast

Ausable River (NY)  
Saranac River (NY)  
Otter Creek (NH)  
West River (VT)  
Blackwater, etc (VT, NH)

## Midwest

Fox River (WI)

## Northern Rockies

West Rosebud Creek (MT)  
Bear River (ID)  
Milltown Dam (MT)

## Southern Rockies

Colorado's Water Supply Future  
(CO)  
Upper Colorado River (CO)  
South Platte River (CO)  
Yampa River (CO)  
Colorado River (CO)  
Green River (WY, CO, UT)  
Dolores River (CO)  
Blue River (CO)  
South Boulder Creek (CO)  
Rio Grande River (CO)  
Animas River (CO)  
San Miguel River (CO)  
Uncompahgre River (CO)  
Ojo Caliente River (NM)  
Rio Grande River (NM)

## Pacific Northwest

Sultan River (WA)  
McKenzie River (OR)  
Sullivan Creek (WA)  
Klamath (OR/CA)  
Crooked River (OR)  
White Salmon (WA)  
Snake River Dams (WA)  
Sandy River (WA)  
Green River (WA)  
Pratt River (WA)  
Forest Service Roads

## California

Feather River (CA), Rock Creek/  
Cresta  
Feather River (CA), Poe  
Feather River (CA), Oroville/ Feather  
River (CA)  
McCloud River (CA)  
Yuba/Bear Rivers (CA)

# 2008 Honor Roll

Butte Creek (CA)  
Kern River (CA)  
Middle Fork American/ Rubicon River (CA)  
California Hydropower Reform Coalition (CA)

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