



AMERICAN WHITEWATER

winter stewardship update | 2019

This past year we helped secure 621 miles of new Wild and Scenic Rivers under the John D. Dingell, Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act. This was a historic achievement and we intend to build on that momentum to pass legislation that both protects wild rivers and enhances opportunities for the public to enjoy them. We're working with legislators in a number of states to introduce new Wild and Scenic bills that would designate thousands of new Wild and Scenic Rivers in North Carolina, New Mexico, Oregon, Washington, and Montana. In close alliance with other human powered recreation organizations, we're working with lawmakers to pass permanent funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund and the Recreation Not Red Tape Act, both of which would enhance access and protections for our rivers on public lands. Protecting landmark conservation laws will also continue to be some of our most important work in the coming year. Attempts to weaken the Clean Water Act could lead to an unprecedented loss of water quality in the rivers we paddle. We'll be fighting to make sure headwater streams are protected under the Act and that state's maintain their right to protect instream flows for river health, water quality, and recreation below hydropower dams.

Support our stewardship work this year – read on for regional details inside!

Youghiogheny River (MD) | Photo: Evan Stafford

P.O. Box 1540 | Cullowhee, NC 28723 | 1.866.262.8429 | americanwhitewater.org



"California has some of the best whitewater rivers in the world and the Ross Creek Trail to Confluence with NF Kings section of Dinkey Creek is no exception." –Tracy Young, USFS Comments for the Sequoia and Sierra National Forest Draft Management Plans. | Photo: Tracy Young

SOUTHEAST

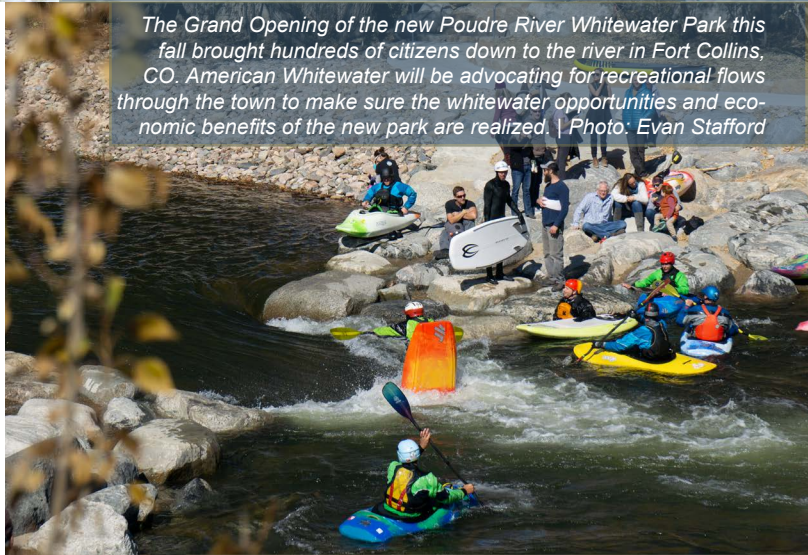
We are fired up on progress towards Wild and Scenic River designation for the Nolichucky, and have even hired a part-time campaign coordinator to help us out. Halley Burleson will be representing AW (and you) out in local communities in the coming months building support for this designation. We'll also be leading the charge to secure a new forest plan for the Nantahala and Pisgah National Forests that is great for rivers. The Draft Forest Plan will be out this fall and you'll be hearing from us on how we can make it a boon to Southern paddling and rivers. And you can count on us to stay on top of the management of dams throughout the region. We help schedule most of the dam releases, and are always seeking enhancements to flows and access.

MID-ATLANTIC

It seems like just yesterday that American Whitewater sat down with regional paddlers and other stakeholders and hammered out an agreement for expanded releases on the Upper Yough. But, it wasn't. That was back in 2011 and the permit is now up for renewal. American Whitewater is working to defend and hopefully expand the releases we have on this incomparable river and we'll need your help. At the same time we'll be hustling on a number of river access issues in state and national parks around the region, with a special emphasis on the Potomac and Shenandoah rivers.

NORTHEAST

American Whitewater is focusing advocacy on New York rivers from the Mongaup to the Moose. With scores of hydropower dams being relicensed in the coming years, we are working hard to protect and expand whitewater boating opportunities in the region. We recently launched our Adirondacks Rivers Restoration Campaign that will work to restore flows to dewatered rivers in order to support aquatic habitat, boating, angling, and the economic well being and quality of life in the surrounding communities. We have successfully advocated for flow studies on West Canada Creek, Mongaup and Merrimack rivers this year to support boating and aesthetics, and we are continuing our work on the Deerfield and Connecticut rivers through the relicensing processes.



The Grand Opening of the new Poudre River Whitewater Park this fall brought hundreds of citizens down to the river in Fort Collins, CO. American Whitewater will be advocating for recreational flows through the town to make sure the whitewater opportunities and economic benefits of the new park are realized. | Photo: Evan Stafford



We're building on our Wild and Scenic success and have hired a campaign manager to continue to push for legislation that would designate the Nolichucky River Wild and Scenic (NC/TN) | Photo: Kevin Colburn

SOUTHERN ROCKIES

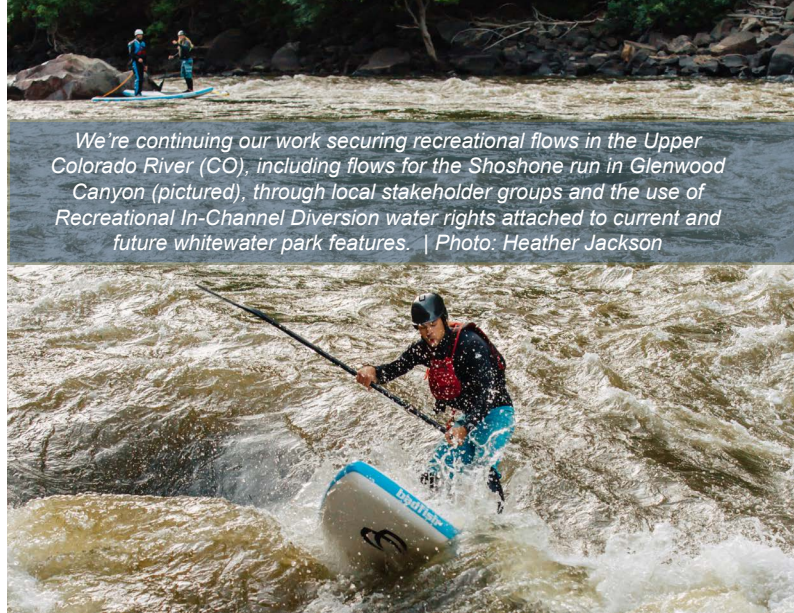
The Grand Mesa Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forest Unit is revising their Management Plan and in 2020 American Whitewater will continue to elevate the voices of our members in the planning process as the Forest Service works towards a final plan. We are working to secure 14 new Wild and Scenic eligibility protections in these Forests, from Crested Butte creeks to the Uncompahgre and San Miguel Rivers. With input from regional members, we are developing policy objectives that will outline the overarching goals we seek to achieve in the Southern Rockies region. We will share these objectives with members, industry leaders, elected officials, and decision-makers across Colorado. We remain deeply involved in Stream Management Planning (SMP) - a directive from the 2015 Colorado Water Plan- on the Rio Grande, San Miguel and St. Vrain rivers, and in upcoming plans for the Eagle River and Gore Creek. We'll continue to stay engaged in negotiating for flow restoration and protection on the Dolores and Upper Colorado Rivers through local stakeholder groups, and we're committed to staying up to date on the latest water supply forecasting to encourage better planning for whitewater opportunities this spring. Finally, we're increasing our involvement on Colorado's front range, bringing our voice to the table and advocating for recreational flows in the South Platte and Cache la Poudre.

NORTHERN ROCKIES

The drumbeat for a significant new Wild and Scenic Rivers bill for Montana is growing louder. Letters to the Editor and public requests for our proposed "Montana Headwaters Security Act" are piling up, and the Congressional delegation is listening. We are optimistic that a bill is on the way, and we'll need your help getting it hearings and passed in the coming year! In the coming months we also expect major decisions by the Forest Service on protections for "eligible" Wild and Scenic Rivers in Idaho, Wyoming, and Montana. Some of these we'll celebrate, some we'll weigh in on, and at least one we expect will be headed to court. You can count on American Whitewater to keep you informed and help you speak up for these amazing wild rivers.

CALIFORNIA

American Whitewater recently provided comments for the Sequoia and Sierra National Forest Draft Management Plans urging the USFS to complete the Wild and Scenic Rivers Study Process by evaluating whitewater recreation as an outstandingly remarkable value on 16 California watersheds. This includes the world class whitewater found on Dinky Creek and the lower half of Devil's Postpile on the Middle Fork San Joaquin. In 2020, American Whitewater will continue to engage in the

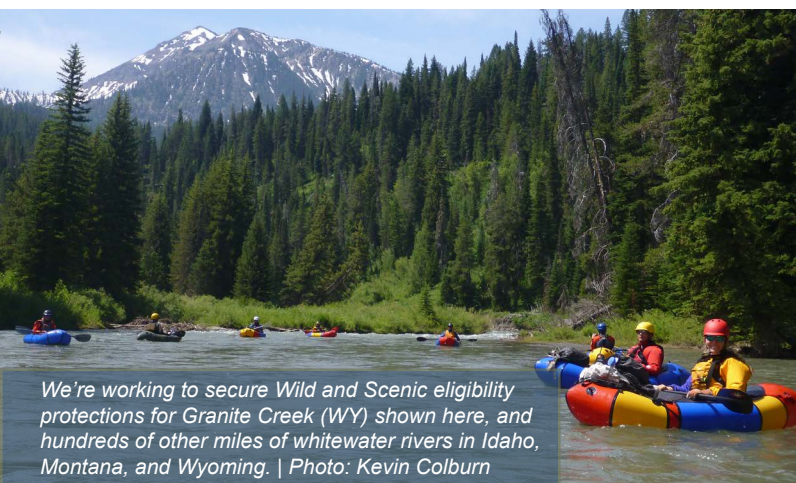


We're continuing our work securing recreational flows in the Upper Colorado River (CO), including flows for the Shoshone run in Glenwood Canyon (pictured), through local stakeholder groups and the use of Recreational In-Channel Diversion water rights attached to current and future whitewater park features. | Photo: Heather Jackson

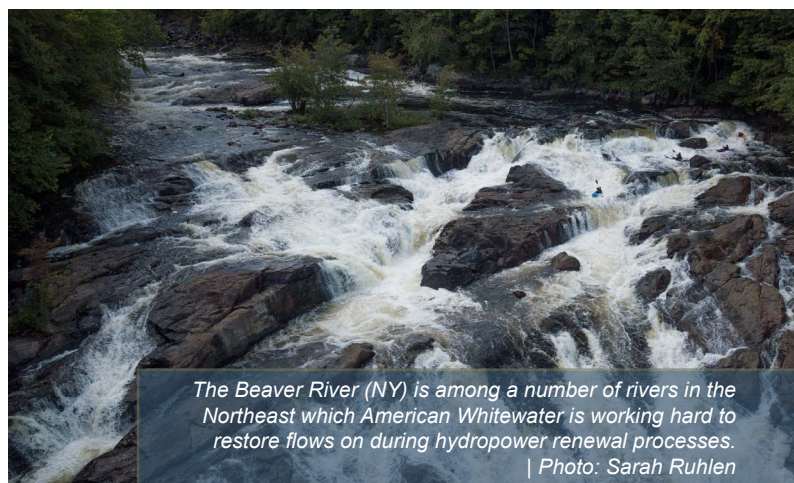
forest planning process as the USFS releases Final Management Plans and solicits public objections. Elsewhere, on the South Fork American River, Sacramento Municipal Utility District announced plans to purchase the Chili Bar Hydroelectric Project from Pacific Gas & Electric by the end of 2019. In the coming year American Whitewater will monitor the progress of this transition and explore opportunities this take-over will provide to open access to the only Class II-III section above Chili Bar and provide a long awaited take-out for the South Fork American River below Slab Creek.

PACIFIC NORTHWEST

Following the success of public lands legislation this past year, we are working to build on that success as we move into 2020. Our Wild Olympics legislation has now had a successful hearing in both the House and Senate and we will be working with Senator Murray and Representative Kilmer to move this bill. Oregon Senator Ron Wyden has also launched a nomination process for new Wild and Scenic Rivers in Oregon and expressed his commitment to a state-wide Wild and Scenic Rivers bill that would expand on the success of the Oregon Omnibus National Wild and Scenic River Act that designated 1500 miles in 1988. We are studying the statewide river maps, cross checking them with our National Whitewater Inventory, looking at past hydropower and other threats, and identifying rivers most in need of protection. On the Oregon/California border four dams are set to be removed in 2022 on the Klamath River. While many are focused on the actual dam removal, we want to ensure the public has the ability to experience and enjoy a restored river.



We're working to secure Wild and Scenic eligibility protections for Granite Creek (WY) shown here, and hundreds of other miles of whitewater rivers in Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming. | Photo: Kevin Colburn



The Beaver River (NY) is among a number of rivers in the Northeast which American Whitewater is working hard to restore flows on during hydropower renewal processes. | Photo: Sarah Ruhlen

FRESH WEBSITE, INTERACTIVE MAPS, ENHANCED USER EXPERIENCE

American Whitewater's website has a brand new look, along with new functionality to allow our members and users to more easily contribute up to date river beta, photos, and hazards. In 2020, we'll be continuing to make improvements to our National Whitewater Inventory (NWI), with an enhanced app interface for updating river beta in real-time straight from the banks of your favorite river through your mobile device. We've significantly upgraded our mapping functionality, moving from point data to an American Whitewater specific line data layer, which allows for all kinds of new beta opportunities, including calculating accurate river lengths and gradients, and identifying rapid, hazard, and access locations along each of the more than 5,500 whitewater runs in our database. We also continue to refine our system for engaging our members in our project outreach and advocacy, as we push for more Wild and Scenic Rivers and other legislation that will restore, protect, and improve access to our whitewater rivers. At the same time we're using these tools to make it easy for our community to push back against bad policy decisions that will negatively affect the health of our rivers and our ability to enjoy them.



Copco 2 dam with a dewatered Ward's Canyon just downstream. When the flow of the Klamath River (CA) is restored to this canyon, we believe it will provide class IV whitewater opportunities in an incredible setting and we're working to make sure the public will have the ability to enjoy this new boating opportunity. | Photo: Tom O'Keefe

SUPPORT AMERICAN WHITewater TODAY!

Join or make a donation today! Our stewardship work is possible only through your support, and your financial contribution plays a vital role in protecting and restoring the special rivers that you love. We are a lean and efficient organization – 83% of every dollar we receive goes directly to our river stewardship work. With your support, we will lean forward and meet the challenges ahead.

Please consider making a tax-deductible donation to American Whitewater. Everything you'll need is included with this letter. Thanks for your support!



Online

We've totally revamped our donation page to make online giving more user friendly! Check it out at: <https://americanwhitewater.org/donate>



Mail

Just fill out the enclosed reply form and return it in the envelope provided.



Phone

Call us at 1-866-262-8429.



American Whitewater recently received our ninth straight 4-star rating (the highest possible) from Charity Navigator for our financial practices and transparency. Only 2% of the charities that Charity Navigator rates have received at least nine consecutive 4-star evaluations, showing that American Whitewater outperforms most other charities in the nation. This "exceptional" designation from Charity Navigator differentiates American Whitewater from our peers and demonstrates our commitment to best management practices. It means you can rest assured that your donation will be put to good use and result in tangible gains for river stewardship!!