



AMERICAN
Whitewater
**PROTECTING PUBLIC
LANDS AND WATERS
SINCE 1954**

SUPPORT OUR WORK WITH A GIFT

Did you know that our work inspiring the river community to take action and engage in public lands protection is almost exclusively funded by members and donors like you? Your gift today will make sure we continue that work in 2026 and beyond.

Whether you've already contributed this year, or it's time to renew, please consider supporting our river stewardship work through an additional contribution or an upgrade in your membership level. Visit americanwhitewater.org or use the return envelope for your generous gift. The strength of our voice is your support!



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Renew

Not all public lands that need protecting are wilderness areas. Some of the most important public waters for recreation, connecting people to river stewardship, and local economies are the ones closest to home. Protecting and improving water quality and access to streams that run through our communities is key to providing safe opportunities for all people to enjoy our rivers.
Arkansas River (CO) / Photo by Jess Oatman



DEFENDING PUBLIC LANDS AND WATERS

Some in our government are taking historic steps to weaken protections for water quality, wild public lands, our climate, and public participation in federal management decisions. The effect, if unchecked, could be generational harm to rivers. Boaters have a vital role to play in speaking up for the rivers and places we care about. American Whitewater will continue our efforts to connect boaters with decision-makers to defend the Clean Water Act, Roadless Rule, National Environmental Policy Act, and other laws that wisely protect our rivers.

Gauley River (WV) / Photo Evan Stafford

Winter Update 2025



1. White Salmon River Access Acquisitions (WA): Three decades ago, our work to bring the BZ Corners access on the White Salmon River into public ownership was among a few key projects that set the stage for protecting river access through acquisition. Today, we're building on that vision with partners that include the Yakama Nation, The Conservation Fund, and the Columbia Land Trust to safeguard the White Salmon River corridor while ensuring the public can enjoy safe access to the river for generations to come. **Image:** The Bottom White Salmon has gone through an incredible transition after the removal of Condit Dam and the securing of long-term access at Northwestern Park. Photo by Evan Stafford.

2. Land Conservation & Access Through Acquisition (WV): American Whitewater is pursuing several large land conservation projects to ensure the rivers we know and love will continue to wow boaters for generations to come. Our work in the region will shepherd these lands to permanent protection while searching for other similar opportunities. **Image:** Protecting the Gauley River watershed is a high priority for American Whitewater in the Mid-Atlantic. Photo by Evan Stafford.

3. Clarifying Legal River Access in Colorado: In the Centennial State, boaters benefit from hundreds of river access sites on public lands, however, checkerboard landownership often requires you float through sections surrounded by private land. Your legal right to do that is unclear and American Whitewater has been leading a coalition of river lovers to clarify this right. We've made significant progress towards improved access laws. Stay tuned in early 2026, as there will be opportunities to share your experiences with decision makers and help us secure long-awaited legal protections for boating. **Image:** The North Fork of the South Platte River provides incredible boating opportunities close to Denver as it flows through both public and private land. Photo by Evan Stafford.

4. Restoring Rivers After Helene (NC): Hurricane Helene changed boating in the Southeast forever, and American Whitewater is focused on ensuring that severely impacted sections of the Pigeon, Rocky Broad, and Nolichucky rivers are restored to support whitewater paddling into the future. We believe that through thoughtful planning that includes boaters, these rivers can play an important role in keeping the region awesome as a place to live and paddle. **Image:** Outfitted rafting trips on the Pigeon River are back, but on other rivers like the Nolichucky, the outfitters are still waiting to startup again causing significant local economic impacts. Photo courtesy Smoky Mountain Outdoors Rafting.

5. Access and Flows at Hydropower Projects in the Northeast: American Whitewater is working to secure river access at hydropower dams in the Northeast, especially in the dewatered sections of the Connecticut River at Bellows Falls (VT/NH), the Merrimack River in Lowell (MA), and West Canada Creek in Trenton (NY). As these dam owners are seeking new 40-year power-generating licenses, freeing these rivers, securing instream flow release, and providing public access is a top priority for us. **Image:** Merrimack River in Lowell, MA. Photo by Bob Nasdor

6. Repairs and Improvements to Tuolumne Access (CA): For the past six years, American Whitewater and the Outdoor Alliance California team have been meeting with Congressman McClintock's (CA-05) office to advocate for repairs and funding to restore and expand access to the Wild and Scenic Tuolumne River. American Whitewater is happy to report that a contract for repair has been signed by the USFS and we anticipate completion of repairs on Lumsden Road for 2026. **Image:** Taking local stakeholders and decision makers down the river has been one of our recipes for success in securing access improvements to the Tuolumne River. Photo by Chase McGregor

7. New Wild and Scenic Rivers for Montana: The Greater Yellowstone Recreation And Tourism Act is based on over a decade of groundwork and would protect the Gallatin and Madison rivers with Wild and Scenic River designation. American Whitewater will be working closely with Congressman Ryan Zinke and our partners in the region to deliver these protections over the coming year. **Image:** Packrafting the Gallatin River. Photo by Kevin Colburn.