



IMPACT

REPORT

20
23



By many measures, 2023 was a remarkably successful year for American Whitewater.

IN ADDITION TO THE PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS

you will see in this report, we made some important investments in the organization you should know about. With over 7,000 members and growing, it is clear that continuing to grow membership sustainably is vital. Last October, we hired Sadie Mathison to the role of Membership and Operations Specialist. Sadie lives in Wisconsin and works closely with our Membership and Engagement Director Bethany Overfield. Together they are reviewing and evolving systems to ensure the personal touch you've come to expect with your membership remains rock solid.

Taking care of our paddling community means also taking care of our staff. At the beginning of 2023, we launched an employer sponsored healthcare plan. We have a ton of fun together,

but this is difficult and often stressful work. Ensuring that our employees and their families stay healthy and get the care they need has a financial impact. But in addition to being a strategic investment in the strength of our team, it is also the right thing to do.

We started the year with a new look and feel to the AW Journal. The Journal has been in publication since 1955—just one year after American Whitewater's founding. Through your member contributed articles, it has been a leading voice of the whitewater community for nearly 70 years and one of the key channels for engaging our membership to take action. We doubled down on keeping this a tangible print publication you can hold in your hands. Your stories deserve it. Plus, it's difficult to keep a digital PDF in the groover library.

Last but not least, 2023 also saw American Whitewater play a unique role as a vehicle for the incredible outpouring of support and generosity directed at protecting the Big Sandy in West Virginia from threats of development. Over 117 people contributed to the effort last year, and you will see the impacts of that herculean effort in our financial reporting. Shortly before the new year, we secured the funding to purchase over four miles of the river-left bank, forever preserving access and the natural beauty it contributes to the character of the run. You will continue to see the impacts of that purchase in next year's financial report, as we transfer that property to the West Virginia Land Trust for ongoing stewardship.

Everyday we ask ourselves and each other as a community what we can do for the rivers we love. American Whitewater's primary focus has been, and will always be, the expression of that love through the mission-driven work we do. Thank you for being a part of it all. Our successes in 2023 are your successes. Celebrate these wins as your own! We couldn't do any of it without you.


Clinton Begley
Executive Director


Brent Austin
Board Chair

MISSION

To protect and restore America's whitewater rivers and to enhance opportunities to enjoy them safely.

VISION

That our nation's remaining wild and free-flowing rivers stay that way, our developed rivers are restored to function and flourish, that the public has access to rivers for recreation, and that river enthusiasts are active and effective river advocates.

Impact Report cover photos, clockwise from upper left: Justin Harris, Jeff Snyder, Craig Tucker, Justin Harris, Justin Harris, Justin Harris, Brad Walker. This spread: Evan Stafford

ENDER CLUB MEMBER

Anastasia Adler | *Washington*

“For me, time on the river is time away from my job, bills, phone calls and the responsibilities of day to day life. When I put on the river with no phone and no obligations for a few hours just to be present and go play with my friends, it allows me to relax and reset. It is the joy and the gift of boating but I know that gift doesn’t come easily. My ability to drive up to the put-in, park, and hike down that trail all comes thanks to numerous meetings, phone calls, and lots of work I never see. AW does the work to protect our rivers and our access. My membership is my way of supporting that work and acknowledging how grateful I am for access to these beautiful places. I want the rivers to be there not just for me but for all the boaters in the future.”



LIFETIME MEMBERS

Amanda Burnham-Marusich, Macy Burnham, Azalea Burnham, Wylie Burnham | *Nevada*

“In the summertime, we spend all our free time on the river as a family. We fully support AW’s mission of securing access, negotiating reliable flows, and protecting the environmental integrity of the places we love -- and of all the new rivers we look forward to exploring. We have a ton of fun adventuring through wild multi-day river canyons and just paddling in our local play parks after work, and we want our kids and everyone else to have and always continue to have the chance to find their own joy on the water.”



ENDER CLUB MEMBERS

Kate and Bob Taylor | *Connecticut*

“Being members of AW has been incredibly rewarding in many ways. Their dedication to securing access and water releases has fostered a special environment where we’ve built strong, lasting friendships with people who share our passion for paddling rivers. Our love for kayaking goes deep—it was there for our initial meeting, engagement, marriage, and even our honeymoon! Supporting an organization that has such a positive impact on the health of our rivers, not just for today but for future generations, is important to us. Our involvement with AW reflects that commitment. We’ve been loyal members for many years. Bob worked for AW back during the time of the TEVA tour and also at the Gauley and Deerfield Festivals. We’ve volunteered for many years at the Deerfield Festival, and we look forward to many more adventures, friendships, and festivals to come.”



SUCCESS STORY 2023

993

NEW MILES FOREST SERVICE WILD AND SCENIC PROTECTIONS

- Tonto National Forest (AZ)
- Nantahala and Pisgah National Forests (NC)
- Sierra and Sequoia National Forests (CA)

958

MILES NEW OUTSTANDING RESOURCE WATERS DESIGNATED (WA)

- Green River (Toutle)
- Cascade River
- Napeequa River

10

NEW RIVER ACCESS LOCATIONS

- Crooked River (OR)
- North Fork Skykomish River (WA)
- Catawba River (SC)
- Connecticut River (MA)
- Cispus River (WA)
- North Fork Feather River (CA)



LAWSUITS WON

- Defended Clean Water Act protections (CA)

3 LAWSUITS FILED

- Shawmut (ME) and West Canada Creek (NY) defending state’s Clean Water Act rights
- Appeal in Somersworth dam surrender to force removal (ME/NH)
- Defending Wild and Scenic Protections (CA)

AMICUS BRIEFS

- Colorado Stream Access case - Hill v. Warsewa (CO)

290 PRO-BONO LAWYER HOURS

- Volunteer legal hours donated to American Whitewater

2500+

MILES WILD AND SCENIC LEGISLATION INTRODUCED

- Wild Olympics (WA)
- Northwest California Mountains and Rivers (CA)
- San Gabriel Mountains (CA)
- Central Coast Wild (CA)
- Smith River (OR)
- Montana Headwaters (MT)
- M.H. Dutch Salmon Greater Gila (NM)

6

RIVER REACHES RESTORED

- Great Falls, Catawba River (SC)
- Turners Falls, Connecticut River (MA)
- Upper Colorado River (CO)



NATIONAL MONUMENT DESIGNATED

- Baaj Nwaavjo I'tah Kukveni – Ancestral Footprints Grand Canyon National Monument (AZ)



RIVER SAFETY

- 2 new river safety films
- New short form Safety Code
- Distribution of river safety sign guide



2 DAMS DEFEATED

- Little Colorado River dams (AZ)

DAMS REMOVED

- Copco 2 Dam, Klamath River (CA)

3 NEW DAM REMOVALS ANNOUNCED

- Scott Dam and Cape Horn, Eel River (CA)
- Ela Dam, Oconoluftee River (NC)

CAMPAIGNS AGAINST NEW DAMS

- East Fork Virgin River (UT)
- Chehalis River (WA)
- Upper Verde (AZ)
- Big South, Cache la Poudre (CO)

57

MEETINGS WITH LAWMAKERS

- In-person advocacy in Washington, D.C.

2,137

COMMENTS FILED

- Comments sent to Congress and river managers

1,296

PERMIT SURVEY RESPONSES

- Working to improve river permit allocations on federally managed rivers

AMERICAN WHITewater 7056 MEMBERS – 85 AFFILIATE CLUBS – 5,000+ VOLUNTEER HOURS

Our Community

**CHAMPIONS
100+**

Board members
Key volunteers
Regional coordinators

**PATRONS
2,300+**

Major donors
Upper-tier partners
Affiliate Clubs
Enduring River Circle
Members

**CONTRIBUTORS
4,600+**

Members and
small donors
Contributing partners
Volunteers
Web contributors

**ENDORSERS
44,500+**

Newsletter subscribers
AW web user accounts
Action takers
Event attendees

**FOLLOWERS
150,000+**

Social media followers
Unique website visitors

MEMBERS: 7,056

SUPPORTERS: 72,000

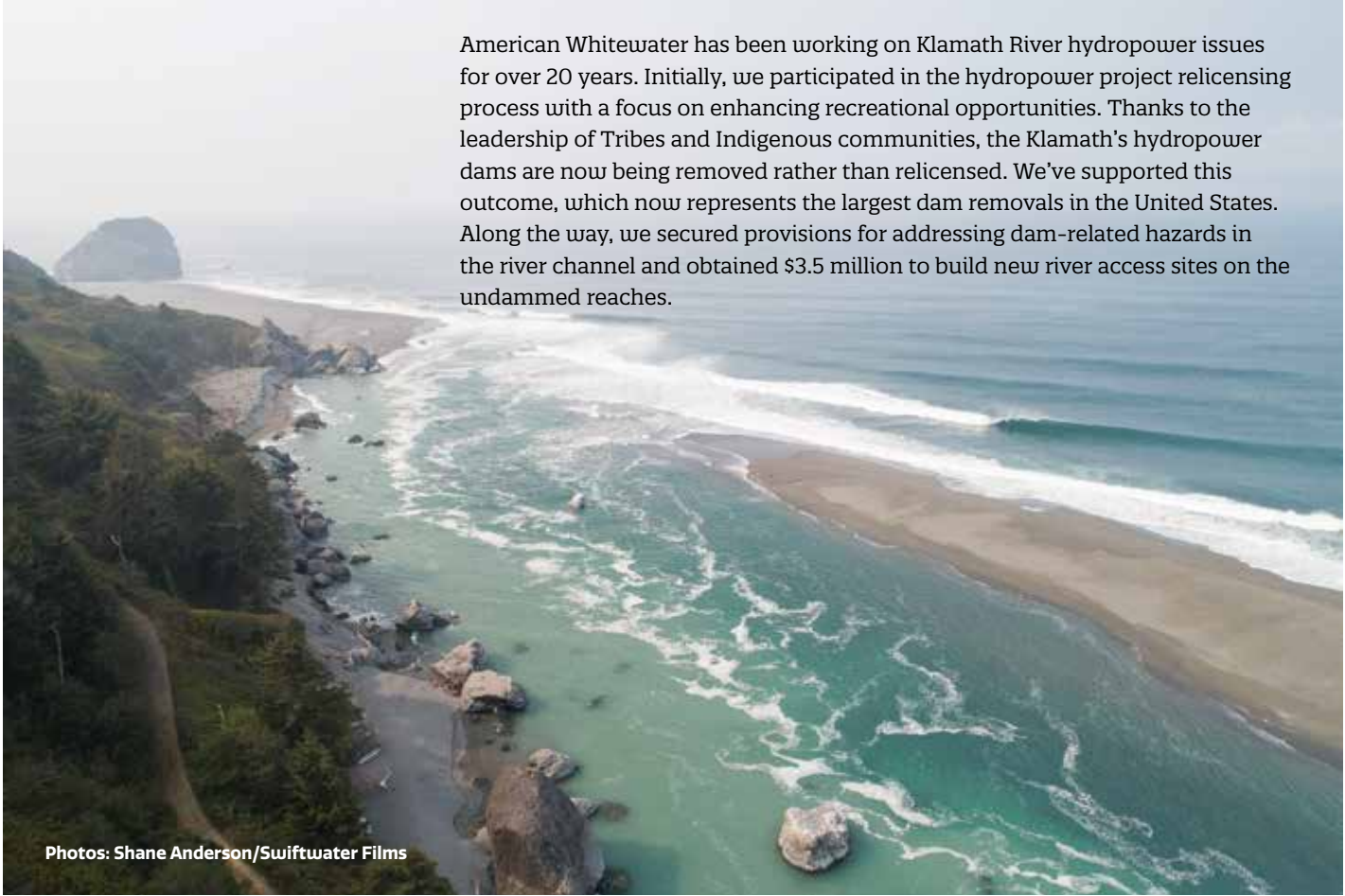
AFFILIATE CLUBS: 80

Photo: Evan Stafford

NATIONAL



American Whitewater has been working on Klamath River hydropower issues for over 20 years. Initially, we participated in the hydropower project relicensing process with a focus on enhancing recreational opportunities. Thanks to the leadership of Tribes and Indigenous communities, the Klamath's hydropower dams are now being removed rather than relicensed. We've supported this outcome, which now represents the largest dam removals in the United States. Along the way, we secured provisions for addressing dam-related hazards in the river channel and obtained \$3.5 million to build new river access sites on the undammed reaches.



Photos: Shane Anderson/Swiftwater Films

Photo: Kevin Colburn

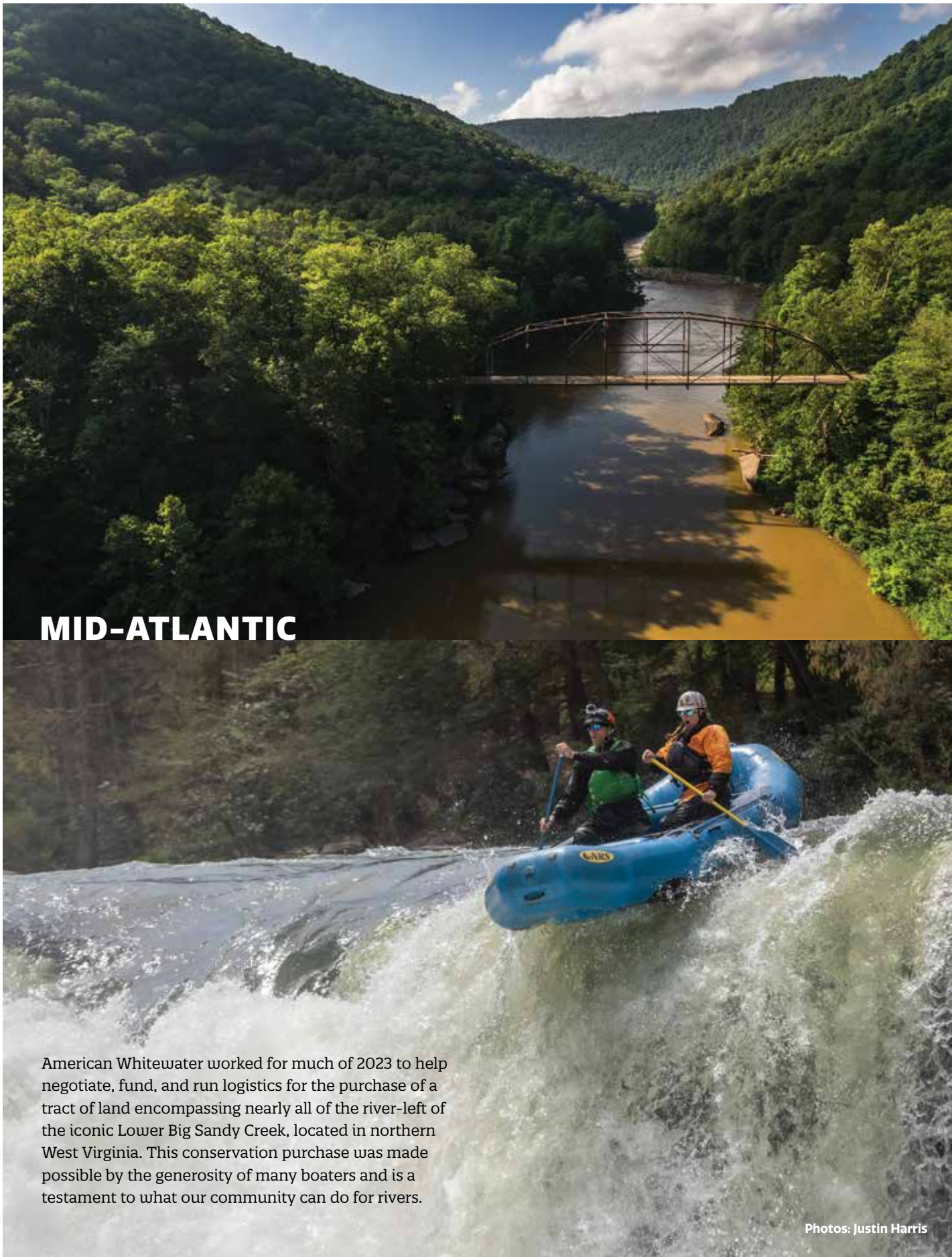


SOUTHEAST

Significant flows were restored to the Great Falls of the Catawba in 2023 based on an over 20-year effort in which American Whitewater played a leading role. These 24/7 flows, several new access areas and trails, and an innovative man-made white-water channel that allows people to paddle from the reservoir to the river below mark a sea change for a river that had been dewatered by a hydropower dam for over a century. American Whitewater also wrapped up a decade-plus forest planning effort on the Nantahala Pisgah National Forest in 2023. Thanks to our advocacy and participation by the paddling community, these whitewater-rich public lands now have nine additional rivers that are protected as eligible for Wild and Scenic designation. The newly eligible streams are: the North Fork French Broad River, Thompson River, Whitewater River, West Fork Pigeon River, Flat Laurel Creek, South Toe River, Fires Creek, Santeetlah Creek, and the Cullasaja River.



Photo: Trip Kinney



MID-ATLANTIC

American Whitewater worked for much of 2023 to help negotiate, fund, and run logistics for the purchase of a tract of land encompassing nearly all of the river-left of the iconic Lower Big Sandy Creek, located in northern West Virginia. This conservation purchase was made possible by the generosity of many boaters and is a testament to what our community can do for rivers.

Photos: Justin Harris



Photo: Brad Walker

NORTHEAST

American Whitewater signed final settlement agreements restoring flows and recreation opportunities on the Connecticut River at Turners Falls in Massachusetts in 2023. The agreement will restore flows to a three-mile dewatered section below the dam; provide fish passage; guarantee scheduled whitewater flows; and protect climbing, biking, and hiking at the project under an agreement with the dam owners, conservation groups, and agencies.

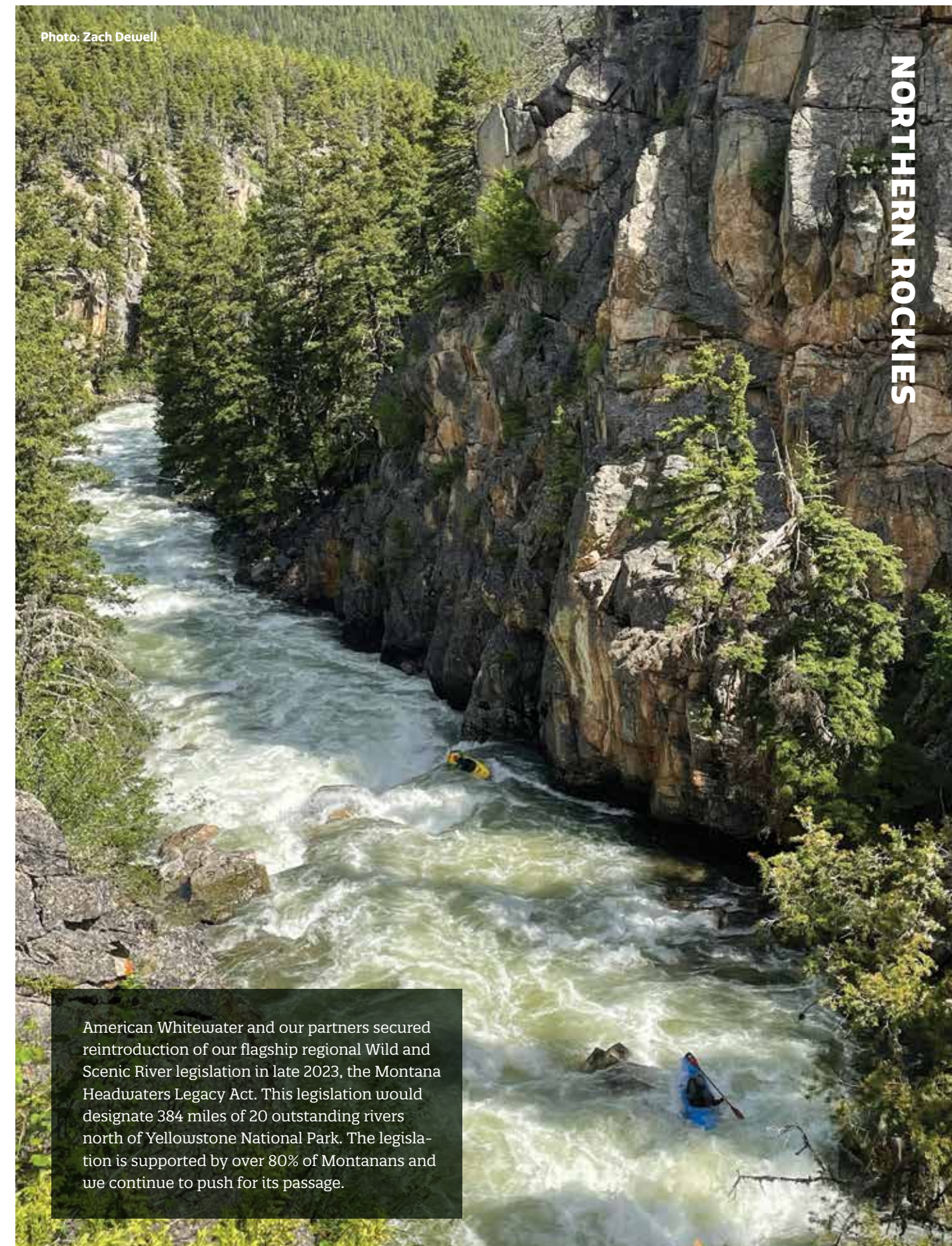


Photo: Zach Dewell

NORTHERN ROCKIES

American Whitewater and our partners secured reintroduction of our flagship regional Wild and Scenic River legislation in late 2023, the Montana Headwaters Legacy Act. This legislation would designate 384 miles of 20 outstanding rivers north of Yellowstone National Park. The legislation is supported by over 80% of Montanans and we continue to push for its passage.

SOUTHERN ROCKIES

In July 2023, after years of American Whitewater advocacy and support for a Tribally led campaign, Baaj Nwaavjo I'tah Kukveni - Ancestral Footprints of the Grand Canyon National Monument was officially designated. The new monument in Arizona protects over one million acres of land and water north and south of Grand Canyon National Park. Management will be shared with the Tribes that have been connected to these lands from time immemorial. Baaj Nwaavjo means "where Indigenous peoples roam" in Havasupai. I'tah Kukveni means "our ancestral footprints" in Hopi. This is an incredible win for Tribes, secures protections for the watersheds that feed the Grand Canyon, and supports Arizona's outdoor recreation industry. Thank you Grand Canyon Tribal Coalition for leading the way, and thanks to our many members that spoke up in support!

American Whitewater also pushed back hard in 2023 on a new ban of the use of "vessels" at Colorado State Wildlife Areas and got the decision reversed at all sites with boat ramps, such as multiple sites in the Roaring Fork watershed and at the Ruby Horsethief put-in on the Colorado River. The Parks and Wildlife Commission approved new regulations in 2023 that required all boat users to be actively hunting and fishing; however, before final regulations were adopted we were able to exempt specific sites with river access.

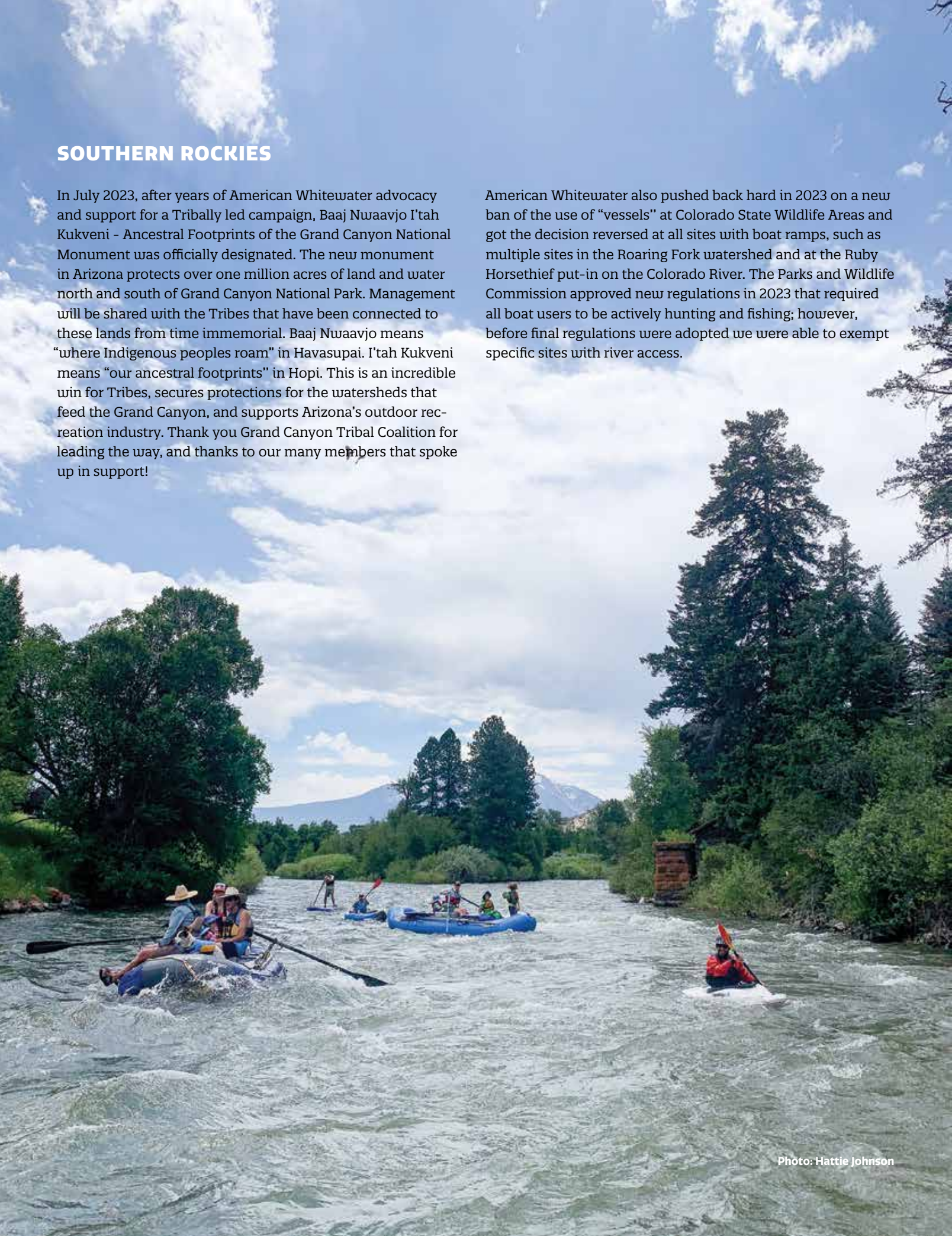


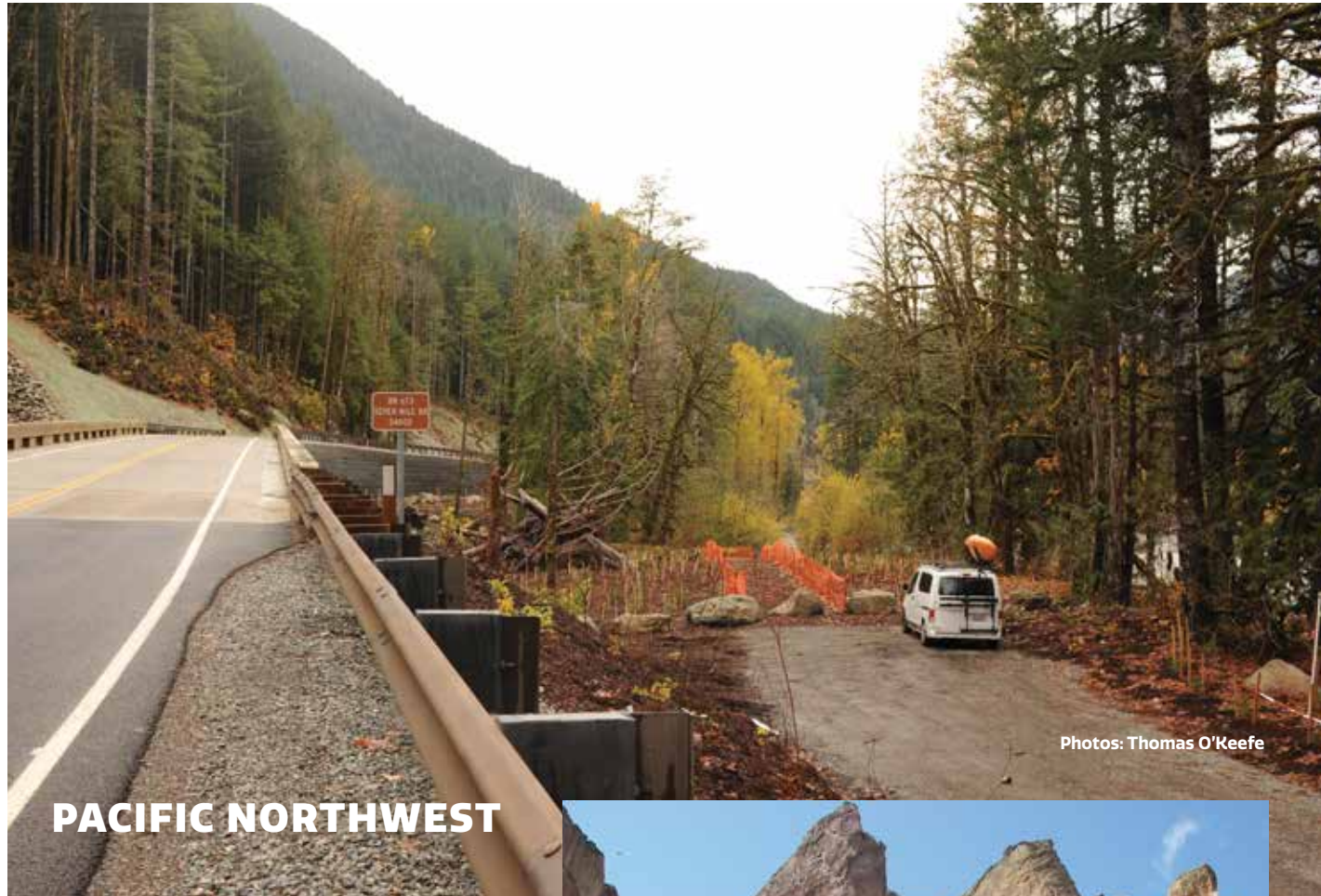
Photo: Hattie Johnson



Photo: Thomas O'Keefe

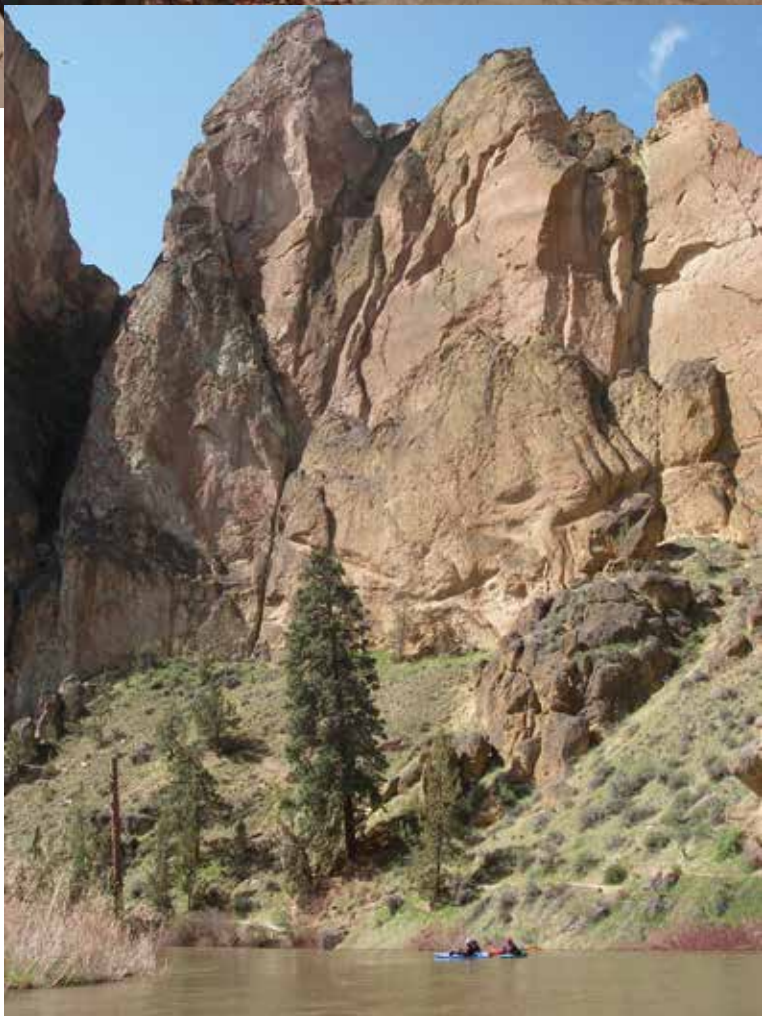
CALIFORNIA

American Whitewater prevailed in protecting 500 river miles impacted by Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E) hydropower projects. In a poorly-planned effort to raise money in a "first-of-its-kind" attempt before the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC), PG&E requested approval to sell a 49% stake in all of its hydropower projects to unknown investors. Citing key testimony provided by American Whitewater and our partners from the California Hydropower Reform Coalition, the CPUC recently denied PG&E's request. This decision sets a strong precedent for the need for public safety, reliability, and transparency in hydropower project operations and transactions. For American Whitewater members, the ruling safeguards the integrity and flows to many of our outstanding whitewater reaches found on the North Fork Feather, the Pit, the McCloud, Butte Creek, Fordyce Creek, Battle Creek, the South Yuba, the Bear, the Eel, the Mokelumne, the San Joaquin, and the North Fork Kings.



Photos: Thomas O'Keefe

PACIFIC NORTHWEST



Nearly 20 years after the road washed out, access to Washington's North Fork Skykomish River was restored. American Whitewater engaged in this project over the years working to ensure paddler interests were recognized in the planning process, including establishment of a new formal public access at Seven Mile Bridge. In Oregon, we worked with Trust for Public Land to successfully bring the Crooked River access at Hollywood Road into public ownership after more than a decade of effort. For both of these access projects we worked with the Pacific Northwest Congressional delegation to secure the funding.

Enduring Rivers Circle



The Enduring Rivers Circle honors and recognizes supporters dedicated to continuing their support of American Whitewater's river stewardship efforts indefinitely through a gift to American Whitewater in their legacy/estate planning. To join the Enduring Rivers Circle contact bethany@americanwhitewater.org

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--|
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| Bob Brewer and Jonna Hussey | John Lawson |
| Thomas Christopher | David Mason |
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| Brian and Maria Jacobson | |

Photo: Evan Stafford

Lifetime Members

Lifetime Members include a group of folks dedicated to supporting American Whitewater at the highest level. We are grateful for their support, many of whom contribute to our work on an annual basis.

Michael and Susan Abernathy
 Russell Abney
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Marc Tohir
Eric Tollefson
Patrick D. Tooley
Linda Tribble and Britt Lindstrom
Nick Troutman and Emily Jackson
Phil Trunnell
Glen Tsaparas
Chris Tulley
Barry and Kitty Tuscano
Kenny Unser

Nicholas Urquhart
Lee Van Pelt
William VanderKooy
Justin VanLandschoot
David E. Vann
Jim Veltrop
Charlie Vincent
Stephen Vitale
Joan and Kurt Wade
Charlie and Sandy Walbridge
William Walden
Trinity Wall
Chip Wallingford
Cindy Walter
Michael Ward
Duke Warner
Gordon Warren
Ryan Waterhouse
Glenn Watt
Christopher Weed
Scott Weems
Sebastian Weiche
Debbie and Kirk Weir
Kate Wempe
Grant Werschkull
Sally Wetzler
Michelle White
Greg and Maria Whiteaker
Collin Whitehead
Natalie Whiteman
Harrison Whitten
Martin Wick
Greg Widroe
Lisa Williams
Kurt Williams
Dock Williams
Cheyenne Wills
Susan Wilson
Julianna Wilson
Laura Wilson
John Wilson
Courtney Wilton
Moe Witschard and Marlene Ren-
wyck
Brandon Woerth
John Wolken
Chloe Wonnell
Brandon Woods
Greer Woody
Carter and Wendy Wray
Brad Xanthopoulos
Gregory Young
Brian Zabel
Mark Zakutansky
Art Zemach
Craig Ziegler
Andy Zimmerman
Mikko and Oskar Zuchner

In Honor Of...

Contributions to American Whitewater were made in honor of the following people in 2023:

George Albrecht
Brent Austin
Carol Bitting
Travis Burkhard
Peter Butch
Jim Byers
Stephen H. Caldwell
Jeff Clement
Bill Cross
The Crystal River
Phil and Mary DeRiemer
Henry Dorris
Paul Eisner
David Christopher Ennis, jr.

Sean and Kim Finigan
John Googins
Gordon Grant
Captain Hank
Robby Hansen
Kyle Irby
Eric Jackson
Hattie Johnson
Klamath River Project
Scott Koehn
Palmer Lamb
Ben Lehman
Stan Marks
Mike Mayfield

Megi Morishita
Tom O'Keefe
Dr. Nori Onishi
Kyle Park
Sarah Zinn and Matt Crane
Kenneth R Siger
Nikolas Sikelianos
Trevor Timm
Jeff Venturino
Lilley Washburn and Michael Egues
Ben Yeamans
Scott Young

In Memory Of...

Contributions to American Whitewater were made in memory of these people in 2023.

Kathleen Anderson
Shebli Arno
Alan Baldwin
Jocelyn Barrett
BIG
David Blanding
Bill Bradt
Edward B. Clark
Anne M Collier
Peter Dayton
Ella Dingman
Dean Alan Fisher
Derrel Fortner
John Huisjen
Taylor Hunt
Gavin Jostad
Candi Kauffman
Carl J. Keaney
Mac Kelsall
Daria 'Dasha' Kolobakhina
Larry Lorusso

George Martin
Dr. John Michnick
Jonas Minton
Maria Noakes
Ricky Brandon Owens
Alan Panebaker
Bill Parks
Maureen Phelan
Tommy Piros
Gavin Rains
Brett Thrasher
Cecil Tickamyer
Sandy Tommey
Phil Urban
Mike Wilson (MFW)
David 'Z' Zimmerman

Photo: Mike Curiak

2023 Statement of Activities*

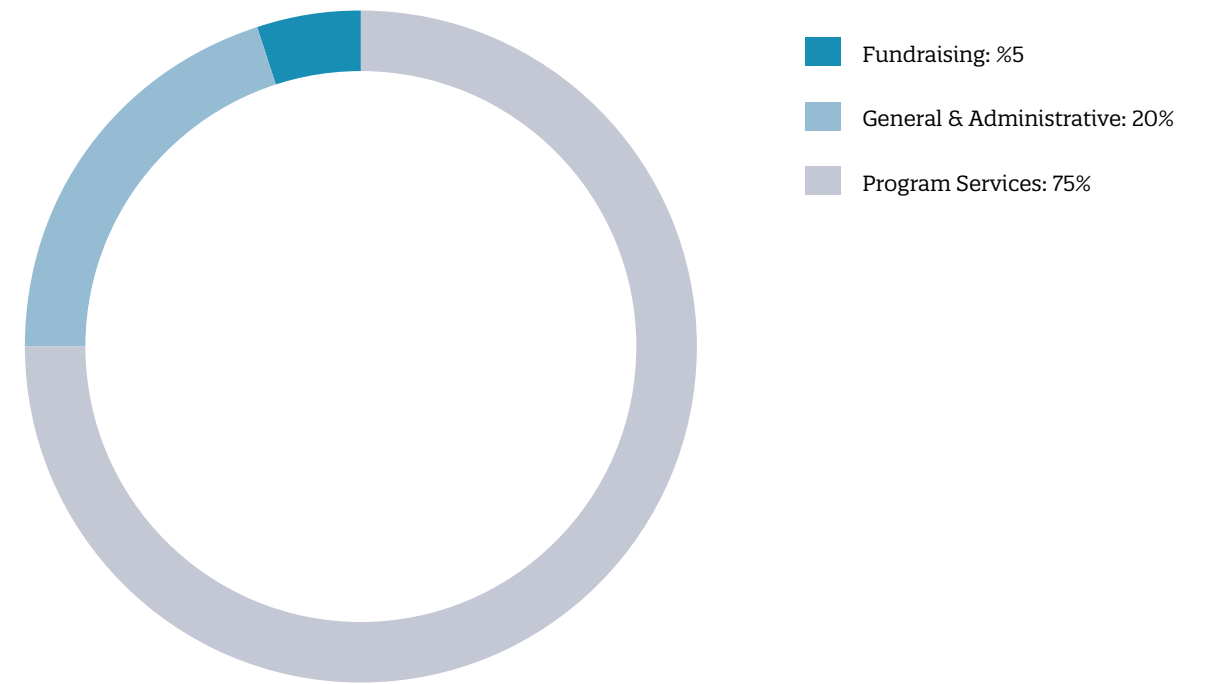
	<u>UNRESTRICTED</u>	<u>TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED</u>	<u>TOTAL 2023</u>	<u>TOTAL 2022</u>
PUBLIC SUPPORT				
Contributions	596,635	370,745	967,380	561,967
OTHER REVENUE				
Membership dues	491,203		491,203	512,917
Grants	356,030	350,800	706,830	698,075
Events	109,769		109,769	99,760
Sponsorships/Corp Programs	66,000		66,000	73,421
Products	97,000		97,000	80,388
Investment Gains/(losses)	36,595	-5,782	30,813	-51,416
In-Kind Contributions	156,851		156,851	60,608
Interest & Dividends	-5,890	34,928	29,038	10,150
Misc. Income	1,295		1,295	1,155
Net Assets Released from Restriction	408,596	-408,596	0	0
Total Support and Revenue	2,314,084	342,095	2,656,179	2,047,025
EXPENSES				
Total Program Services	1,704,878		1,704,878	1,613,171
SUPPORTING SERVICES				
General & Administrative	444,106	0	444,106	349,221
Fundraising	115,416	0	115,416	107,030
Total Supporting Services	559,522	0	559,522	456,251
Total Expenses	2,264,400	0	2,264,400	2,069,422
Total Change in Net Assets	49,684	342,095	391,779	-22,397

*Financial figures in this report are provisional. A final independent Auditor's Report and completed form 990 for fiscal year 2023 will be publicly available on our website later this year.

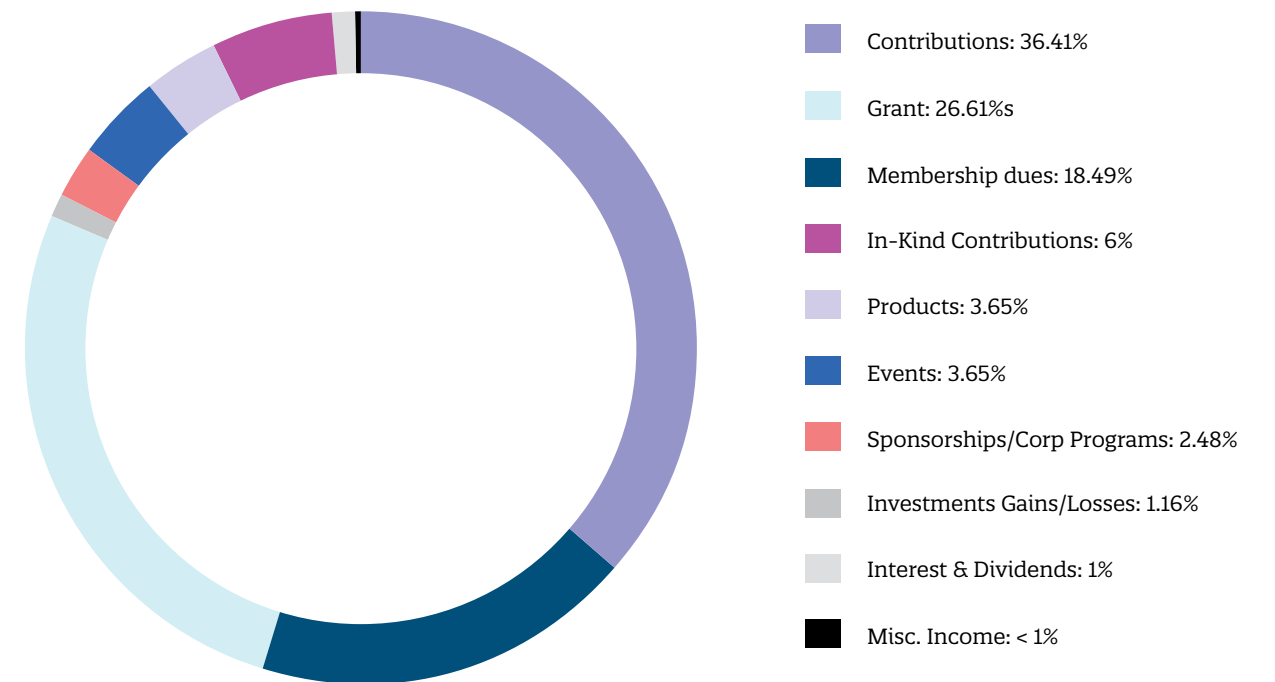
2023 Statement of Financial Position

<u>ASSETS</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash	1,398,283	1,135,463
Accounts Receivable	13,524	19,583
Grants Receivable	106,877	27,649
Investments	819,357	810,988
Prepaid Expenses	17,722	27,679
Inventory	30,083	33,668
Total Current Assets	2,385,846	2,055,030
LONG-TERM ASSETS		
Lands held for protection		
Whitewater Estates, KY (Elkhorn)	31,367	31,367
Warson Island, TN (Watauga)	17,414	17,414
Craig County, VA (John's Creek)	9,536	9,536
Preston County, WV (Big Sandy)	5,000	0
Total for Lands held for protection	63,317	58,317
Computer equipment, net	70,181	93,467
Total Long-Term Assets	133,498	151,784
Total Assets	2,519,344	2,206,814
LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCES		
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Accounts Payable	39,707	70,576
Deferred Revenues	171,380	217,528
Payroll Liabilities	42,200	44,432
Total Current Liabilities	253,287	332,536
NET ASSETS		
Unrestricted Net Assets	1,508,486	1,458,802
Restricted Net Assets	757,571	415,476
Total Net Assets	2,266,057	1,874,278
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	2,519,344	2,206,814

2023 Functional Expenses



2023 Revenue Sources



Board of Directors

Brent Austin

Vice President
Cosby, TN

Melissa Driver

Mills River, NC

Lily Durkee

Fort Collins, CO

Christopher Hest

Chico, CA

Susan Hollingsworth Elliott

Lyle, WA

Brian Jacobson

Treasurer
Long Creek, SC

Greg Lee

Portland, OR

April Montgomery

Norwood, CO

Megi Morishita

Trout Lake, WA

Chris Neuenschwander

President
Pike Road, AL

Erin Savage

Secretary
Mills River, NC

Chris Tulley

Folsom, CA

Charlie Walbridge

Honorary
Bruceton Mills, WV

Staff

Clinton Begley

Executive Director
Eugene, OR

Kevin Colburn

National Stewardship Director
Asheville, NC

Scott Harding

Stewardship Associate
Forks of Salmon, CA

Hattie Johnson

Southern Rockies Stewardship Director
Carbondale, CO

Kestrel Kunz

Southern Rockies Associate Stewardship Director
Crested Butte, CO

Sadie Mathison

Membership and Operations Specialist
Wild Rose, WI

Robert Nasdor

Northeast Stewardship Director
Sudbury, MA

Thomas O'Keefe

Pacific Northwest Stewardship Director
Seattle, WA

Bethany Overfield

Membership and Engagement Director
Brevard, NC

Theresa Lorejo-Simsiman

California Stewardship Director
Citrus Heights, CA

Evan Stafford

Communications Director
Fort Collins, CO

Dave Steindorf

California Hydropower Specialist
Chico, CA

Laura Wilson

Finance Director
Cullowhee, NC