



winter stewardship update | 2017

American Whitewater exists to help whitewater enthusiasts like you protect outstanding whitewater rivers. In the coming year, we will be focusing our resources on making permanent gains through securing protections for new Wild and Scenic rivers. Our vision is bold, and we see unique opportunities to make a lasting impact by protecting some of our best remaining freely-flowing whitewater rivers.

### 50 Years of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act

In the 1960s American Whitewater joined a national conversation to establish a system of protected rivers. In 1968 Congress established the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System to preserve certain rivers with outstanding natural, cultural, and recreational values in a free-flowing condition for present and future generations to enjoy. In the coming year we will celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act by expanding on our successful efforts to protect wild rivers across the country. Many of our priority projects focus on defending wild rivers against the threats they face while continuing to pursue permanent protection of our most cherished river resources. American Whitewater has a proven track record as the leading organization focused on the headwaters of our nation's watersheds, where rivers begin their journey to the sea and cascade through whitewater that fuels our passion. With your support we will continue to be the highly effective, results driven organization that we are.



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P.O. Box 1540 | Cullowhee, NC 28723 | 1.866.262.8429 | [americanwhitewater.org](http://americanwhitewater.org)

Wild and Scenic Clarks Fork River, WY | Photo: Evan Stafford



## REGIONAL STEWARDSHIP UPDATES

### NORTHERN ROCKIES

Idaho is home to two of the original eight Wild and Scenic Rivers—the Middle Fork Salmon and Middle Fork Clearwater (with tributaries Lochsa and Selway included). In recent years, American Whitewater has built on this legacy, advocating that the Forest Service increase the number of Wild and Scenic “eligible” streams in the region. This work has paid off, and as we head into 2018 the agency is considering a stunning number of outstanding rivers for Wild and Scenic protection in Idaho, and in Montana too. We’ll also keep up our efforts to secure Congressional designations of new Wild and Scenic rivers in Montana.

### PACIFIC NORTHWEST

In the Pacific Northwest, American Whitewater will continue our efforts to move legislation to designate over 450 miles of new Wild and Scenic Rivers in the Olympic Peninsula. In the North Cascades, hydropower developers continue to pursue new hydropower projects on cherished headwater streams. As we engage in the hydropower regulatory process, our long-term goal remains permanent protection through Wild and Scenic designation. And in southwest Oregon, resource development continues to threaten Wild and Scenic rivers like the Rogue, Illinois, Chetco, and North Fork Smith. We recently celebrated an Outstanding Resource Waters designation in Oregon for the North Fork Smith and a temporary ban on new mining claims for the region. In 2018, we will build on these successes to work to expand protections for tributary streams and surrounding forests.

### SOUTHERN ROCKIES

In the Southern Rockies, American Whitewater is using local alternatives to Wild and Scenic designation to restore flows to once wild rivers and protect the few remaining free-flowing rivers from future threats. This unique approach uses state level tools and cooperative agreements to protect rivers and balance the needs of farms and cities. A great example is the Dolores River, which was recommended for Wild & Scenic designation in 1975 but reduced to a trickle 15 years later when McPhee Dam was completed. In 2017, the Dolores surged back to life after we spent a decade working with irrigators and agencies to study reservoir operations and negotiate releases that restore the values that once made the river worthy of Wild & Scenic protection. In 2018, we’ll continue to work collaboratively and creatively to protect and enhance rivers like the Yampa, Colorado and Dolores.

### SOUTHEAST

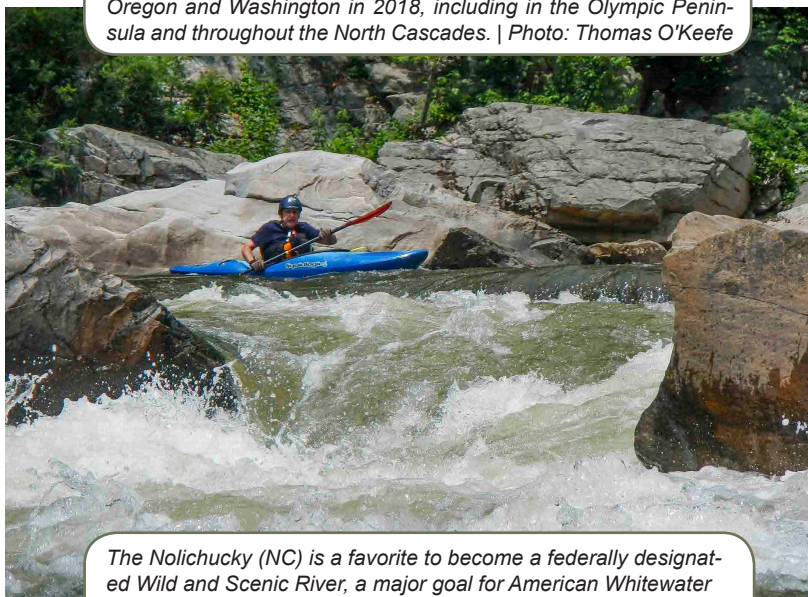
The Southeast is a paddling and biodiversity hot spot with lots of dams and only a handful of Wild and Scenic Rivers. We aim to fix that. American Whitewater has been pitching Forest Service protections for new “eligible” Wild and Scenic Rivers in western North Carolina for several years. The agency has indicated support for protecting 10 of our recommended streams, and we’re aiming for more. We’ll see the draft Forest Plan in early 2018 and will be asking you to send comments in support of new protections. The future looks good for streams like the West Fork Pigeon, Thompson, Santeetlah, and Upper Tuck. We hope to take



Colorado River Stewardship Director Nathan Fey leads a diverse group of stakeholders down the Dolores and San Miguel Rivers to see first-hand how the state's instream flow protections and improved operations at McPhee Dam can enhance recreational flows and environmental health. | Photos: Evan Stafford / Cody Perry, Rig To Flip (inset)



The Lower Deschutes is one of Oregon's most popular overnight float trips and was federally designated as a Wild and Scenic River in 1988. A number of opportunities exist to protect more rivers in Oregon and Washington in 2018, including in the Olympic Peninsula and throughout the North Cascades. | Photo: Thomas O'Keefe

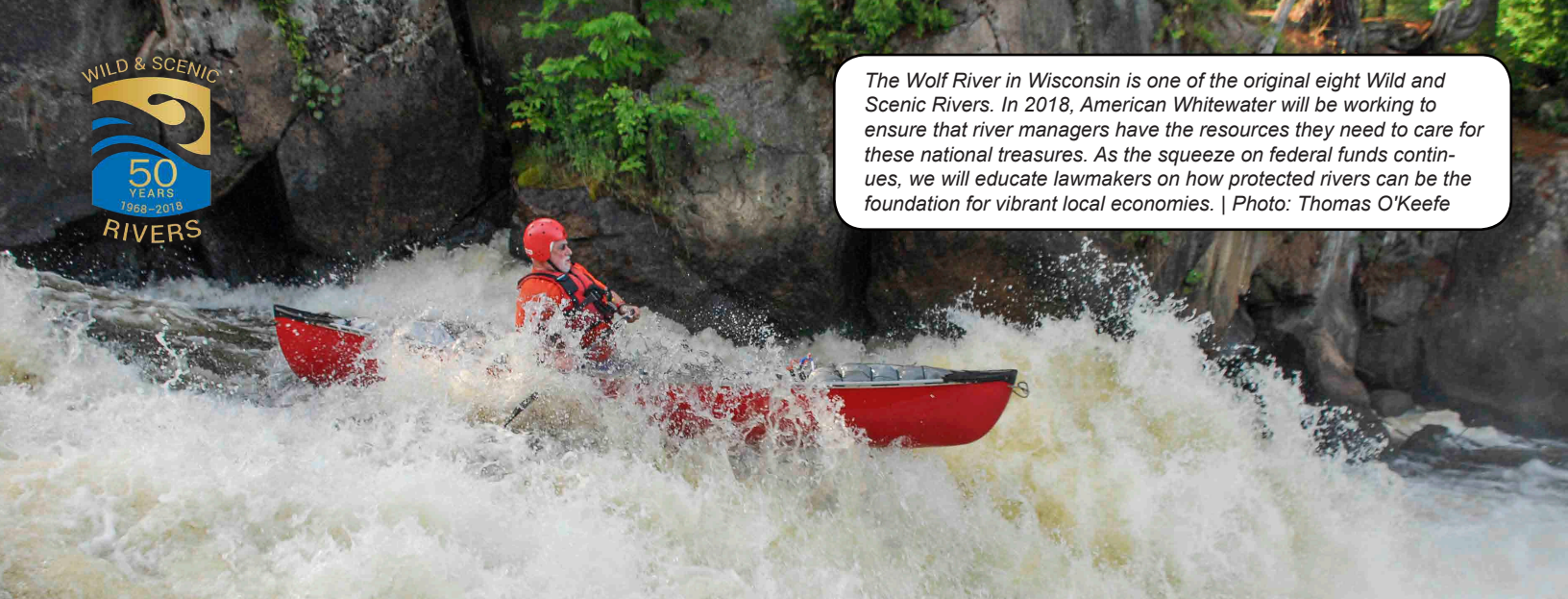


The Nolichucky (NC) is a favorite to become a federally designated Wild and Scenic River, a major goal for American Whitewater in 2018, with well documented local support. | Photo: Lee Thonus





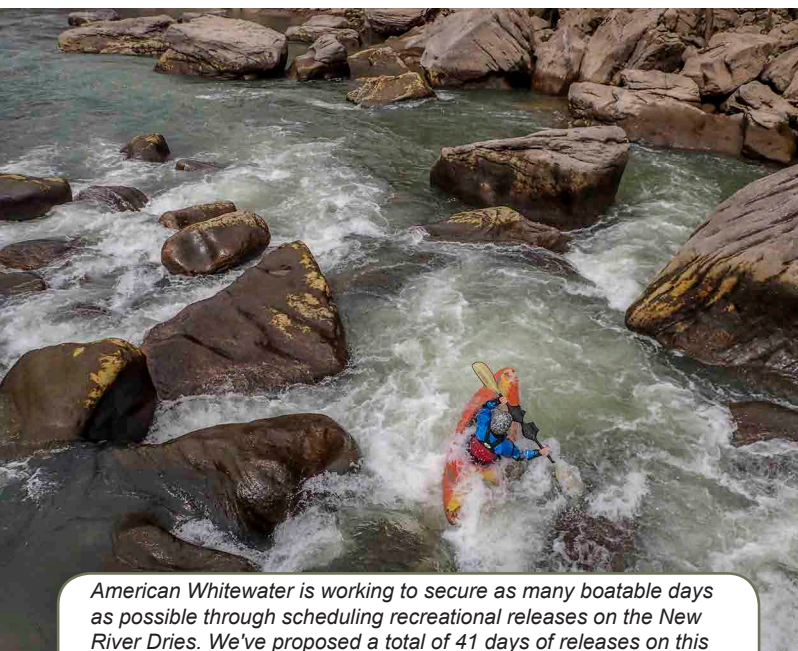
*The Wolf River in Wisconsin is one of the original eight Wild and Scenic Rivers. In 2018, American Whitewater will be working to ensure that river managers have the resources they need to care for these national treasures. As the squeeze on federal funds continues, we will educate lawmakers on how protected rivers can be the foundation for vibrant local economies. | Photo: Thomas O'Keefe*



this momentum to Congress and earn federal Wild and Scenic designations for the Nolichucky, Big Laurel, and other great streams in the region.

## CALIFORNIA

In recent years, American Whitewater has advocated for the Forest Service to find freely flowing rivers like Dinkey Creek “eligible” for Wild and Scenic designation. In 2018, we’ll continue these efforts on the Inyo, Sierra and Sequoia National Forests, and gear up for the process on the Stanislaus and El Dorado National Forests. Additionally, we’ll work to ensure that river managers apply the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act during the FERC relicensing process for hydropower dams on the Wild and Scenic Eel River and Piru Creek. Under the Act, these projects cannot invade or unreasonably diminish the river’s outstandingly remarkable values. Hydropower relicensing provides the best opportunity to return flows to these rivers, and American Whitewater will work to ensure that Wild and Scenic protections guide the process.



*American Whitewater is working to secure as many boatable days as possible through scheduling recreational releases on the New River Dries. We’ve proposed a total of 41 days of releases on this classic dewatered section. | Photo: Jeff Macklin*

## MID ATLANTIC

As we work to protect rivers across the country, opportunities also exist to restore them. Fifty years ago we thought that dams and their impacts were permanent. We now know that restoring flows can bring positive change. American Whitewater is the only group working for a better future for the New River Dries (WV). In 2017, we challenged a state decision and won more releases and better access. In 2018, we expect that FERC will release a new federal analysis and license for the Dries that may require us to act. The New River is big, beautiful, and biologically diverse, and it deserves a brighter future. You can count on us to speak for the river’s potential.

## NORTHEAST

In 2018, American Whitewater will continue work to protect the region’s remaining wild rivers, like the Farmington in Connecticut, through Wild and Scenic designation. Alongside these protection efforts, we’ll keep working on restoring rivers from the impacts of dams. On the mainstem of the Connecticut River, hydropower dams with distant owners have replaced long abandoned mills. These dams provide little economic benefit to distressed towns on the banks of dewatered river reaches, destroy aquatic habitat and prevent recreational use. Through the federal licensing process, we will restore more natural flows and bring two river reaches back to life, provide new recreation opportunities, remove a dangerous obsolete low-head dam, and create new and improved means of river access.



*During the FERC relicensing process on the Eel River (CA) American Whitewater will focus on ensuring that FERC adheres to the tenets of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. | Photo: June Ruckman*



# SUPPORT **AW** 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—81 cents of every dollar 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.

## Charity Navigator

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



The North Fork Blackwater is an incredible hike-to creeking resource for Missoula boaters and is one of several streams in Montana that American Whitewater and our partners are proposing that Congress designate as Wild and Scenic in 2018. | Photo: Kevin Colburn



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