



AMERICAN WHITEWATER

spring stewardship update | 2019

With the passage of the sweeping John D. Dingell, Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act, 621 miles of new Wild and Scenic Rivers were established and thousands of acres of land surrounding whitewater rivers was protected. It's also a sure sign that the preservation of our public lands and rivers has incredibly strong bipartisan support. That's great news because American Whitewater has no intention of letting off the gas pedal, using this momentum to protect thousands more miles of rivers under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act with new legislation and engaging in the Forest Planning process. We also see opportunities for restoring rivers and improving access as the sizable economic impact of whitewater recreation is more broadly recognized and understood. We know that healthy rivers providing quality whitewater recreation attract and inspire new businesses, jump start communities, and improve our quality of life, and we're finding more and more willing partners to help us protect and restore these recreation opportunities across the country.

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

Dolores River (CO) | Photo: Evan Stafford

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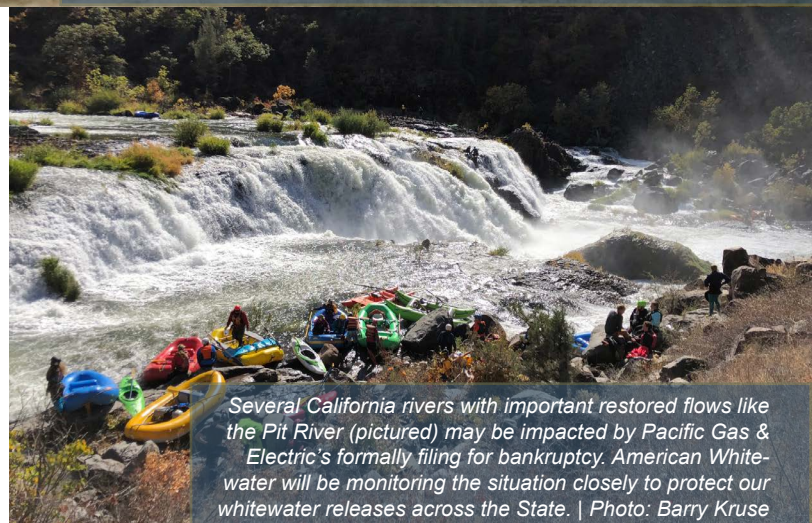
American Whitewater is working to ensure that potential changes to the storied Russell Fork River (KY/VA) release schedule enhance recreation opportunities on this whitewater classic. | Photo: Sarah Ruhlen

PROTECTING WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS

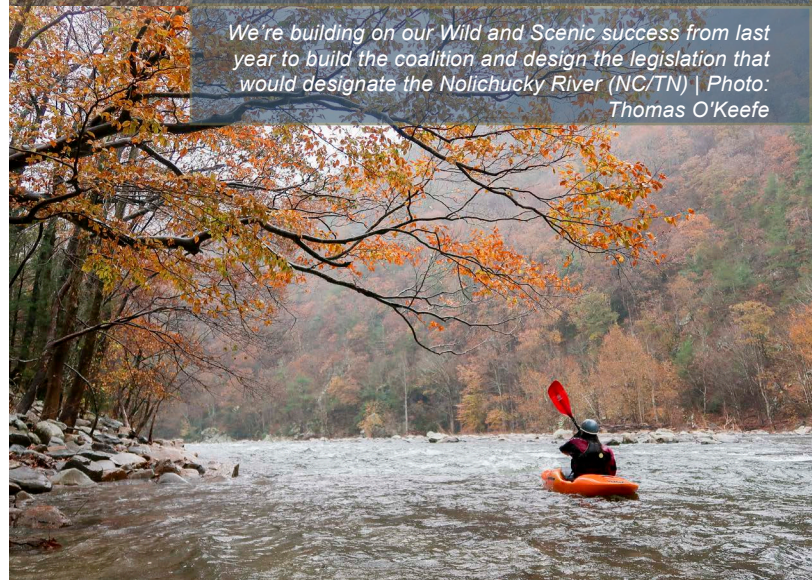
We are riding a wave of enthusiasm with our new Wild and Scenic Rivers across the country and working hard on the next suite of rivers to go before Congress. In our trips to Washington DC we are laying the groundwork for hearings on the next set of Wild and Scenic bills. We will be prioritizing passage of the Wild Olympics Act, and introduction of new Wild and Scenic legislation for 37 rivers in Montana and the Southeast's Nolichucky River. At the same time thousands of miles of streams are under consideration for protection as Wild and Scenic Eligible through National Forest Plans in California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, and North Carolina. We'll need your help to make a case for all these deserving rivers and streams.

PROTECTING PUBLIC LANDS AND RIVERS

While Oregon Wildlands was passed as part of the John D. Dingell, Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act, important provisions were stripped out of the bill and plenty of unfinished business remains in the Kalmiopsis region. Earlier this year, Senator Wyden (OR) and Representative Blumenauer (OR) hosted a listening session in Portland to set the stage for what's next. With your support, we will continue working with their offices and the rest of the Oregon delegation to finish the job of permanently protecting the Rogue, Illinois, and North Fork Smith Rivers. In Washington State, American Whitewater is working with several conservation and recreation groups to explore opportunities for an initiative focused on protecting the upper watersheds of the Salish Sea. Rivers like the Skykomish and Snoqualmie have seen the most recent hydropower threats but proposals for dewatering headwaters of the Nooksack, Skagit, and Stillaguamish have all been considered and are likely to emerge again. Our goal is to permanently protect these free-flowing rivers. In Colorado we'll be working to make sure there's an outcome amenable to boaters for the Bureau of Land Management's proposed plan in changes to the management of Gore Canyon and Pumphouse on the Upper Colorado River.



Several California rivers with important restored flows like the Pit River (pictured) may be impacted by Pacific Gas & Electric's formally filing for bankruptcy. American Whitewater will be monitoring the situation closely to protect our whitewater releases across the State. | Photo: Barry Kruse



We're building on our Wild and Scenic success from last year to build the coalition and design the legislation that would designate the Nolichucky River (NC/TN) | Photo: Thomas O'Keefe

PROTECTING WATER QUALITY

American Whitewater is working to protect our rivers from the harmful effects of pollution and hydropower generation on water quality. Through our work to make sure the Clean Water Act functions as it was intended to, we're rallying the recreation community to ask that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) do more to protect our public health and clean water, not less. From battling the proposed rollback of federal regulations that would endanger the quality of the water we play in and ⅓ of the country's drinking water, to defending the essential role that the states play in enforcing the Clean Water Act's protections for river wildlife and recreation, we're at the forefront of efforts to preserve our treasured rivers.

ACCESS TO RIVERS AND THE VALUE OF OUTDOOR RECREATION

Earlier this year, our Pacific Northwest Stewardship Director Thomas O'Keefe was invited to testify before Congress on the topic of outdoor recreation. In his remarks before the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, Tom made the case for prioritizing outdoor recreation on public lands as an essential public value. As we served in a leadership capacity to shape a bipartisan public lands package over the past year, we now see an opportunity to develop an outdoor recreation package. With your support, our goal will be to work with Congress to provide land and river managers with more tools and the resources to use those tools to sustainably manage our nation's river resources and the lands they flow through. We're also joining forces with states, industry partners and outfitters to create state offices of outdoor recreation that will promote the benefits of outdoor recreation on the economy and quality of life. Eight states have already created state offices, and we'll be working to expand this effort to Massachusetts and other states. We're also in the midst of working through specific access issues on California's Wild and Scenic Tuolumne and South Fork American rivers, and Colorado's Slate River.

MAINTAINING AND RESTORING FLOWS TO FLOAT YOUR BOAT

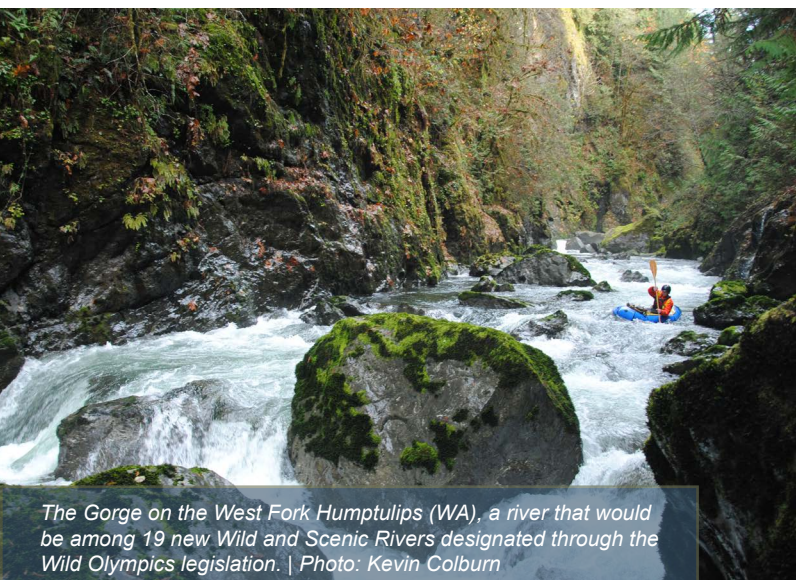
Projects with restored flows and scheduled whitewater releases across the country require constant upkeep from our team. Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E) formally filed for bankruptcy in January 2019,



Pacific Northwest Stewardship Director Thomas O'Keefe testifying before the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee. | Photo: Caleb Hargett

potentially impacting several California rivers with important restored flows like the South Fork American, the Mokelumne, the Yuba, the Pit and the North Fork Feather. Their bankruptcy has also put on hold the removal of dams on rivers such as the Eel and Butte Creek. Hydropower dams have altered flows and dewatered river reaches throughout the northeast region from the Mongaup River and West Canada Creek (NY) to the Connecticut River in (MA/VT/NH). We're leading the charge to restore these rivers, ensuring that both state and federal agencies protect recreation opportunities in the same way our efforts in Vermont led to a court ruling protecting whitewater boating on the Green River.

The relicensing process has begun in Washington State for hydropower projects on the Skagit River which will affect flow on the Skagit and access to tributaries like Thunder Creek. We will be actively participating in whitewater recreation studies to make sure these resources are protected during the process. In the Mid-Atlantic we'll be addressing potential changes to the much loved whitewater releases on the Russell Fork (VA/KY) and Upper Yough (MD), making sure we see outcomes that enhance whitewater opportunities on these whitewater classics. On recently negotiated flow agreements for the New River Dries (WV), the San Joaquin (CA), Upper Colorado River through Glenwood Canyon (CO), and Dolores River (CO) we'll be making sure these agreements are upheld and entities are delivering on the whitewater opportunities they've promised.



The Gorge on the West Fork Humptulips (WA), a river that would be among 19 new Wild and Scenic Rivers designated through the Wild Olympics legislation. | Photo: Kevin Colburn



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

NEW TECHNOLOGIES, BETTER BETA, SAFER RIVER TIME

American Whitewater's National Whitewater Inventory (NWI) is the premier source for online paddling information and we'll be continuing to make improvements in 2019 to its user experience and interface for sharing our community's incredibly valuable beta. We'll be working to upgrade our newly released apps, which currently share real-time details on the more than 5,500 whitewater runs in our database. New capabilities allowing crowdsourced updates, including comments, hazards, flow information, and photos via mobile device are all in the pipeline and will put sharing the most current river beta at your fingertips. We'll also continue enhancing the mapping capabilities on our website by creating American Whitewater specific underlying data.



The Shoshone section of the Upper Colorado River through Glenwood Canyon (CO) has newly protected whitewater flows through a water right American Whitewater helped secure and we will stay engaged to make sure recreational flow regimes are properly implemented. | Photo: Evan Stafford

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!!