



AMERICAN WHITEWATER

Conservation • Access • Events • Adventure • Safety

BY BOATERS FOR BOATERS
Mar/Apr 2016

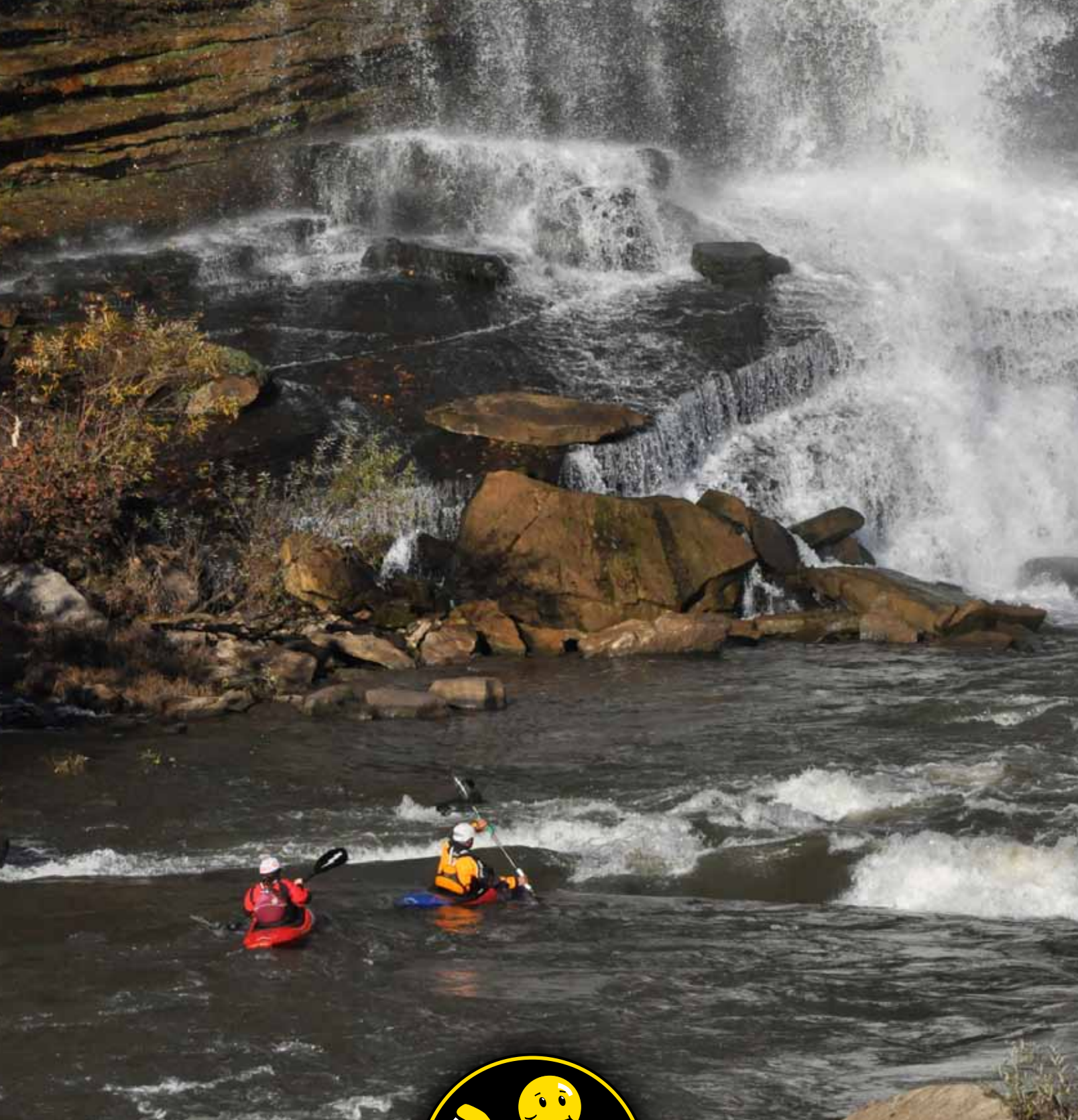
**STEWARDSHIP FOCUS:
RIVER ACCESS ACROSS
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AMERICAN WHITEWATER

A VOLUNTEER PUBLICATION PROMOTING RIVER CONSERVATION, ACCESS AND SAFETY

American Whitewater Journal Mar/Apr 2016 – Volume 56 – Issue 2

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With a new Forest Service trail built by the utility, whitewater paddling is now recognized as a legitimate form of recreation on the Sultan River (WA).
Photo by **Thomas O’Keefe**

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PURPOSE

RIVER STEWARDSHIP: AN INTEGRATED APPROACH

Our mission: "To conserve and restore America's whitewater resources and to enhance opportunities to enjoy them safely," is actively pursued through our conservation, access, safety and education efforts under the umbrella of River Stewardship. The only national organization representing the interest of all whitewater paddlers, American Whitewater is the national voice for thousands of individual whitewater enthusiasts, as well as over 100 local paddling club affiliates.

AW's River Stewardship program adheres to the four tenets of our mission statement:

CONSERVATION: AW's professional staff works closely with volunteers and partner organizations to protect the ecological and scenic values of all whitewater rivers. These goals are accomplished through direct participation in public decision-making

processes, grassroots advocacy, coalition building, empowerment of volunteers, public outreach and education, and, when necessary, legal action.

RIVER ACCESS: To assure public access to whitewater rivers pursuant to the guidelines published in its official Access Policy, AW arranges for river access through private lands by negotiation or purchase, seeks to protect the right of public passage on all rivers and streams navigable by kayak or canoe, encourages equitable and responsible management of whitewater rivers on public lands, and works with government agencies and other river users to achieve these goals.

SAFETY: AW promotes paddling safely, publishes reports on whitewater accidents, maintains a uniform national ranking system for whitewater rivers (the International Scale of Whitewater Difficulty) and publishes and disseminates the internationally-recognized American Whitewater Safety Code.

EDUCATION: AW shares information with the general public and the paddling community regarding

whitewater rivers, as well as river recreation, conservation, access, and safety. This is accomplished through our bi-monthly AW Journal, a monthly e-news, americanwhitewater.org, paddling events, educational events, and through direct communication with the press.

Together, AW staff, members, volunteers, and affiliate clubs can achieve our goals of conserving, protecting and restoring America's whitewater resources and enhancing opportunities to safely enjoy these wonderful rivers.

AW was incorporated under Missouri nonprofit corporation laws in 1961 and maintains its principal mailing address at PO Box 1540, Cullowhee, NC 28723; phone 1-866-BOAT-4-AW (1-866-262-8429). AW is tax exempt under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Service.



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Founded in 1954, American Whitewater is a national non-profit organization (Non-profit # 23-7083766) with a mission "to conserve and restore America's whitewater resources and to enhance opportunities to enjoy them safely." American Whitewater is a membership organization representing a broad diversity of individual whitewater enthusiasts, river conservationists, and more than 100 local paddling club affiliates across America. The organization is the primary advocate for the preservation and protection of whitewater rivers throughout the United States, and connects the interests of human-powered recreational river users with ecological and science-based data to achieve the goals within its mission. All rights to information contained in this publication are reserved.

EDITORIAL DISCLAIMER

The opinions expressed in the features and editorials of American Whitewater are those of the individual authors. They do not necessarily represent those of the Directors of American Whitewater or the editors of this publication. On occasion, American Whitewater publishes official organizational policy statements drafted and approved by the Board of Directors. These policy statements will be clearly identified.

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THE JOURNEY AHEAD

THANKS TO YOUR strong end of year contributions, 2015 was another outstanding year for American Whitewater and our River Stewardship Program. The outpouring of year-end giving in support of our stewardship efforts was truly amazing. American Whitewater is deeply humbled to be an organization worthy of this level of support. It demonstrates confidence in our mission and ability to achieve successful outcomes on projects that are near and dear to the hearts of boaters and friends of wild rivers. Support of this magnitude places additional responsibility on AW staff to demonstrate leadership in the coming year on stewardship issues and to adequately report back key developments.

As a community of boaters and river lovers, we all have a role to play in protecting rivers that are central to our stewardship mission. As we move into 2016, one of American Whitewater's primary goals is to increase our base of membership. At the end of 2015 American Whitewater membership stood at approximately 5400 individuals. That translates to just one out of every ten whitewater boaters being an AW member in good standing (meaning their dues are up to date). There is need to grow our membership base so the boating community can speak out with increased clout on stewardship and access issues. Membership size is the key metric government agencies and elected officials use to determine the capacity of an organization to reach their constituents. Increasing AW membership empowers our staff to be even more effective in driving outcomes that protect rivers and increase recreational opportunities for all paddlers.

The American Whitewater membership value proposition is compelling. Each membership dollar that AW receives is leveraged to generate four dollars in total funding that can go to support river stewardship and access. The \$1 to \$4 ratio is achievable because core membership allows AW to attract support from foundations, private donors, advertising

opportunities, events, and partnerships. As a result each membership dollar goes four times as far in the protection of whitewater rivers. Where else can you stretch your money like that?

On each project we work on, we seek land and water conservation, public river access, stream flow information, and flow releases that benefit the aquatic ecosystem as well as recreation. We have a proven track record of success with each of these goals. With your membership, these enhancements create a triple bottom line: they provide local communities a sustainable economic base, they result in healthier rivers, and they provide opportunities for healthy nature-based recreation. Reconnecting people and communities with their rivers creates an enthusiastic and lasting constituency for river conservation.

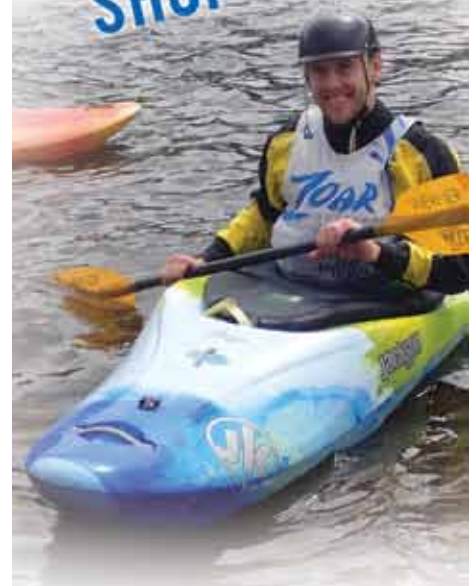
American Whitewater has a great story to tell right now. Our stewardship projects are making a real difference for rivers and local communities. If you are reading this publication and you are not a member, please consider supporting this work. If you are a member, thanks for your support and in 2016 we challenge you to encourage your non-member boating buddies to join AW. Your reward for this challenge is healthy whitewater rivers for future generations with ongoing access. There has never been a better time to support American Whitewater!

See you on the river,



PS: If you have boating friends that are not members of American Whitewater, please share this issue of the *Journal* with them. Together all members of the boating community can speak out with increased clout.

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STEWARDSHIP

RIVER ACCESS BY THE STEWARDSHIP TEAM



WELCOME TO THE Access Issue! Think of our nation's rivers as an interconnected trail system stretching some three million miles. That is a system 20 times longer than all the trails in all National Forests combined. This trail system connects neighbors and communities, and enriches lives and economies all along its staggering length. While land trails have effects on habitat, rivers *are* habitat, with vast biodiversity swimming and crawling beneath boats. And while it would cost over 1.5 billion taxpayer dollars to maintain three million miles of land trails, our rivers are essentially maintenance free. What an amazing public treasure our river system is!

We need to provide what this river system needs if we want to be able to continue to enjoy it. We need to be physically and legally able to get in and out of rivers at

bridges, dams, and access areas. We need the right to float downstream through both public and private lands, and scout and portage when need be. We need enough water to float our boats, both literally and figuratively. And we need clean water that doesn't make us sick, and river corridors that draw us back time and time again for their scenery. Here at AW, our stewardship staff works every day to better meet these needs, and in this issue of the *AW Journal* we are going to take a deep dive into our river access work.

We think you'll see the balance between private and public use of rivers is somewhat tenuous. There are people, industries, and power companies constantly vying for exclusive use of rivers, and they win if no one pushes back. At the same time, there are incredible partnerships growing that celebrate and improve river recreation. Our job—and this includes you—is to help

river recreation be recognized as the deeply valuable activity we all know it to be. We need to grow the community of people who appreciate river recreation's value, and we need to rally that community when public enjoyment of rivers is put at risk or when positive opportunities arise.

One very important thing for you to know about all this work is that you make it happen. Membership and donations overwhelmingly fund AW's river access work and we almost always partner with affiliate clubs and members on projects. It is work by paddlers and for paddlers, but it is also important to the countless businesses and communities that benefit from river recreation. So, thank you for what your support makes possible!

CALIFORNIA ACCESS

BY DAVE STEINDORF AND THERESA SIMSIMAN

IN CALIFORNIA, AMERICAN Whitewater has been working to improve access for paddlers in several important arenas. First, we are continuing to work to negotiate improved river access at hydropower projects across the state via the various FERC relicensing negotiations that we are engaged in. Second, we've been working with the California Department of Transportation and counties to ensure compliance with California Streets and Highway Code Section 84.5 and Section 991, which require that agencies and local governments consider the feasibility of providing or improving river access on all state and county bridges constructed over a navigable waterway. Third, we are working with the State Lands Commission to improve policies relative to navigation and river access. Below are just a few of the high profile projects that we will be working on in 2016.

Tuolumne River - Wards Ferry Bridge Take-out

The Wild & Scenic Tuolumne River from Meral's Pool to Wards Ferry Bridge is a classic reach filled with spring poppies, blue herons and miles of Class IV whitewater. Unfortunately, the less than stellar take-out facility at Wards Ferry Bridge has often discouraged private boaters from enjoying the run. After a long single day or multi-day trip, many boaters are not enamored of navigating the steep egress with heavy boating gear, the locked bathroom, the copious graffiti, and the regular vehicle break-ins and vandalism.

In 2015 the Modesto and Turlock Irrigation Districts, the City and County of San Francisco, agencies, and interested stakeholders formed the Don Pedro Relicensing Settlement Group to develop a comprehensive settlement agreement for the FERC relicense of the Don Pedro Hydroelectric Project #2299. The Wards

Ferry Bridge take-out is at the upper end of the Don Pedro Reservoir, and project operations have a significant impact on river levels at the end of the run. As a result, the relicensing negotiations provide a perfect opportunity to champion significant facility improvements at the bridge. American Whitewater has joined with officials from Tuolumne County, federal agencies (BLM, NPS and USFS), conservation organizations, (Tuolumne River Trust and Central Sierra Environmental Resource Center), and local whitewater outfitters (ARTA, OARS, and Sierra Mac) to form a recreation workgroup. Together, we are advocating for a safe multi-use recreational facility at Wards Ferry Bridge. We are seeking:

- Simultaneous, all-water-level access
- Safe pedestrian access/egress from water level to bridge
- Toilet and changing facilities

Wards Ferry Bridge on the Tuolumne River.
Photo by Gary Vaughn USFS



STEWARDSHIP

- Sufficient and secure parking
- Safe bus/vehicle pedestrian loading areas
- Day use areas
- Signage (use, interpretive, safety)
- Reliable communication (cell tower)
- On-site staffing during permit season (May 1 – Labor Day)

Lower Merced River – Public Boating Access below Crocker Huffman Diversion Dam

The Lower Merced River between Crocker Huffman Dam and Henderson Park provides an excellent resource for beginner boaters. It is a stretch that has plenty of Class I and II rapids along rich riparian habitat. Public access, however, has been limited by extensive private land along both the north and south shorelines, and the few public access sites that do exist are undeveloped. During negotiations for the FERC Merced River Hydroelectric Project #2179, American Whitewater collaborated with Merced Irrigation District to develop plans for river access facilities below Crocker Huffman Diversion Dam outside of the license process.

To fund this project, Merced Irrigation District applied for and received grant money through the Merced Integrated Regional Management Plan, which coordinates local resources with matching funds from the California Department of Water Resources. Construction of public access facilities below Crocker Huffman Diversion Dam should start this spring. The access will include a graded gravel parking area for eight vehicles, a two-unit vaulted restroom, a 20-foot wide boating ramp, a picnic table and an interpretive kiosk. This public access, coupled with planned Merced County improvements downstream at Henderson Park, will create a more functional river reach for boaters, anglers, and other riverside recreation.



The improved access to the North Fork Feather River will make crossing Highway 70 with a raft a thing of the past.

Photo by Dave Steindorf

Rock Creek Bench (North Fork Feather River)

Since 2001, the releases negotiated by American Whitewater for the North Fork Feather River-Rock Creek Bench have become one of the most popular whitewater opportunities in California. Each year, over 1,000 paddlers come to enjoy fabulous paddling on Tobin, Lobin and Rogers Flat runs, all of which are located within this eight-mile section. This popularity has occurred despite the fact that access, particularly to the put-in of the Rogers Flat run, is truly abysmal. Currently, to get to the river, paddlers need to park their vehicles in a small turnout along Highway 70, carry their boats across the busy highway, and then climb down a steep sprayed concrete embankment. American Whitewater has been working for the past 15 years to improve this situation. In 2009, we renegotiated our flow agreement with PG&E, which capped the number of release weekends at one per month. In exchange, PG&E agreed to build this much-needed river access. Then in 2013, PG&E attempted

to back away from our agreement because of potential “safety concerns” with the project. After a series of discussions with PG&E’s senior management, we were able to come to agreement on how to move the project forward. We have received 90% design drawings from PG&E and are waiting on final permitting. At a cost of almost \$5 million, this is a significant project. Most of the expense comes from the need to build a ramp from Highway 70 to the parking area near the river. This will require 24,000 cubic yards of fill material, which equals 2,400 dump trucks loads! We are cautiously optimistic that this project will be constructed in time for the 2016 Feather Fest. The new project design includes:

- 18 parking places for vehicles and trailers
- Seasonal restrooms and
- Open during release weekends

South Fork American River - Highway 49 Bridge Replacement Project

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) recently began a preliminary planning process for replacing the Highway 49 Bridge over the South Fork American River in Coloma. Construction on the two-year long project is slated to begin in May of 2017. The current bridge is one of the few remaining free public access points to the South Fork American River near Coloma. In 2013, American Whitewater successfully petitioned Caltrans to have this project serve as a blueprint for complying with California Streets and Highway Code 84.5, which requires the state to study the feasibility of providing or improving river access at all bridges constructed over a navigable waterway. As a result, Caltrans District 3 solicited our input on the project and fully considered public access at Highway 49 Bridge in its feasibility study, which was included in the March 2015 Final Environmental Document. This study confirmed that a 200-foot state right of way must be maintained on each side of a new bridge centerline, which means the public will have the legal right to enter and cross the state right of way to access the South Fork American River at all four corners of the new bridge. The feasibility study outlined additional accommodations, including constructing 10 parallel parking spaces on the west side of the bridge and a maintenance vehicle pullout on the east side of the bridge, which will be publically available for parking when not in use by Caltrans.

The new bridge will be located 20 feet north of the existing bridge and will be constructed in two phases, which will have a significant impact on vehicle travel over the bridge and river travel under the bridge. American Whitewater, California Outdoors and the El Dorado County River Supervisor collaborated with Caltrans on how to ensure continued river travel under the bridge throughout construction. This will likely entail river patrols leading river traffic through a 30-foot wide tunnel that will be

erected under the bridge construction. In addition, the group determined river access during the first phase of construction will be on the southeast corner of the bridge and will move downstream to the county park upon the final phase. We're excited to see the improvements that will come with the new Highway 49 Bridge and will continue working with Caltrans throughout construction to get information out regarding any river travel or public access changes as they happen.

South Fork American River - Slab Creek - Mosquito Road Bridge Replacement Project

Mosquito Road Bridge provides one of just two public take-outs available on the Class IV-V South Fork American River below Slab Creek. It currently serves as the historic take-out for boaters who desire a shorter run and also allows boaters to enjoy the river but take out above the harder Class V rapid known as Motherlode Falls. Currently, parking at the bridge is limited to just a few spaces located up Mosquito Road on the Placerville side of the bridge, which is frowned upon by concerned locals who do not like the idea of parked vehicles possibly blocking one of only two routes out of the town of Swansboro. Pedestrian access to and from the river at the bridge is precarious at best too, especially when you add the weight of a heavy boat. Fortunately, the El Dorado County Community Development Agency, Transportation Division is in the public process of updating a 1993 replacement study for Mosquito Road Bridge. The completion of this study will position the county to receive Federal Highway funds administered by Caltrans to begin construction on a new bridge as early as 2018.

During a three-year public process, American Whitewater advocated that the county examine access for all bridge alternatives considered in the study, as required by the California Streets and Highway Code for county bridges. As a result of our efforts, El Dorado County issued an invitation for the public to specifically

comment on river access at Mosquito Road Bridge. American Whitewater submitted a preferred scenario that includes:

- Providing year round access to the river, as is the current setup at Mosquito Road Bridge
- Maintaining the old Mosquito Road Bridge as a pedestrian walkway and as a bicycle route across the river
- Providing year-round vehicle access to the river on the South Placerville side where the public currently parks for river access

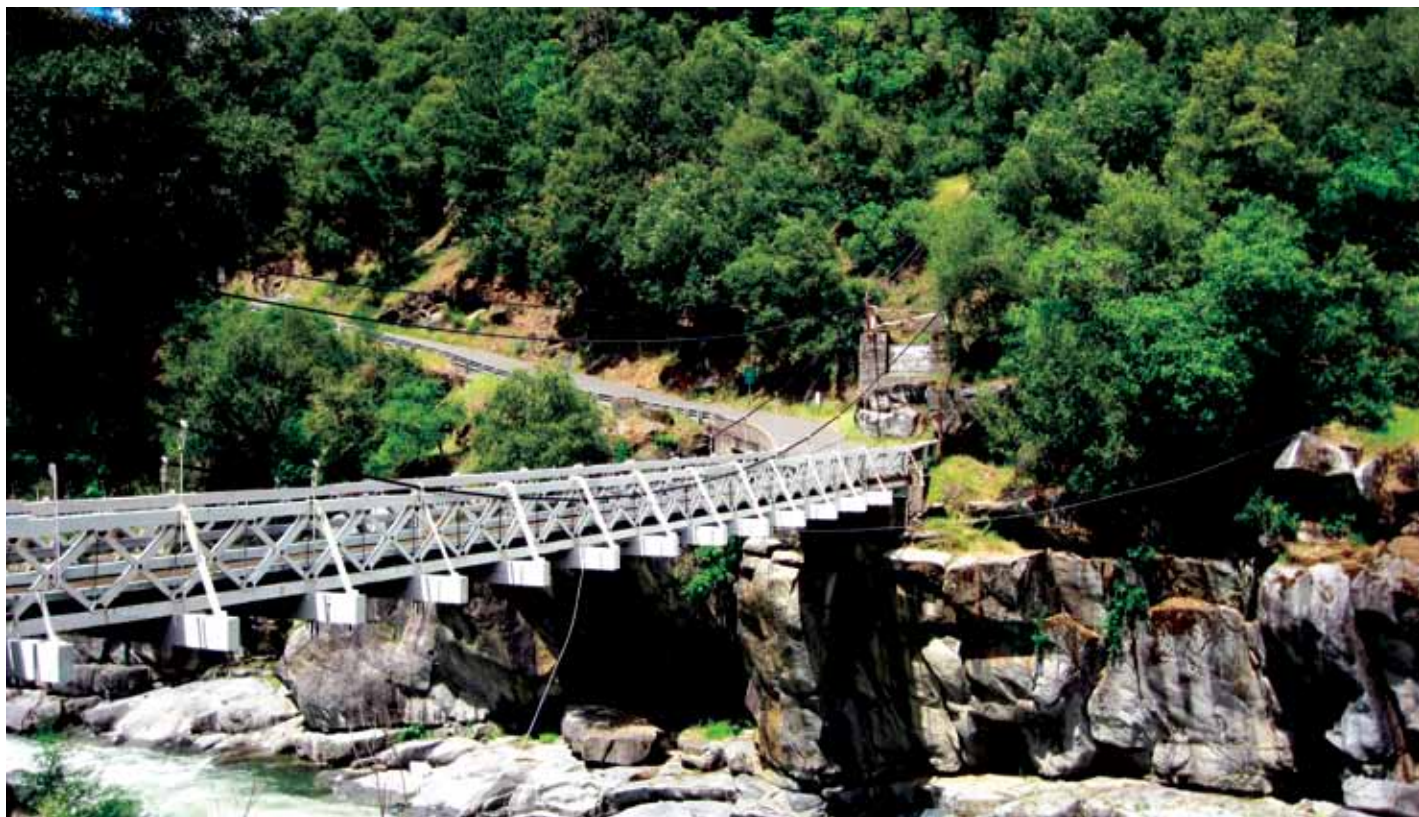


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STEWARDSHIP



Mosquito Road Bridge is ready for a facelift. Once complete, this will be a critical access location for the Slab Creek run on the South Fork American River.

Photo by Violet Jakab

- Exploring the possibility for additional parking spaces adjacent to the river and at the first hairpin turn on the South Placerville side and
- Improving pedestrian access down to the river at the current Mosquito Road Bridge

It is our hope that the county will incorporate these interests into the bridge alternatives to be included in the Environmental Impact Report that is slated for release this spring.

California State Lands Commission Strategic Plan

The California State Lands Commission (SLC) plays a critical role in protecting both river access and the public's right to float throughout the entire state. The SLC is tasked with protecting the lands that are

controlled by the State of California, which includes all of the lands under and adjacent to the navigable rivers within the state. In 2015, the SLC began the process of updating its strategic plan. American Whitewater provided comments on the Draft Strategic Plan and attended stakeholder meetings to ensure that the needs of paddlers were represented. The Commission adopted its new plan in December of last year.

One of the most important strategies in the plan is to "Protect, expand, and enhance public use and access to and along the State's inland and coastal waterways." Additionally, the Commission plans to "Prepare and disseminate a Guide to Rights on and to California Navigable Waterways and associated brochure for coastal and inland waterways." This guide will be a valuable tool when private landowners, agencies, or municipalities are illegally

denying the public access to rivers. For example, on the Cosumnes River in El Dorado County, a private landowner has constructed an illegal fence blocking public access. American Whitewater has been working for over two years to get the county to remove this fence, and yet it continues to refuse to take the necessary enforcement action. In this case, and in others where we work to ensure public access, we believe that having the weight of the State Lands Commission behind us will help motivate public agencies to obey and enforce the law.

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STEWARDSHIP

RIVER ACCESS IN COLORADO

BY NATHAN FEY



CO river access.
Photo by Nathan Fey

WHETHER YOU'RE A resident or visitor you'll recognize that Colorado's rivers and streams, and the world-class paddling opportunities they provide, vary greatly—by size, gradient, rate of flow, and also by ownership. These variables can mean that paddlers who spend time on a river one year may find a whole new set of challenges on that same river the next—from changes in flow and rapids, to a surprise new fence placed across the river. While flow variability is part of the character of paddling in Colorado, for residents and visitors alike, ownership of rivers and streams in the state is confusing, complicated, and sometimes life-threatening.

Take for example the story of Chris and Kelly, who had recently transplanted to Denver from Richmond, VA. They traveled to Crested Butte to meet Max on his way back from paddling Upper Cherry Creek in California and decided to hit the Taylor River Canyon on their way back to Denver. As Max recalls,

We were graced with a flow of roughly 1,200 cfs in the river and put on at the Lottis Creek access. All being non-native

to the state and its rivers, we were going off of beta in the “Whitewater of the Southern Rockies”, and “River Gypsies” guidebooks. After a few miles of stellar and continuous Class III we were confronted by signs on either side of the river claiming the following stretch to be unnavigable and illegal to paddle. In Virginia we are used to landowner issues, but I have never seen signs solely directed at stifling a paddler's downstream progression, only signs placed in effort to protect landowners' riparian property rights.

The group didn't want to get sued, harassed, or threaten access to the river for other paddlers, so they decided to portage the questionable stretch by way of the two lane highway alongside river left.

Upon getting out of our boats, we were confronted by a four-foot tall barbed wire fence. Our boats cleared the fence without issue. When it came to the three of us negotiating the fence in our expensive gore-tex dry tops and suits, that was a different issue entirely. Two people had to hold strands of barbed wire open for the other in

the group to be able to succeed in a weird limbo maneuver to avoid the barbed wire wrecking our dry gear. Our PFDs all took solid gouges from the barbed wire.

After this hurdle, the group was left to walk roughly one mile on the small shoulder of the highway to the next suitable access point at Next Generation.

When we reached the take-out, we met some locals whom we had paddled the Upper East with a couple of days before, who presumably had put on after us. They told us that most paddlers disregard the signs we took as serious warnings and paddle the stretch of the river in question without issue.

Had we known that we could have avoided negotiating barbed wire and walking a mile with our boats, we could have more completely experienced the full bounty of the beautiful Taylor River Canyon.

As our rivers and streams differ, so have the variety of situations that threaten or

restrict public access and enjoyment. These arise from several scenarios, from water projects that dry up rivers once prized by kayakers and rafters, or landowners (both private individuals and public agencies) that string cables and fences across our rivers, to poorly planned or maintained launch sites and take-outs that become unsafe to use.

Take, for example, the Lower Gunnison River. On this mellow Class II (III) run that takes you through the Dominguez-Escalante National Conservation Area, poor river access has led to injury, damage to gear, and decreased visitation to this west-slope classic. Locals and outfitters alike enjoy this run as a quick overnighter for families and kids, and the canyons offer fantastic side-hikes. Consider though that existing access to the river requires carrying boats under a train trestle that sits less than six feet off the ground, and is too narrow to fit a vehicle or trailer under. Paddlers must wrestle their canoes, kayaks, or rafts through the mud and sand, and under the trestle to reach their vehicles. Optional access can be found downstream, but paddlers won't find a boat ramp or improved facilities there either.

In Southwestern Colorado, reduced flows in the Dolores River now prevent annual runs of Slickrock Canyon and the Ponderosa Gorge. Lack of streamflows on the Dolores have left public boat ramps and access facilities high and dry, and even if you could get your boat to the river, what then? Persistent low-flows have also encouraged plants like tamarisk to encroach into the river channel, and boat ramps and public campsites once frequented by families floating the five-day trip, are now invisible to the untrained eye and difficult to access. Upstream, on a section of the Dolores River regularly floated by outfitters, anglers, and local paddlers, low flows allowed ranchers to hang fences across the river—presumably

to control livestock. In September 2013 when flows returned, a near miss with a barbed-wire fence nearly ended with a fatality (AW accident #3804):

I have paddled this river for almost 20 years and every time it sure is nice to be out on the water. This section of river is not technical, Class II, maybe III at 'big water.' Today however unbeknownst to anyone it was Class VI, death. I successfully negotiated a drop in the river as we floated 'through' the ranch and was charging the wave train when I heard by buddy in the raft behind me yell 'fence' a fraction of a second after I saw the fence myself but was left speechless due to the instant severity that I knew I was in. The raft behind me up river containing my two buddies, one with his two year old son, was able to get to the riverbank safely. I however could not spin and ferry over fast enough and got pinned against the fence with the river pounding against me trying to take my head down under water.

I somehow had gotten the majority of my body over the top strand of barb wire and was able to stabilize myself with my head above water. I couldn't move. The fence, the barbs, the water pressure all had me pinned in the

middle of the river. Unbelievable. All I remember thinking is 'you better pull this together.' I looked up river to see if there was anything my buddies could do to help. I saw their helpless eyes wishing those were not the last eyeballs I ever see. I put myself here and I have one option, get myself out.

First I carefully unwound my arms and legs out of the fence trying not to cut myself any more than I already had. Something still had me. If I cut the fence with my Gerber tool in my chest pocket I would flag myself and if still caught on the fence would surely drowned. I pulled the release cord on my safety paddle jacket. Nothing. I grabbed my river knife and cut my sup leash once. Nothing. I made another cut and my sup went down river with the current. I sure wished I was on that thing. Looking up river standing on the bottom wire and hanging on to the top strand of barb wire I assessed every aspect of myself to ensure I was free from the fence. Checking everything multiple times. All I wanted to do was dive backwards down river off the fence and be free floating down the river again. If one thing was still entangled that I was unaware of then that could be lights out.

Taylor River Access - Prohibited.

Photo by Nathan Fey



STEWARDSHIP



On Willow Creek in NW Colorado, river access near the take-out is obstructed by a river-wide cable and Pallet Fence.

Photo by Nathan Fey

I slowly began to side step to my left, river right, down the fence dodging barbs until I could step off the fence and feel the river bottom beneath. One foot off. The other foot off. I took my hands off the fence and there I was standing in the water, free. No paddle. No paddleboard. I chased down river and fetched my sup. My paddle was found days later by another paddler and is back in my possession. My hands were cut up. My paddle pants were shredded. My wrist still hurts. I can't wait to get back on the horse.

Similar situations are happening across Colorado, from Route County to Boulder County. On Willow Creek, a Class IV tributary to the Elk River in NW Colorado, a private landowner hangs wooden pallets across the river just upstream of the take-out. While the landowner contends that the obstruction is there to keep his cows from going downstream, local authorities, neighbors, and paddlers report never seeing livestock on the property. The pallet curtain traps debris, and forces paddlers

out of the river—a clear threat to public safety. (See photo).

In Boulder County, many of the parks and open space properties are located along riparian areas and creek corridors, and privately leased for agricultural use. The county requires fences, some which are electric, to cross the creeks in order to prevent livestock from escaping onto neighboring lands, public roads, and housing developments. In the spring, kayakers float through some of the properties along the lower Boulder Creek and St. Vrain Creek drainages.

The Assistant Boulder County Attorney has stated that “Boulder County is like a private property owner in that it gets to decide whether or not to permit people to float through its property and, for agricultural land where there is grazing livestock that needs to be fenced, Boulder County is well within its rights to fence people out and prosecute violators for civil and/or criminal trespass.”

So while the Colorado Constitution provides “the water of every natural stream...is hereby declared to be the property of the public,” the public can be prevented from using public property? The Colorado Supreme Court has indicated that the general rule in Colorado is that streambeds are owned by the owners of the adjoining lands. This rule is based upon the common law principle—that is, he who owns the surface of the ground has the exclusive right to everything that is above it—and has been codified in the Colorado Revised Statutes.

The extent of the public's rights, if any, to float or otherwise recreate on streams running through private property is unsettled. There is a Colorado Supreme Court case (*People v. Emmert*, 597 P.2d 1025 (Colo. 1979)), which holds that there is not a right to float in Colorado and that it is a criminal trespass for someone to float on a stream through private property without the consent of the owner. The Colorado Attorney General issued a formal legal opinion in 1983 stating that persons who float or boat on Colorado streams across private lands without the owner's permission do not commit trespass, so long as they do not touch the stream banks or beds. However, because the Attorney General's opinion is not binding on law enforcement officials, those officials may or may not apply the Attorney General's opinion, which could result in inconsistent enforcement across the state.

Landowners—whether an individual rancher or a parks department—use the ambiguity in Colorado law to strengthen the position that they can fence us out.

American Whitewater's Access Program continually works to address access issues by negotiating agreements, working on a legislative fix, or simply through respectful co-existence.

In 2008, American Whitewater reached agreement with Sportsman's Paradise on the Upper South Platte to provide access

for paddlers wanting to enter Wildcat Canyon. In order to access the Class V canyon, paddlers had to float through a Class II stretch of water crossing the private fishing club. This led to conflicts, with paddlers dodging low-hanging wires, metal grates stretched across the river, and confronting verbal and physical harassment, until a negotiated solution was found that provides vehicle access to the canyon through the same private property.

In response to the near fatality on the Upper Dolores, local boaters and the ranch owner together developed a solution that works for all—they installed a hanging curtain of 10-foot-long PVC pipes over the river at the property lines. The units are designed to be raised and lowered depending on flows, and can be taken down as needed.

Reaching resolutions is not always easy, and conflicts will continue to exist, if only because recreational boaters and landowners disagree about the public's right

to float on waters flowing through private land. In 2010, Colorado's lawmakers came close to finding a solution. The legislation failed, and Colorado's Governor, Bill Ritter, Jr, issued an executive order creating the River Access Dispute Resolution Task Force.

The Task Force was charged with re-establishing a dialogue between landowners and boaters that will lead to the establishment of a fair and efficient process for resolving conflicts between landowners, anglers, commercial outfitters, and the general paddling public. The Task Force agreed that conflicts between members of the boating public and landowners can and should be minimized and resolved where possible, and never endorsed either side of the "right to float" dispute. The Task Force described historical conflicts and solutions to those conflicts, and offered recommendations to resolve conflicts between landowners and boaters.

Conflicts between boaters and landowners arise in a variety of contexts. In no particular order, some of these conflicts include:

- 1. Trespass:** The law in Colorado provides that floating on rivers or streams flowing through private property does not constitute criminal trespass as long as one does not touch the bed or banks of the stream. A significant number of the conflicts between landowners and boaters arise, for example, when boaters anchor or beach their crafts or get out of their boat to use the bed, banks, or adjacent property for activities such as walking, wading, picnicking, camping, resting, or bathroom breaks. Conflicts also arise over contact by boaters with the streambed.
- 2. Right to Float:** Some landowners assert that they have the right to exclude the public from the surface of waters flowing over privately owned stream

Low bridges, like this one on the Taylor River, create dangerous threats to paddler safety.

Photo by Nathan Fey



STEWARDSHIP



Landowners have used various tactics to discourage paddlers from floating through property. On the Upper Colorado River, they use electric fences.

Photo by Nathan Fey

beds. Some boaters assert that the waters of the state belong to the public for their use, whether or not those waters flow over private property. Conflicts over boating through private property have led to litigation.

3. Obstructions: Diversion structures, fences, bridges, stream improvement structures, and natural obstructions such as downed trees are common features of Colorado's rivers and streams. Generally, recreational boaters view these types of man-made structures as legitimate necessities or property improvements, and treat their presence in the river channel as such. Paddlers also acknowledge that natural obstructions occur frequently and unpredictably. However, to the extent that such structures or obstructions impede boaters' passage downstream, they are also viewed as potential hazards to public safety. Conflicts arise when landowners object to boaters portaging these obstructions or when boaters cut fencing or otherwise damage structures to continue their downstream travel. Paddlers, on the other hand, think that clear passage, or a portage alternative, should be

maintained on rivers and streams with flows and access that support river recreation.

Often, paddlers are confronted by situations where landowners create deliberate obstructions in river channels presumably to impede boaters. Examples include hanging barbed wire and fishhooks below a bridge, felling trees across river channels, and constructing impassable fences that are maintained even during high water and in the absence of livestock. Such obstacles can be dangerous to boaters and may be illegal pursuant to C.R.S. 18-9-107.

4. Misconduct: There are a variety of descriptions of poor conduct by both landowners and boaters. In addition to topics already covered, such as trespassing and deliberate obstruction of waterways, examples of misconduct include inconsiderate and disruptive passage near wade fishermen and adversarial exchanges by both sides. In rare instances, both landowners and boaters have reported criminally menacing behavior by members of the other group.

5. Enforcement: Landowners are unable to prevent repeated acts such as trespass and misconduct because of two issues: unresponsive local law enforcement officers and an inability to identify non-commercial boaters. Commercial boaters are required to be licensed and display identification on their vessels. Some assert that non-commercial boaters should be required to identify, license, or register their vessels to improve identification and enforcement of the law. Boaters counter that Colorado does not require identification for other non-motorized activities such as biking, hiking, horseback riding, or snowshoeing. They also have expressed concerns about the cost to individuals, their safety, and the bureaucratic viability of a large, new licensing program at the state level.

6. Changes in Streamflow: The actual amount of water flowing in rivers and streams in Colorado varies significantly throughout the year. Depending on the channel configuration, low flows may make it impossible or difficult to boat without touching the stream bed or to avoid conflicts with anglers, and can necessitate additional fencing by ranchers to control livestock. In some instances, diversion dams can also create significant changes in stream flows.

7. Change in Ownership of the Land: There have been instances in which a change in the ownership of the land has eventually caused a conflict between the landowner and the local boaters who had enjoyed a more constructive relationship with the prior landowner(s). Prospective purchasers from other states or countries may not be familiar with Colorado law or may not appreciate the potential conflicts associated with boating on waters flowing through private property.

- 8. Firearms:** Landowners who utilize or lease their land for hunting have liability concerns when boaters are on the water while hunters are hunting and possibly shooting across the river or stream. Conversely, there are instances when boaters hunting from their vessels could endanger persons or property on the land.
- 9. Landowner Concern About Liability:** Landowners have expressed concern over their liability should a boater be injured while floating downstream, portaging around an obstacle or hazard, or simply using designated launch points on their property. Landowners also assert that Colorado's premises liability and recreational use statutes are unclear as applied to boating, conflict with one another, and do not provide enough protection from lawsuits.
- The Task Force reviewed the sources of conflicts and historical and potential solutions, listened to public testimony—including that provided by American Whitewater—and made these specific recommendations to Governor Bill Ritter, Jr. regarding river access disputes in the State of Colorado. They include:
- 1. Report Publication.** Publish or post the Final Report in a readily accessible location as an education tool to help facilitate the cost-effective and timely resolution of future disputes as they arise. Armed with the knowledge of historical conflicts and solutions between boaters and landowners on the rivers and streams of Colorado, the affected parties in future disputes might more readily identify cost-effective and timely solutions to their own local conflicts.
 - 2. Executive Leadership.** Utilize the Governor's pulpit to encourage and foster an environment and attitude of good conduct and respect as multiple stakeholder groups with different viewpoints continue to share the use, conservation, and protection of these special riparian corridors and environments.
 - 3. Public Education.** Promote public education via publications by Colorado Parks and Wildlife, official government websites, and information boards at public access points to inform the public at large about ways to avoid or resolve conflicts; recommend best practices for boaters and landowners; and address liability for unlawful trespass, unlawful obstruction of a waterway, and other prohibited activities.

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4. Official Statewide Signage System.

Direct the Colorado Department of Natural Resources to design an official signage system modeled after the signs developed by State Parks for the Yampa River that clearly designate “No Public Access” and “Public Access”. A signage system with statewide application and recognition would more clearly delineate land use boundaries along Colorado’s rivers and streams. These signs could be purchased from State Parks, if desired, by interested parties.

5. Engage Law Enforcement.

Implement a proactive and ongoing effort with county sheriffs and district attorneys to raise their awareness of the conflicts between landowners and boaters, and their role in helping to resolve conflicts. Advocate for more consistent enforcement of existing laws regarding trespass, illegal obstruction of waterways, boating under the influence, harassment, criminal mischief and menacing. Provide members of sheriffs’ associations and district attorneys with all educational materials and with information concerning contact, activation, and utilization of the River Access Dispute Mediation Commission.

6. Landowner Liability Legislation.

Recommend legislation to clarify Colorado’s recreation use and premises liability statutes to specifically address landowner liability, or exemption from liability, when a member of the public is floating on waterways flowing over private property and suffers injury.

7. River Access Dispute Mediation Commission.

Occasionally, a contentious and personalized conflict can arise between boater(s) and landowner(s). Usually these conflicts involve one or two parties on either side and are specific to the local stream segment in question. For those cases in which parties are unable to resolve the conflict, the Task Force recommends

that the Governor of Colorado create, by Executive Order, the River Access Dispute Mediation Commission.

8. Funding Sources.

Encourage funding opportunities including, but not limited to, tax credits/incentives, GOCO, state agency or private funds. Such funding could be used to develop and implement dispute resolution tools, provide public education, develop/acquire river access and/or portage sites, remove barriers for downstream passage or otherwise implement recommendations of the Task Force.

Today, even though the rights of the public to float our rivers are uncertain, river recreation in Colorado is big business. Nearly 80,000 jobs, and \$1.2 billion in Federal, State, and local taxes is generated by river-recreation in Colorado. Across the state, commercial outfitters take nearly half a million people on raft trips each year! On the Upper Colorado River alone, private boaters make up MORE than half of all trips down the river. AW is working with communities across the state to connect their residents and visitors with rivers in their backyard, to protect streamflows for recreation, and to improve public access. As paddlers, we must all think about how our actions help, or hinder, the hard work of protecting the places we play and making sure we have safe public access statewide. So on your next trip to Colorado, be sure to plan ahead, check water levels, and understand who owns the river.

For more information on American Whitewater’s Colorado River Access work, check out: <http://www.americanwhitewater.org/content/Project/view/id/122/>



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TOWN OF EAGLE, COLORADO LAUNCHES AMBITIOUS RIVER CORRIDOR PLAN

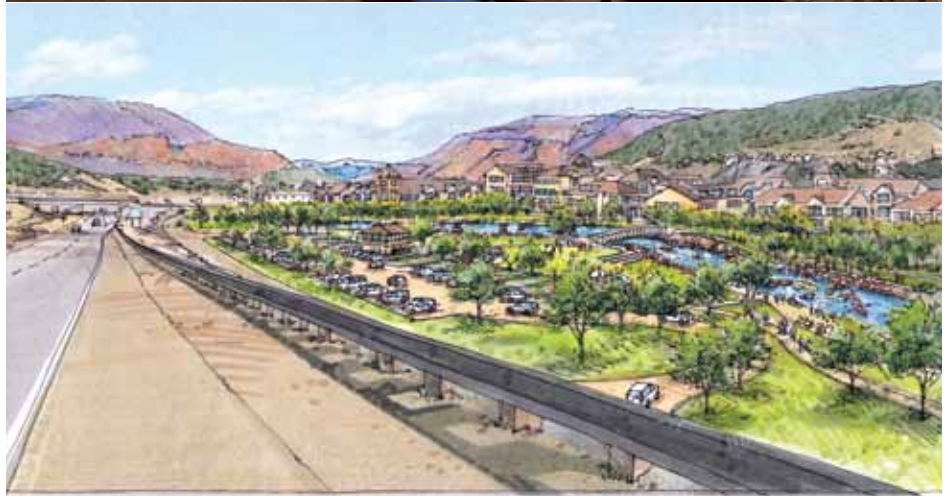
BY TOWN OF EAGLE

THE TOWN OF Eagle recently adopted the Town of Eagle - River Corridor Plan, an ambitious project that aims to strengthen the town's connection to its river. As spelled out in the comprehensive master plan, this improved connection will be achieved through a variety of steps, including: allowing for development within Eagle's downtown to extend to the river; construction of soft and paved trails along the river corridor; enhancement of existing public open space areas, as well as the creation of new public open spaces along the river; and development of new public parks adjacent to the river.

"The primary goal of the plan is to provide residents and visitors opportunities to enjoy the Eagle River that simply do not exist today," noted town of Eagle assistant planner and avid kayaker Matt Farrar. "The plan provides that access through trails, parks, new and improved put-in and take-outs and more."

Access to the river for boaters, anglers, cyclists, nature lovers and other potential users is currently very limited. In fact, a large portion of land adjacent to the river is currently being used as a truck stop, with a chain link fence prohibiting access to the river and its banks. The plan calls for the truck stop to be replaced by the Eagle River Park, a combination of in-stream features and river side park.

The Eagle River Park, a major component of the plan, will be a prominent and highly visible amenity of the town and is intended to serve as not only a quality of life improvement for residents, but also be a regional and national draw for recreation and competition, as well as provide economic vitality and diversity. Working with renowned whitewater engineering firm S2O Design, the in-stream features alone will be a significant attraction.



Above: The current view from I-70, with truck parking along the river.

Below: Rendering of the new plan, with a riverside park and access.

Photo of I-70 and truck parking, courtesy Town of Eagle, Colorado. Rendering of future plan by Jim Leggitt, studioINSITE, courtesy of Town of Eagle, Colorado.

"From what I've seen of the plan, I think it will be a great thing for everyone — fishermen, boaters, families. It will open up a section of river that nobody uses right now and bring more people to town," said John Packer in a recent local newspaper article. Packer is an Eagle resident and owner of Fly Fishing Outfitters in nearby Avon, Colorado. "Right now it's basically a muddy truck stop with a whitewater hazard

in the middle of it. But it could be a really great spot for families and members of the community to gather and enjoy a beautiful river with a beach and a nice takeout."

More information, additional resources and the entire Eagle River Corridor Plan can be viewed at www.townofeaglerivercorridorplan.org.

STEWARDSHIP

NORTHEAST ACCESS

BY BOB NASDOR



The natural river channel in Bellows Falls, VT, where hydropower operations have eliminated aquatic habitat and whitewater boating opportunities.
Photo by Bob Nasdor

WHEN MOST OF us think of river access, our minds turn to having a safe, legal, unimpeded, and relatively convenient place to put in and take out. This is, no doubt, critical to a successful run. But there's another key part to being able to access a river, and that's whether there's actually enough water in the river to boat on. Many hydropower dams limit access to rivers on both of these levels. They divert some or all of a river's natural flow, leaving river channels dry, and areas of public access above and below dams are often closed due to supposed public safety or security concerns.

American Whitewater has worked on FERC hydropower relicensing projects across the country and has successfully restored access to rivers, both by negotiating restored flows and ensuring that the public can get to the river. The Northeast is no exception, where restoring flows and access is central to our work on the Deerfield and the Connecticut Rivers. We are actively participating in the process

to relicense hydropower projects on both rivers.

Deerfield River

Each year, tens of thousands of boaters enjoy the Deerfield River in western Massachusetts as a result of the 1994 Settlement Agreement negotiated by American Whitewater and affiliate clubs. The Settlement Agreement provides guaranteed flows from the Fife Brook Dam 106 days each year so that whitewater boaters can enjoy this scenic river reach, and 32 annual releases on the Dryway portion of the river upstream from the Fife Brook Dam. Brookfield Power is seeking a new license for the project and American Whitewater, New England FLOW, Appalachian Mountain Club, and other stakeholders are working to improve public river access above the Fife Brook Dam where hydropower operations have closed a two-mile section of the river.

The Fife Brook Dam is part of a much larger pumped storage project that pumps water from a lower reservoir in the river to an

upper reservoir on an adjacent mountain. Brookfield generates revenue by pumping water when electric rates are low and generating electricity when rates are higher. Pumped storage projects result in a net loss of electricity, but stabilize the electric grid, using, in theory, surplus power from nuclear, wind, and solar sources.

Pumped storage projects like the one on the Deerfield River harm aquatic habitat and limit recreation and public access. Pumping water from the lower to the upper reservoirs results in a 40-foot reservoir level fluctuation on almost a daily basis. On the Deerfield, these fluctuations intermittently inundate rapids at the bottom of the Dryway section of the river, which is a premier northeast whitewater run. Equally troubling is the closure of two

Opposite: Hydropower operations completely dewater this section of the Connecticut River at Turners Falls, MA for much of the year.

Photo by Bob Nasdor

river miles to boating, elimination of public access along both shorelines, and the lack of any portage around the dam.

Through the current relicensing process, American Whitewater and our partners fought to compel Brookfield to study access restrictions around the dam with the goal of opening the area above the dam to public access and limiting restrictions to only those areas necessary to protect public safety. Although Brookfield resisted these efforts, FERC agreed with us and directed Brookfield to study boater access issues. Over the next two years, Brookfield will conduct required studies on the Deerfield, including a controlled-flow whitewater boating study below the Fife Brook Dam, and a study examining whether public access above the dam can be restored in order to enhance whitewater boating opportunities and other forms of recreation in the river and on the shorelines.

Connecticut River

As on the Deerfield River, the Connecticut River hydropower projects also limit river access. TransCanada and Firstlight are seeking to relicense projects at Wilder, Bellows Falls, and Vernon in Vermont, and Northfield Mountain, and Turners Falls in Massachusetts. These projects have a negative impact on whitewater boating

opportunities on the Connecticut River at Sumner Falls below the Wilder Dam, and in the natural river channels at Bellows Falls and Turners Falls, which have been bypassed by hydropower operations. At each of these projects, American Whitewater and several affiliate paddling groups are seeking access improvements. Notably, Bellows Falls is a completely dewatered river gorge where all natural flows are diverted into a power canal. Recreation access to the river below the dam has been eliminated by the lack of flows, an unrunnable and obsolete low-head dam, and by the lack of a usable access trail.

American Whitewater, New England FLOW, and Appalachian Mountain Club requested that TransCanada study the dewatered natural river channel at Bellows Falls to determine whether restoring flows, removing impediments, and offering access would provide recreational opportunities on this unique river section, which includes petroglyphs chiseled in the rock wall. FERC agreed and directed TransCanada to study the recreational potential of the gorge, and we assisted with the whitewater boating study last year. We are awaiting the final study report in the coming months.

Likewise, at Turners Falls, where nearly all of the natural flow has been diverted into

a power canal, aquatic habitat has been destroyed and recreation opportunities have been eliminated in all but the highest of water events. The only portage around the dam involves a three-mile hand carry or shuttle to a put-in down a steep embankment. Both the Bellows Falls and Turners Falls projects have left in their wake depressed towns separated from their natural resources and little in the way of economic benefit.

At the end of the relicensing process, we hope to restore flows and public access to the natural river channel at Bellows Falls and remove the dangerous low-head dam, restore flows, and improve access at Turners Falls, and improve flow management at Sumner Falls in order to expand boating opportunities and allow the public to reconnect with its natural resources.



RIVER ACCESS SUCCESSES AND FUTURE PRIORITIES IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

STORY AND PHOTOS BY THOMAS O'KEEFE

To access Central Oregon's Crooked River, boaters needed to cross private land. When the property came under threat of development, the Trust for Public Land, with support from American Whitewater, acquired the parcel. We are working together to transfer it to a federal land manager.

OVER THE PAST year American Whitewater has celebrated some great successes in our river access work in the Pacific Northwest. To achieve our goals of conserving and restoring rivers, we know that providing opportunities for paddlers to go out and enjoy them is critical to building a constituency of passionate advocates for wild rivers. While our projects are generally focused on the needs of the whitewater paddling community, improving river access also benefits fishermen and families who simply want a place to play on the banks of the river. Our work includes a mix of on-the-ground projects and policy initiatives that benefit river access. While we have built an impressive list of successes over the past decade in the Pacific Northwest, we have also laid the groundwork for many more projects that will benefit the paddling community for years to come.

Acquisition of River Access

One obvious approach to improving river access, particularly along rivers that flow through private land, is to acquire access from willing sellers. Recent past examples include acquisition of the BZ put-in on the White Salmon (WA) and Minam put-in on the Grande Ronde (OR), as well as the pending transfer of the Punch Bowl Falls access on the Hood River (OR) and Hollywood Ranch Road on the Crooked River (OR) to public ownership. In most of these land deals we have partnered or supported the efforts of land trusts, including Western Rivers Conservancy, Trust For Public Land, and others. These land trusts have the technical capacity to execute land transactions, and we work to build public support to bring forward the public funds necessary to complete the deals. We also provide technical capacity and advice to land trusts who have an interest in projects that benefit outdoor recreation.

One of our most important tools for executing these transactions is the Land and Water Conservation Fund, which is a federal fund that, for more than 50 years, has used a portion of the royalties from offshore oil and gas leasing to fund outdoor recreation and conservation projects. Although Congress allowed this important program to lapse, it was reauthorized at the end of 2015 for three years at \$450 million a year. In 2016, we will continue our efforts to permanently reauthorize the Land and Water Conservation Fund at the full funding level of \$900 million. In addition to this work we will partner with the land trust community and focus on several on-the-ground projects where the potential exists to bring key parcels that provide river access into public ownership.

STEWARDSHIP



Access at Hydropower Projects

Hydropower licenses provide opportunities to develop new access points on rivers impacted by hydropower. This past year, the new Sultan River (WA) Trail, a stairway providing take-out access on Canyon Creek (WA) in the Lewis River drainage, and three new projects on the Clackamas River (OR), are improving public access as part of mitigation requirements hydropower utilities need to meet. PacifiCorp has made some improvements to access on the North Fork Rogue (OR) but more work remains to be done. These are all examples of license conditions we worked hard to negotiate and are now in the process of implementing. In the coming year we will be working to complete projects on the Clackamas River (OR) and deepen our partnerships with other hydropower operators throughout the region who have made commitments to improve public access.



Requiring Consideration of Public Access at Bridges

The states of Virginia, Maryland, and California all have laws or policies in place that require that public access be considered when a bridge across a waterway is reconstructed. We are working on bringing a similar policy to Washington State, and have been running a bill in the



Top: American Whitewater developed an access site for whitewater boaters on the Middle Fork Snoqualmie (WA). It also serves the entire community during the low flows of summer when the site becomes a community swimming hole.

Middle: When the private landowner was no longer interested in providing public access to the Wild and Scenic White Salmon River (WA) and ready to sell, the Forest Service was able to acquire the property and bring it into public ownership through the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

Lower: Over the years accessing the Upper Sultan (WA) had become more and more of a project, requiring a rugged hike in while evading watershed security.

STEWARDSHIP



state legislature to achieve this goal. Public right-of-ways associated with bridges represent important access points for boaters. When a bridge is reconstructed, policies that require an evaluation of opportunities to improve river access can greatly enhance the user experience. Sometimes actions can be as simple as designing the landscaping so that a simple path to the river is provided.

Access at Wild and Scenic Rivers

When a Wild and Scenic River is designated the managing agency is required to develop a Wild and Scenic River management plan within three years of designation. These management plans often include specific recommendations for river access. Additionally, the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act directs river managers to protect and enhance the values for which the river is designated. We are involved in several Wild and Scenic River campaigns across the Pacific Northwest: Wild Olympics (WA), Nooksack (WA), Owyhee (OR), Wild Rogue (OR), and Molalla (OR). In all of these efforts we work to make sure that recreation is a value that is recognized, with the goal



Top: The recently-reconstructed Steven Memorial Bridge across the South Fork Smith River (CA) provides public access within the bridge right-of-way. We are working to bring policies that encourage this type of thinking to other states and this year are running a bill in the Washington State legislature to that end.

Middle: Unfortunately the new Highway 2 bridge across the Wenatchee River (WA) does not provide adequate public access, a concern we raised prior to completion of the project.

Bottom: With a maze of roads through the forest that had more resemblance to an off-road vehicle park than a public access to a Wild and Scenic River, Backman County Park on the Sauk River (WA) was in need of attention. Parking is now better defined and drainage has been improved so passenger vehicles can now easily access the site.



of seeking opportunities to enhance the quality of the recreational experience. For rivers that have been recently designated, we are working to ensure that river management plans recognize the access needs of the whitewater paddling community. Finally, for those rivers that have management plans in place, we are working to make sure they are implemented. Last summer we completed the redevelopment of Backman County Park, a key access point on the Sauk Wild and Scenic River outside Darrington, WA through a partnership between Snohomish County and the Forest Service. We will be working on other sites identified within the river management plan for this river and others throughout the region.

Working With Federal Land Managers

Our partnerships with river managers are not limited to those rivers that are designated as Wild and Scenic Rivers. A sometimes forgotten section of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (Section 11.b.1) authorizes federal land managers to “assist, advise, and cooperate” with partners (including organizations like American Whitewater) to “plan, protect, and manage river resources.” This authority specifically includes all other rivers and is not limited to those designated as Wild and Scenic. We have successfully used this authority to work with the Forest Service to develop new river access sites on the Skykomish



American Whitewater worked with the Forest Service for nearly a decade to formalize the access to the Horseshoe Bend section of the North Fork Nooksack (WA). Now paddlers have a clearly defined trail accessing a gem of a run that is important to the Bellingham, WA paddling community.

(WA) and Nooksack Rivers (WA). In the coming year we will explore additional opportunities to work with resource agencies to embrace their authority to plan and manage river resources by improving river access where appropriate.

Water Trails

Every river is a water trail and our database of whitewater rivers represents the most comprehensive national directory of water trails across the country. In the coming year we will be investing in our river database to improve our mapping capability and continue our work with dozens of dedicated volunteers to fill out the content. We have

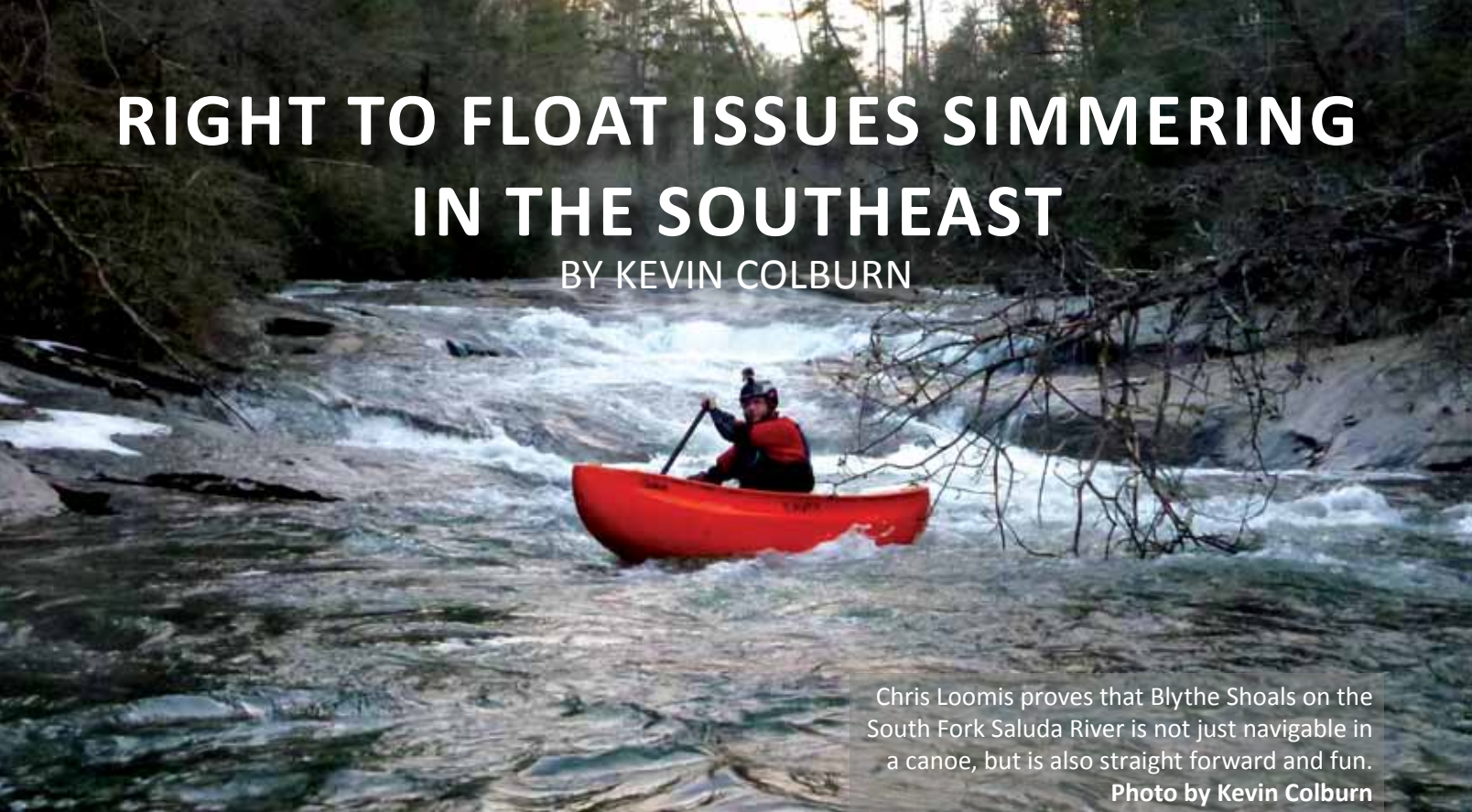
developed river plans or are in the process of doing so for some rivers, and these rivers will receive special attention. Past efforts have included plans for the Nooksack (WA) and Middle Fork Snoqualmie (WA). We are currently working on water trail plans for the Skykomish (WA)—Sky to Sound Water Trail—and Nisqually River (WA). During these planning efforts we identify recreational resources, evaluate potential impacts of recreation on other river values, document existing access points, and propose enhancements that will improve the experience of river runners in a manner that is protective of the resource. Once these plans are completed we work to implement the proposed actions. In the coming year we will continue our work to implement projects along the Middle Fork Snoqualmie (WA). Identifying a take-out for the North Fork Nooksack (WA) in Maple Falls near milepost 27 will also be a high priority.



Access at Cable Drop was just the first of additional improvements we are working to make to river access in the Skykomish River (WA) watershed as part of the Sky to Sound Water Trail. We will be working over the next two years to plan this water trail and identify public access needs.

RIGHT TO FLOAT ISSUES SIMMERING IN THE SOUTHEAST

BY KEVIN COLBURN



Chris Loomis proves that Blythe Shoals on the South Fork Saluda River is not just navigable in a canoe, but is also straight forward and fun.

Photo by Kevin Colburn

THE ROOTS OF our right to paddle rivers go back over 700 years to a body of law that protects use of navigable rivers, tidal areas, and the oceans as “public trust,” regardless of who owns the land beneath or along them. Similar laws were adopted when the United States was formed, and while land was granted and sold many times over, exclusive navigation rights were never granted and an implied recreational easement stayed with all navigable waters. And here we must put an asterisk*, because just what constitutes a navigable river is complicated. Suffice it to say, it varies by state and purpose but current practice is that the public is welcome to float the vast majority of rivers and streams in the US.

And yet there are those who seek exclusive rights to rivers, to make them private property rather than public treasures. They do this by blocking access or through the courts, and if the laws fail them they seek to change the laws. This anti-public sentiment is bubbling up in several locations in the eastern US.

A challenge to the right to float in South Carolina is playing out right now on the South Fork of the Saluda River. A landowner

sued the State and the public, seeking a court ruling that a section called Blythe Shoals is non-navigable and exclusively theirs. American Whitewater intervened on behalf of the public thanks to our incredible pro bono legal counsel, and we are providing evidence and arguments in support of the public’s right to paddle the river. Heck, we might even take the AW raft down the set of Class IV slides to prove our point. We believe the law is strongly on our side and expect a lot of movement in the case this year.

Just up the escarpment from the Saluda another case may erupt this year. Landowners on the Wild and Scenic Upper Chattooga River, emboldened by the Forest Service ban on paddling, have indicated they will seek a legal ruling that they have exclusive rights to prevent recreation on sections of the river flowing through their land. These same landowners have built fences and gates across the Wild and Scenic River that make passage difficult or impossible. Like South Carolina, North Carolina has strong laws supporting public river enjoyment. We will vigilantly watch this area for potential litigation that would threaten the public trust.

In Virginia, paddlers got word last year that in the Commonwealth’s eyes a suite of whitewater streams are open to public recreation. Paddlers have begun or continued to responsibly enjoy these streams, including the classic John’s Creek. We remain hopeful that recreational rights will stay out of the courts and legislature in Virginia and positive relationships with landowners and communities continue.

As long as there is confusion about the dividing line between public trust recreational rights and private property rights there will be conflicts. Sometimes people will just want exclusive control for privacy, financial gain, or ideological reasons. That will happen, probably for decades or even centuries to come, and it will be important to have a strong public response based on a wellspring of support for public river recreation. At the same time, we can all do our best to be respectful visitors as we float on our treasured aquatic trails through a mosaic of landowners.

STEWARDSHIP

SOUTHEAST ACCESS — GUY FORD ON THE WATAGUA HOW ONE INDIVIDUAL CAN CATALYZE RIVER ACCESS ACTION BY EDGAR PECK

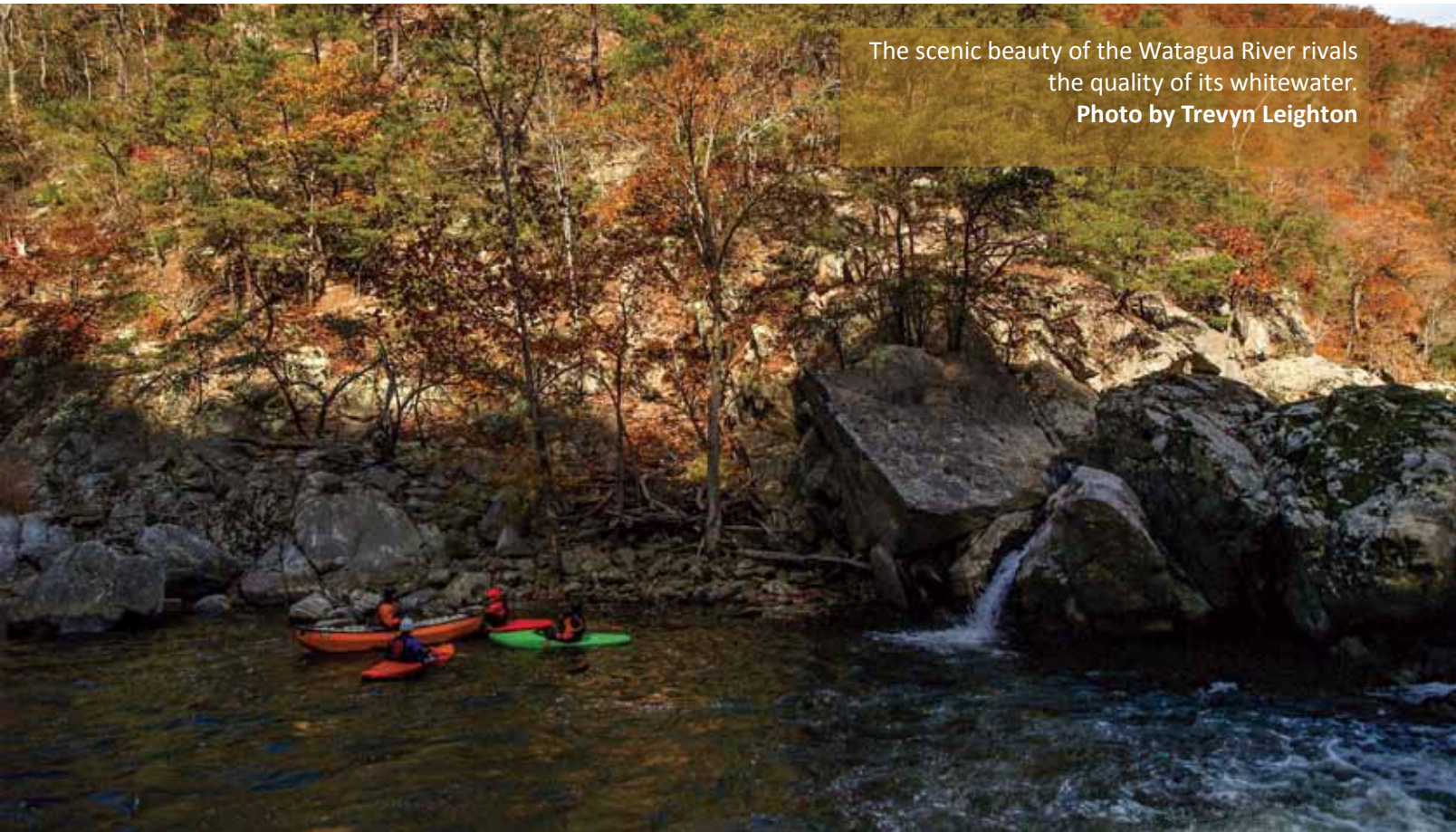
FEEL A DESPERATE, wild, constant, unending need to protect this river. It distracts me, consumes me at times. Its crushing force interrupts my thoughts, pulls at my time. I cannot shake the belief that my experiences and thoughts, indeed, my existence in the universe will have been squandered, if I cannot do something—everything—to preserve this place.

Watauga has been linked to meanings such as “beautiful waters,” “whispering waters,” “river of islands,” “foaming at the mouth,” “the land beyond,” and many others. Its origin likely lies with the Cherokee word “Wata’gi” or the Creek, “Wetoga.” Whatever the origin, this river, and the High Country of North Carolina and Tennessee, are simply remarkable. Young paddlers have taken to calling river trips “church.” It seems they are searching for a way to represent the meanings, feelings,

and significance rivers and nature play in our lives. If we want to continue to enjoy these experiences, the preservation of beautiful, wild, untamed, natural areas like the Watauga River Basin must be a priority, not just in our thoughts, but in our actions.

Thanks to the generosity of the Trivette family, local land owners, river access at Guy Ford on the Watauga has long served as an unofficial point of departure for numerous activities like swimming, fishing, and of course paddling. In the 1970s, 80s, and 90s, people accessing the river parked along the road. As you can imagine, this sometimes led to conflicts. The construction of a new bridge in 2005 and the Trivettes’ cooperation created the current parking area upstream of the bridge. This reduced conflicts and improved access to the river. For paddlers, Guy Ford serves as the take-out for Section 3, a

Class II-III stretch beginning at the new Upper Gorge Park along Highway 321, as well as a put-in for the Class IV-V Watauga Gorge section. Thanks to the work of local paddlers and American Whitewater (AW), boaters traversing the gorge take out at the Dr. Sherwood Horine Memorial river access area at Watson Island. Before his death in a mountain biking accident on July 18, 1998, Sherwood was a core member of the high country paddling community and helped galvanize local support to create a Watauga Gorge take-out. With the help of Sherwood and many others, American Whitewater purchased property at Watson Island in 1998. Since then, boaters have enjoyed secure parking and avoided the long lake paddle out. Local boaters donate their time and money during the year to make repairs, grade the road, trim the trees, and mow the field to preserve this wonderful access.



The scenic beauty of the Watauga River rivals the quality of its whitewater.
Photo by Trevyn Leighton

STEWARDSHIP



One view of the Watauga riverside lot that went on the market in 2013, and is soon to be a permanent, public put-in.

Photo by Edgar Peck

For paddlers, a take-out does not do much good without a put-in. Local officials and outdoor enthusiasts have been working to formalize access to the Watauga River at Guy Ford Road for decades. In 2001 and during the reconstruction of the bridge (twice) in the years prior to 2005, American Whitewater attempted to secure an easement for river access, to no avail. In 2010 the *Watauga County Parks & Recreation Comprehensive Systemwide Plan (2010-2019)* included plans for “Blueway” river trails and the development of river access areas on the New and Watauga rivers. This was due in part to a recreation survey of county residents indicating that river access points were a priority. This plan led to county partnerships with the Blue Ridge Conservancy, and North Carolina Wildlife Resource Commission, and the construction of several new river access areas. However, many of the proposed sites have not been developed due to the resignation of the county employee who spearheaded these efforts.

Retaining paddlers’ access to rivers like the Watauga takes time, energy, and perseverance on the part of would-be advocates. The rivers themselves makes it all worthwhile.

Photo by Trevyn Leighton

One day in 2013, we arrived at the river to discover that one of the partially developed home sites, the 2.38 acre “Tract II” property, adjacent to the downstream river left side of Guy Ford Road was for sale for \$125,000. I immediately thought, *opportunity!* Here is our chance to secure long-term access to a fantastic recreation area, and protect the river from further development. Despite my initial excitement, my pessimistic and pragmatic side soon took over and I dismissed the idea as impossible and forgot about it. Or tried to.

After a few weeks, I couldn’t sleep at all. I lay awake for hours, wondering—hoping—there was a way to make this happen. I finally decided it was extremely unlikely, and I was undoubtedly tilting at windmills, but I would not be able to live with myself if I didn’t try. I began by calling the realtor, fishing for information about the owner, and the potential of a donation or lower price. I called local officials, requesting meetings. At this time Watauga County was developing the Upper Gorge Park river access just five miles upstream, and a river access at Guy Ford was part of the *Watauga County Parks & Recreation Plan*. In my mind it stood to reason that they would want to talk about building another new park and river access. I was wrong. No one knew me, and no one wanted to hear about a river access.

Everyone refused to meet with me; most didn’t even bother to return my emails and phone calls. What I didn’t realize at the time was that projects, grants, fundraising, and business decisions are all about relationships. I reached out to Mike Mayfield and Dennis Huntley who have both been paddling the Watauga for decades. A few calls later, and we were meeting with the Upper Gorge project manager, and Eric Hiegl, the Blue Ridge Conservancy Director of Land



Protection and Stewardship. Little did I know at the time, but Eric's guidance and partnership would be the bedrock of this process. Soon I was also meeting with Mark Singleton and Kevin Colburn from American Whitewater. With my new-found support I managed to arrange a meeting with the Watauga County Tourism Development Authority (WCTDA), Planning & Inspections Department, Parks & Recreation Department, Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), NC Wildlife Resources Commission (NCWRC), Blue Ridge Conservancy, and American Whitewater. *Hope!*

In preparation, I met with Wesley Bradley, Dennis Huntley and local paddlers, and I made phone calls to potential donors to determine our fundraising capabilities. I visited the county offices and did title searches on all the properties surrounding Guy Ford. I researched all the properties

with potential to serve as a river access and met with land owners. I organized an agenda and disseminated information. I created lists of environmental and river stewardship organizations, river keepers, state and federal agencies, and sent them information. I invested time establishing relationships with officials from the TVA, NCWRC, and Blue Ridge Conservancy. I reached out to anyone who would listen for ideas, feedback, and support. I enrolled in a grant writing course and spent time researching potential funding sources and searching grant makers' websites. At the time I believed I would need to raise over \$100,000 through private donations. This made every day difficult. I felt like I was wasting my time.

In our meeting, the Tennessee Valley Authority representative offered to donate \$25,000. I swear you could have heard a

pin drop. I am fairly sure I heard several folks gasp in amazement. In response, the Tourism Development Authority did a complete turnabout and agreed that they would seek matching funds from their board. American Whitewater and the county officials quickly chimed in with support. The Blue Ridge Conservancy tentatively agreed to serve as the fiscal agent to purchase the property and transfer it to the county for final ownership. We had a plan!

One of the most important steps I took was to seek out the land owner and establish a relationship. It was hard at first. We talked on the phone. I emailed her updates. We ate dinner together with our families. I shared my dreams and goals with her. I tried to find ways this would benefit her. After over a year of planning, she agreed to sell the property for less than half of

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Future access at Guy Ford, Watagua River, NC.

Photo by Edgar Peck

what she paid in 2006. In November of 2015 the TVA and WCTDA boards each approved contributions of \$25,000 toward the purchase of the Tract II property. American Whitewater also developed a board proposal to contribute \$5,000.

The purchase and development of river preservation and access areas often involves significant costs. Don't give up because of this. There are many resource agencies and grant makers dedicated to the conservation and development of river basins. The Clean Water Management Trust Fund, Recreation Trails Program, Duke Energy Water Resources Fund Program, and local land conservancies are just a few. Again, the key is to establish relationships with your support network and grant managers early and often.

In addition to financial support, the NCWRC agreed to include Guy Ford in the Public Fishing Access Program. This agreement alleviated many local land owner and county commissioners' concerns. The program empowers law enforcement officers to enforce allowable activities the owner designates like fishing, launching vessels, and swimming, and prohibit other activities like drug use and littering.

These developments were a tremendous relief and meant that we only needed to raise about \$15,000 to complete the purchase. The Blue Ridge Conservancy graciously agreed to devote a portion of their website and their staff's time to collecting donations, no small task. This allowed us to devote 100% of the funds toward the project. If you are working on a property purchase or easement, your local conservancy should be one of the first groups you contact. To raise the remaining funds, we took to social media and paddling websites, and held a fundraiser to spread the word. Social media is a great way to provide information, but personal connections in the form of conversations, phone calls, texts, and emails were key to securing donations.

By the end of December 2015 we raised the remainder of the funds and closed on the property. In the coming year we will be working to create a sustainable long-term river access for local residents and visitors alike. Thank you so, so, much to everyone who made this a possibility.

Key Lessons:

- 1. Build relationships:** Work hard to develop relationships with local land owners. Millions of acres of property across the country are conserved through easements and land transfers each year. Partnerships with local land conservancies, river keepers, and environmental groups are also essential.
- 2. Research and prepare:** Use GIS explorer sites and county records to research property information. Communicate often with your stakeholders and seek out advice. Keep detailed notes.
- 3. Reach out for support:** Find financial partners in your area such as local businesses, the Clean Water Management Trust Fund, Recreation Trails Program, Duke Energy Water Resources Fund Program, and state and federal wildlife and recreation agencies.
- 4. Leverage private money for public funding:** Grant funds or private donations are often matched by tourism development agencies, and county, state, and federal government groups.

I wrote the first paragraph of this article on a scrap of paper at 3 a.m. two years ago, with no idea or plan. In the end, I discovered that I could make a difference. Many projects have been conceived, and even planned; they only require a motivated individual or group to bring the plan to fruition. I hope some of you out there will want to do just that for a project in your own backyard. I encourage—no, beg—you to consider translating your professed beliefs into action. Try. We need help. American Whitewater's small professional staff cannot do it alone. Contact me (edgarlymanpeck@gmail.com) or the staff at American Whitewater at any time if you have questions, ideas, need support, or want to donate your time. #youareAW

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www.americanwhitewater.org/deerfieldfest



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SHARE THE LOVE OF WHITEWATER, SATURDAY, JUNE 25

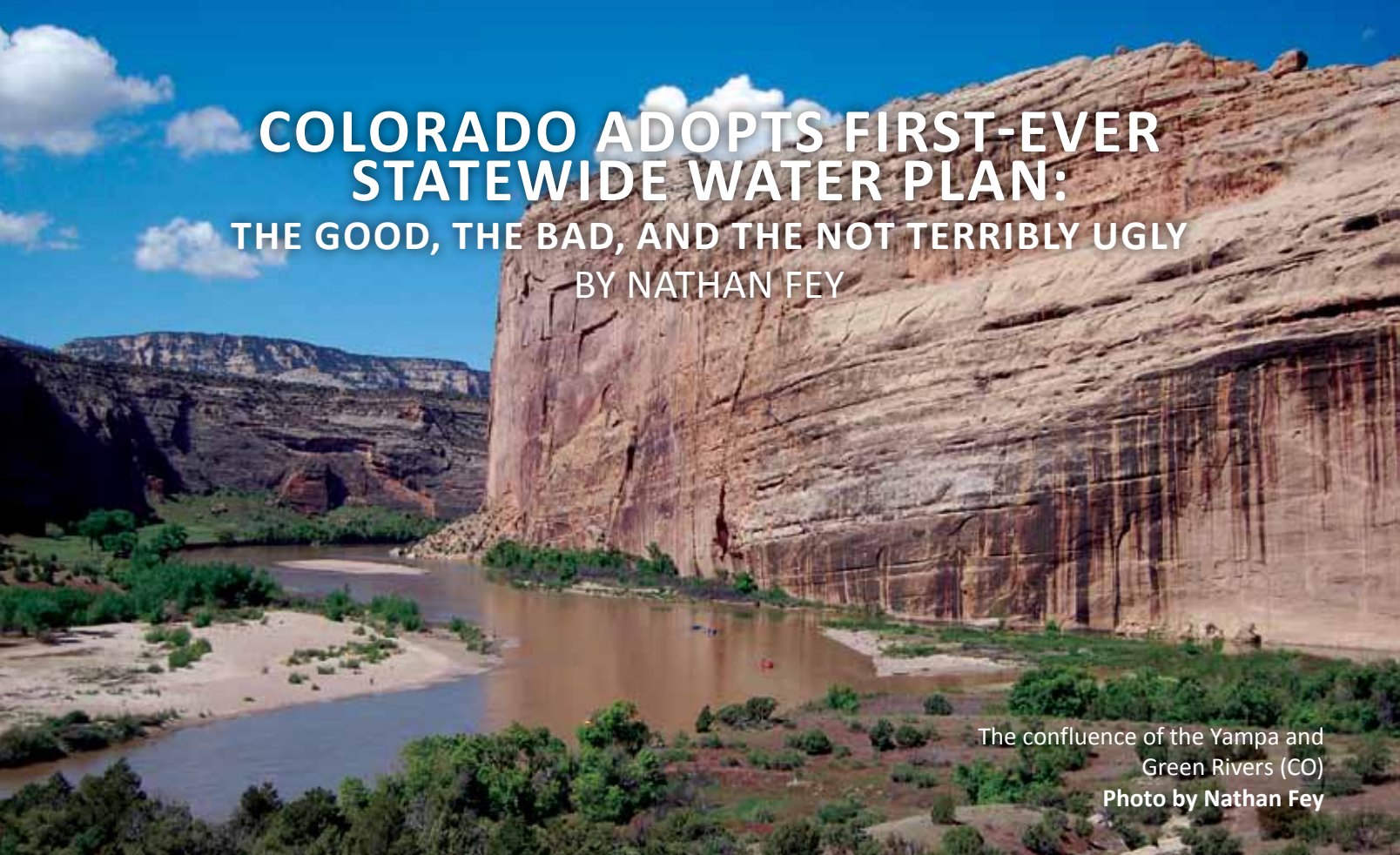
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COLORADO ADOPTS FIRST-EVER STATEWIDE WATER PLAN: THE GOOD, THE BAD, AND THE NOT TERRIBLY UGLY

BY NATHAN FEY



The confluence of the Yampa and Green Rivers (CO)
Photo by Nathan Fey

AS ANYONE THAT watches the world of water in the West knows, the first ever Colorado Water Plan was released in November 2015. After two years of public process, intense political maneuvering, dedicated work by Basin Roundtables and the Water Conservation Board, and lots of input—especially by the recreation and conservation communities—we can say that the Plan is something to celebrate.

The Plan sets very important conservation targets, some solid goals for stream-level management, and a good framework for evaluating the feasibility of those very destructive trans-mountain diversions that thirsty Front Range cities are so eager to build. It also emphasizes the critical role that individuals, and groups like AW, play as actions are taken.

But here's the rub: to implement the Plan we need funding mechanisms. So questions like whether the Plan now just sits on the shelf, what actions get done and what don't, and what interests get support, will all be determined in the Colorado legislature and

leadership at the state. So now that the buzz of having our first Plan has settled, it's time to tackle the next task for our community and for the public at large. We must ensure that funding necessary for all the values of the Plan to be honored is secured. Our rivers depend on it!

This is where American Whitewater members can play a critical role. As the 2016 legislative session kicks into full swing, stay tuned for opportunities to help ensure that laws are passed that help protect our rivers and enhance opportunities to enjoy them safely. The places we paddle and the communities that depend on rivers for their economic health need our support.

As part of Colorado's two-year planning effort, American Whitewater advocated for critical actions that were successfully integrated into the Water Plan. These include:

- Support legislation that clarifies the public's ability to use natural waterways for recreation, and support recreational use of waters that cross private lands
- Require the integration of safe downstream boat/fish passage at all diversion structures
- Amend existing statutes to eliminate the requirement of control structures associated with Recreational In-Channel Diversions (recreational water rights or RICDS)
- Encourage the application of "optimal flows" for recreation associated with RICDs, and fund the study of flows and recreational quality to help define "optimal" flows on rivers statewide.
- Fund and encourage the evaluation of "Boatable Days" as a common metric for quantifying the change in recreational whitewater boating opportunities from future actions.
- Compile information on the economic impact that commercial and private sectors of our river-based recreation have on Colorado's communities

STEWARDSHIP

Map of the Colorado River Basin
Courtesy of U.S. Bureau of Reclamation

American Whitewater has assisted Basin Roundtables, and the CWCB in the assessment of flow-recreation relationships, and the development of “boatable days” as a quantitative metric for identifying recreational demands. The information sets a baseline that describes the existing quality and quantity of recreational boating opportunities in relation to changes in stream flows, and can be applied to evaluating how future water management actions or risk management strategies may impact or enhance our state’s recreational values.

Until each Basin and the state develop a common set of metrics for evaluating recreational values, and apply these metrics consistently to local stream, basin, and trans-basin planning, the Colorado Water Plan will not reach its full potential. The development and integration of recreational metrics, including “boatable-days” will increase the level of support and cooperation American Whitewater and our affiliate clubs can direct towards new projects.

The Colorado Water Plan responded to AW’s efforts by recognizing the need for common metrics in all levels of planning, and requested that AW continue to work with the state moving forward.

Colorado law limits Recreational In-Channel Diversions to the “minimum stream flow necessary for a reasonable recreation experience,” and must be diverted through a control structure. The unintended consequence of the control structure requirement



is that an RICD applicant is required to build a “whitewater park” if it seeks to protect boating flows along a reach of stream where recreational uses currently exist. Allowing the applicant to protect boating flows for a segment of river using a stream gage, rather than a control structure, would more easily align



STEWARDSHIP

RICD rights with other water demands and environmental concerns. Additionally, the CWCB should support the appropriation of “optimal” flows for recreation under RICD rights. Optimal flows are amounts defined by flow-recreation evaluations that meet the greatest recreational demands for the most users. The minimum flows currently protected under RICD rights have not always maximized the use of water using this definition.

The Colorado Water Plan adopted AW’s recommendation, and will be looking for opportunities to increase the level of protection for in-stream water needs, without the use of control structures.

Whether any longitudinal reach of stream in Colorado has any recreational needs or protections, the public’s legal rights to recreate on those streams in not fully

recognized under state law. American Whitewater believes that the Colorado Water Plan offers a great opportunity for the state and legislature to clarify the public’s rights to recreate on our streams and rivers, and to align the activities of CWCB with those of Colorado State Parks, Department of Outdoor Recreation Industry, and local tourism offices to protect both sufficient flows and provide safe access to high-value recreational streams.

American Whitewater has worked hard over the past decade on Colorado’s Water Supply planning efforts, and recreation has never before received as much attention from policy-makers as it does today. We’ve worked across interests and party lines to make sure that rivers are protected and that paddlers have a say in what the future looks like. There is no doubt that water scarcity and threats to our state’s

beautiful and endangered rivers and streams are getting more intense by the day, especially as the climate warms and dries and cities grow. AW will be working hard throughout this year to ensure that the voices of paddlers are heard in all the implementation, legislative, and funding decisions that spring from the Colorado Water Plan.

¹*Sanderson, J.S., B.P. Bledsoe, N. L. Poff, T. Wilding, W. Miller, and N. Fey (2012). Colorado Basin Roundtable Watershed Flow Evaluation Tool (WFET) Study.*

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THE FUTURE OF THE COLORADO: AN INTERVIEW WITH THE COLORADO RIVER RESEARCH GROUP

BY NATHAN FEY

THE STORY OF the Colorado River is a story of conflict. It's also a story of creative leaders finding ways to share a common resource. The conflict between declining water supplies and increasing demands persists, and the water supply shortage that leaders across the Southwest are working to address today is forecast to get worse.

The work is not just about finding water for cities and farms, however, and the more that these difficult conversations are framed that way, the more that river health and our recreation economy are treated as second class interests. What will paddlers lose if we aren't part of the solution on the Colorado River?

We explored this question with two friends of American Whitewater, and well-respected members of the Colorado River Research Group. Doug Kenney is the Director of the Western Water Policy Program at the University of Colorado. Brad Udall is the Senior Water and Climate Scientist at the Colorado State University (and a paddler!). Here's our interview:

Tell us about how decision-makers are facing the reality of declining flows in the Colorado River system. Why should this matter to paddlers?

Doug: Two things jump out: one is that the basin states appear more cooperative and engaged than they have been in many years. However, most of the discussion is still taking place through the lens of how to squeeze every drop of water out of the system. That's putting a huge strain on river health and flows for recreation. And there's a lot of entrenched resistance to anything more than incremental steps.

Brad: This drought has people thinking long and hard about the future of the river. We keep getting close to an official shortage and then backing away, and that



backing away makes people reluctant to really dig deep about how to solve some of these problems of declining flows and over-allocation.

What would help move things along to healthier rivers and a more visionary approach?

Doug: Let's look at how we got the interim guidelines of 2007, which were a big step forward. The federal government said to the basin states: you have to come up with a better plan or we'll do it for you. That sort of approach works; the states will acknowledge that. Additional outside pressure might be helpful, like a Secretary of the Interior who makes the Colorado River a priority.

The new conservation partnerships (links) are good models that need to be brought up to scale. But whether even dozens of these partnerships solve the larger problem of an over-allocated river remains to be seen. There's a lot that can be achieved that is based on saving water instead of taking more water out of rivers, and partnerships are key to that. Also, for these partnerships to be effective you have to do it every year and it's not sexy, like building a dam. No politician gets a following program named after him or her.

Brad: These new conservation-focused partnerships are really intriguing because

they have cracked the interstate water-marketing nut. But the question I have is, *do the finances continue to work at scale?* Right now the money is small and everyone can feel good about throwing in their \$2 million.

What does this mean for paddlers and healthy flows throughout the basin?

Doug: Recreation voices need to be vigilant to ensure that the issues aren't framed totally in terms of water for cities and businesses. If you allow every discussion to be framed that way, then the environment and recreation will always be add-ons that are inherently less important. You have to start with the argument that in-stream values are every bit as important as the off-stream values. If you do that each and every time, then every process gets a little better outcome.

Brad: The truth is that with climate change we know what's coming: more rain, less snow, earlier runoff, and drought. So if we're serious about wanting river health we need to continue to agitate for greenhouse gas mitigation. Yes we should fly less and drive less and use solar more. But that's basically what I call a "hippie do-gooder tax." What we really need are the international agreements that get us to a new economic and energy system. That's how this gets fixed in the long run.

What is the most impactful thing paddlers can do to influence policy at the state and federal levels?

Doug: From a strategic standpoint recreation advocates are most effective if they really emphasize the economic contribution of recreation to the West. When we look at statistics, contribution of the recreation industry compared to other sectors, including agriculture, holds up really well. There's a powerful economic argument to be made for keeping water in streams.

But I would very much caution against only saying that. There is also a very strong moral and ethical argument. You can and should use both. If you really want to be strategic, some groups would emphasize the economic argument, and others the moral argument. You likely need some folks working within the established seven

state process and some folks outside throwing rocks.

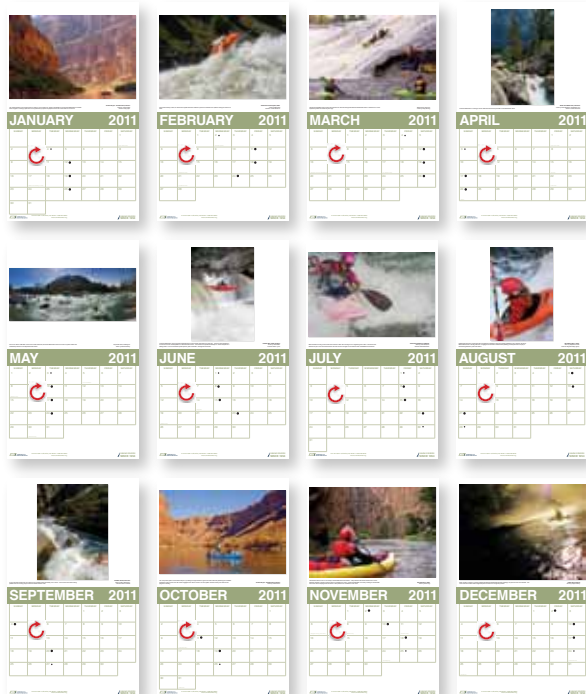
In some countries, if you run a river dry as a public official, that is shameful. It's seen as morally wrong. But here in the western US it's almost the opposite: not running a river dry is viewed by many as immoral. So you need to challenge the ethics and culture surrounding river management, and recreation voices can be key to that.

Brad: When I go to these water meetings where the big decisions are being made, I see what an insider game it is. You need a tremendous amount of expertise and stamina even to participate. It's a total mismatch between the water agencies and the advocates for rivers, who are often getting run over. So that's a big argument for continuing to support American Whitewater and other NGOs, so they can

work on these issues day in and day out, and make those other voices heard in the halls of power.

The Colorado River Research Group is a self-directed team of ten veteran Colorado River scholars. Each member has led a research program concerning water resources management, river science, or water law and public policy, or has written widely on these topics. The purpose of the CRRG is to provide a non-partisan, basin-wide perspective on matters pertaining to the Colorado River, helping all those with a stake in the river to identify, justify, and implement actions that sustainably meet society's demands for water, while maintaining the distinct attributes of the Colorado River ecosystem. More information can be found at <http://www.coloradoriverresearchgroup.org/>

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COLORADO'S DOLORES RIVER RECEIVES PERMANENT FLOW PROTECTION

BY NATHAN FEY

LAST SEPTEMBER, COLORADO'S Water Conservation Board voted unanimously to seek an in-stream flow water right on the Lower Dolores River, securing up to 900 cfs of water during spring peak flows, as well as essential winter base flows of 100 cfs. This water right will help prevent three native warm-water fish in the Dolores River from becoming threatened or endangered species. This is the largest in-stream flow protection on the Dolores River to date, and covers the reach of river near the Unawep-Tabeguache Scenic and Historic Byway between the confluence of the San Miguel River and the Town of Gateway.

"We're so pleased with the Colorado Water Conservation Board's unanimous vote securing water for fish and wildlife on this magnificent river in Colorado's Red Rock Canyon country," said Rob Harris, Staff Attorney at Western Resource Advocates (WRA), a longtime partner of American Whitewater and legal council in the fight to restore flows to the Lower Dolores. "Healthy rivers are important for wildlife and recreation. Fishermen, boaters, and wildlife lovers can celebrate this decision that will help keep water flowing in the Dolores for generations to come."

The Dolores River is a refuge for three native fishes that are struggling to survive (Flannelmouth Sucker, Bluehead Sucker, and Roundtail Chub). Since 2007, American Whitewater has worked to reform dam operations at McPhee Reservoir to improve native fish habitat and restore world-class whitewater boating on the Dolores River. The ISF right is a big part of a successful campaign. For more information, please visit our Dolores River Project page.

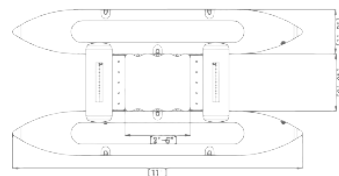
Without dedicated in-stream flows awarded to the state, native fish could require protective action under the federal Endangered Species Act, which may jeopardize any opportunity to secure releases for boating. The Board heard testimony opposing the in-stream flow water right, asking instead for additional diversions from the river for unspecified future urban or agricultural water demands. The Colorado Water Conservation Board determined these requests for withholding water from this in-stream flow water right were speculative and unfounded. Now the Board will approach the state water court to secure the water right and it appears at this time that it should be a straightforward process.

Colorado's in-stream water rights help keep water in a river or lake. The rights dedicate minimum water flows between specific points to preserve or improve the natural environment. These can be used to protect fisheries, waterfowl, frogs and salamanders, unique geologic or hydrologic features, and habitat for threatened or endangered fish. The rights can be monitored and enforced under state water law, thereby insuring longterm protections. American Whitewater's 2010 Recreational Flow Study for the Dolores River identified 800 cfs as the minimum flow for rafting this section of the Dolores, and we are pleased that the state is protecting peak spring flows that also benefit whitewater paddling.



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STEWARDSHIP

GILA RIVER: STILL FIGHTING FOR NEW MEXICO'S LAST WILD RIVER BY NATHAN FEY

THE GILA, for those who haven't paddled it, is truly one of the most beautiful rivers in the West. Cutting through an arid and varied landscape, it is New Mexico's last wild river and provides a kind of secluded, wildlife-rich experience that is increasingly rare in the Southwest these days. At AW, we are working hard to keep it that way.

As many of you know, the state of New Mexico has long pushed for a true boondoggle of a diversion project on the Gila, and unfortunately 2015 saw that proposal inch forward. The state's Interstate Stream Commission approved the project, slated to cost at least \$1 billion and provide very little water at an exorbitant price, mostly for farms in the region, at great price to the river's ecosystem and the region's recreation economy, not to mention paddling opportunities.

In late November 2015, because federal dollars are involved, the proposal took another small step when Interior Secretary Sally Jewell agreed to review the project, which will trigger federal environmental studies. That's good news amidst the bad.

Now that the project has crept onto the federal radar, advocates will be able to leverage another round of studies before a 2019 deadline. This means that the fight will continue, which, though not what we would have preferred, does mean it's still possible to stop the project.

New Mexico has always been an arid land, and climate change and drought are making it even more so. Against this backdrop, draining the last of the state's rivers dry for irrigated farming begins to look more and more absurd. We'll keep the paddling community informed and mobilized throughout 2016. Stay tuned!

The Middle Fork of the Gila River in SW New Mexico, an important piece of the state's last wild river.

Photo by Joe Burgess, Courtesy
Wikimedia Commons

NEWS & NOTES

AW ROGUE TRIP 2016

BY MARK SINGLETON



FOR THE PAST couple of years, the staff of American Whitewater has joined with a number of our members to participate in a four-day float trip on the Rogue River in Southern Oregon. This trip has been a great opportunity to connect with members in ways that build a lasting understanding of the role of recreation in fostering a stewardship ethic. As one of the original eight Wild and Scenic Rivers in the country, the Rogue is an outstanding classroom for American Whitewater's river stewardship program. Staff members share current projects, their challenges and successes, as well as highlights of national policy work that affects Wild and Scenic rivers like the Rogue. The trip is made possible through the support of Northwest Rafting Company. They provide professional guides, exceptional food, transportation to and from Galice (the put-in), and group equipment.

In June 2016, American Whitewater members will again have an opportunity to join American Whitewater staff and board members for this exclusive trip on the Rogue. We invite you to come learn more about what we're up to while having a great time enjoying one of our nation's first Wild and Scenic Rivers. You will have the option of bringing your own boat, renting a boat, or joining as a passenger on one of the rafts. The price for the trip will be \$1045, with a portion of the trip proceeds going to American Whitewater to support our work.

The trip, which will take place June 14-17, 2016, will be fully outfitted by Northwest Rafting Company with professional guides and all group equipment. The trip is suitable for all skill levels. Last year we had paddlers representing the full range of skill levels from experts who are out every weekend,

to folks who had not been in a boat for a while, and some who were just getting into an inflatable kayak or raft for the first time. Everyone is welcome on this trip—the only experience you need is a love of rivers. One of the most important concepts the Rogue trip will reinforce is what we all know firsthand—it is our common love of whitewater that makes us such passionate defenders of rivers. Oh yeah, and the food is excellent and the camping superb. Last year, we had a full trip, so make your reservation soon to ensure a spot on the Rogue trip with American Whitewater this summer.

Make your reservation directly through Northwest Rafting Company's website today at <http://www.nwrafting.com/rogue>. We hope to see you on the Rogue River this June!

AMERICAN WHITEWATER FATAL ACCIDENT SUMMARY JULY-DECEMBER 2015

BY CHARLIE WALBRIDGE

TWENTY-FIFTEEN WAS A quiet year for whitewater accidents, especially during its last six months. From July to December 2015 there were only four kayak, two canoe, and five rafting deaths reported to American Whitewater. That count includes two heart attacks, which are not, strictly speaking, river deaths but did occur while paddling. This year's total fatalities for all whitewater craft, 34, was tied for fewest in the last 15 years. The probable explanation: unusually low water in the West and below-normal flows through much of the East that reduced the amount of available whitewater. Conversely, since high water often results in fatalities, I was quite relieved when the November-December high water in the Southeast passed without casualties. Apparently late season cold weather kept less skilled paddlers at home and those who got on the water had the skills and judgment needed to stay out of trouble. We hope this trend will continue as the waters rise next year.

Four of the second half 2015 fatalities came after long swims, and two involved very experienced kayakers. On December 12th Taylor Hunt, an elite kayaker from Asheville, NC, drowned on the Sardinias Grandes River in Ecuador. Hunt, 22, was with a small group making the descent at high water. The group scouted a large rapid and ran; Hunt swam and washed downstream into another difficult rapid where he disappeared. The group searched for hours before darkness overtook them. A larger team found Mr. Hunt's body the next day. A few days later, on December 18th, 59 year-old Eric Bush died after a long swim at Class IV Quarter-

Mile Rapid on Tennessee's Nolichucky River. He washed into Muphy's Ledge, recirculated there, and was unconscious when he washed out. His son pulled him ashore, then ran six miles downstream to find help. In a similar incident a Boy Scout canoe trip down Montana's Class III Clark Fork of the Yellowstone ended in tragedy when an adult leader drowned after a long swim. Everyone in the group was wearing

***THIS YEAR'S TOTAL
FATALITIES FOR ALL
WHITEWATER CRAFT, 34,
WAS TIED FOR FEWEST IN
THE LAST 15 YEARS.***

life vests. They got Mr. Darden, 46, ashore and started CPR. Local whitewater paddlers assisted with the evacuation; they were met by the local coroner who pronounced him dead.

On August 15th a party of 12 rafters attempted to run Takilma Gorge of Oregon's North Fork of the Rogue River. This is a serious Class IV run with complex, boulder strewn drops. After one of the rafts capsized Brayden Biggs, a four-year-old boy, was missing. Word got out that the group was in trouble; a group of five kayakers camping upstream was asked by the Sheriff to go into the gorge and help out. They found Brayden 200 yards downstream and performed CPR for 45 minutes before standing down. Another three-year-old in the group was unhurt but terrified. The adults told the kayakers that they had no

idea what they would encounter when they started downstream. Rescue squads arrived to help the group hike out of the gorge.

Several of the deaths were the result of heart attacks. On July 26th Tim Meyers, 50, was kayaking along with some rafting friends on Pennsylvania's Lower Youghiogheny River. It was a very hot day, and Mr. Meyers started feeling poorly about a mile below Railroad Rapid in the flatwater section. He paddled ashore and collapsed. His companions got him to a shady spot, made him comfortable, and used a cell phone to call 911. In spite of their efforts, he slipped away. On July 2nd Carter Worthington, 53, flipped his canoe near the take-out of the Greenbrier Section of Tennessee's Little Pigeon River. Friends got him and his boat to shore, where he stood up, said, "I'm worn out," and collapsed. His friends pulled him out of the water but he was clearly failing. They removed his PFD and started CPR. Rangers arrived and transported him to the hospital, where he was pronounced dead.

Two commercial rafting deaths were reported. In the first, 20-year-old Daniel Chong died after a long swim on Colorado's Clear Creek. He fell out of his raft on July 3rd near mile marker 259 on this relentless Class IV run. Guides eventually pulled him ashore and attempted CPR, without success. On July 21st Jeffrey Standish, 58, fell out of a guided raft on Washington's White Salmon River above Buck Creek. He held onto the raft briefly, but was not breathing when pulled aboard. CPR was ineffective, and a heart attack seems likely.

Back on the East Coast, 14-year-old Jordyn Englen was in a rented tube when she washed under a downed tree on New York's Esopus River, NY. The girl and her father persuaded a shuttle bus driver to drop them off at a seldom used access just above a huge strainer left by a flood in 2005. The two washed into the strainer; her father got to her but was unable to hold on. Ms. Englen's life vest came off and she disappeared after a desperate struggle. Mr Englen washed downstream where he was rescued by a kayaker. Afterwards, a group of minimally-trained rescuers attempted a recovery. Spurning help from trained paddlers, they managed to pin and destroy one of their boats.

On the Lower Delaware River near Stockton, NJ Doris Rake, 45, and, Kathryn Haney, 19, drowned after their kayaks flipped. The accident occurred on July 10th in the vicinity of Bulls Island. Neither the mother nor the daughter was wearing a life vest.

Near Misses and Rescues

This season saw a number of heads up rescues, all of which occurred during high water. On September 29th two kayakers were separated from their boats during as high water run of North Carolina's Wilson Creek. According to the Caldwell Journal of Granite Creek, NC one kayaker had to fight her way to the shore by grabbing trees. The other was swept downstream and stranded on the opposite side of the creek. The Collettsville Fire & Rescue Department and the Gamewell Fire Department were called out. They ran into an experienced kayaker at the scene who ferried across the river to check on the stranded kayaker. He urged the man to walk upstream to a bridge, which he did, saving the first responders considerable trouble!

Milton Stanley shared an intense video of a foot entrapment rescue on Muddy Creek in Southeastern Pennsylvania on his Facebook page. His friend Ron Price was

shepherding a couple of people down the river in a double duck when it capsized. An

**AMERICAN WHITEWATER
NEEDS YOUR HELP
COLLECTING ACCIDENT
INFORMATION SO WE CAN
SHARE THE FACTS AND
LEARN FROM THEM.**

unidentified woman apparently stood up and caught her leg while trying to swim to shore in a Class II rapid. Her partner and Price waded out to shore and managed to work her free in a desperate struggle. Most whitewater rescues are made when someone gets to the person in trouble, puts their hands on them, and gets them free. This is a fine example of how this works in the real world. See for yourself: <https://www.facebook.com/milton.stanley.39/videos/939060376178049/>

Finally, I received sketchy information from newspaper articles and on-line posts about two kayakers who were rescued in Alabama's Little River Canyon. Kyle Hulsey reported on Facebook that his group attempted the Chairlift section at 13,000 cfs, which they felt was a manageable level. After the river flashed to 26,000 cfs one kayaker was separated from his boat and marooned in the middle of the river for over 12 hours. DeKalb County first responders needed 10 hours to hike down into the canyon and get him ashore after a helicopter rescue was nixed due to bad weather. They are not the first paddlers to be caught by rapidly rising levels, which are especially likely when heavy rains hit during a long stretch of wet weather. It's a warning to all of us to be especially wary under these conditions.

American Whitewater needs your help collecting accident information so we can share the facts and learn from them. These accounts teach us how to avoid trouble and manage emergencies. We can modify techniques, procedures, and river gear based on what we learn. To report a whitewater accident, near miss, or serious injury, please go to the Safety page on the American Whitewater site, click "report an accident," and enter your information. You can forward links to newspaper articles, chat room posts, and first person accounts to the safety

editor at ccwalbridge@cs.com or message me, Charlie Walbridge, on Facebook. I'll be happy to help you prepare a first person report if needed. Thanks!

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REMEMBRANCE

REMEMBERING WOLF BAUER AN ORIGINAL CO-FOUNDER OF AW

BY THOMAS O'KEEFE



*Wolf Bauer on the Middle Fork Snoqualmie River in 1956.
Photo by Josef Scaylea, Seattle Times*

WOLF BAUER WAS born on February 24th, 1912 in the Bavarian Alps. He was the oldest among a family of five children and immigrated with the family to Seattle, the home of his maternal grandparents, when he was 13. Wolf quickly learned the language of his newly adopted country and by the age of 16 he was exploring the North Cascades with the Boy Scouts. In 1929 he was one of three local Boy Scouts awarded a membership in The Mountaineers.

Upon completion of his doctorate in geography at the University of Washington, his father took a job as president of a junior college in West Virginia, while Wolf returned to Seattle in 1931 and enrolled as a freshman in the engineering program at the University of Washington. His weekends were filled with adventures skiing (a sport he had learned as a boy in Germany) and climbing. Wolf's climbing accomplishments

include pioneering a route up the north side of Mt. Rainier in 1935 via Ptarmigan Ridge and the first ascent of Mount Goode in the North Cascades in 1936. Wolf is best known, however, for his commitment to teaching others how to climb.

As Wolf sought to improve his climbing skills, he was frustrated by the culture of local climbers who were self-taught and jealously guarded their knowledge and techniques. Wolf immersed himself in German climbing books and established the first climbing course at The Mountaineers in 1935; Lloyd Anderson, who went on to found REI, was one of the students in that course. The course was an overwhelming success and set the foundation for the climbing program that has produced climbing greats such as Fred Beckey and Jim and Lou Whittaker, who all consider Wolf a mentor. A teacher who focused on safety, Wolf was also among the founders

of Seattle Mountain Rescue, and a leader in the subsequent creation of the Mountain Rescue Association.

After World War II, and while he was established in his career as a ceramics engineer, Wolf became more interested in the rivers and marine environment of the Pacific Northwest. As he had done with skiing and climbing, Wolf looked to Germany for resources and equipment to inspire his entry into the sport of river touring. Wolf believed "river touring" was more inviting than "whitewater paddling" and always felt that a kayak was simply a means to experience places that would otherwise be difficult to access.

In 1948 Wolf and a group from The Mountaineers established the Washington Foldboat Club (today Washington Kayak Club), and by 1950 the club was offering a course in river touring that was taught

through the YMCA. Club volunteers continue to teach the introductory paddling course to this day. In 1954 Wolf joined the conversation among paddling club representatives around the country about the need for a national affiliation of clubs engaged in whitewater paddling, and the American Whitewater Affiliation was born. As one of the original founders, Wolf focused his efforts on paddling technique and safety and his articles in the early days of the *American Whitewater Journal* represent some of the first instructional materials for whitewater kayakers. He was a member of the committee that established the first whitewater safety code and standardized the rapid rating system we use today, but he also wrote about how to have fun and enjoy rivers.

His 1956 article in the *American Whitewater Journal* introduces paddlers to the concept of play boating and how it can be used to hone skills and enhance enjoyment of a day on the river. Wolf wrote that to learn the fun and recreational values of whitewater we have been “providing opportunities for everyone on regular weekend trips to ‘play the river’ at frequent intervals. We have found expected fun and experience in recognizing and exploiting these play spots at every opportunity; many river sections formerly run in a half hour or less are now worth an hour or more of cavorting, practicing, playing the currents without getting out of the boats. By making these frequent play and practice periods an expected part of many of our trips from the very start on easy rivers, our beginners learn to consider the river surface a

playground to be enjoyed, not feared.” He concluded his article with the statement that “many of us in the Pacific Northwest feel that the maneuverable kayak is the man-boat combination to play the currents as free and easy as do the salmon and trout beneath us.”

Having completed many first descents on runs like the Sauk, Snoqualmie, Skykomish, Green, and majority of the rest of the Class II-IV whitewater across the state, Wolf began sharing his knowledge of rivers as early as 1950 when he began publication of a series of river maps. Over the next 15 years Wolf refined his statewide river map analyzing river flow data to determine optimal levels and seasons, and documented access points for all the major Class II to IV whitewater runs in Washington. These historic maps, which served as the first guide to paddling opportunities in Washington State, continue to be used in our conservation work today as important documentation of historic river use for recreation by paddlesports enthusiasts. Wolf also turned his engineering skills to boat design and worked with boat builders to design boats with more rocker and a stern that would more efficiently turn in a river environment. He worked with Martin Geisler of Chicago to refine the design of the Whalecraft, a foldboat that Wolf worked to optimize for Pacific Northwest Rivers. Much of his boat design theory was integrated into the Tyee, his first fiberglass built in 1961.

While any of Wolf’s accomplishments in skiing, climbing, mountain safety and rescue, or pioneering whitewater and sea kayaking in the Pacific Northwest would stand on their own, his greatest contribution has been towards the conservation of our rivers and shorelines. The turning point for



Wolf Bauer, Herb Flatow, Hubert Schwartz, Rocky Bauer, and Harriet Bauer enjoy Dunn Canyon on the Cowlitz River in 1958.

Photo by Bob and Ira Spring

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American Whitewater is supported by members, donors, foundations, and partners in the whitewater and outdoor industries. In each edition of the *Journal*, we highlight one such partner in this space. American Whitewater urges you not to make purchase decisions blindly. We hope you'll consider a company's commitment to river stewardship when making your next purchase.

KEEN STRIVES TO be a company with a conscience, and believes in the power of business to inspire others to create lasting change. This ethic was born in response to the SE Asian Tsunami disaster in 2004 when the one-year-old company diverted its entire advertising budget to disaster response, setting the stage for how it would act as a global citizen from that point forward. Since this action KEEN has donated more than \$10 million in cash and resources to non-profit organizations around the world.

This belief is reflected in KEEN's corporate responsibility program - the KEEN Effect. With focus on three priorities: supply chain responsibility, philanthropic partnerships, and fan-based activism, KEEN is seeking to be a difference maker in an unapologetic pursuit of protecting and creating places to play outside.

American Whitewater and KEEN have been proud partners for over a decade – paddling next to each other through things like the Condit Dam removal, Capitol Hill visits in

Washington DC, and Wild and Scenic Rogue River trips.

“AW is a great example of a highly organized, passionate, and results driven organization. We are proud to support AW's mission and are constantly blown away by the team's steadfast dedication to preserving and protecting whitewater across the United States.”

– Kirsten Blackburn, KEEN

KEEN Inc., manufacturer of original hybrid footwear, bags, and socks was founded in 2003. Headquartered in Portland, Oregon, KEEN offers innovative hybrid products that enable outdoor enthusiasts to enjoy an active lifestyle. Known for its innovation and creativity, KEEN was founded on the simple design question – can a sandal protect your toes? The answer was yes, and the KEEN Newport was created. Since its inception, the company has applied the same problem-solving design approach to expand its footwear collection and offer bags and socks.



Join



AMERICAN WHITEWATER Today!

American Whitewater has been extraordinarily fortunate in our ability to leverage a strong grassroots base—members and other volunteers—to assist our limited staff with many whitewater river conservation and restoration efforts.

Over the years, American Whitewater volunteers have participated in numerous hydropower meetings as well as instream and recreational flow studies; filed comments and assisted with an uncountable number of filings; appeared as expert witnesses; lobbied; worked to fight new dams, remove existing dams, deny licenses, and improve public access to rivers and streams. In nearly every river stewardship issue AW has been involved with, the outcome has been favorable to paddlers. Not only has AW secured favorable decisions for the paddling community, but we are the only national organization representing paddlers as these decisions are being made.

A growing membership base is crucial to our ability to continue with our work. Some studies show that there are currently over 100,000 whitewater paddlers in the U.S. American Whitewater currently has 5,500 active members. When considering the amount of whitewater river miles that AW has had a direct impact on, this membership number is unimpressive. We need all paddlers to join American Whitewater. If you are a member, please be sure that everyone you paddle with understands the work AW does, and how you, as an AW member, value that work.

Membership support is what will determine our ability to continue our river stewardship work in the years to come. Individual Annual Memberships are only \$35. If you are a member of your local paddling club and your club is an Affiliate Club member of AW, join as a Club Affiliate Individual for \$25. This is less than a tank of gas or an inexpensive night out. This is certainly not too much to pay to have a national organization representing your paddling interests all

across the country.

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REMEMBRANCE



At age 97 Wolf was recognized for his contributions to the conservation of the Green River Gorge and gave a presentation on his first descent of the river a half century earlier.

Photo by Thomas O'Keefe

Wolf was a trip on the Cowlitz River in 1958 that was featured as a full-color cover story in the *Seattle Times Sunday Magazine*. In a project initiated in 1946, the City of Tacoma had set their sights on damming the Cowlitz River for hydropower. With Bob and Ira Spring as photographers for the expedition, Wolf chronicled the scenic beauty of the deep bedrock canyons shortly before they were swallowed up by the reservoirs behind the two dams completed in 1962 and 1969. Vowing to protect the Green River Gorge, now a popular local Class III/IV whitewater run southeast of Seattle from a similar fate, Wolf led the successful effort to establish the Green River Gorge Conservation Area and Kanaskat-Palmer and Flaming Geyser State Parks in 1969.

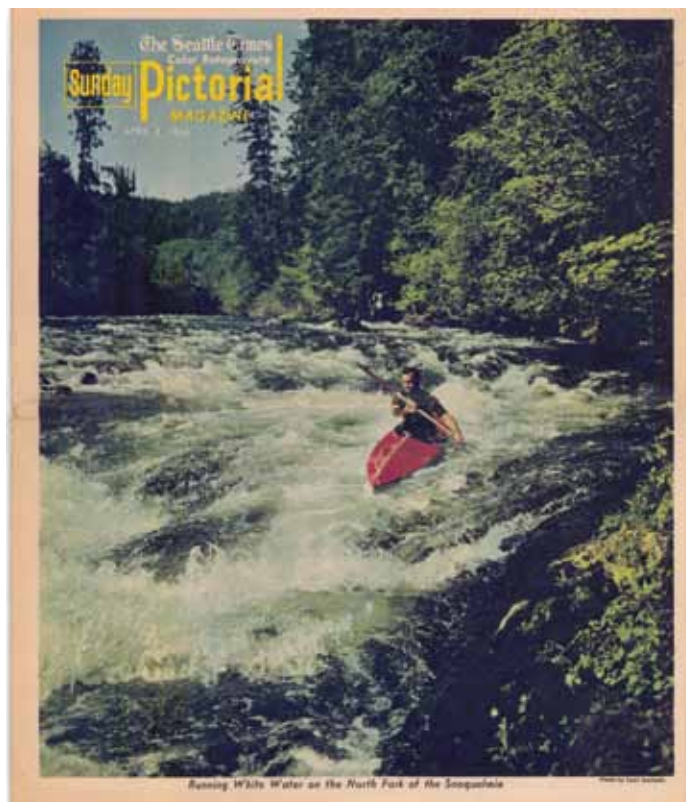
Through his writings published in the 1960s (in the *Seattle Times*, *Seattle PI*, *Northwest Boating*, as well as publications of the North Cascades Conservation Council and The Mountaineers) Wolf's focus transitioned from promotional pieces on river touring to a more advocacy-focused message on the need to protect

Wolf successfully used the local media to promote paddlesports along with river and marine shoreline conservation initiatives through articles in the Seattle Times.

the region's rivers in their free-flowing state and keep their shorelines undeveloped for the enjoyment of all and health of our environment.

At the time he was working to protect the Green River Gorge, and after an unsuccessful run at establishing a State Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, Wolf joined with others to form the Washington Environmental Council to play a more effective role in environmental issues at the state legislature. He was a leader in the effort to establish the Shoreline Management Act of 1971, which seeks to protect the natural character of shorelines and includes provisions to "increase public access" to shorelines and "increase recreational opportunities for the public on the shoreline."

Following his work to protect undeveloped shorelines, Wolf began an ambitious effort to restore shorelines. Applying his skills as an engineer, Wolf became convinced that bulkheads and riprap that were designed to protect waterfront property were actually having the opposite effect. While the negative impacts of hardening shorelines are well known today, his challenge to conventional wisdom was a heretical notion at the time. When others his age were looking towards retirement, Wolf began his second career as a full-time shoreline resource consultant in 1975. Many of the beaches at our state and local parks have benefitted from the restorative touch that Wolf Bauer applied.



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AFFILIATE CLUBS

AW'S ORIGINAL PURPOSE

BY CARLA MINER

The Affiliate Club Program lies at the very heart of American Whitewater's existence. American Whitewater's original purpose since 1954 has been to distribute information among its Affiliate Clubs. Our relationships with local clubs have provided the backbone for the river conservation and access work we accomplish. We have over 100 current AW Affiliate Clubs and they are all doing great work on your behalf. If you don't belong to a club, consider joining one today.

Our Affiliate Club Spotlight this issue is on the George Canoeing Association an outstanding Affiliate Club and longtime supporter of our mission to conserve and restore America's whitewater resources and to enhance opportunities to enjoy them safely.

Georgia Canoeing Association originated in 1968 to provide a common outlet for canoeist, whether novices or experts, as well as safety and paddling instruction. The club has grown from a handful of people to several hundred families and individuals and has expanded to include decked boats as well as canoes. The GCA's membership consists mainly of people from Georgia and adjoining states who share the common objectives of exploring, enjoying and preserving the recreational waterways of America, particularly those in the Southeast.

GCA welcomes canoeists and kayakers of all ages and paddling abilities. Mutual interests include whitewater river running, creeking and playboating, river and lake touring, sea kayaking, paddle camp outs and competition and racing activities. GCA espouses conservation, environmental and river access issues as well as boating safety and skills development. The Club is active throughout the year with scheduled trips from February through November, as well as impromptu trips during the frigid months.

Membership in GCA is an affordable \$35 annually, check out their website <http://www.gapaddle.com/> for additional information and a detailed calendar of events. And remember, current members of the GCA receive a \$10 discount off their AW membership.

Thank you Georgia Canoeing Association for your continued support of American Whitewater!

The AW Journal Club Affiliates by state:

Alaska

Fairbanks Paddlers, Fairbanks
Nova River Runners Inc., Chickaloon

Alabama

Huntsville Canoe Club, Huntsville

Arizona

Outdoors Unlimited, Flagstaff
Southern Arizona Paddlers Club, Tucson
Thunderbeard Outdoor, Glendale

Arkansas

Arkansas Canoe Club, Little Rock

California

Chico Paddleheads, Chico
Gold Country Paddlers, Lotus
Sierra Club Loma Prieta Paddlers, San Jose

Colorado

Friends of the Yampa, Steamboat Springs
San Miguel Whitewater Asso, Telluride
Upper Colorado Private Boaters Assn, Glenwood Springs

Connecticut

AMC - Connecticut Chapter, Waterbury

Delaware

AMC Delaware Valley Chapter, Oaks
Wilmington Trail Club, Newark

Georgia

Georgia Canoeing Asso, Atlanta
Paddlers4Christ, Ellijay

Idaho

Backwoods Mountain Sports, Ketchum
Idaho Whitewater Association, Boise

Illinois

Chicago Whitewater Assn, Chicago

Indiana

Hoosier Canoe Club, Brownsburg

Iowa

Iowa Whitewater Coalition, W. Des Moines

Kentucky

Bluegrass Wildwater Asso, Lexington
Elkhorn Paddlers, Lexington
Viking Canoe Club, Louisville

Maine

Penobscot Paddle & Chowder Society, Troy

Maryland

Baltimore Canoe & Kayak Club, Baltimore
Monocacy Canoe Club, Frederick

Massachusetts

AMC Boston Chapter, Boston
Zoar Outdoor, Charlemont

Michigan

Venture 8 / Troop 8, East Lansing

Minnesota

Rapids Riders, Eagan

Missouri

Missouri Whitewater Assn, St Louis
Ozark Mountain Paddlers, Springfield
Ozark Wilderness Waterways, Kansas City

Montana

Beartooth Paddlers Society, Billings

Nevada

Sierra Nevada Whitewater Club, Reno

New Hampshire

AMC New Hampshire Paddlers, Raymond

New Jersey

AMC Delaware Valley Chapter, Oaks
KCCNY, Flanders

New York

ADK Schenectady, Schenectady
Flow Paddlers' Club, Livonia
Hamilton College, Clinton
Housatonic Area Canoe & Kayak Sq., Ossining
KCCNY, Flanders
Zoar Valley Paddling Club, Buffalo

North Carolina

Base Camp Cullowhee, Cullowhee
Carolina Canoe Club, Raleigh
H2o Dreams, Saluda
Landmark Learning, Cullowhee

Ohio

Columbus Outdoor Pursuits, Columbus
Friends of the Crooked River, Akron
Keelhauler Canoe Club, Cleveland

Oregon

Eugene Kayaker, Eugene
Lower Columbia Canoe Club, Portland
Next Adventures, Portland
Northwest Rafters Association, Roseburg
Oregon Kayak and Canoe Club, Portland
Oregon Whitewater Association, Portland
Willamette Kayak & Canoe Club, Corvallis

Pennsylvania

AMC Delaware Valley Chapter, Oaks
Benscreek Canoe Club, Johnstown
Bradford County Canoe and Kayak Club, Sayre
Canoe Club of Centre County, Lemont
Canoe Club of Greater Harrisburg, Harrisburg
Holtwood Hooligans, Paradise
Leehigh Valley Canoe Club, Leehigh Valley
Philadelphia Canoe Club, Philadelphia
Three Rivers Paddling Club, Pittsburgh

South Carolina

Foothills Paddling Club, Greenville
Palmetto Paddlers, Columbia

Tennessee

Appalachian Paddling Enthusiasts, Limestone
Chota Canoe Club, Knoxville
East Tennessee Whitewater Club, Oak Ridge
Ocoee River Council, Knoxville
Tennessee Eastman Hiking and Canoeing Club, Kingsport
Tennessee Valley Canoe Club, Chattanooga

Utah

High Jim and the A.S.K., Salt Lake City

Vermont

Vermont Paddlers Club, Montpelier

Virginia

Blue Ridge River Runners, Lynchburg

Canoe Cruisers Association, Herndon

Coastal Canoeists Inc, Richmond

Float Fishermen of Virginia, Roanoke

Washington

BEWET- Boeing Employees Whitewater & Touring Club, Bellevue

Northwest Whitewater Association, Spokane

Paddle Trails Canoe Club, Seattle

Spokane Canoe & Kayak Club, Spokane

The Mountaineers, Seattle

University Kayak Club, Seattle

Washington Kayak Club, Seattle

Washington Recreational River Runners, Renton

West Virginia

Dbl Z! Whitewater Club, Fayetteville

Mason Dixon Canoe Cruisers, Berkeley Springs

Redneck Kayak Club, Beckley

WV Wildwater Assn, S. Charleston

Wisconsin

Hoofers Outing Club, Madison

North East Wisconsin Paddlers, Inc., Neenah

Sierra Club/John Muir Chapter, Madison

Wyoming

American Packrafting Association, Wilson

Ontario

Kawartha Whitewater Paddlers, The Kawarthas

Quebec

Club de Canoë-Kayak d'Eau Vive de Montréal

DISCOUNTED AW MEMBERSHIP FOR AFFILIATE CLUB MEMBERS

By Carla Miner, Membership Manager

AW offers a discounted Affiliate Club membership of \$25, a \$10 savings. If you are renewing your AW membership or joining as a new member, select the Affiliate Club Discounted Personal Membership online at <http://americanwhitewater.org/content/Membership/join-AW/> Or, if you are renewing or joining by mail or telephone just mention the name of the Affiliate Club you belong to and you can take advantage of the \$25 membership.

A list of AW Affiliate Clubs can be found on our website at <http://americanwhitewater.org/content/Membership/join-AW/>. If you do not see your Club listed here please encourage them to renew their Club membership or to join AW as a new Affiliate Club. Your Club's membership and your personal membership enable our staff to be active and engaged in the process of river stewardship. When you join or renew your membership your support is helping to meet the many challenges whitewater rivers face.

If you have any questions about the Affiliate Club membership, please contact me. I can be reached at 866_BOAT-4AW or membership@americanwhitewater.org.

JOIN AMERICAN WHITEWATER AS A CLUB AFFILIATE!

10 REASONS TO JOIN AW AS AN AFFILIATE CLUB

1. Support river access and restoration through the AW River Stewardship Team.
2. Be part of a national voice for the protection of the whitewater rivers your club values.
3. Tap into the professional expertise of AW staff for river issues that come up in your backyard.
4. Your club's members can become AW members for \$25. A \$10 savings!
5. Receive the American Whitewater Journal, the oldest continually published whitewater magazine.
6. Your club is recognized in the list of Affiliate Clubs posted to the AW website.
7. Recognize your club in the list of Affiliate Clubs noted in each bi-monthly AW Journal.
8. Post Club information on the AW Website to help paddlers find you.
9. Gain Club satisfaction from lending support to AW's stewardship efforts.
10. Improve your club members river karma.

For more information, contact Carla Miner at membership@americanwhitewater.org or sign-up on line at www.americanwhitewater.org/membership.

The logo features the letters 'AW' in a large, bold, white font. The 'A' is set against a green background, and the 'W' is set against a blue background. A stylized white wave graphic is positioned between the two letters. To the right of the logo, the words 'AMERICAN WHITewater' are written in a bold, white, sans-serif font with a slight drop shadow.

AMERICAN WHITewater

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Rok Sribar and friends, East Fork Kaweah, CA. © Darin McQuoid

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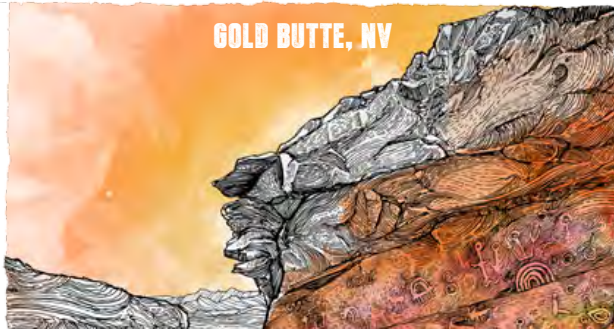


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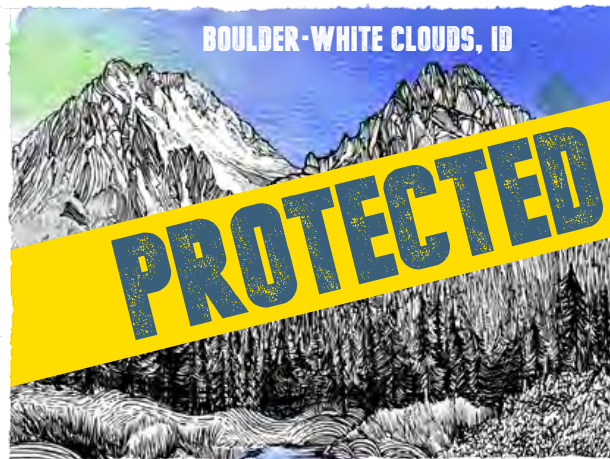


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