

REBUILDING COMMUNITIES & RIVER ACCESS

WHAT DOES SAFE RIVER ACCESS MEAN TO YOU AND YOUR FAMILY?

Healing After Devastating Flooding in the Southeast (NC/TN): Recovering from Hurricane Helene is going to be a colossal task for many riverside communities in Western North Carolina and East Tennessee, and as those communities rebuild, American Whitewater will be involved in river access planning efforts at many dozens of sites that were lost in the storm. Access to rivers for paddlers and community members can play an important role in economic and personal recovery, and we'll be there to help. We'll also continue to represent boater's interests in two cases disputing the public's right to float rivers in the Southeast on the Watauga River (NC) and in Georgia.



Flooding in North Carolina | Photo John Grace



Millinocket Stream (ME) | Photo Sarah Sindo

SUPPORT RIVER ACCESS WITH A GIFT TO AMERICAN WHITEWATER

Did you know that our access work is almost exclusively funded by donors like you? Your gift today will make sure we continue that work in 2025 and beyond.

Whether you've already contributed this year or it's time to renew, please consider celebrating our 70th year with a generous gift or increasing your membership level by visiting americanwhitewater.org or using the enclosed reply envelope. All current members will be entered to win a Kokatat drysuit or a Hyside raft in an end of the year drawing—Now is the perfect time to renew your membership!

Join or Renew



Donate

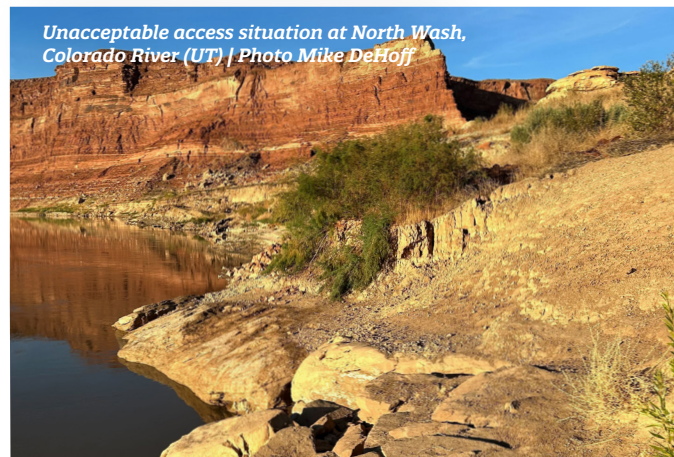
Restoring the West Branch Penobscot (ME): American Whitewater is working to restore flows and access to three sections of the West Branch of the Penobscot River that have been dewatered by Brookfield's hydropower dams. Led by Chris Howe, Mike Smith, and other local paddlers in the Millinocket/Baxter Maine region, we are advocating for boatable flows and scheduled releases in the Ripogenus Gorge, Millinocket Stream, and West Branch below Stone Dam. The relicensing of the Ripogenus and Penobscot Mills projects gives American Whitewater and our partners Appalachian Mountain Club, Trout Unlimited, and local boaters and anglers the best opportunity to restore these sections.



J.C. Boyle Dam before removal (CA) | Photo Swiftwater Films



J.C. Boyle Dam site after removal and new Moonshine Falls River Access site. (CA) | Photo Swiftwater Films



Unacceptable access situation at North Wash, Colorado River (UT) | Photo Mike DeHoff



White Salmon River access should be publicly owned (WA) | Photo Thomas O'Keefe

Cataract Canyon and Taylor River Access (UT/CO): The loss of a reasonable take-out for Cataract Canyon (UT) along the Colorado River reflects shortsighted water management and the impacts of climate change. American Whitewater has worked to bring the issue of safe egress from Cataract to Washington DC on multiple trips, and is continuing to find both short and long-term solutions for the public to access this iconic and rapidly changing stretch of river. Farther up in the headwaters of the Colorado River Basin, American Whitewater is working with the Forest Service to construct access improvements on the Taylor River in Colorado. Design plans are complete and we've received the majority of the funding to start the construction phase. The project will improve the user experience and safety, and reduce streambank erosion long into the future!



Old access to Taylor River, slated for improvements (CO) | Photo Matt Quinn

Bottom White Salmon Access (WA): Over 20 years ago, American Whitewater used the Land and Water Conservation Fund to secure public ownership of BZ Access on the White Salmon River. Now, after helping to permanently authorize and fully fund this important federal funding source, we're working to use it again to bring Northwest Park into public ownership. Securing publicly owned access at this site is one of several priorities we're focusing on in the Columbia River Gorge.



Bottom White Salmon River (WA) | Photo Evan Stafford

Klamath Restored, Public Access Next (CA): After two decades of Tribally led efforts, the fourth and final outdated hydropower dam on the Klamath River was removed in September 2024. Shortly after, the first salmon swam upstream through the newly restored reaches. Over 40 miles of whitewater have returned to free-flowing condition, improving water quality for 200 miles downstream to the Pacific. To support public access, American Whitewater helped design and secure \$3.5 million in funding for five new river access points along the undammed stretches, enabling river enthusiasts to witness first-hand the rebirth of this iconic river system.



Upper Yough (MD) | Photo Evan Stafford

Upper Yough Releases (MD): In 2024, homeowners along the reservoir sought to force changes to Upper Yough levels and releases through a legislative edict. The boating community stopped that effort, and now American Whitewater and regional partners will work with the state and other stakeholders to consider dam permit changes that could meet homeowner interests, while protecting or enhancing downstream recreation in an appropriate and collaborative manner.



Fall River (ID) | Photo Kevin Colburn

Improved Access and flows for Fall River (ID): American Whitewater is diving into a new dam relicensing in the Northern Rockies, this time focused on the Fall River in Southeastern Idaho. The Fall River offers delightful Class III+ rapids, and the dam relicensing creates opportunities for improved access and flow releases.



Montreal River (WI) | Photo Thomas O'Keefe

Montreal River Public Access (WI): As part of hydropower licensing on the Montreal River, American Whitewater will be working to formalize access at the Saxon Falls Powerhouse, a long staircase that serves as the put-in for the Montreal Canyon, and at other sites associated with the hydropower project. While many of these sites have been used by boaters for years we will work to make public access to the river a formal requirement of the hydropower license.