



PECOS RIVER, NEW MEXICO
PHOTO: PECOS AMIGOS BRAVOS

Spring!

As we head into spring, I realize how much I have missed being on the river. There's something magical about rivers to begin with, but in the springtime, my heart beats a little faster when I first hear the river laughing its way downstream. I know there will be plenty of water, and the fish will be hungry.

I also feel hopeful thinking about the health of our rivers and progress we've made over the past few months, which is highlighted in this report. Saving rivers is hopeful work: removing harmful dams, protecting rivers, restoring floodplains, and fighting for smart river policy.

Thanks for helping to make this hopeful work happen, enjoy the report and good luck on the river this spring.

Steve White
Director, Anglers Fund for
American Rivers

OREGON'S RIVER DEMOCRACY ACT

In 2019, Sen. Ron Wyden (D-OR) asked Oregonians to recommend rivers they want to see protected against new dams and development. Thousands weighed in, culminating in the River Democracy Act, which Wyden introduced in January. The bill would protect more than 4,600 river miles, giving Oregon more protected river miles than any other state. Most of the streams are small tributaries that are vital to the health of better-known rivers, such as the McKenzie, Deschutes, Grande Ronde, Rogue, Illinois and Nestucca. The upshot: thousands of additional protected miles of habitat for trout, salmon and steelhead. AmericanRivers.org/RiverDemocracy

100 DAYS FOR RIVERS

During the first 100 days of the Biden administration, we have achieved significant progress on our 2021 Blueprint for Action, which calls on the administration to make clean water and healthy rivers a top national priority. President Biden began to repeal regulatory rollbacks and reinstated important standards, such as those for restoring floodplains — important rearing habitat for juvenile fish. Our policy team will continue to advocate for investment in infrastructure, protection for critical river habitat, and investment in dam removals nationwide. AmericanRivers.org/100DaysForRivers

CHANGING TIDES FOR SNAKE RIVER SALMON

The Pacific Coast's legendary wild salmon and steelhead are at risk of extinction, with a major factor being the four federally owned dams on Washington's lower Snake River. Removing the dams could save these amazing migratory fish, so in February, Congressman Mike Simpson (R-ID) announced a proposal for a \$33.5 billion legislative package that would remove the dams and create economic opportunity regionwide. We are now working with a broad coalition to bring about the biggest river restoration effort in history. AmericanRivers.org/SnakeRiverVision

RESILIENCE FOR GEORGIA'S FLINT RIVER

Healthy rivers are essential for staving off the worst of climate change. That's why our work on the Flint aims to enhance resilience for the future while restoring flows that have been diverted in the past. Watch this new video, featuring our work on the upper Flint. By keeping enough water in the river, we will help native shoal bass (a great fighting fish) and other Flint wildlife survive Georgia's worsening droughts. AmericanRivers.org/FlintDrought

A WIN FOR WILD BROOK TROUT ON THE SUSQUEHANNA

While we can't make new rivers, we can restore damaged rivers to make new stretches fishable. The Susquehanna watershed in Pennsylvania has a long history of coal mining, which polluted thousands of miles of the river with metal-laced drainage that killed most fish and aquatic life. About two decades ago, the state began funding local watershed groups and municipalities to reduce the pollution and clean up the river. It worked: Water quality has improved, and life is returning. Populations of native brookies and other fish have started to grow, leading the state to re-categorize stretches of the river as Class A trout waters. Now, American Rivers is using that data to help prioritize which dams we remove. On the Upper West Branch of the Susquehanna, we recently completed a restoration that included the removal of three dams. Trout can now access 63 miles, much of which is now Class A habitat. We expect the health of the entire system — and the fishing — to improve.

HEALTHIER COLORADO RIVERS MEAN MORE FISHABLE WATER

Last November, fishable streams in Colorado won big when ballot measure 7A passed with overwhelming support. The mill-levy increase provides much-needed funding to improve the health of rivers on Colorado's Western Slope, where 65 percent of the flows in the entire Colorado River basin originate. The first project undertaken will reconnect the Colorado River around Windy Gap Reservoir, near the town of Granby, to improve flow and temperature — which will revive habitat for trout, sculpin, stoneflies and other aquatic life.

AMERICAN RIVERS WELCOMES A NEW LEADER

We are delighted to welcome Tom Kiernan as American Rivers' new President and CEO. An experienced angler, Tom developed a love for rivers as a child growing up on the Potomac River. Before joining American Rivers, he led the American Wind Energy Association and the National Parks Conservation Association. Prior to that, he co-founded the Rocky Mountain Outdoor Center on Colorado's Arkansas River and guided river trips throughout the Southeast. Get to know Tom and why he is optimistic about the future of the river movement. AmericanRivers.org/WelcomeTom



PHOTOS: LISA HOLLINGSWORTH-SEGEDY

The West Branch Susquehanna before and after we removed Patton Dam in 2019. Local anglers report that wild trout are already returning,

PROGRESS PROTECTING ICONIC TROUT AND SALMON HABITAT

For over four decades, American Rivers has been leading the movement to protect free-flowing rivers in the United States. In addition to the River Democracy Act in Oregon, American Rivers and our partners have also been instrumental in advocating for protection for 336 miles of excellent trout streams in southwest Montana, including the Madison, the Gallatin and Slough Creek. This joins efforts to protect the Gila River in New Mexico, salmon and steelhead streams on the Olympic Peninsula in Washington, and rivers on the California coast. These bills are currently moving through Congress, and we will continue to provide the strategic vision, advocacy and outreach needed to pass the legislation.

AmericanRivers.org/StateofWild



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American Rivers' Anglers Fund is a program for anglers who believe in the importance of healthy rivers. Joining allows you to protect wild rivers, restore damaged rivers and conserve water for people and nature — all of which improve the health of our rivers and the strength of our fisheries. With headquarters in Washington, D.C., and 300,000 supporters, members and volunteers across the country, American Rivers is one of the most trusted and influential river conservation organizations in the United States, delivering solutions for healthier rivers, ecosystems and communities.