



SPRING RUN CHINOOK SALMON  
PHOTO: OREGON DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

## Take heart in your impact

Welcome to our spring edition of the Anglers Fund Conservation Update! I'm sure you are as eager as I am to get back on the water.

It's a true joy for me to share how your support helps the rivers and the fish, ecosystems, and communities that depend upon them:

When rivers are in good shape, you're helping to keep them that way. And when rivers have been damaged (usually by dams), you're helping to restore them.

I hope you'll read these stories with a sense of pride knowing that you're making a difference.

Good luck with your fishing this season!



Steve White  
Director, Anglers Fund for  
American Rivers

## WINNING FEDERAL FUNDING FOR RIVERS

The first step was securing \$1.6 billion for dam removal and dam safety in the bipartisan [Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act](#), which was signed into law in November — an amazing accomplishment. The next step is doing the planning needed to fully leverage this funding. Across the country, we are identifying high-priority dams to remove and deciding where additional staff focus could result in the biggest ecological and public-safety benefits. We're already investing in Georgia and hope to replicate that in several other regions. More than 90,000 dams in the United States are large enough for the US Army Corps of Engineers to know about them. We want to take out thousands. Click this link for [25 top dam removals to watch for in 2022 and beyond](#).

## RIVER PROTECTIONS MOVING FORWARD

We have an unprecedented number of river miles pending protection. There are currently 12 bills in Congress to protect over 6,700 river miles across 15 campaigns in 9 states. That's a lot of numbers, but the point is that there's more interest than ever in

protecting our nation's pristine rivers with Wild and Scenic River designation, which makes the river off limits to new dams or development.

In early March, the Wild and Scenic Rivers Coalition, which we help lead, held 37 meetings with Congressional members to help get these 6,700 river miles protected. If all of the bills pass through Congress and are signed into law, we could see protection for iconic trout streams of southwest Montana, steelhead rivers of the Olympic Peninsula, the native range of the Gila trout, and many more. [Click here](#) for details on all of the bills moving through Congress.



PHOTO: JIM KLUG

American Rivers and our local partners won protection for Montana's East Rosebud Creek (above) in 2019. If (and when!) Congress passes the current raft of river protections, it will be the largest increase to the Wild and Scenic Rivers system in the history of the 54-year-old system.

## FIGHTING FOR STRONG RIVER POLICY

Our national policy work has made progress across a broad agenda, including improving water infrastructure, restoring watersheds, modernizing flood management and reversing harmful regulatory rollbacks — much of which will improve critical fish habitat. We are now highlighting with Congress and the Biden administration national investments needed for 2022 river priorities in our [2023 River Budget](#), endorsed by 47 partner organizations.

## PASSAGE FOR SALMON AT LEWIS RIVER DAMS

More than 15 years ago, PacifiCorp made a promise to address some of the damage that its dams inflict on the Lewis River in southeast Washington by installing fish passage at its dams. Despite numerous attempts since then to renege on this agreement, PacifiCorp is once again on the hook to build fish passage. In October and December 2021, the National Marine Fisheries Service and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service determined that fish passage through all project reservoirs remained appropriate. American Rivers and our partners are committed to seeing this through for the river, the salmon, and all who benefit from a healthy Lewis River. More on this issue can be found on [American Rivers' blog](#).

## HOMESTRETCH FOR KLAMATH RIVER DAM REMOVAL

This February, we [entered the homestretch](#) for removing four dams on Oregon and California's Klamath River when the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission issued its draft Environmental Impact Statement. The draft study concludes that dam removal provides significant economic, environmental, and cultural benefits to northern California and southern Oregon, and moves the project into public comment. The dams are a key factor in diseases that are wiping out entire generations of salmon. Removing the dams will reintroduce salmon to over 400 miles of historical habitat, eliminate reservoirs that host toxic algae blooms each summer, and eliminate poor water quality conditions that allow fish disease-causing parasites to flourish. American Rivers has advocated alongside tribes and conservation partners for the removal of the dams for more than two decades. Deconstruction and drawdown will begin in 2023.

## BOUNDARY WATERS ON ROAD TO PROTECTION

The Biden administration announced in late October that it has started a process to ban copper mining next to Minnesota's Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness. This national treasure boasts tremendous fishing for northern pike, walleye, and bass. American Rivers listed the Boundary Waters as one of America's Most Endangered Rivers® in 2013, 2018 and 2021, spotlighting the threat mining poses to the area's clean water.

## RESTORING HABITAT FOR WILD BROOKIES AND SALMON

This March, we celebrated the removal of the Burrell Place Dam on a tributary to the Chattooga watershed. Removal of the 165-foot-wide dam, facilitated by Naturaland Trust, American Rivers, US Forest Service, US Fish and Wildlife, and the local Trout Unlimited chapter, will help restore habitat for a unique strain of brook trout — and the property will be added to Sumter National Forest.

On the opposite coast, American Rivers and partners are actively removing the Nelson Dam on Washington's Nachez River. The 1929 dam blocked salmon and steelhead and had collected sediment that backed up for miles. No matter what part of the country, dams ruin rivers and degrade habitat for the fish and ecosystems that rely on clean, flowing water. That's why removing dams is such a high priority.



PHOTO: MAC STONE, NATURALAND TRUST

Historic data show that brook trout was the only fish species that occurred naturally in Pigpen Creek, a tributary of the Chattooga River, South Carolina.



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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.