

the source



AMERICAN
RIVERS

IMPACT REPORT 2024

Your ripple effects

As a child, you likely tossed a pebble into water and watched the ripples expand. A rhythmic dance across the surface, growing larger and larger. It was pure magic — how one small action could have such far-reaching impacts.

The impact of your generosity is no different. Whether your support helps us remove a dangerous dam or save a precious river — every action we take together creates a ripple. Collectively, these ripples gain momentum and eventually transform the entire surface of the water.

Thanks to you and thousands of dedicated supporters, partners, staff experts, and volunteers who contribute every day to our outward ripples, American Rivers is increasing our impact across the country. Together, we are rising to meet our most ambitious goals yet.

Last year alone, American Rivers and our partners tore down 80 dams and opened over 1,000 miles of habitat for fish and wildlife (see page 3). We influenced policy to ensure long-term, sustained protection for our rivers and streams (see page 4). We opened new offices in the Northeast, Mid-Atlantic, and Central regions to lead localized restoration

initiatives. We worked with 102 cities and counties across the country to secure clean, plentiful water.

Individually, these are remarkable milestones. Together, they create the momentum we need to spur transformational change for rivers nationwide.

As climate change amplifies existing threats to our waterways — outdated dams, rampant development, and pollution — healthy rivers are more crucial than ever for building resilience and saving our natural world. Solving these complex environmental challenges will take all of us working together. We are deeply grateful for your commitment. With you by our side, we will achieve even greater ripples for our rivers, ecosystems, and communities in the year ahead.

Onward together!

Jo-Ellen Darcy
Chair of the Board of Directors

Tom Kiernan
President and CEO



Gregg Martin

My River Why

GREGG MARTIN

Member since 1998, Legacy Society

"I moved to Durango, Colorado in 1992. I bought a used kayak and enrolled in a paddling class. The Four Corners area is truly a boater's paradise. My favorite memories are the hundreds of laps on the Animas River in downtown Durango.

With repetition comes familiarity, and with familiarity comes attachment. I feel very attached to the rivers in this area and their access, cleanliness, safety, and sustainability. As a donor of American Rivers for over 25 years, I know my funds support the needs of these rivers. American Rivers is a very responsive organization, which has kept me supporting its work. While local projects are important for addressing acute issues, American Rivers' national approach can help take key issues further up the ladder to decision-makers. This combination of local and national efforts is needed for comprehensive river protection. Thank you, American Rivers, for your efforts — keep it up!"

Join the River Legacy Society

A special community dedicated to our rivers' future. These gifts, often through wills or trusts, power our important work to advocate for clean water and threatened river wildlife.

► AmericanRivers.org/PlannedGiving

America's Most Endangered Rivers®

#1 Spotlight Drives Action

New Mexico's waterways face unprecedented threats, with nearly all rivers and wetlands at risk of pollution due to the loss of Clean Water Act protections. Yet recently, a significant breakthrough has inspired hope for the future. New Mexico allocated funding for a state program to regulate pollution and joined the America the Beautiful Freshwater Challenge. This ambitious initiative by the Biden administration sets a national goal to protect, restore, and reconnect 8 million acres of wetlands and 100,000 miles of our nation's rivers and streams by 2030. Our America's Most Endangered Rivers® listing and partners' leadership played important roles in raising public awareness and securing these positive steps forward. Looking ahead, we're committed to supporting our partners as they gear up for a critical year of advocating to restore clean water protections in state laws and regulations.



Adobe Stock

Rio Chama, New Mexico

"The heightened attention provided by the Most Endangered Rivers® listing has helped us to elevate both the risks to New Mexico's rivers from the loss of federal protections and the need for state action to protect our rivers, streams, and wetlands."

Rachel Conn, Deputy Director of Amigos Bravos

Your support helps us shine a national spotlight on the critical work of our local partners around the country.

Learn more about America's Most Endangered Rivers® of 2024 at AmericanRivers.org/EndangeredRivers

Year in Review

Here's a snapshot of the impact of your support in 2024.

Restore damaged rivers and waters

80 DAMS

removed by American Rivers and our partners*

1,160 MILES

of new river habitat reconnected for fish and wildlife thanks to dam removal

552,957 POUNDS

of trash cleaned up from rivers and streams through National River Cleanup® events

* latest data, 2023

DID YOU KNOW?

Every \$1 million invested in restoring watersheds generates 16 jobs and up to \$2.5 million in economic benefits.



Mobilize a powerful river movement

15,993 VOLUNTEERS

mobilized through National River Cleanup® Events

102 CITIES & COUNTIES

supported to secure clean, plentiful water

43.4 MILLION PEOPLE

impacted by our efforts



DID YOU KNOW?

Over 80% of wildlife species in the U.S. rely on healthy rivers, including many endangered plants and animals.



Protect healthy rivers

853 MILES

of rivers protected

2,448 ACRES

of riverside habitat and floodplains conserved

33 STATES

where we actively worked to protect and sustain rivers

Ripples of Impact

Your support powers our local restoration efforts with partners, creating brighter futures for rivers that people and wildlife call home. Those hometown wins are critical and take place when community members stand with us for healthy, clean, and safe rivers. Now imagine if

every river had multitudes using their voices for change — outdoor enthusiasts, council members, policymakers, and more. We are working across the country to build a powerful, bipartisan movement of advocates for thriving rivers, abundant wildlife, and vibrant communities.

MAP KEY



America's Most Endangered Rivers® of 2024



Regions where American Rivers launched new offices in 2024



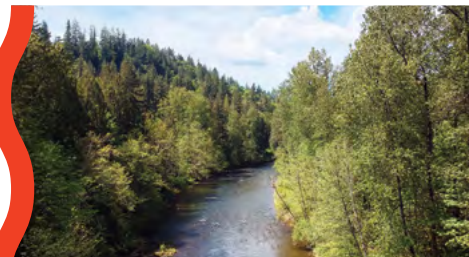
States where we supported local campaigns to protect and sustain rivers



States where American Rivers and partners removed dams last year



Cities and counties we supported to secure clean, plentiful water



Remember when Washington's Green River was endangered?

After a decade-long battle against mining, it's now protected, preserving its rich ecosystems, and keeping local taps flowing with clean water.

WASHINGTON

After years of advocacy by American Rivers and our local partners, the Washington Department of Ecology designated more than 950 miles of the Cascade, Green, and Napeequa river systems as Outstanding Resource Waters. These rivers are now protected for their cultural and spiritual significance to Tribal Nations, critical habitat for salmon and wildlife, and their role in providing a sanctuary of clean, cool water for species adapting to a rapidly changing climate.

KANSAS

At a National River Cleanup® event in Wichita, Cox Communications President and American Rivers board member Mark Greatrex joined Mayor Lily Wu to share insights and inspiration about protecting rivers.

▶ **Check out the video:**
AmericanRivers.org/CoxKSCleanup



MICHIGAN

We received funding from the Grand Rapids City Commission to advance our sustainable approach to stormwater pollution. Communities of Color, who disproportionately feel the impacts of pollution, are important partners in this work. Our approach encourages installing natural features like rain gardens and bioswales, which filter and absorb excess water, contributing to a healthier, cleaner Grand River.

PENNSYLVANIA

Fostering Philadelphia's environmental leaders of tomorrow, we partnered with Overbrook Environmental Education Center to launch an inspiring climate change career discovery program. Over three months, local high schoolers gained hands-on experience in diverse conservation skills,



learning everything from assessing stream channels and flood risks to engaging with policy leaders, preparing them for environmental careers or college.

GEORGIA

We helped secure \$50 million in federal funds to build a trail network that gives Southside Atlanta communities access to the Flint River headwaters greenspace, while also addressing stormwater flooding that threatens homes, businesses, and public safety. After a decade of work with local communities to draw attention to water and environmental justice challenges, this influx of funding is especially gratifying.

CALIFORNIA

A groundbreaking restoration effort is underway in Yosemite National Park's Ackerson Meadow, a critical biodiversity hotspot. American Rivers and our partners are restoring 230 acres of habitat for endangered wildlife, which will also improve water quality and boost groundwater storage capacity by an estimated 20 million gallons annually. Groundwater is an important source of clean, dependable drinking water.



PROTECTING THOUSANDS OF MILES OF RIVERS ACROSS FIVE STATES

Several of our highest-priority river protection bills advanced in Congress, bringing them closer to becoming law. These bills will safeguard thousands of miles of rivers and streams in 1) Washington's Olympic Peninsula, 2) Oregon's Owyhee River Canyonlands, 3) Colorado's Dolores River watershed, 4) California's Ackerson Meadow complex, and 5) New Mexico's Pecos River. The Owyhee bill would also move tens of thousands of acres of sacred lands into a trust for the Burns Paiute Tribe.



Expanding our impact in the Northeast, Mid-Atlantic, and Central regions

American Rivers has opened three new offices in the Northeast, Mid-Atlantic, and Central regions. Our local presence will allow us to lead on-the-ground river protection and restoration efforts for watersheds across 24 states.

Freeing Rivers, Unlocking Potential

Your support is rippling out toward a future of healthy, free-flowing rivers



Shane Anderson

The first dam removal on California and Oregon's Klamath River, kicking off the largest dam removal project in history.

Twenty-five years ago, the idea of removing a dam was considered radical, even impossible. Today, it's a proven method for restoring health to rivers which in turn revives fish and wildlife populations, protects cultural resources, and enhances public safety for local communities. This paradigm shift can largely be attributed to American Rivers and our unique approach of bold vision, strategic expertise, dedicated advocacy, and inclusive partnerships.



Zhee Chatmon

Learn more about these 2024 River Champions:
[▶ AmericanRivers.org/RiverChampionAwards](https://AmericanRivers.org/RiverChampionAwards)

A pebble, rippling out Restoring the Klamath River

We celebrated the largest dam removal and river restoration project in history on the Klamath River in Oregon and California. The Yurok Tribe, Karuk Tribe, Klamath Tribe, and other Tribes have led the decades-long effort to tear down four dams to improve water quality and revive the salmon runs that are the cornerstones of Tribal culture.

American Rivers first engaged on the Klamath in the early 2000s when the dams' operating licenses were up for renewal. In collaboration with Tribal Nations and partners, we began shaping a long-term strategy to improve the health of the watershed. Over the years, we used our America's Most Endangered Rivers® platform to spotlight national attention on the Klamath, and since 2016, we have sat on the Klamath River Renewal Corporation Board of Directors — an organization committed to revitalizing the watershed so it can support the communities that call it home.

With 400 miles of river habitat newly opened and free-flowing, our commitment to this river continues to evolve. Working with local partners, we are now focused on restoring tributaries in the upper watershed to maximize the impact of dam removal and ensure returning salmon have the best possible chance of survival.

Recognizing the achievement on the Klamath, we named it River of the Year for 2024 and presented River Champion Awards to the following leaders instrumental to the success: Yurok Tribe, Karuk Tribe, Klamath Justice Coalition, Berkshire Hathaway, State of California, State of Oregon, and Ridges to Riffles Indigenous Conservation Group.

We were thrilled to present a \$10,000 grant to Ridges to Riffles to advance Indigenous-led river conservation efforts, generously matched by two American Rivers donors who contributed gifts totaling \$20,000.

Ripples getting bigger Together, we're mobilizing a nationwide dam removal movement

One organization alone can't create the ripples of change necessary to heal the decades of damage done to rivers. Yet, your support is resulting in more healthy, free-flowing rivers than ever before. How is that possible? Because your gift to American Rivers is the linchpin that allows us to pull together all the players and mobilize them to take action for our rivers and waters.

Since last year, we've seen a 67% surge in dam removal professionals seeking our training and expertise. Now there are state dam removal teams, from the Atlantic to the Pacific coasts.

Transforming the entire surface A comprehensive approach to watershed health

More than 2,000 dams have been removed nationwide since 1912, but over 500,000 still block rivers across our country. We must act swiftly to remove thousands of these barriers, bringing life back to watersheds.

This is why we've set an ambitious goal of removing 30,000 dams by 2050.

We will reach this goal by expanding our network of dam removal professionals, improving state and federal policy, and securing additional federal funding. We will also advocate for the reintroduction of legislation to support not only the removal of obsolete and dangerous dams, but the retrofitting and rehabilitation of dams that should remain in place.

Your support helps us ensure every river reaches its full potential. From the smallest tributary to the mightiest river — we focus on the health of the entire watershed, securing a bright future for the communities that depend on them.

Stay Connected

Don't miss out on news and opportunities to take action for healthy, free-flowing rivers. Sign up for our monthly e-newsletter.
[▶ AmericanRivers.org/Signup](https://AmericanRivers.org/Signup)



Ryan Hagerly

In Pennsylvania, we are spearheading the removal of 10 dams on streams crucial for brook trout and other wildlife species. Our goal is to create an interconnected stream network spanning 190 miles, providing a sanctuary to forage, spawn, and rear young.

Year of Impact

Your support creates groundbreaking impact for our country's rivers. We deeply appreciate the individuals, corporations, trusts, and foundations that donated their time, expertise, and financial support between July 1, 2023, and June 30, 2024. Together, we are creating a legacy of healthy, thriving rivers that will benefit generations to come.

Find complete financials at AmericanRivers.org/Impact2024.

REVENUE \$37,154,781

- Individuals (38%)
- Corporations (2%)
- Foundations (14%)
- Government (43%)
- Other (3%)

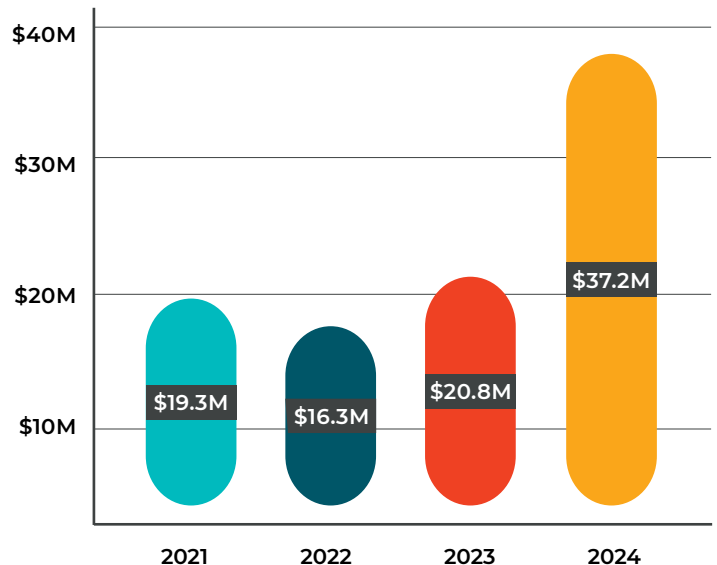


TOTAL EXPENSES: \$33,959,740

- Programs (78%)
- Fundraising (14%)
- Management & General (8%)

unaudited

Operating budget by fiscal year



MEET SPLASHY! A larger than life drop of water here to remind us about the importance of streams and wetlands. Splashy's message is simple — all water is connected, and allowing pollution anywhere threatens clean water everywhere.

► AmericanRivers.org/MeetSplashy

OUR PURPOSE

American Rivers is championing a national effort to protect and restore all rivers, from remote mountain streams to urban waterways. Healthy rivers provide people and nature with clean, abundant water and natural habitat. For 50 years, American Rivers staff, supporters, and partners have shared a common belief: Life Depends on Rivers.

American Rivers acknowledges, works with, and seeks to amplify Indigenous leadership in river protection and honors the traditional ecological knowledge and perspectives held by Indigenous People and Tribal Nations.



Members: We are here to help!
Contact us at 877-347-7550 to update your address or manage your membership preferences.



AMERICAN RIVERS

Life Depends on Rivers.™



@AmericanRivers



Grow your ripples of impact by giving monthly!

A recurring gift allows more of your contribution to go towards our life-giving rivers.

► AmericanRivers.org/Monthly

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