



Philanthropic Solutions to Ease the Water Crisis



Philanthropy
southwest

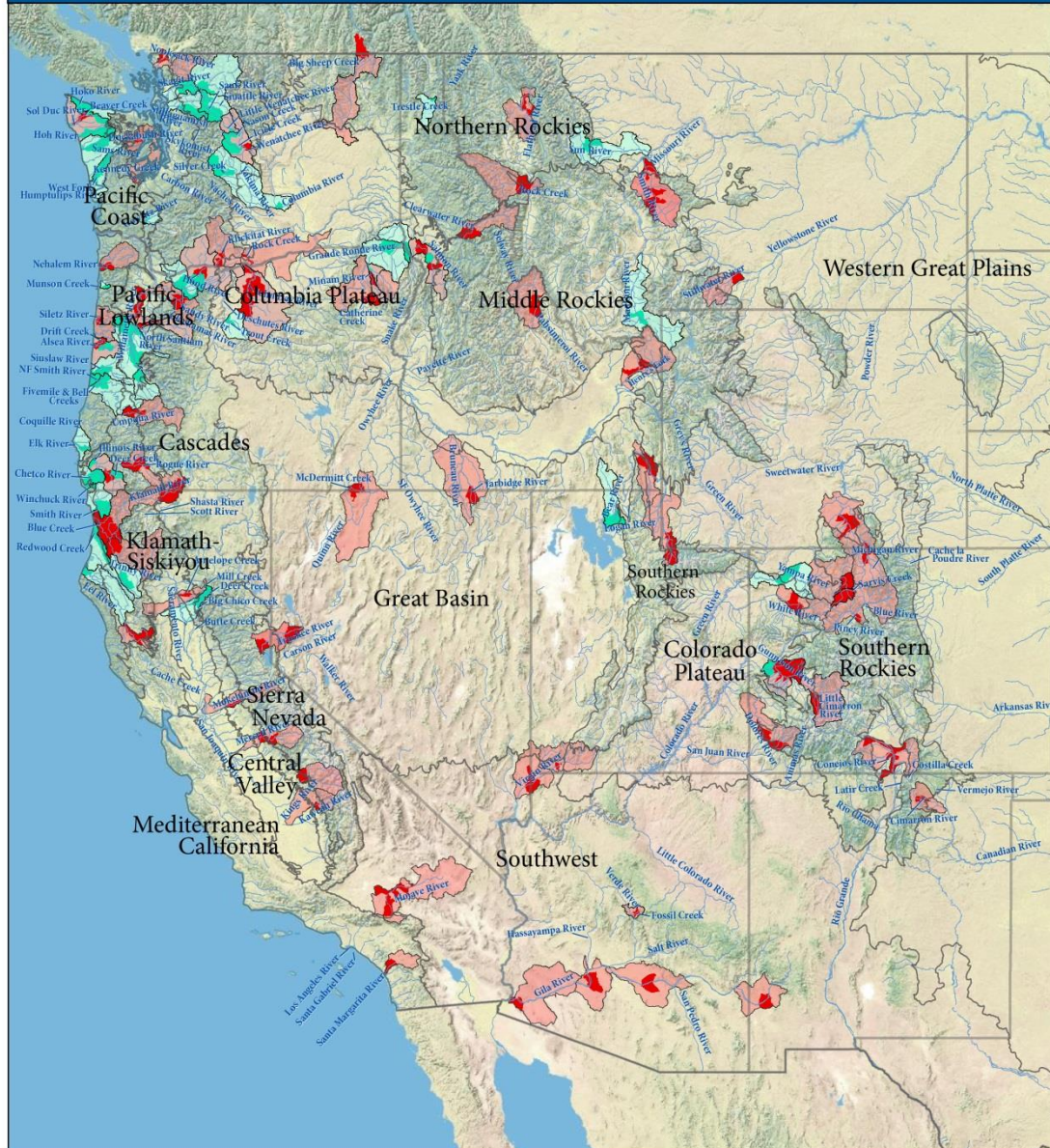


WESTERN RIVERS
CONSERVANCY

WRC Strategic Plan 2015-2020 Ten-Year Vision

Impacts to Date 10 Year Impacts

Source: US EPA Level III Ecoregions of the Continental United States; US EPA Hydrological Unit Codes Level VIII, X and XII



What can philanthropy do to ease the water crisis?

Essential Priorities

- Save the pieces.
- Protecting a healthy river system eases the water crisis in part because of the work rivers do and the ecosystem services they provide, such as drinking water supplies, agricultural production and recreational opportunities.
- The benefits of land and water conservation include improving water quality and quantity, putting more water instream, and protecting and restoring fish and wildlife habitats.





WESTERN RIVERS
CONSERVANCY

Lower Klamath River and Blue Creek Salmon Sanctuary Del Norte and Humboldt Counties, CA *A Cornerstone for Klamath River Restoration*

- In one of the earth's biodiversity hotspots, Western Rivers Conservancy is partnering with California's largest Native American tribe to create a globally important cold-water salmon sanctuary and permanently protect 73 square miles of vital wildlife habitat.
- This project is a solution for the water crisis, as it is providing a cold-water lifeline to forever protect the most recoverable runs of wild salmon in the West.
- WRC is leveraging private philanthropic support, PRIs, public funding, New Markets Tax Credits, and carbon offset sales to bring a \$65 million project to fruition.



Rio Grande, Colorado

Conserving Habitat and Reconnecting Communities to the River

- The Rio Grande flows nearly 2,000 miles from Colorado's San Juan Mountains to the Gulf of Mexico. WRC is pursuing high priority conservation properties in southern Colorado's San Luis Valley.
- The project area lies within the congressionally-designated Rio Grande Natural Area, between the Alamosa National Wildlife Refuge and New Mexico's Rio Grande Wild and Scenic River corridor.
- Western Rivers Conservancy is acquiring more than 18,000 acres of land along six miles of the Rio Grande and tributaries to enhance fish and wildlife habitats and create new compatible public access.
- WRC and partners have established an innovative approach to conservation in this southwestern ecosystem. A multi-year seven figure foundation investment awarded last month in the San Luis Valley is encouraging collaboration through project development funding, capital support, a community re-granting program, and PRIs.





Little Cimarron River

Gunnison & Montrose Counties, Colorado

Returning Flow to a Dry Reach of a Great Trout Stream



- In an innovative solution for a great trout stream that is dewatered for several months annually, WRC acquired a 214-acre property along the Little Cimarron River upstream of the Black Canyon of the Gunnison.
- By acquiring a property with very senior water rights, WRC has effectively gained control of a lifeline for the Little Cimarron.
- This project will: guarantee a perennial flow in the Little Cimarron all the way to the Black Canyon of the Gunnison; dramatically increase this priority stream's adaptability to a changing climate; and allow native Colorado cutthroat trout to re-colonize a former part of their range.
- A program-related investment and capital leveraged the reconfiguration of the water rights.
- Public funding will allow the water to be dedicated to in-stream use, when it is needed most in late summer months.
- The land will be conveyed to a private conservation buyer.

What can philanthropy do to ease the water crisis?

How Southwestern Philanthropies Can Set Priorities, Leverage Resources and Implement Systemic Solutions

- *Assess*: the importance of healthy functioning river ecosystems for recharging aquifers and other ecosystem services.
- *Partner*: with other funders and grantees to prioritize watersheds and river systems, leverage resources, and deliver stacked benefits for conservation and communities.
- *Support*: project development costs, capital needs, and interim funding through program-related investments.





Philanthropy
s o u t h w e s t



WESTERN RIVERS
CONSERVANCY