

What Philanthropists Can Do to Ease the Water Crisis

Beth Bardwell

Director of Conservation

bbardwell@Audubon.org



Audubon NEW MEXICO

Western Rivers Sustain Life As We Know It

- Provide drinking water to tens of millions of people;
- Supply water to 1 out of 5 irrigated farms;
- Support the culture of western tribes;
- Allow fish and wildlife to thrive in national wildlife refuges, recreation areas and national parks;
- Sustain the west's multi-billion dollar tourism and outdoor recreation economies; and
- If healthy, provide a front-line defense against extreme weather events in an era of climate change.



Freshwater is essential to all life but occupies a tiny fraction of the arid western landscape, less than 1% in New Mexico.

What's the Problem with Western Water?

In three words, **scarcity, over allocation and climate change.**

From a changing climate to increasing demands from cities and agriculture, we are putting tremendous pressure on our water resources and most vulnerable communities.

While water scarcity breeds conflict, it also breeds opportunities.

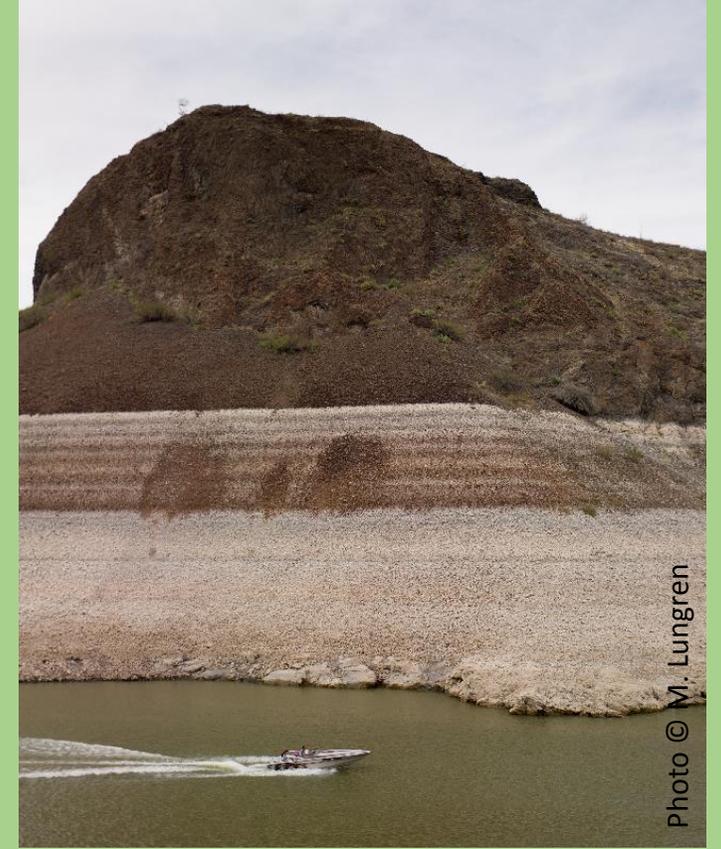


Photo © M. Lungren

People Are at the Heart of Conservation Solutions.

Audubon works to change attitudes about how we use, manage and value water.

We build collaborative partnerships to achieve conservation victories at scale.

The Audubon network delivers balanced conservation programming from backyards to classrooms, to legislatures.



Innovation & Collaboration

Audubon spearheads innovative and collaborative solutions with cities, farmers and tribes to increase water productivity, and regulatory flexibility across competing demands. Projects include:

- **environmental water transactions with farmers and Pueblos; and**
- **Modernization of outdated reservoirs.**



WATER RIGHTS FOR RESTORATION



Restoration & Protection

Audubon inspires individuals and groups to take action in their communities by creating personal connections between water, and New Mexico's cultural and natural heritage. Projects include:

- **increasing public funding for restoration;**
- **restoring riparian and wetland habitat within or adjacent to Global and State Important Bird Areas; and**
- **protecting New Mexico's rivers from more water development projects.**



Education & Empowerment

Audubon educates and empowers thousands of volunteers, citizen scientists and the next generation to make a difference. Projects include:

- K-12 science-based, environmental education in public schools;
- Summer camp and adult education programs;
- Citizen science projects that have captured bird data for over 100 years to inform conservation science; and
- Audubon's Western Rivers Action Network volunteers who advocate for sustainable water policy.



What You Can Do to Ease the Water Crisis

The threat and opportunity are now.

The scale and ambition of our freshwater conservation work needs to match the intensity of 21st century demands.

Make a commitment to include water as a priority in your funding portfolio and collaborate with your colleagues to fund for impact and scale.



“We will start to live by a new ethic that says all living things must get enough water to survive before some of us get more than enough.” - Sandra Postel

Let's Start the Conversation!

Beth Bardwell
Director of Conservation, Audubon New Mexico
bbardwell@Audubon.org; 575-418-0288

