

WINTER APPEAL ²⁰/₁₅



Sitkum River (WA), proposed for Wild and Scenic as part of Wild Olympics. Photo by Thomas O'Keefe.

American Whitewater exists to help whitewater paddlers like you protect outstanding paddling opportunities. In the coming year this will mean securing new river access sites, protecting new Wild and Scenic Rivers, and restoring flows to rivers impacted by dams. 2016 is shaping up to be ripe with challenges, but also with exciting opportunities for paddlers to affect lasting positive changes on some of our favorite rivers.

American Whitewater's small professional staff offers the paddling community an authentic and thoughtful voice wherever decisions are being made that affect whitewater rivers. We work regionally so our

staff can be part of the communities in which we work, and work side-by-side with many inspiring paddlers and clubs. Always lean and energetic, American Whitewater is poised to do some great work in 2016.

As you determine your charitable gifts for the end of the year, please consider the value that American Whitewater's work brings to you and the whitewater paddling community. We are pleased to share some of the exciting projects we see on the horizon, and would be honored to have your support.



Charity Navigator

Thanks to an organization wide effort to provide transparency and operate efficiently, Charity Navigator awarded American Whitewater with its fifth consecutive 4-star rating. Receiving four out of a possible four stars indicates that American Whitewater consistently executes its mission in a fiscally responsible way and adheres to good governance and other best practices that minimize the chance of unethical activities. Only 4% of the nonprofits Charity Navigator rates have received five consecutive 4-star evaluations, indicating that American Whitewater outperforms most other charities in America. This "exceptional" designation from Charity Navigator differentiates American Whitewater from its peers and demonstrates to the public it is worthy of their trust and support.

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Nooksack River Access (WA).
Photos by Thomas O'Keefe



Pacific Northwest

PROJECT | River Access

Over the past year American Whitewater has constructed new river access points on Canyon Creek (WA) and the Nooksack (WA), Sauk (WA), and Clackamas (OR) Rivers. We have several more access projects in the works. In 2016 we will continue our efforts to enhance opportunities for whitewater recreation by participating in planning efforts, advocating for funding that benefits river access, and rolling up our sleeves to build new access points for paddlers and all who want to just hang out and enjoy the river.

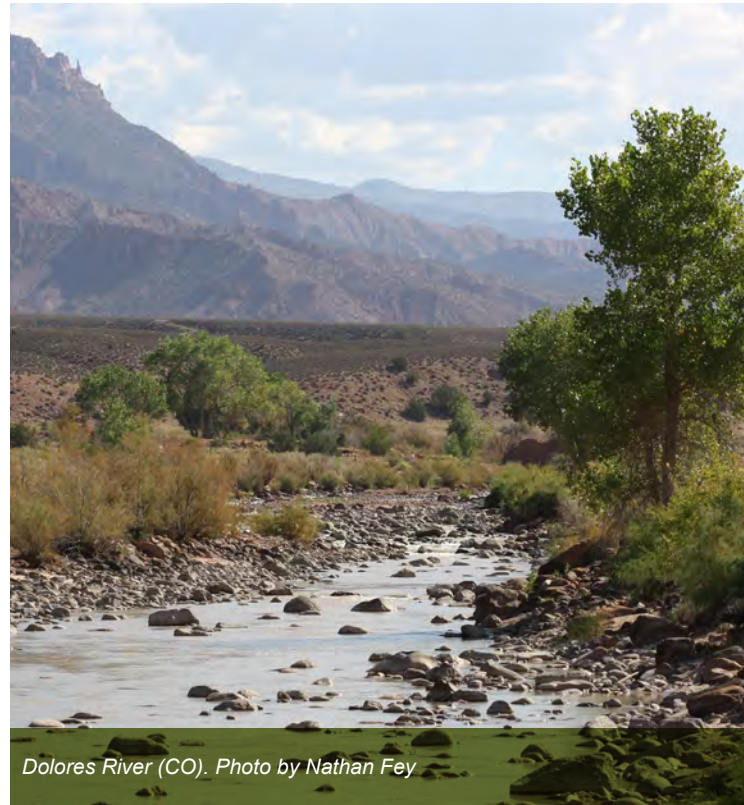
PROJECT | Wild and Scenic Rivers

One of the best tools we have to protect free-flowing rivers is the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. American Whitewater will continue our efforts to achieve permanent protection for rivers on the Olympic Peninsula in Washington, the Kalmiopsis region of Oregon, and Wild Owyhee in eastern Oregon. We will also work to craft a vision for long-term protection of the Nooksack and other rivers in the North Cascades in Washington.

Colorado

PROJECT | Statewide Water Plan

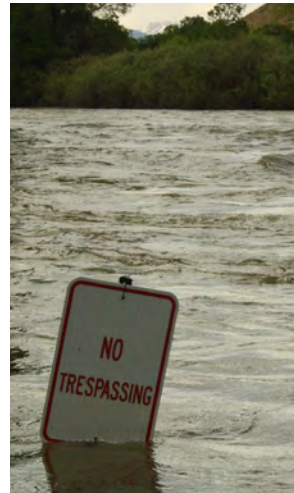
American Whitewater has worked for nine years to ensure healthy river flows on cherished and revered rivers in Colorado are protected by the first-ever state water plan. With the Colorado Water Plan finalized, our team will be working to integrate flow information into new stream management plans authorized by the State. This is a critical effort towards protecting what little water remains in the region's rivers, and restoring important recreational needs, as the push for more dams, reservoirs, and trans-mountain pipelines continues in the drought stricken West.



Dolores River (CO). Photo by Nathan Fey

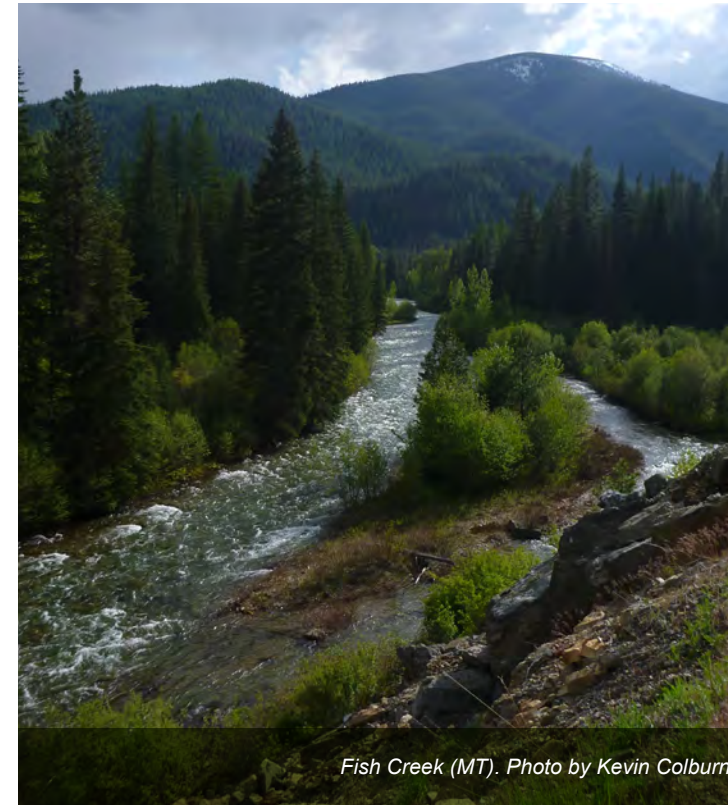
PROJECT | Colorado River Access

2016 promises to be another tense year over river access in Colorado, and American Whitewater will be working to ensure that the state doesn't further restrict the public's rights to float, like our neighboring states of Utah or New Mexico. A short-term "deal" that avoided court battles between private landowners and the paddling public expires this year, and another set of ballot initiatives or legislation is being discussed by both sides of the "Right to Float" argument. American Whitewater will continue to work with powerful political associations and interest groups to decriminalize the public's ability to fish and float Colorado's rivers.



PROJECT | Wild and Scenic

Across Colorado, hundreds of rivers are being studied for possible inclusion into the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. The State, which has its sights on new water supply projects to meet urban water supply demands, aggressively opposes these actions. American Whitewater will keep up the fight to ensure that the Wild & Scenic Rivers Act is applied fairly, and that equal protections for our rivers are achieved under state-led Wild and Scenic management alternatives.



Fish Creek (MT). Photo by Kevin Colburn

Northern Rockies

PROJECT | Montana Headwaters

Streams like Fish Creek, which flows into Alberton Gorge, are part of our coalition proposal to designate over 700 miles of new Wild and Scenic Rivers in Montana. Having laid the groundwork for the past 5 years, in 2016 we will seek the introduction and passage of Montana's first Wild and Scenic River legislation in 40 years. The result will be an outstanding network of whitewater rivers that will be forever protected from dams and other impacts!

Southeast

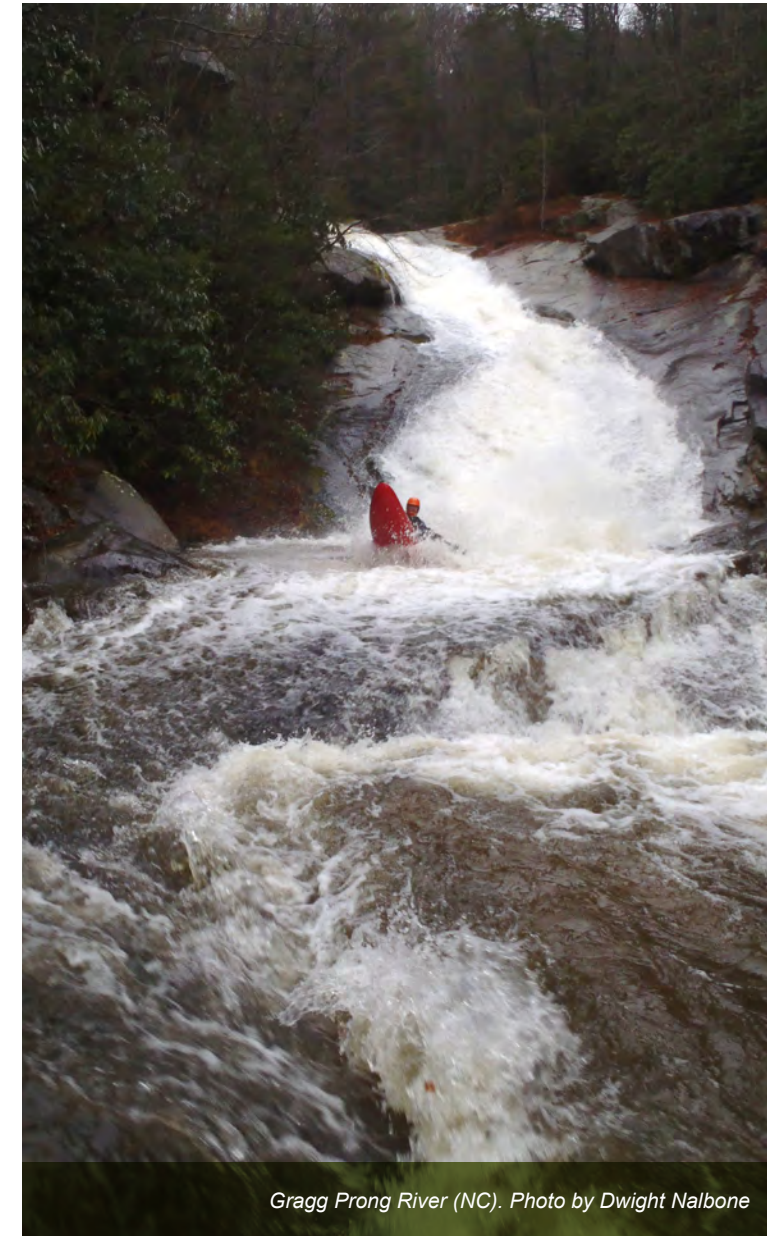
PROJECT | New Wild and Scenic Protections for North Carolina Creeks

Western North Carolina has almost 400 dams and only 3 rivers permanently protected from dams and other impacts under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. We aim to change that, and are starting by seeking interim Forest Service protections for a large suite of rivers like the Gragg Prong pictured to the right. 2016 will be the critical year for us to build the data and public support we need for new Forest Service protections. Then we'll focus on new legislation to designate some of these streams Wild and Scenic!

Mid Atlantic

PROJECT | River Access in Virginia

Paddlers gathered in 2015 to clean up the American Whitewater John's Creek river access site after a state agency determined the stream to be navigable. As paddlers become reacquainted with this awesome previously off-limits creek, new legal challenges to the right to paddle appear likely. American Whitewater is working closely with local paddlers to defend your right to float and build support for river access statewide.



Gragg Prong River (NC). Photo by Dwight Nalbene



AW John's Creek river access site (VA). Photo by Kevin Colburn



Boaters testing the waters on the Connecticut River (VT/NH) during the Bellows Falls flow study. AW is working to restore this dewatered river section.

Northeast

PROJECT | Connecticut River (MA, VT, NH)

American Whitewater will continue working to restore the Connecticut River through the relicensing of hydro projects in VT/NH/MA throughout 2016. Flow studies at Sumners Falls, Bellows Falls, and Turners Falls showed that there are new boating opportunities on the horizon for northeast paddlers once flows are restored and barriers removed.

PROJECT | Deerfield River (MA)

Kayakers, canoeists, paddle-boarders, rafters and tubers enjoy 106 chances each year to experience the Deerfield River thanks to American Whitewater's work two decades ago. Now, hydro relicensing is giving us another opportunity to improve on the boating opportunities available to northeast paddlers.

California

PROJECT | River Access in California

2015 was a big year for boating access victories in California. In addition to the opening of the Merced and Tuolumne Rivers in Yosemite National Park, we convinced California State Parks to lift their camping ban for private boaters on the Middle Fork American. Over the next year, we will be working with the California State Lands Commission to produce a guide that will outline the legal obligations of state agencies to ensure access to California's rivers.

PROJECT | Middle Yuba

After a six year relicensing effort, we are zeroing in on an agreement that will return the full flow of the Middle Yuba in wet water years. In the more than 20 dam relicensings that American Whitewater has negotiated in CA, a result that returns all of the water back to the river is unprecedented. Our goal is to finalize this agreement in 2016.



Jim Sullivan styles it on the Deerfield River (MA). AW is working to expand boating opportunities through the hydro dam license renewal process.



River Access in California. Photo by David Steindorf



Middle Yuba River (CA). Photo by David Steindorf

Support American Whitewater Today!

Our Stewardship work is possible only through your support, and your contribution plays a vital role in protecting and restoring the special rivers that you love. We are a lean and efficient organization, with 82 cents of every dollar going to directly support our river stewardship work. With your support, we will be better prepared to meet the challenges ahead.

Please consider making a year-end, tax-deductible donation to American Whitewater.
Everything you'll need is included with this letter. Thanks for your support!



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To Join or Donate by Mail
Just fill out the enclosed reply form and return it in the envelope provided.



Phone
Call us at 1.866.262.8429.