

Montanans for Healthy Rivers

is a coalition of citizens, sportsmen, business owners and conservationists working to conserve the last, best free-flowing rivers in western Montana. We are dedicated to keeping our rivers clean and free-flowing for future generations to enjoy. Our strategy combines incentive-based conservation tools for rivers flowing through private lands with new Wild and Scenic River designations for rivers flowing through public lands. We need your help and input to accomplish these goals!



We believe that now is the time to have a conversation about which rivers Montanans believe deserve permanent protection, while they are still largely intact. We want to hear from a broad cross-section of Montanans so that we can craft homegrown river protection measures that reflect the values of all Montanans.

Please join us in the conversation!

Join the Conversation!

To learn more about us and what you can do to conserve Montana's rivers for today and tomorrow, please visit us at www.healthyriversMT.org.



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*Conserving our rivers
and way of life*

Montana's Rivers

Montana is home to some of the last, best free-flowing rivers in the lower 48 states. From world famous fly-fishing and boating to the clean water used for drinking and irrigation, Montanan's lives are intertwined with their rivers. Outdoor recreation alone supports 64,000 Montana jobs and generates \$5.8 billion in consumer spending. Plus our rivers, lakes and mountains provide the kind of setting where people want to invest in jobs that are good for Montana families. Montana's rivers also sustain the state's richest fish and wildlife habitats, supporting 75% of the state's bird and mammal species for at least part of their life cycles.

But our rivers are much more than that. They represent family, community, prosperity, and then Montana way of life.

Looming Threats

As a headwaters state, Montana has what other states want – clear, cold, and relatively abundant water. Fast growing cities to our south are already reaching farther for water, and Montana soon could be in their sights.



In 2011 a Colorado developer filed for a permit to build a \$9 billion, 500-mile long water pipeline from the Green River in Wyoming to the Front Range of Colorado. These types of projects are already common in the southwest US. When combined with the threat of new hydropower projects, it's clear Montana's rivers are facing unprecedented development pressures.

Montana still has what the rest of the country wants – plentiful clean water and free-flowing streams.



Conserving Rivers on Private Lands

Funding through the **Water Resource Reform and Development Act** for:

Conservation Easements – These voluntary legal agreements give landowners a financial incentive to preserve biologically rich habitats such as floodplains, wetlands and cottonwood galleries.

River Restoration – Funding through WRRDA will help landowners eradicate invasive weeds and update irrigation infrastructure to conserve water, boost instream flows and improve fish passage.

Channel Migration Zone (CMZ) Mapping – CMZ maps predict where a river will move over time, giving landowners and communities the information they need to keep development out of harm's way.

Conserving Rivers on Public Lands

The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act – Inspired by opposition to the proposed Spruce Park Dam on the Middle Fork of the Flathead River in Montana, the federal Wild and Scenic Rivers Act is our nation's most powerful river protection tool. It prohibits harmful new dams, ensures that a river's outstanding values are safeguarded, and that water quality is maintained and enhanced. The National Wild and Scenic Rivers System currently protects more than 200 rivers and 12,000 river miles. Montana has not had a new Wild and Scenic river designated since 1976, while our neighbors in Wyoming, Idaho and Utah had nearly 1,000 miles of new Wild and Scenic rivers designated in 2009 alone. We think it's time to bring the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act home to protect our last best rivers while they're still intact.