

EAGLE RIVER WATERSHED COUNCIL



Impact Report & Highlights

2020 - Summer 2021

From Executive Director Holly Loff:

In 2020, as the world reeled and adjusted to the pandemic and the associated stay-at-home orders, fear, anxiety and boredom, many people turned to natural spaces, including rivers, for relief. The increased use of rivers caused impacts to streambanks, vegetation and more.

Our small staff of four created virtual programs and online resources to reduce these impacts. We also designed small, social-distance-friendly restoration projects and volunteer opportunities.

Now, we're living with fears surrounding low streamflows, high temperatures and the upcoming fire season. Rest assured, we are hard at work on community education and projects to address those issues, too.

Please take a look at what you helped us accomplish and see a preview of what we have coming up! And thank you for being our partner in river protection.



Holly Loff

Holly Loff
Executive Director
loff@erwc.org

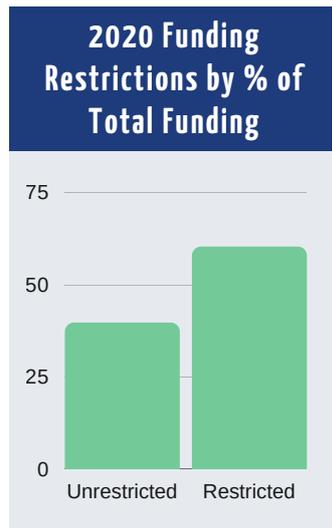
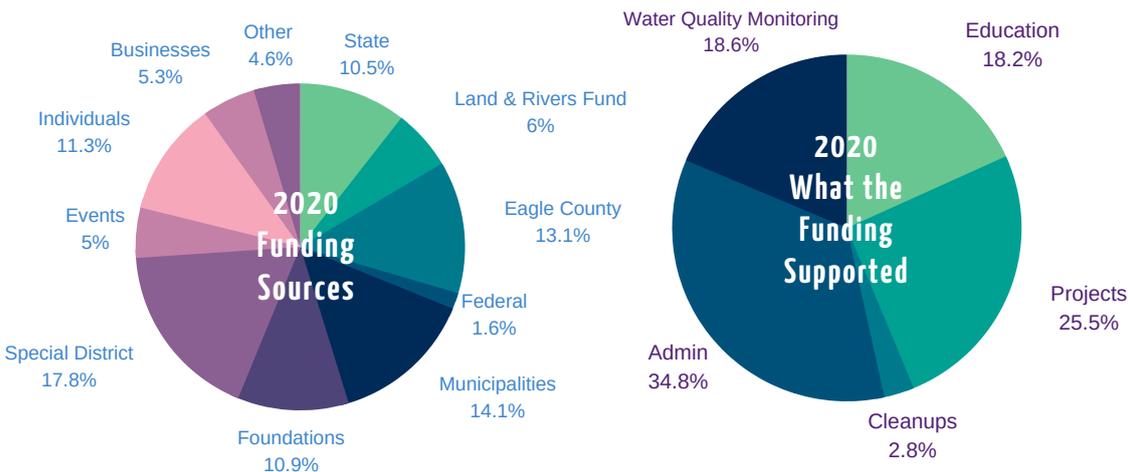
Watershed Council Board of Directors

- Tom Allender** | President
- Tom Boyd** | Vice President
- Tania Landauer** | Treasurer
- Kristin Yantis** | Secretary
- Claudia Bryan**
- Kate Burchenal**
- Allison Ebbets**
- Fritz Ganz**
- Joe Robinson**
- Josh Stepanek**
- Pete Wadden**
- Woody Woodruff**

Many thanks to current board members and to **Cliff Simonton** (previous Board Chair) and **Jacque Stevenson**, who provided valuable service as members of the Board in 2020.

Watershed Council Staff

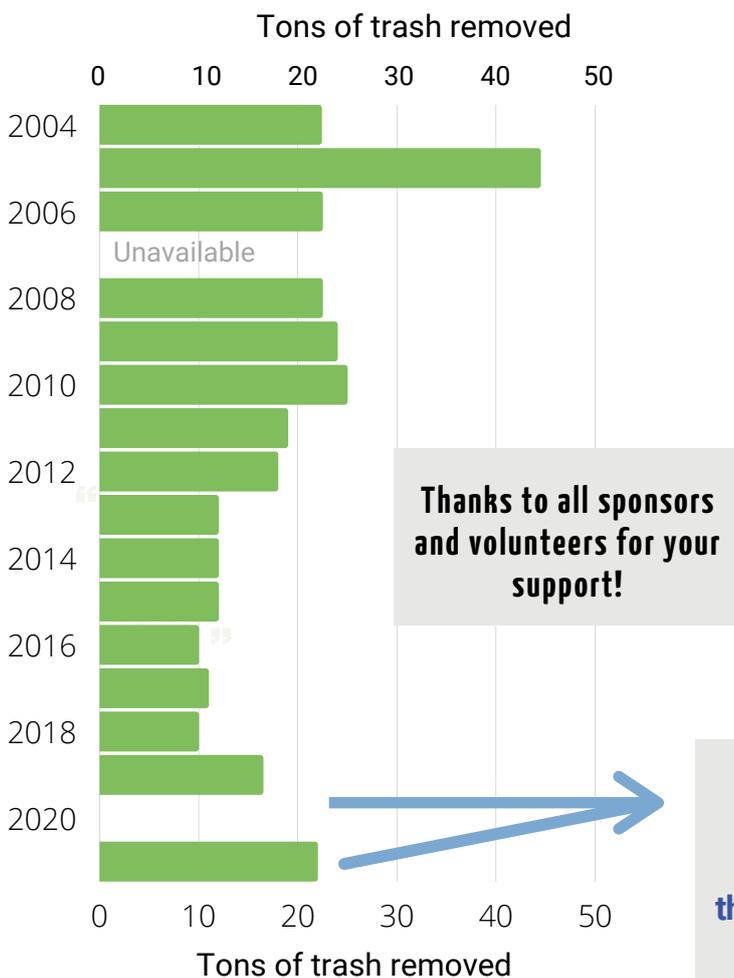
- Holly Loff** | Executive Director
loff@erwc.org
- Kate Isaacson** | Projects & Events
isaacson@erwc.org
- James Dilzell** | Education & Outreach
dilzell@erwc.org
- Melanie Smith** | Development & Communications | smith@erwc.org



WATERSHED COUNCIL INITIATIVES

Eagle River Watershed Council advocates for the health of the Upper Colorado and Eagle River watersheds through research, education and projects.

Community Pride Highway Cleanup Impact



Water Quality Monitoring Efforts

5+ Number of lab tests performed on each sample every month, testing for dissolved oxygen content, hardness, alkalinity, pH and the concentrations of certain metals.

THOUSANDS

of data points are collected and analyzed annually, providing a comprehensive understanding of water quality.

Square miles of watershed monitored.

970

FROM BOARD MEMBER KRISTIN YANTIS:

"When most people are asked about where their water comes from, 'the faucet' often is the natural response. Water is a precious natural resource and I want people to think more about where our water comes from. I wanted to join the board because "water" is one of the most important issues we face in the Western US and I want to do my part to help people better understand this valuable resource."

WATERSHED COUNCIL SUCCESSES

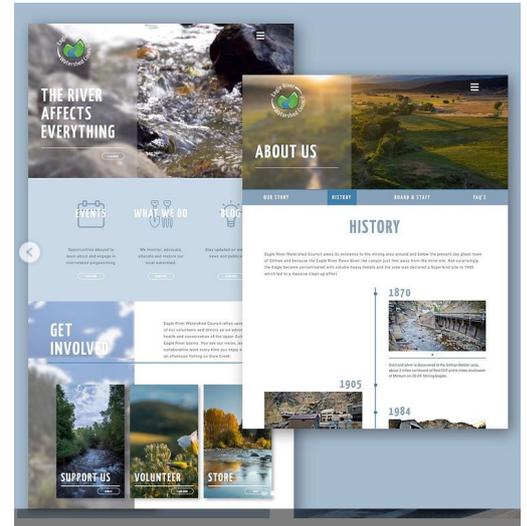
Reflecting on the accomplishments from our mission-driven work.

Access & Communications

When the world shifted in 2020, the Watershed Council board and staff recognized the role of our waterways as powerful **sources of relief** for the upheaval in our lives. We encouraged river use, but recognized the likelihood for impacts.

To ensure and promote **proper use** of our streams, we added resources to our website and prioritized **improvements** to it and to our **communications infrastructure**, unveiling a more navigable, attractive and impactful online presence as a result.

→ [Check out our revamped website at erwc.org.](https://erwc.org)



Riparian Restoration & Rehabilitation

As possible, we modified projects to coordinate **socially-distant restoration work**, as well as mitigate negative impacts of observed **increased trail and resource use** throughout the summer and fall.

Notable project efforts included:

- tree planting
- noxious weed removal
- erosion-reduction efforts
- spreading native seed
- signage installation
- GIS mapping work

Recent Tamarisk Mitigation Project Efforts

Thanks to the hard work of **25+ individuals**, a large area of invasive tamarisk spread was mitigated in a large-scale restoration project in late May 2021 **in Dotsero**. This is a large effort that will continue into the future. The project brought together Watershed Council staff and volunteers, Eagle County, BLM and USFS staff and local businesses that supported the project with food, supplies and transportation.

It is part of our **ongoing effort** to protect our local rivers from the immediate threats caused by tamarisk. **Thanks to all who helped make this event a success!**



WATERSHED COUNCIL IMPACT

Letter received in gratitude of the 2020 Community Float, a bilingual initiative that combines education, stewardship and family fun during a day on the Colorado River.

First and foremost I want to thank you for organizing the 2020 Community Float last summer. My 13 year old son Jason* and I attended the event. We were so fortunate that the weather was warm and a clear sky. As a single parent this was a wonderful experience for me and Jason. It was a great opportunity for us to bond and create a meaningful memory for Jason. He still talks about the event and how a blast he had and has asked if we could do it again.

We had the opportunity to relax, be present during the float trip, admire the beautiful scenery for the river environment and the red hawks that we saw, and learned their name. Now every time we see a red hawk it reminds us of the float trip and how much fun we had. The water splashing among floats was definitely the highlight of the event for the children...

I would have not been able to expose my son to this experience for being a financial burden and not having the skills to provide it in a safe and secure environment as the event was, we all had life jackets and the knowledgeable floating staff was very assuring. We have been talking about going fishing this summer and enrolling him in some swimming classes too.

Hope you are doing well and definitely looking forward to this summer and that all the pandemic restrictions would be lifted to enjoy the outdoors more freely.



*Names and identifying details have been altered.

WATERSHED COUNCIL PROGRAMS

Education & Outreach | Riparian Restoration Projects | Water Quality Monitoring

By the Numbers

835

Number of participants in our 2020 educational programming.

365

Number of volunteers who completed

1,072

hours of restoration work in 2020.



THANK YOU.

Your contributions make a difference.

\$15,000

Cost of plant material, delivery & crew for half-acre restoration project



\$10,000

Average operator & heavy equipment cost for 7 days

\$750

One year subscription of GIS mapping software



\$300

50-60 lodgepole & spruce saplings + 10-20 shrubs for revegetation project



\$5,000

Quarter-mile of erosion-control matting to restore ~5 acres of disturbed ground

\$100

Cost of educational handouts and brochures for event booths



Lumber & railing material costs for river access staircase

\$2,500

Rental of large tent for use at annual Eagle River Water Festival

APPRECIATE WHAT WE DO?

- Visit our website, erwc.org, and donate online.
- Set up an automatic monthly recurring donation.
- Mail a check to Eagle River Watershed Council, PO Box 1477, Gypsum, CO 81637.

UPCOMING OPPORTUNITIES

For a complete list of events, as well as the most up-to-date information, pricing and to register, please visit www.erwc.org.

We hope to see you!

| Date | Event | Description |
|------|----------------------------------|--|
| 7/22 | Hike at Homestake | Learn from experts about the unique ecology of the area, water rights, the importance of wilderness, possible future dam project and more. Space is limited. |
| TBD | Family Fly Fishing Clinic | Bilingual guides will teach basic angling skills, such as knots, river stewardship and casting at Nottingham Lake in partnership with Eagle Valley Outdoor Movement (EVOM). |
| 8/9 | Community Float | 2021 marks the 6th annual event, which is an opportunity for Spanish-speaking families to enjoy a float on the Upper Colorado in partnership with EVOM. |
| 9/2 | Bike & Learn | Enjoy a bike ride along the Glenwood Canyon Trail to the Grizzly Creek TH, where we'll learn about the impact of fire on hydrology, as well as ongoing restoration efforts. |
| 9/11 | Eagle River Cleanup | A much-loved and appreciated community tradition! Join a team and clean up a public stretch of local waterways. Don't forget to photograph your strange finds to vie for our coveted Most Unusual Trash Award! |

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