



3501 MacCorkle Ave. SE #129
Charleston, WV 25304-1419

Return Service Requested

Non-Profit Org.
US Postage Paid
Charleston, WV



HEADWATERS

Conserving and Restoring West Virginia's
Exceptional Rivers and Streams

FALL 2019

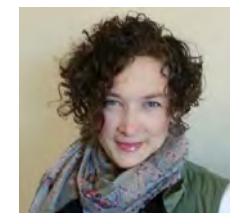
Meet the Staff

Over the last ten months, WV Rivers added three talented staff members to our team tasked with delivering WV Rivers' programs to communities across West Virginia. Together, we are excited to better serve you and the rivers and streams of West Virginia!



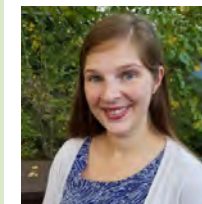
Angie Rosser, Executive Director, began her relationship with WV Rivers in 2009 as a board member. She joined the staff in 2012 as Executive Director.

Favorite River: The Elk



Myia Welsh, Program Director, joined the team in January 2019. Based in Morgantown, she helps WV Rivers' staff and programming be the best it can be.

Favorite River: Deckers Creek



Kathleen Tyner, Operations Manager, joined the WV Rivers' team in 2009 as an AmeriCorps VISTA. Today, she manages WV Rivers' operations and communications.

Favorite River: The Williams



Autumn Crowe, Staff Scientist, was raised in West Virginia and holds a BS in Environmental Protection and a MS in Soil Science from WVU. She joined the WV Rivers' staff in 2015.

Favorite River: The Greenbrier



Tanner Haid, Eastern Panhandle Field Coordinator, joined the team in May 2019. He is a proud West Virginia native and makes his home in Jefferson County.

Favorite River: The Shenandoah



Rhea Mitchell, Public Lands Coordinator, joined the staff in May 2019. Prior to joining the staff, she was a WV Rivers' volunteer in the New River Gorge area.

Favorite River: The New

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

CHAIR

Chrissy Zeltner

VICE-CHAIR

Doug Evans

SECRETARY

Ed Gertler

TREASURER

Turner Sharp

Paul Breuer

Eric Engle

Shawn Romano

David Ruediger

Rachel Tompkins

Nick Smith

Nancy Ward

Donor Spotlight: Kati Holland



Kati lives in Cabell County, WV, and is a proud WV Rivers' Paddling Partner. She gives a little each month to keep WV Rivers' mission moving forward.

"I am very passionate about water quality and keeping our state safe and clean," she shares.

"I wish I could do more hands on, but I'm **incredibly grateful that I can partner financially with WV Rivers** by making a monthly donation. I know that they are doing great work on the front lines and I appreciate their efforts immensely. It's not an easy fight and I feel honored to play even a tiny role!"

You can join Kati as a WV Rivers' Paddling Partner for as little as \$10/month. **Your monthly gift is one of the best ways to protect our wild & wonderful waters.** It's convenient, hassle-free giving that makes a real difference.

Yes! I want to help West Virginia Rivers protect our streams for recreation, wildlife and for our health and enjoyment.

I'd like to donate:

\$250 \$100 \$75 \$50 Other \$ _____

Frequency of gift: One time Monthly

I do not want to receive public acknowledgment of my donation

Printed name _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Please charge amount above to Visa OR MasterCard

Expiration Date (MM/YY) _____/_____

Credit Card Number # _____

Security Code _____

Signature _____

Date _____

You can also donate online at WVRivers.org.

Note from Our Executive Director: We Want to Hear from You!

It's been quite a year for WV Rivers. We restructured our organization for growth and are doing more than ever before for clean water. **You make this possible.**

In this edition of *Headwaters*, we take a moment to reflect on 2019's accomplishments — your accomplishments. Think of it as a mini annual report with snapshots of our programming, finances, and membership activity this year.

While it's been a challenging year for our policy goals, our movement is getting stronger. Now, we have our sights on the new year. To succeed, **we need your advice.** For WV Rivers, 2020 marks the start of a new 3-year strategic plan, and we want your feedback to help prioritize our work. **Share your thoughts with WV Rivers** in our easy and confidential survey here: surveymonkey.com/r/wrivers.

We exist to represent your interests, and we're here because you aspire for our state to be great. Please take our survey to let us know how we're doing. And enjoy reading about the work YOU helped make possible!

Thank you, Angie Rosser

Conserving and Restoring West Virginia's
Exceptional Rivers and Streams

West Virginia Rivers Coalition

3501 MacCorkle Ave. SE #129

Charleston, WV 25304

(304) 637-7201 | wvrivers.org

Find us on Facebook: [wvrivers](https://www.facebook.com/wvrivers)

Follow us on Twitter: [@OurWVRivers](https://twitter.com/OurWVRivers)



2019 Programming Snapshot

Safer Water, Healthier Streams

Safe Water for West Virginia

This year, our drinking water protection program, Safe Water for WV, helped communities update their source water protection plans to better protect their drinking water supplies. Our pilot projects focused efforts in three regions — Buckhannon, Marlinton, and the Eastern Panhandle. **We provided specific recommendations to strengthen drinking water protections to 23 water utilities.**

We've learned source water protection can't rest solely with the water utility. It's public engagement that makes our water safer. We helped people get involved by providing information and fact sheets to guide them through source water protection planning.

We also continued to build partnerships with local land trusts and watershed groups to promote land conservation around water supplies as a powerful way to permanently protect public drinking water sources.



WV Rivers Eastern Panhandle Field Coordinator, Tanner Haid, at the Berkeley County Fair.

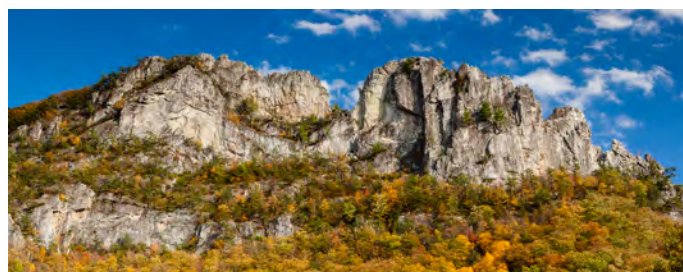
Shale Gas and Regulatory Oversight

Since the start of the shale gas boom, WV Rivers has been speaking up for our streams. Now, with the rush to build massive transmission pipelines, we ramped up our efforts. Weak regulations, lax enforcement, and negligence by construction companies building the pipelines are threatening to harm our streams. So far, we've fended off stream crossings by pipelines — the most dangerous stage of construction for our water — by demanding regulatory agencies enforce existing rules forcing pipeline companies to comply with permit conditions. But now, pipeline companies are pressing hard to start in-stream construction.

We know that WVDEP doesn't have the resources in place to make sure our streams aren't degraded. That's why it's up to WV Rivers and our oversight program to be fierce watchdogs for our streams. Here's a snapshot of what we've done during the past ten months:

- Supported 185 volunteer water quality monitors at 552 locations.
- Submitted 77 pollution reports to WVDEP from our volunteers.
- **Helped people submit 1,536 public comments on shale gas related permits.**
- Held a monitoring blitz along the Mountain Valley Pipeline with 57 potential violations reported to the WVDEP.
- Hosted a tour of pipeline construction with the Indian Creek Watershed Association for members of the WV Legislature.
- Published a report with Trout Unlimited on water quality violations from pipeline construction in 2019, find it here: wvrivers.org/resources/publications.

Public Lands and Headwater Streams



Seneca Rocks by Kent Mason

Healthy headwater streams begin on wild public lands. That's why advocating for policies that benefit public lands is such an important part of WV Rivers' work. This year, our West Virginians for Public Lands campaign had a big win when **Congress permanently reauthorized the Land & Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)**, an important program that pays for public lands acquisition and maintenance. All five of WV's congressional delegation voted in favor of LWCF!

Now through the end of the year, we need your help to ask WV's congressional delegation to allocate the full funding the program deserves. You can take action here: wvrivers.org/our-programs/public-lands/lwcf.

WV Rivers' Members Getting it Done for Our Water

So far this year, WV Rivers provided citizen advocates **22 advocacy campaigns** to raise their voices. Our network of **8,879 citizen advocates took action over 45,500 times** through our alerts!

That's 110% more actions than last year. It shows that West Virginians care about science-based environmental policy. And our movement is growing.



Water Policy

Water advocates joined together for a press conference on West Virginia's water

Water Quality Standards: After an intense legislative session in which legislators flip-flopped on whether to update limits for toxins most dangerous to human health, they chose to maintain the status quo. But because of the advocacy of WV Rivers members, the legislature set a firm deadline of April 2020 for WVDEP to propose new human health criteria limits.

October 1, 2019 marked the deadline for the public to submit proposals to WVDEP on human health criteria. WV Rivers submitted a proposal with four recommendations that ensure updated limits are based on sound science and provide stronger protections for our health. Learn more here: wvrivers.org/2019/10/wqsupdate.

Now, we are reviewing industry recommendations to WVDEP. **We will expose efforts to weaken water quality standards** that make it easier for industry to release more toxins and cancer-causing chemicals into our water. We'll need your help at public meetings and comment opportunities to tell WVDEP how to move forward.



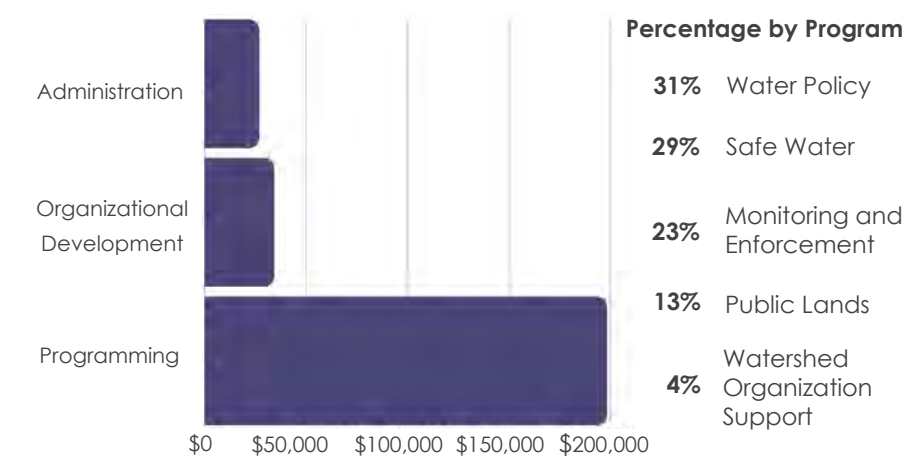
Climate Change: This year, we launched a new campaign — organizing action on climate change. As a headwater state, we're especially vulnerable to the effects of climate change like flooding, drought, and rising temperatures which threaten trout streams. That's why we're providing public education and resources on the realities of climate change, and the need for action. **We made 8 visits to West Virginia's congressional members** to discuss climate solutions. So far, 920 citizens and 91 organizations have joined us in this call to action. Learn more: wvrivers.org/climate.

Biological Assessment Rule: We helped **273 citizens submit comments** on a proposed WVDEP rule that determines whether a stream meets the state's water quality standards based on the aquatic life living in it. WVDEP proposed using a less accurate system to quantify stream health; we encouraged WVDEP to adopt a more precise method. We are waiting to see if WVDEP adopts our recommendations.

Ohio River Protections: We advocated for the Ohio River to receive the protections it deserves from its governing body, ORSANCO. After ORSANCO proposed to abandon uniform pollution limits for Ohio, we organized **773 public comments**. This fall, ORSANCO agreed to keep the pollution standards in place! Still, we will need to be vigilant to see if, and how, the standards are implemented.

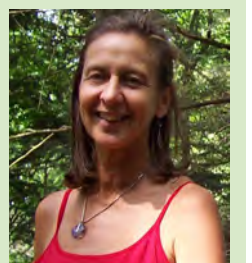
2019 Financial Snapshot: January - October 2019

You trust WV Rivers to be a good steward of your donations and we don't take that responsibility lightly. Here's how we put your donations to work.



Activist Spotlight: Debbie Naeter

Debbie Naeter lives in Greenbrier Co. and is a dedicated activist.



She responds to each of WV Rivers' action alerts, making her voice heard on important decisions about our water.

Debbie shares,

"WV Rivers' action alerts are how I stay informed. I feel like there's not a lot I can do, but if I can send comments through action alerts, that's one way I can affect change."