



WEST VIRGINIA RIVERS

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

Return Service Requested

US Postage Paid
Charleston, WV



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

CHAIR

Chrissy Zeltner

VICE-CHAIR

Rachel Tompkins

SECRETARY

Ed Gertler

TREASURER

Turner Sharp

**Paul Breuer, Eric Engle,
Doug Evans, Shawn
Romano, David Ruediger,
Mike Sawyer, Nick Smith,
Nancy Ward**

STAFF

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Angie Rosser

PROGRAM DIRECTOR

Myia Welsh

OPERATIONS MANAGER

Kathleen Tyner

STAFF SCIENTIST

Autumn Crowe

FIELD COORDINATOR

Tanner Haid

CAMPAIGNS COORDINATOR

Sarah Cross

HEADWATERS

Conserving and Restoring West Virginia's Exceptional Rivers and Streams

Congress Passes Historic Public Lands Funding Bill WV's Congressional Delegation Provides Key Leadership

It's time to celebrate! In late July, Congress passed the Great American Outdoors Act. Enjoying broad bipartisan support, the Act should quickly be signed into law by the President.

The Great American Outdoors Act is vitally important to making sure the public lands we turn to are accessible, maintained, and managed in a way that promotes environmental integrity. One of the highlights of the Act is the permanent and full program funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF).

Here in West Virginia, our outdoor recreation economy depends on LWCF. Known as one of America's most successful conservation programs, LWCF supports the development of recreation and conservation projects on federal, state, and local public lands. The Great American Outdoors Act also begins to address the maintenance backlog plaguing our public lands, providing funding for repairs to roads, trails, recreation sites, bridges, buildings, and water systems.

This victory couldn't come at a better time. More and more Americans are turning to our public lands to find their happy place during the COVID-19 pandemic and outdoor recreation is an activity folks can participate in while keeping their communities safe.

Through our coordination of the West Virginians for Public Lands Alliance, we've advocated for full LWCF funding since 2015!

Over the last 5-years, thousands of West Virginians called on West Virginia's members of Congress asking them to make public lands a priority and our legwork paid off. We're especially grateful to Senator Manchin for his leadership on introducing the Great American Outdoors Act and garnering its bipartisan support. Join us in thanking West Virginia's members of Congress who voted for the Great American Outdoor Act: wvrivers.org/2020/07/gaoavictory.

Note from our Executive Director

Whew, what a year 2020 is turning out to be! And I'm finding in this moment I've never been prouder to be a part of this organization. We are keeping our operations and advocacy strong through major social and economic disruption.



We're learning new ways to be creative in our program delivery and deepening our understanding of the intersections of equity and justice in our work.

We do all of this appreciating that we are part of a big community that loves rivers and cares for each other. Thank you, for being there for us, for each other, and for the rivers!

Thank you, Angie Rosser

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:

☐ \$25 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$250 ☐ 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.

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)



Water Quality Standards: WVDEP Proposal Heads to Legislature

Soon the WVDEP will file their latest proposed water quality standards rule to address human health criteria. Now, you might think you are experiencing déjà vu. We've been talking about human health criteria updates since the spring of 2018 when the WVDEP began the triennial review, a process that occurs every three years where water quality standards are revised. See a timeline here: wvrivers.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/wqs.jpg.

Time and time again these important updates have been delayed because of push back from the WV Manufacturers Association, an industry group that represents the chemical industry.



Angie Rosser provides testimony to WVDEP on human health criteria.

What's the problem? Water quality standards are highly technical, but to summarize this issue in the simplest terms: EPA recommends WVDEP update limits on 94 toxins within our water quality standards, known as human health criteria – some strengthen limits, some weaken limits. It's WV Rivers' position that no toxin limit should be weakened. In WVDEP's newly revised water quality standards rule, it is only choosing to update limits for 24 toxins – 13 of which would be weakened. Additionally, after three years of study and public comment, WVDEP now recommends the development of a "workgroup" to study the remaining toxins.

As disappointing as this proposal is, it's important to remember that it is the West Virginia Legislature that will determine the final water quality standards rule. The Senators and Delegates elected in November will be the deciders on what happens to human health protections in water quality standards. Make sure you vote!

Keeping Connected to Your Watershed During Social Distancing

Watershed organizations are vitally important to improving the water quality and health of streams across West Virginia. These grassroots efforts are largely volunteer driven and have limited capacity. That's why WV Rivers, in partnership with the WVDEP, provides training and resources through our Watershed Organization Capacity Building Program.

Recently, we teamed up with River Network to offer a webinar on how watershed organizations can get creative to engage with members during these unprecedented times. We shared tips on how to host online and virtual events; and conduct outreach and education activities all while keeping everyone safe, healthy, and socially-distant. Learn more about resources for watershed organizations and find a watershed group in your community here: wvrivers.org/resources/watershed.



Addressing Septic Problems Through Partnership

Failing septic tanks are one of the biggest stream impairment culprits. The leaking and discharge of waste introduces fecal coliform bacteria into streams. In West Virginia, fecal coliform bacteria is one of the most common types of pollution. This spring WV Rivers teamed up with the Eastern Panhandle Conservation District to provide septic pumping in the Elks Run watershed in Jefferson County.

Through this special project, free septic pumping was available for 22 residents within the Elks Run Watershed. Septic pumping is a priority conservation practice identified in both the Harpers Ferry Source Water Protection Plan and the Elks Run Watershed Based Plan. Learn more: wvrivers.org/2020/07/septic.

Atlantic Coast Pipeline Canceled and New Report on Pipelines



Atlantic Coast Pipeline construction in Upshur County. Photo by April Keating.

In early July, the 600-mile Atlantic Coast Pipeline (ACP) was abandoned by its developers citing increased costs and ongoing delays.

While we are glad much of the pipeline did not get built in the reckless manner we feared, it's regrettable West Virginia's lands and waters have already experienced impacts from the construction of the project to date.

So what happens now? There is still a lot we don't know, but we do know that ACP should be beholden to their stormwater permit requirement to stabilize the areas they've already developed. We're watching to see what happens next, but there are a couple scenarios that might happen: ACP might be forced to remove the abandoned pipe and reclaim the area; or another company may decide to try to finish what they started. Either way, we all need to stay vigilant to ensure that our rivers and streams are not further degraded by this project. Our oversight efforts also continue working to minimize damage to rivers and streams from the construction of the Mountain Valley Pipeline. Read our full coverage on this news and a new report on pipeline stream crossings: wvrivers.org/2020/07/acp-4.

Climate and Water Webinars Shine a Spotlight on WV Researchers

West Virginia is home to some of the researchers on the frontlines of the climate crisis. This summer, WV Rivers highlighted a few of the scientists whose contributions are helping our state and nation prepare for the future. You can learn more about climate change in West Virginia and watch recordings of our Climate and Water Webinar Series here: wvrivers.org/climate.

Meet The Researchers



Dr. Nicolas Zégre is the Director of the Mountain Hydrology Laboratory at WVU. Dr. Zégre is an expert on climate change impacts on water security in West Virginia.



Dr. Georgiana Logan is an assistant professor of health science and a research associate for the Minority Health Institute at Marshall University. Dr. Logan studies the intersection of climate, public health, and environmental justice.

Dr. Omar Abdul Aziz is an associate professor of Civil and Environmental Engineering at WVU. Dr. Aziz is leading the way on modeling climate impacts on freshwater flooding in coastal areas.



Dr. Than Hitt is a fish biologist with the USGS Leetown Science Center in Kearneysville WV. Dr. Hitt conducts research on trout populations and community ecology in Appalachia.

