

2017 Accomplishments

To protect and restore Oregon's rivers, groundwaters and wetlands in 2017, WaterWatch:



Worked closely with partners to secure two critical state protections for the pristine **North Fork Smith River** and headwater streams in southern Oregon: rules essentially limiting water uses to instream uses and protecting existing water quality by establishing the river as Oregon's first ever Outstanding Natural Resource Water under the Clean Water Act. The North Fork Smith is arguably the most pristine river in the Lower 48. These state protections are critical for conserving the instream uses of these waters—a need that has been highlighted by a large proposed nickel strip mine in the river's headwaters.



Secured a major victory for the renowned **McKenzie River** from the Oregon Court of Appeals. A private concern, Willamette Water Company, sought to lock up 34 cubic feet per second (22 million gallons per day) from the river but lacked plans for use of the water. WaterWatch's appellate court victory protects streamflows in the McKenzie and prevents water speculation across Oregon.



Challenged unsustainable **groundwater** permitting decisions and policies in the **Malheur** region and across Oregon to protect groundwater dependent ecosystems, prevent harm to Oregon's communities, and secure a water future resilient to the effects of climate change. Groundwater provides cold, clean water for many rivers and wetlands. WaterWatch also worked with the media and elected leaders to daylight unsustainable groundwater policies and advocate for science driven groundwater decisions.



Helped secure the first new **state scenic waterways** in thirty years on reaches of the **Molalla and Chetco Rivers**. Efforts are continuing with partners to ensure follow through on the Governor's commitment to study three new rivers per biennium. Now Oregon is considering possible designations on the Nehalem, South Umpqua and North Santiam rivers.

2017 Accomplishments Cont'd

To protect and restore Oregon's rivers, groundwaters and wetlands in 2017, WaterWatch:



Successfully blocked dozens of water bills in the **2017 legislative session** that would have harmed Oregon's rivers and streams. WaterWatch fought off an attempt by cities to eliminate protections for fish that apply to development of old water permits, including a harmful provision that would have had dire consequences for salmon and steelhead in the West Fork of the Hood River. Also, as part of a multi-session coalition effort involving many partners, WaterWatch helped support final passage of **Suction Dredge Mining Reform**, preventing harmful suction dredge mining in salmon habitat. We continued our multi-year campaign to ensure water use measurement and reporting statewide. WaterWatch and partners also secured critical funding for the instream flow program at the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife.



Continued to build a global settlement to protect the lower **Chetco River** from excessive water development. WaterWatch and local water providers are close to negotiating a result that will meet future municipal demands but prevent new water development that would impair the streamflows needed by prized salmon and steelhead runs on the Chetco.



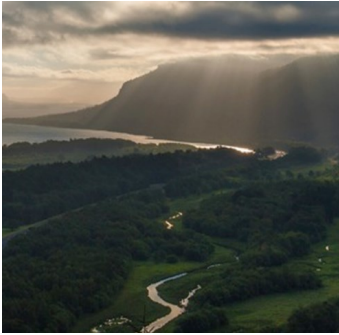
Fought for **fish passage** by advocating for full and faithful enforcement of Oregon's fish passage laws against numerous requests for waivers, exceptions and exemptions to fish **passage standards** at multiple dams and other artificial obstructions in streams and rivers. WaterWatch seeks to require full fish passage more often.



Challenged a state decision in the **Powder River Basin** that failed to convert an old, unused hydroelectric water right to an instream water right on a tributary to the **Powder River** in eastern Oregon. WaterWatch asserts that the law requires the water right to be converted to an instream water right since the power plant shut down. Oregon Water Resources wants to resurrect the old water right for a proposed new power plant. The case is now pending at the Oregon Court of Appeals.

2017 Accomplishments Cont'd

To protect and restore Oregon's rivers, groundwaters and wetlands in 2017, WaterWatch:



Remained the only group watchdogging all decisions of the Oregon Water Resources Department across the state. WaterWatch influenced or challenged those with significant water policy or ecological impacts. This work protects and restores streamflows, helps obtain **good government, science based water decisions**, and secures the **balanced water policies** Oregon so desperately needs in this time of recurring drought and a changing climate.

Additional 2017 Accomplishments By Basin



In the **Klamath Basin**, WaterWatch led a coalition to bring public attention to the ongoing disastrous neglect of the internationally significant **Klamath Basin National Wildlife Refuges** and reform the Department of Interior's mismanagement of refuge lands and waters. WaterWatch and conservation allies filed litigation in federal court against the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for failure to follow federal law in the creation of Comprehensive Conservation Plans for the Klamath refuges. WaterWatch's work for these refuges was highlighted in a major three-part series on Oregon Public Broadcasting.



In the **Deschutes Basin**, WaterWatch is advocating for proper implementation of the Federal **Crooked River Act** to ensure that roughly 80,000 acre feet of water behind Bowman Dam is allocated to downstream fish and wildlife and protected once released below the dam. Once protected, this water will restore streamflows in the 72 mile reach of the Crooked River between Bowman Dam and Lake Billy Chinook. WaterWatch also took critical steps to protect this water for fish by advocating to stop five new water storage projects proposed upstream of Bowman Dam that would rob flows needed by downstream fish.

2017 Accomplishments Cont'd

Protecting and Restoring Streamflows and Rivers



In the **Umatilla Basin**, WaterWatch and partners challenged efforts by a massive new dairy operation to obtain water and build operations that would have a substantial impact on already impaired aquifers in the Umatilla Basin.



In the **Willamette Basin**, WaterWatch advocated to secure fish and wildlife an adequate share of 1.6 million acre feet of water stored in 13 Army Corps of Engineers reservoirs including Detroit Reservoir on the **North Santiam River** and Cougar Reservoir on the **South Fork of the McKenzie River**. WaterWatch also prepared to challenge a proposed new 70-foot in-channel dam on **Drift Creek**, a tributary to the **Pudding River**, which would flood out twelve family farms and store water to irrigate land that already has water rights. Drift Creek provides habitat for coho salmon, cutthroat trout, and a possibility for wild winter run steelhead which are on the brink of extinction in the Willamette River above Willamette Falls.



You made these accomplishments possible. We wouldn't be able to celebrate these successes without your support.

THANK YOU!

