



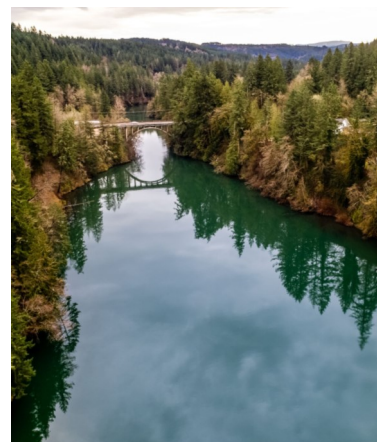
## 2019 Accomplishments

**State Scenic Waterways:** WaterWatch and other conservation allies worked successfully to secure the designation of roughly 17 miles of the Nehalem River on Oregon's North Coast as Oregon's newest state scenic waterway. That reach of the Nehalem - and the streamflows needed to fulfill its scenic waterway status - will now be protected for public enjoyment and fish and wildlife now and into the future.



**Drift Creek, Willamette Basin:** WaterWatch, along with farmers whose lands would be flooded out and taken by eminent domain, successfully challenged a permit for a proposed 70 foot tall channel spanning dam on Drift Creek, a tributary to the Pudding River that the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife still considers habitat for threatened steelhead but also supports cut-throat trout, lamprey and other salmon. The 12,000 acre foot water storage dam proposal did not include fish passage.

**Clackamas River:** Since 2008, WaterWatch has served as a critical watchdog and legal backstop as City of Lake Oswego and other municipalities have sought entitlements to withdraw almost half of the dry season flow of the Lower Clackamas River, thus further imperiling four runs of salmon and steelhead that use the Lower Clackamas. Although WaterWatch previously won these cases at the Oregon Court of Appeals, the Oregon Water Resources Department again approved the diversions without protecting the water needs of these fish. WaterWatch has taken the matters back to the Court of Appeals where we just filed an opening brief. This and other ongoing efforts will be crucial to ensuring the future viability of salmon and steelhead in the Clackamas.



**North Umpqua River - Winchester Dam:** WaterWatch is leading a 20-member coalition of conservationists and fishing groups working to systematically eliminate Winchester Dam's impacts on the North Umpqua River's prized salmon and steelhead runs. After successfully petitioning the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife to list the dam among the highest fish passage priorities in the state, we are pressing state and federal authorities to address the significant and longstanding fish passage, public safety, and water quality issues at this dam.



Photo: Scott Wright, River Design Group

**Lake Abert:** Lake Abert – Oregon’s only hypersaline lake – is a natural jewel in peril. The lake supports critical food for migratory birds, including some of the nation’s largest populations of eared grebes and Wilson’s Phalaropes. WaterWatch is promoting wider recognition of the ecological importance of the lake. We also challenged some upstream water permitting on the Chewaucan River that reduces inflows to the lake. Our goals are to encourage problem solving that will increase much needed inflows to the lake and better long-term resilience of the lake.



**Willamette Basin:** WaterWatch continues to be the central conservation participant in a “once in a generation” process to allocate fairly 1.6 million acre feet of water storage space from 13 Army Corps of Engineers reservoirs in the Willamette Basin. Right now, the Corps’ plan will jeopardize chinook and steelhead. WaterWatch has advocated that a larger share of allocated water go to fish and wildlife. In January, we, along with other conservation groups, formally asked the Corps to set aside their plan and develop a new one. We are currently developing legal and political strategies in response to the Corps’ agency review of their plan.

**Oregon Legislature:** The 2019 Oregon Legislative session was one of the most politically—and emotionally—divided sessions in recent memory. Still, WaterWatch successfully blocked and helped amend dozens of bills that would have rolled back protections for rivers and streams. We also successfully worked to increase funding for agencies—notably the water program at Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife—and increased staff and funding to conduct groundwater research and work.



**Place Based Planning:** WaterWatch is participating closely in two basin collaborative water planning efforts in the Lower John Day and Harney/Malheur Lakes regions. These planning efforts are to consider future instream and out of stream water needs and follow state law. In both processes, WaterWatch is serving in a leadership role on ecological and instream issues. In the Harney process, we are involved in developing innovative “first of their kind” in Oregon solutions for groundwater problems in the region caused by over pumping of aquifers that affects residential well owners, farmers, streams and wetlands.

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Protecting Natural Flows In Oregon Rivers

## Looking Forward to 2020

**Governor's Water Vision:** Governor Kate Brown is rolling out a 100-Year Water Vision for Oregon. WatchWatch will push the Governor and relevant agencies and stakeholders to ensure that the planning, funding, governance and implementation of the Vision are fair, ecologically appropriate and begin to right historic wrongs visited upon people and Oregon's waters and species.

**The Deschutes River Basin/Upper Deschutes and Crooked Rivers:** Some 11 years in the making, the Deschutes Basin Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) was released for public comment in October 2019. The HCP falls short of providing healthy flows for the Upper Deschutes and Crooked River that would protect endangered species such as the Oregon Spotted Frog. In 2020, WaterWatch and partners will continue to advocate for the water needed to begin to restore these rivers and prevent further harm to imperiled species in the basin.

**Groundwater Reform:** Groundwater is essential to Oregon's resilience to climate change. Aquifers provide cold, clean water for streams, wetlands and people. In 2020, WaterWatch will continue its groundbreaking advocacy for groundwater policies and agency practices that treat groundwater like the precious resource that it is – for people and for fish and wildlife.

**Oregon Legislature:** Though it's a short session in 2020, WaterWatch will be advocating for additional agency capacity to protect and restore streamflows across Oregon while also working to defeat bills that would harm rivers or promote poor water policies.

**Dam Removal:** 2020 will be a year of significant developments in WaterWatch's campaign to remove obsolete, fish killing dams from Oregon's rivers and streams. Stay tuned!



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