



# CLEAN WATER HEALTHY FISH THRIVING COMMUNITIES



At Trout Unlimited, “infrastructure” means fixing rivers.

Thanks to more than \$230 million in federal investments, we are scaling up our efforts to restore rivers and streams, recover fisheries, and make communities healthier and economically stronger.

We are restoring and reconnecting rivers on national forests, Bureau of Land Management holdings and other key landscapes alongside the Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, NOAA, the Bureau of Reclamation, and our partners – from tribes, farmers, ranchers and landowners to local communities, state and local governments, and conservation allies.

Our approach translates into cleaner water, healthier fisheries, and thriving local economies. We help towns recover from wildfires and floods. We help farmers improve operations and look after rivers running across their land. This work creates family-wage jobs for our restoration crews and the local contractors who work with us, many of them in rural communities.

With these historic investments in conservation, we are working at a scale that matches the challenges America’s rivers, fisheries and communities face.

# TROUT UNLIMITED PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS: COLORADO

## TELLURIDE VALLEY FLOOR:

Trout Unlimited is partnering with the Forest Service to tackle a \$2.6 million revegetation project on the Telluride Valley Floor where the EPA previously removed 60,000 cubic yards of hazardous mine tailings. The project site is comprised of stream and floodplain habitats on National Forest System (NFS) lands of the San Miguel River, with year-round recreational use. TU's project site is bracketed by 600 acres of Town of Telluride Open Space lands, which protects river and wetland habitat in perpetuity. The project is part of the broader ongoing river restoration and revegetation work in which TU and partners will restore 3,200 linear feet of the San Miguel River and upwards of 16-acres of riparian habitat restoration.

In 2024, the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forests, in partnership with Trout Unlimited, continued this work by replacing the Boomerang Bridge over the Telluride Valley Floor. Formerly, Boomerang Bridge was comprised of an old railcar and rotting timbers, which required the Forest Service to decommission the bridge for safety concerns. The nexus for Trout Unlimited in reconstructing the bridge through a Forest Service partnership was tripling the flow capacity and eliminating the historic flow constriction at the feature. In August 2025, TU plans to initiate a stream restoration project to continue this work.

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## MIDDLE COLORADO RIVER AGRICULTURE COLLABORATIVE:

Colorado Trout Unlimited and Trout Unlimited are working with the Meadow Creek Ranch and the Roseman Ditch Company through an ongoing "umbrella" project called the Middle Colorado River Agriculture Collaborative. The five unique projects will reconnect five miles of Elk Creek to the Colorado River by upgrading, relocating or combining irrigation diversion structures. Upgraded or removed structures will enable fish passage by building rock ramps over diversions and increase irrigation diversion efficiency thereby enabling voluntary bypass flows. The Bureau of Reclamation is funding \$3 million of the \$4.62 million project (Colorado Water Conservation Board \$1.5 million and the Colorado River District \$120,000). These projects are all currently under construction and expected to be complete by April 1, 2025.

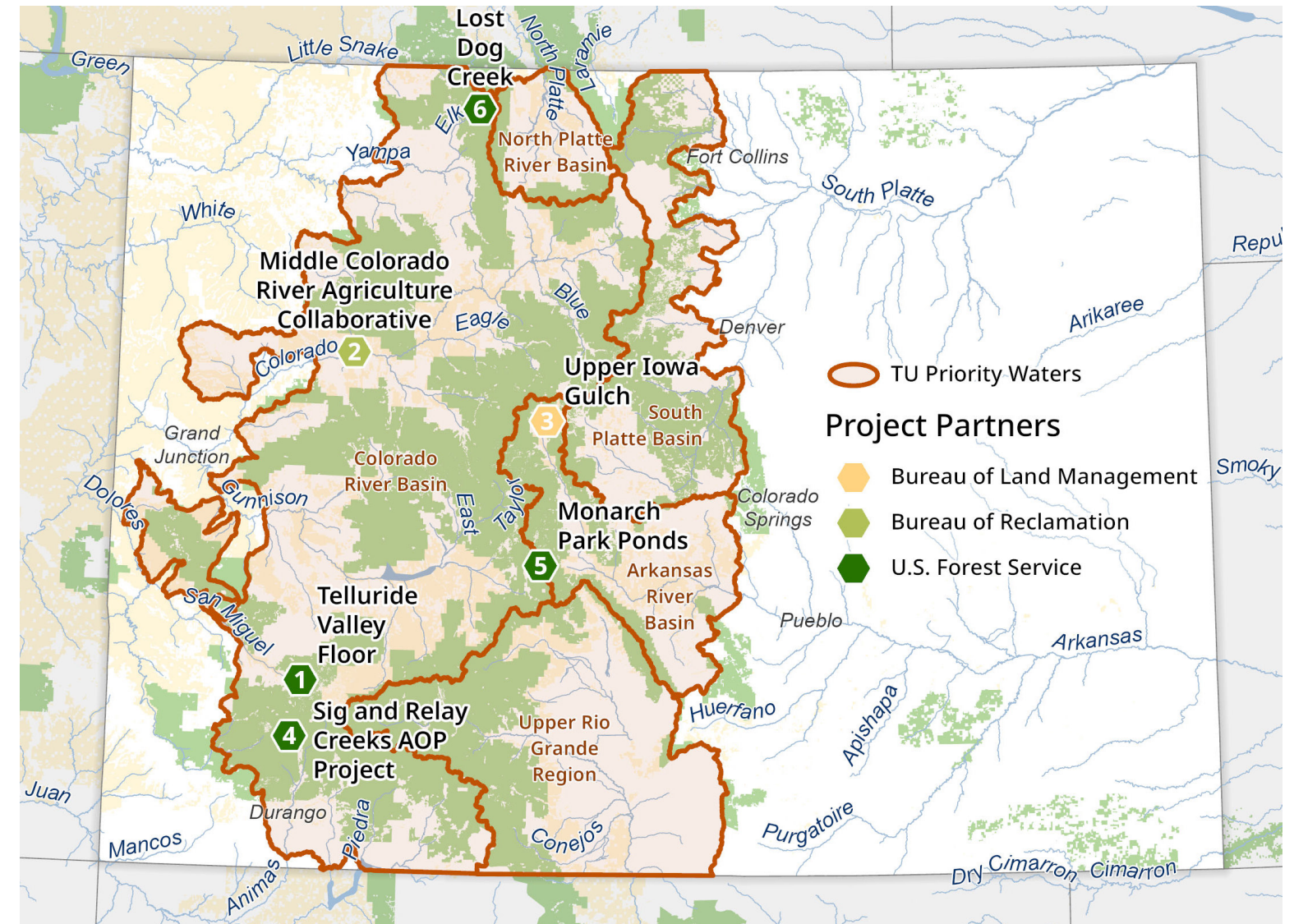
## LOST DOG CREEK:

The Lost Dog Creek Project in Medicine Bow-Routt National Forest helps protect 7.3 miles of native Colorado River cutthroat trout habitat by constructing two fish barriers to prevent non-native brook trout from entering the stream. This project also prevents damage to Forest Service Road 433 from future flooding.

The \$123,000 project, which stimulated the local economy by employing a local woman-owned contractor, is part of a five-year national agreement between the Forest Service and Trout Unlimited funded through the Legacy Roads and Trails program.

*My relationship as a contractor with Trout Unlimited has been a great experience. I see the dedication of their personnel to improving not only fish and aquatic species habitat, but also improving the local awareness and education. Their work has improved many waterways in terms of sustainability, water quality, wildlife habitat, and we all know that is very important to local communities, State and Federal water supplies. Their goals to support local economies and local contractors provide stability for this and future generations to succeed in enhancing and maintaining our natural resources as well as providing jobs and income for so many people. I see this as critical for healthy communities, healthy States and a healthy and prosperous United States of America.*

*John Beckett, Custom Design Fabricators, on his working relationship with Trout Unlimited*



*"The GMUG National Forests and project partners see this site (Telluride Valley Floor) as a 'blank canvas' and are excited about the partnerships this project has already created. We look forward to restoring this site's ecological function as it serves as a case study of collaboration and a unique approach to restoration."*

*Brian Hoefling, Acting Norwood District Director, Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre, and Gunnison national forests*



Trout Unlimited's Priority Waters are the 200+ rivers, streams, lakes, and ponds where we are directing our energies to care for and recover wild and native trout and salmon watersheds. Rooted in science and developed in collaboration with our supporters and trusted partners, these shared Priority Waters are the foundation of an ambitious strategic roadmap.



# PARTNERSHIPS THAT WORK

**Forest Service:** We are working on a \$40 million, five-year initiative that is increasing the pace and scale of watershed restoration on national forests, including the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison (GMUG) National Forests and Medicine Bow Routt National Forest and Thunder Basin National Grasslands in Colorado.

**BLM:** In the Colorado River, California-Great Basin, and Columbia-Pacific Northwest, we are making watersheds more resilient to drought.

**Fish and Wildlife Service:** In every corner of trout and salmon country, we work with the National Fish Passage Program to reconnect streams and reduce flood risks.

**Bureau of Reclamation:** WaterSMART funds allow TU to improve fish passage, water quality and aquatic habitat in many states across the West, including Utah, Montana, Idaho, Wyoming and Colorado.

**NOAA:** The long-running fish passage program at NOAA Fisheries supports our work to restore trout, salmon and steelhead populations across the country, including addressing barriers in Colorado.

*“Our partnership is not just about cleaning a stream or increasing fish populations. It’s life-sustaining work that is as vital to aquatic species as it is to people and communities. When our natural resources are healthy, we are healthy as a nation and as individuals.”*

*– Randy Moore, chief of the U.S. Forest Service,  
on its TU partnership*

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