



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 on key landscapes alongside the Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, NOAA, the Bureau of Reclamation, and other partners, from tribes, farmers, ranchers and landowners to local communities, state and local governments, and conservation allies.

This work creates family-wage jobs for our restoration crews and the local contractors who work with us, many of them in rural communities.

Our approach translates into cleaner water and thriving fisheries. We build healthier ecosystems that bolster local economies and healthier communities. We help towns recover from wildfires and floods. We help farmers improve operations and look after rivers running across their land.

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

TROUT UNLIMITED PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS: WYOMING

1. WAPITI RANGER STATION: U.S. FOREST SERVICE

TU has partnered with the Shoshone National Forest to improve and enhance aquatic, riparian and wetland habitat and improve floodplain systems and functions on the North Fork Shoshone River, Sweetwater Creek, and Elk Fork Creek near the Wapiti Ranger Station, west of Cody. Large wood design techniques will be utilized to improve streambank stability, which will minimize risk to historical and recreational infrastructure, while also providing important aquatic habitat for Yellowstone Cutthroat Trout and other wild trout populations. In total, the U.S. Forest Service has allocated more than \$1.2 million to this project through the BIL, IRA, Secure Rural Schools Act, and the Keystone Agreement with TU. In total, it is expected to cost more than \$2 million and construction is slated to begin in the fall of 2025.

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2. MUDDY CREEK: BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

For decades, TU and partners such as the Bureau of Land Management, Wyoming Game and Fish, and the Little Snake River Conservation District have been restoring vital habitat for Colorado River cutthroat trout in Muddy Creek, which is part of the Little Snake Basin. More recently, their efforts have included low-tech, process-based restoration and the installation of man-made beaver dams.

The basin is home to four native fish species and is a focus area for TU. Through a feat of Western water engineering, the Little Snake Basin serves as both a headwater for the Upper Colorado River Basin and provides source water for the city of Cheyenne, which is outside the watershed.

These structures restore resilience and natural hydrologic function to Colorado River tributaries, slowing down flows and allowing the water to spread across the floodplain, increasing seasonal water storage, and raising the streambed. This simple approach to stream restoration influences a range of hydraulic, geomorphic, and hydrologic processes, and helps achieve restoration goals.

Additionally, TU's national partnership with the BLM and funding from the Inflation Reduction Act and Bipartisan Infrastructure Law made it possible to hire multiple crews from the Wyoming Conservation Corps and host high school and college-aged students through our TU Expeditions program to learn about careers in conservation and the incredible amount of work it takes to restore our watersheds.

3. GREEN RIVER RESTORATION: BUREAU OF RECLAMATION

Trout Unlimited, in partnership with the Wyoming Game and Fish Department, was recently awarded two separate projects in the Green River watershed by the Bureau of Reclamation.

The \$13 million Green River Tributaries Aquatic and Riparian Initiative project includes stream restoration, wetland creation, and infrastructure improvements to enhance aquatic habitat and drought resilience on seven tributaries of the Upper Green River, with key components including replacing the U.S. Highway 189 Fontenelle Creek culvert with a fish-passable structure, consolidating multiple diversion structures for improved fish passage, creating new wetlands, restoring streams, and protecting riparian areas from drought.

The \$2.2 million Green River Mainstem Aquatic and Riparian Initiative project includes bank stabilization, riparian and floodplain restoration, and increased fish passage to enhance aquatic habitat and drought resilience across the mainstem of the Green River in Wyoming. These benefits will not only mitigate for existing drought impacts, but also improve downstream water quality, increase fish and wildlife habitat, and maintain and improve terrestrial habitat in the drainage, with add-on benefits to people and communities downstream of the project.

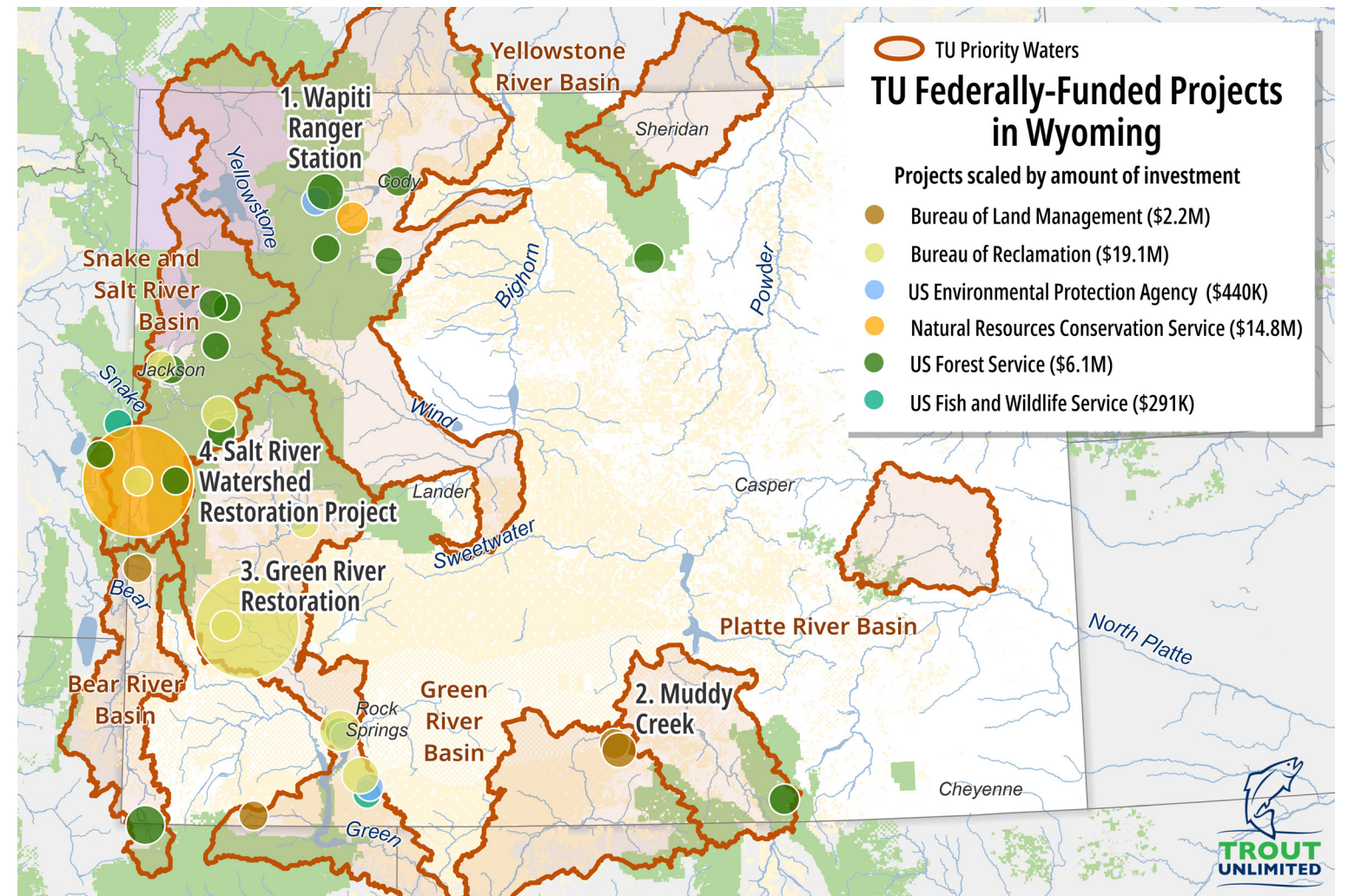
These projects were awarded but not yet contracted, so the future of these awards is unknown.

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4. SALT RIVER RESTORATION: NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE

Trout Unlimited was awarded \$14,034,000 by the NRCS in 2024 to complete the Salt River Watershed Restoration Project. The project aims to restore aquatic and riparian habitat, reduce streambank erosion, restore habitat connectivity, and sequester carbon in the Salt River and its tributaries through stream restoration, grazing management, and agricultural infrastructure projects. The NRCS's Regional Conservation Partnership Program would fund approximately 75 percent of the cost of construction and materials for projects in this rural watershed that has been degraded by past and current land use practices, including agriculture and riparian development. The U.S. Forest Service has also contributed funds to the watershed's restoration through our Keystone Agreement with the agency.

This project was awarded but not yet contracted, so the future of this award is unknown.



“Wyoming has long been a leader in conservation, and the reason for that is our ability to get multiple entities to work together on large landscape-scale projects. While some think about dozens of acres of project benefits, we think on the scale of tens of thousands of acres. The work of the WWNRT is made all the more impactful by the partners we work with to leverage funding and resources. TU has been and remains one of our most valuable partners in river restoration, which is one of the most prevalent project type that we do. These projects contribute to local communities and economies by providing irrigation infrastructure efficiencies, improving recreational opportunities, ensuring sustainable landscapes, and providing jobs for people who work in restoration and reclamation.”

Bob Budd, Wyoming Wildlife and Natural Resources Trust Executive Director



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 Bridger-Teton National Forest, Shoshone National Forest, Caribou-Targhee National Forest, Bighorn National Forest, and Medicine Bow Routt National Forest and Thunder Basin National Grasslands.

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, and engage communities and partners in collaborative watershed management planning across many states across the West, including Utah, Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, and Colorado.

“The City of Green River’s partnership with Trout Unlimited continues to provide multiple benefits for our community’s residents and visitors to the area. Through this partnership we have been able to leverage a significant amount of federal, state, local, and private dollars and expertise to complete important habitat and infrastructure projects which not only benefit wildlife, but also support quality of life, recreation, education, and economic development in our community. The City places a high value on this partnership and looks forward to future successes together.”

Ryan Rust, City of Green River Government Affairs & Grants Manager

Kay Lynn Nield, rancher, Salt River landowner and Star Valley Conservation District Manager

“Trout Unlimited has been a great partner for our Salt River restoration projects. We are a small Conservation District and TU has been invaluable in the effort to help landowners stabilize the river and meet irrigation needs while providing for fish habitat. TU has the capacity to run larger projects that we do not. We have the local knowledge that is needed to make these projects successful. It is a win-win for all of us for conservation and good stewardship.

We are excited about the possibility to build on this partnership through the \$14 million Salt River RCPP award.”

“Arrow Land & Water, LLC has worked with Trout Unlimited on numerous river restoration projects across southwest Wyoming over the past decade, including many funded by federal project partners or programs. These projects include diversion improvements, culvert replacements and streambank restoration that improve wildlife habitat. These partnerships with TU have been essential to maintain my Wyoming-based business and support our local economy.”

Chad Espenscheid, rancher and Wyoming-based stream restoration engineer/contractor with Arrow Land & Water, LLC