



Healthy Forests Healthy Water Healthy People

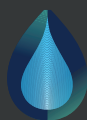
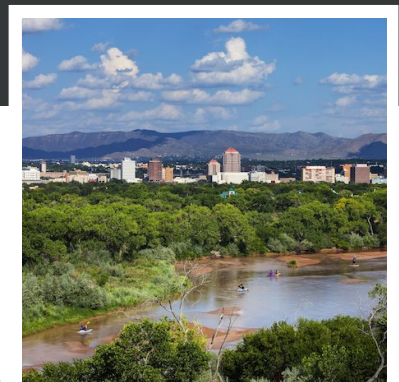
Western forests, whether in headwaters or the region's fruitful floodplains, are the key to water security, flood protection, and water quality. But catastrophic wildfires, a rapidly changing climate, over-development, and poor past management decisions means that these lands are increasingly limited in their ability to provide clean water to millions of people.

Today, leaders around the American West are pioneering innovative ways to restore forests - the source of over 60% of our water. Healthier forests results in healthier water downstream. But we must invest in restoration and protection to fulfill this promise. These four regions have big plans, and the pricetag is hefty, but are an economically responsible investment for long-term water security. As communities around the West consider similar investments, these regions are leading the way.

Rio Grande, NM: Forest Restoration & Drinking Water

The Rio Grande Water Fund aims to restore 600,000 acres over 20 years for a total cost of approximately \$420 million. While that sounds like a big price tag, it's actually a bargain. Catastrophic wildfires are ripping through New Mexico's overgrown forests, causing massive disruption to water quality and supplies downstream - particularly for the one million people dependent on the Rio Grande for drinking water. The Las Conchas Fire in 2011, for example, has already racked up at \$246 million and counting in just mitigation costs.

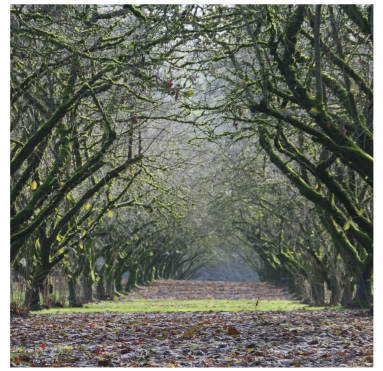
The Rio Grande Water Fund is demonstrating, through its 70-player strong coalition and dozens of responsible forest thinning projects, the simple logic that restoring forests now is a smart investment for the long haul.



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Eugene, OR: Forested Floodplain Restoration

In Eugene, a vibrant city completely dependent on the McKenzie River for drinking water, a collaborative of local agencies is lining up support for a wide-ranging floodplain restoration. Five forested floodplain projects will dampen increasingly harsh flood impacts, while retaining water longer for release during the longer, dryer summers of a climate-changing region. At \$14 million, the projects promise both greater water supply, and less flooding as extreme weather increases in frequency throughout the Willamette Basin.



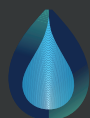
Front Range, CO: Forest Restoration

As in New Mexico, Colorado's Front Range forests are deeply compromised due to poor past land management, overbuilding in the fire danger zones, and a warming climate. Wildfires are becoming more intense and more frequent, jeopardizing downstream water supplies for nearly five million people in this rapidly growing region. To meet the challenge, the Watershed Wildfire Protection Group has set out an ambitious task: restore 400,000 critical acres in the upstream forests that provide water for the booming cities of the plains. The total cost of restoration is about \$600 million, with funding is being sought by a coalition of Front Range agencies and community leaders.



Upper Clark Fork Basin, MT: Water for Fish & Ranch

Montana's Clark Fork River forms the eastern headwaters of the Columbia River system. It's a place where mountains meet rivers and wild landscapes connect, providing rich habitat for wildlife and abundant water for farms. But the river system faces many threats: dried and dewatered streams, fish-trapping irrigation diversions, sediment-bleeding logging roads, and fast-paced development that encroaches on the river. One key solution is to renovate small, rustic reservoirs high in the watershed that store snowmelt for release over the summer for river flows and agriculture. This work is relatively inexpensive and won't result in the controversy that results from proposals for major storage projects. At a price tag of \$39.5 million, renovating 15 small dams (and one larger dam) will protect water supplies, ranching and blue-ribbon trout fisheries for generations to come.



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