



Hello River-Loving Friends!

2026 is proving to be a challenging year for river protection, and we are meeting the challenge head-on. Please know we are hard at work and greatly appreciate your support! Here is an update about our programs in the Colorado River Basin, the Cache la Poudre River basin, and beyond.

First, we're thrilled to have achieved a BIG VICTORY against a proposed massive dam project on the

THE COLORADO SUN

Longmont water district giving up right to build a big dam on St. Vrain Creek

"The St. Vrain is a beautiful river and is the heart and soul of the Lyons community. This agreement is the best outcome for the River." -- Gary Wockner

St. Vrain Creeks in Lyons, CO. After a 2-year court battle, and significant negotiations, the St. Vrain Water District, located in Longmont, sacrificed its right to build the so-called "Coffintop Dam and Reservoir" just outside of Lyons on St. Vrain Creek.

We are especially pleased with this outcome because it was a mutual agreement supported by the Water District as well. This dam would've been massive and loomed over the Town of Lyons, as well as hugely disrupted the ecology and streamflow in St. Vrain Creek. The Water District agreed to not build this dam, and to not expand any other on-channel dams inside the District.

Further, the District agreed to focus some of its funding and programs on ecological and recreational projects in the Creek for the full benefit of the community and its residents. **It was a lot of hard work and legal negotiations – during which we were happy and fortunate to be represented by the University of Denver Environmental Law Clinic – and WE WON!**

Second, our "Rights of Nature for Rivers" campaign keeps moving forward. Most recently, we were highlighted in this Harvard University video about the Rights of Nature movement, along with

indigenous and other environmental leaders. The video, in part, focused on the renewed interest in Rights of Nature in the Colorado River basin. In the Fall/Winter of 2026 and in 2027, we will be ramping up our work in the Southwest U.S. to support local communities by helping them gain the right for their river to keep flowing through their town and county.

As we stated on the video, *“Corporations have personhood. Property rights can make claims in the legal system. Why not Nature?”* Stay tuned as this

necessary program moves forward, and please get in touch with us if you’d like to launch a Rights of Nature for Rivers project in your town!

Third, we are heavily entrenched in the Oh-My-God Chaos around the Colorado River. In the vacuum of leadership around how the Colorado River will be managed, we are continuing to move

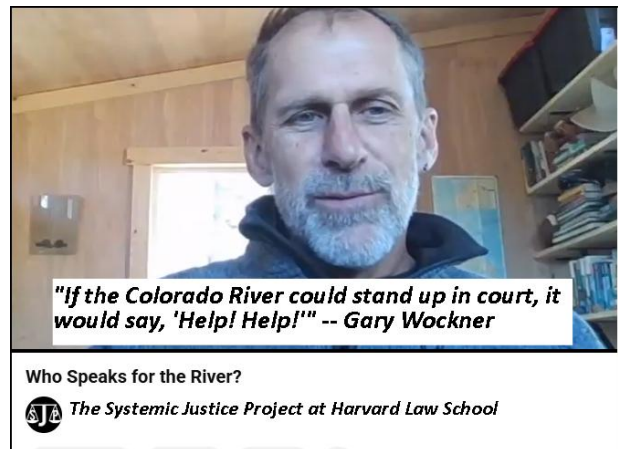
forward ideas and policy proposals that better protect the Colorado River and its tributaries.

We published a column in *Colorado Newswire* titled, “No New Depletions has to be in a Colorado River deal,” that brings attention to the large number of proposed new dams and diversions in the Colorado River basin. **“When you’re in a hole, stop digging,”** is the message we give to river managers.

We also published a column in the *Colorado Sun*, titled, “Will more of the Colorado River flow uphill toward Front Range money?”

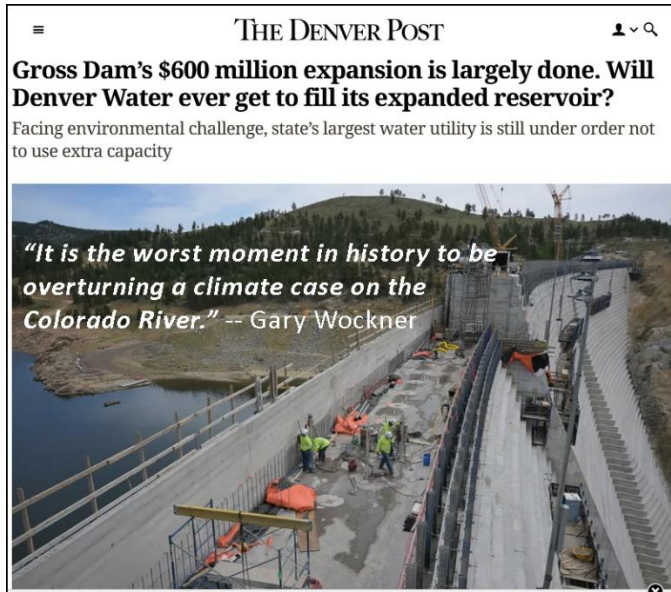
that calls attention to how the urban water providers in the Denver megalopolis are trying to circumvent Colorado water law by diverting even more water off of Colorado’s West Slope. Our organization is the ONLY org in this state water court battle arguing that MORE water should flow downstream on the western side of Colorado rather than less.

As of this writing, the seven states that are supposed to be negotiating a solution have deadlocked and the whole Environmental Impact Statement process has



flatlined. It remains to be seen what will happen, but we're in the fight offering real solutions to protect the River. Our specialty is looking out for the ecological health of the River itself, which is mostly completely ignored by the negotiators.

Fourth, the ongoing chaos at Gross Dam in Boulder County continues to limp forward as we head into the hearing in the federal court of appeals on July 31st. Our opponent, Denver Water, is actually



arguing that the court should OVERTURN the climate change ruling of the lower district court that ruled in our favor. **Denver Water is arguing that climate change SHOULD NOT be considered on the Colorado River, at the exact moment in history when climate change is drying out the river to its lowest point ever.**

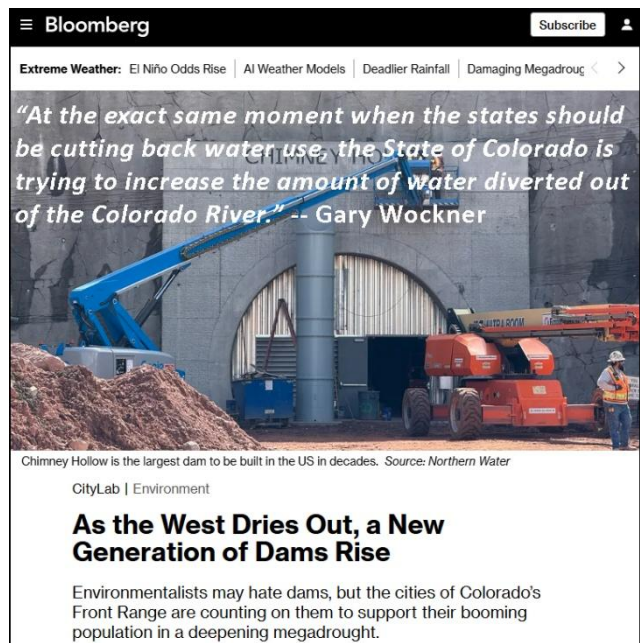
Where this Gross Dam fight will end is hard to say, but we are on the right side of science and the right side of history, and we are speaking for that which cannot speak, the River itself.

We were very pleased to get a huge media hit from *Bloomberg News* on the very same issue,

where we again point out that water diverters in Colorado should be decreasing their water use and building fewer dams, not more.

Fifth, our Save The Poudre program continues to engage around the Cache la Poudre River in Fort Collins. The biggest news is that the proposed Northern Integrated Supply Project (NISP) has gotten so expensive that half of the participants dropped out, and now **the project may not get built.** Amidst this uncertainty – which has also stalled the \$100 million settlement agreement we negotiated last year – **we are continuing to advocate for protecting and restoring the Poudre River as well as creating a recreational “water trail” all the way through Larimer County.**

Where this will end, nobody knows, but we are engaged for the long-term protection of the Poudre River whether NISP gets built or not. We are also actively engaging with the City of Fort Collins around the protection of the River and how their proposed expansion of Halligan Reservoir on the North Fork of the Poudre River will fit into that. **We have all oars in the water protecting the Poudre River!**



Sixth, our coalition work in California engaged around the climate impacts of dams got a HUGE media hit as the top story on the front page of the *Los Angeles Times* April 15th. Joining us in this



work are Patagonia, California Trout, Friends of the River, Ridges to Riffles Indigenous Conservation Group, Ríos to Rivers, Center for Biological Diversity, and Tell The Dam Truth.

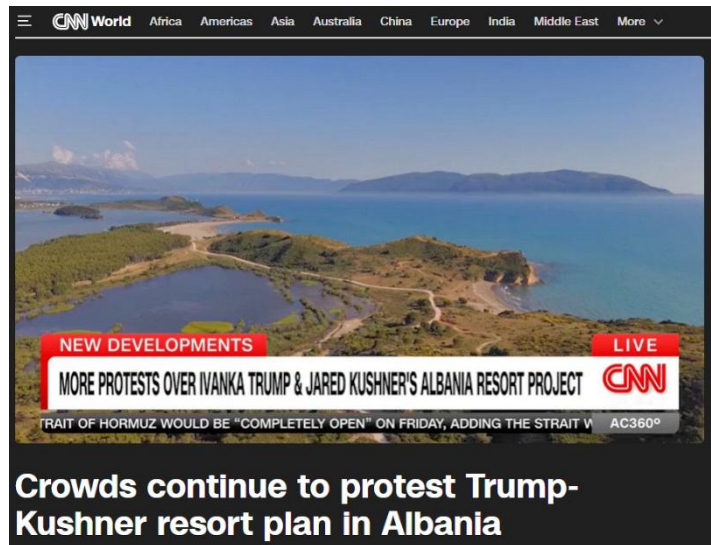
We've been working for a decade to bring attention to the greenhouse gas emissions caused by dams and reservoirs, and this news story – by Ian James, one of the top climate reporters in the U.S. – was great to see. Titled, “Under water, a hidden methane source,” the story discusses our coalition’s petition to the California Air Resources Board asking them to start counting and reporting the GHG emissions caused by dams and reservoirs across the state.

Finally, on the international front, we have been

happy to watch the first Wild River National Park in the world, on the Vjosa River in Albania, be thrust into international news as hundreds of thousands of Albanians rallied to support it. A

massive resort and real estate development where the Vjosa River meets the sea, proposed by President Trump’s daughter and son-in-law, has set off a firestorm of support for protecting the river and its delta in Albania. We visited the beautiful Wild River National Park in 2024 and we are huge fans of supporting it!

Please know that we are a very small, very aggressive river-protection organization, and that it is solely **YOUR SUPPORT** that keeps us working and fighting to protect rivers across Colorado, the Western U.S., and beyond!



Crowds continue to protest Trump-Kushner resort plan in Albania



Please donate online: <http://savethecolorado.org/donate/>

Or mail back the enclosed envelope today.

Gary Wockner

Director, Save The Poudre/Save The Colorado/Save The World’s Rivers