



# Southwest Rivers Program - Headwaters

## NFWF CONTACTS

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## PARTNERS

- U.S. Forest Service
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Trinchera Blanca Foundation

## ABOUT NFWF

Chartered by Congress in 1984, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) protects and restores the nation's fish, wildlife, plants and habitats. Working with federal, corporate and individual partners, NFWF has funded more than 5,000 organizations and generated a total conservation impact of \$6.1 billion.

Learn more at [www.nfwf.org](http://www.nfwf.org)

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The Rio Grande in Colorado's San Luis Valley

## OVERVIEW

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) and the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and Trinchera Blanca Foundation announced a 2020-year round of funding for Southwest Rivers Headwaters projects under the Southwest Rivers Program. Five new aquatic and riparian habitat restoration grants totaling \$584,586 were awarded. The five awards announced generated \$980,846 in match from the grantees, providing a total conservation impact of over \$1.56 million.

The Southwest Rivers Program was launched in 2018 to fund projects that improve stream corridors, riparian systems and associated habitats from headwaters to mainstem rivers in the Southwest. Through the Southwest Rivers Headwaters funding opportunity, the program funds projects that produce measurable outcomes for species of conservation concern in the riparian corridors of the headwaters region of the Rio Grande. In 2020, the funding opportunity included a pilot focal area of increasing interest in the Gila River Watershed.

The following projects address two key strategies for species and habitat restoration in headwaters streams of the Rio Grande and Gila River: 1) increasing water availability for species and their habitats; and 2) riparian and instream habitat restoration and enhancement.

*(continued)*



Gila trout

**Upper Gila Agricultural Diversion Replacement (NM)**

Grantee: The Nature Conservancy  
 Grant Amount: ..... \$150,000  
 Matching Funds: ..... \$150,000  
 Total Project Amount: ..... \$300,000  
 Construct a permanent, fish-friendly diversion structure that will replace an existing push-up diversion at the upper end of the Cliff-Gila Valley. Project will enable irrigators to increase water availability for species and their habitats, remove barriers to flow, restore aquatic and riparian habitat, and reconnect 48 miles of the Gila River.

**Habitat Enhancement for Rio Grande Sucker and Rio Grande Chub at McIntire Spring (CO)**

Grantee: Colorado Parks and Wildlife  
 Grant Amount: ..... \$165,000  
 Matching Funds: ..... \$279,210  
 Total Project Amount: ..... \$444,210  
 Enhance habitat and exclude nonnative fish to benefit Rio Grande sucker and Rio Grande chub in historically occupied habitat at McIntire Spring. Project will secure resilient populations of both species, providing a significant contribution to their rangewide conservation.

**Willow Creek Habitat Restoration (NM)**

Grantee: USDA-Forest Service - Gila National Forest  
 Grant Amount: ..... \$100,000  
 Matching Funds: ..... \$297,000  
 Total Project Amount: ..... \$397,000  
 Restore stream morphology and function in Willow Creek to benefit Gila trout. Project will increase riparian cover and

improve the stability of the stream and floodplain by utilizing native sourced materials that improve riparian and stream conditions.

**Polvadera Creek Sediment Stabilization and Ecosystem Restoration (NM)**

Grantee: Rio Grande Return  
 Grant Amount: ..... \$54,587  
 Matching Funds: ..... \$54,636  
 Total Project Amount: ..... \$109,223  
 Stabilize and enhance the aquatic and riparian habitats native to Polvadera Creek. Project will enhance and restore native Rio Grande cutthroat trout populations by protecting, restoring and enhancing habitats through erosion stabilization, barrier construction to limit off-road vehicle access, in-channel structure installation and vegetation planning.

**Santa Clara Creek Headwaters Habitat Restoration (NM)**

Grantee: Santa Clara Pueblo  
 Grant Amount: ..... \$114,999  
 Matching Funds: ..... \$200,000  
 Total Project Amount: ..... \$314,999  
 Restore vital Rio Grande cutthroat trout habitat in Santa Clara Creek, an area severely impacted by fire and debris deposition. Project will restore and enhance 3 acres of riparian habitat and 1,000 feet of stream through the construction of off channel ponds, establishing grade control, facilitating fish passage with the removal of natural barriers, revegetation of native plants, spreading mulch and woody debris and planting of at least 30 ponderosa pine blue spruce trees.