



WESTERN RIVERS CONSERVANCY

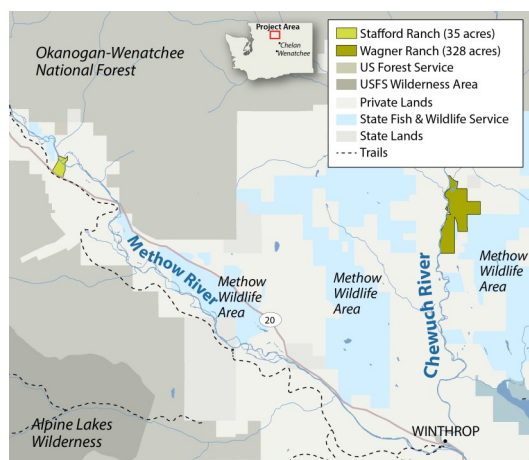
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Methow and Chewuch Rivers, Washington: Saving Open Space and Salmon Streams

In the heart of the Methow Valley, WRC acquired two properties in 2018 to improve fish habitat and preserve the valley's natural beauty. The opportunity is tremendous, as both properties trace designated Critical Habitat for Upper Columbia River spring Chinook and contain key habitat for Columbia River steelhead and bull trout. First we acquired the 328-acre Wagner Ranch, which spans 1.6 miles of the Chewuch River, the Methow's largest tributary. Then we purchased the 35-acre Stafford Ranch along the Methow River, including a critical groundwater right needed to reestablish flows in dry side channels that are crucial to fish. WRC will convey the properties to the Yakama Nation, which is committed to stream restoration and conservation in the Methow Valley. Through its capable stewardship program, the tribe plans to restore offchannel areas, floodplains, wetlands and riparian vegetation, making a lasting difference for salmon and steelhead.

Ellen Bishop Photo



Snake River, Idaho: Protecting the Place Where Bighorns are Born

As the Snake makes its way toward the Columbia, it carves the rugged depths of Hells Canyon. Populations of Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep were once abundant here, icons of the Snake, but today, Idaho's Hells Canyon herd has only 150 head—a fraction of historic numbers. An exceptional parcel of land, Ten Mile Creek Ranch traces four miles of the Snake River, just upstream of Hells Gate State Park and downstream of Craig Mountain Wildlife Management Area and Hells Canyon National Recreation Area. The 2,920-acre ranch is the herd's best nursery, with as much as 80 percent of the Idaho ewes giving birth here in spring. In summer 2018, Western Rivers Conservancy purchased Ten Mile Creek Ranch. We are now working with the Idaho Department of Fish and Game to place a conservation easement on the property, preventing a 24-home subdivision and ensuring this crucial landscape remains intact, protected forever and healthy for the Snake River's outstanding fish and wildlife.

Kirk Anderson photo

