

IMPACT REPORT 2021



DESCHUTES RIVER
CONSERVANCY



FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



2020 was a challenging year for everyone. If the last year taught us anything, it was to increase our empathy for those around us and to remind us that real and durable progress comes from authentic relationships. We are so grateful for our dedicated donors, partners, board members and staff members who ensured that our work remained strong and steady through all of the changes we faced.

Despite the year's challenges, we did not slow down. In 2020, we helped launch the Deschutes Basin Water Collaborative, we made great strides in the development of our on-farm, conservation and water marketing

programs, and we continued adding flow to rivers through water leasing and conservation projects.

In January of this year, I was honored to be selected at the DRC's new Executive Director and could not ask for a more talented team to work with to increase the pace and scale of river restoration.

Over the past 25 years, we've brought people together to have critical conversations, to make long-lasting agreements, and to implement innovative basin-wide change. This investment is leading to accelerated implementation and restoration outcomes that will benefit the Deschutes River Basin today and into the future. In the face of persistent drought and climate change, this is more important than ever.

KATE FITZPATRICK
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

OUR APPROACH IN THE BASIN

We take pride in bringing diverse stakeholders together to resolve complex water issues.

INNOVATION

For over 25 years, the DRC has earned a reputation for fresh ideas that accelerate conservation and restoration. We leverage our regional partnerships and organizational talent to create programs to conserve, lease, and market water. Ongoing innovations include expanding our on-farm efficiency and water marketing programs and integrating them to maximize outcomes. These programs will help restore flows and improve water reliability for farmers.

COLLABORATION

We bring diverse voices together to solve complex water issues. Through strategic partnerships, creativity, and planning, we make lasting change to the Deschutes Basin while benefiting community relationships. We cut our teeth on past projects requiring simple agreements with one landowner, one irrigation district, or one city. Today, we're engaged with restoration projects, including the Upper Deschutes, that span the region and include many diverse stakeholders. The stakes are higher, but we're up for the challenge.

FLOW RESTORATION

We restore flows and improve water quality for the benefit of all. Restoring rivers while respecting other water users is complex. The legacy of our work includes Whychus Creek, now flowing year-round, and significantly increased flows in the Middle Deschutes, Tumalo Creek, and the Crooked River. While celebrating this progress, we know we have a lot more work to do. With the effects of current water management, drought, and climate change impacting fish and wildlife habitat as well as water quality, this work is more important than ever.

WATER PLANNING & VISIONING

We are working to ensure water security across the Deschutes Basin for today and into the future. Studies have shown that there is enough water in the basin to meet most needs most of the time. We also know the way water is allocated no longer works for today's situations. We've helped to convene the Deschutes Basin Water Collaborative, a group that seeks to accelerate integrated basin-wide conservation and water marketing solutions while securing needed funding and policy innovations.



MAIN INITIATIVES

WATER MARKETING

ANNUAL WATER LEASING PROGRAM In 2020, DRC leased 4,344 acres of water from 323 individuals for a total volume of 19,986 acre-feet and 58.2 cubic feet per second (cfs) protected instream. Working with voluntary participants and irrigation district partners, the DRC leasing program has averaged 60 cfs annually instream from 1998–2020.

EXPANDING MARKET TOOLS Our ongoing work on water marketing strategy development envisions an expanded voluntary, incentive-based program that helps improve agricultural reliability while restoring instream flows and supporting municipal needs. We are working towards the establishment of a collaborative Central Oregon water bank.

WATER CONSERVATION

ON-FARM We have launched an on-farm efficiency program with our partners that will provide funding and technical assistance to modernize irrigation infrastructure on private lands, conserving water that can help restore flows.

DISTRICT PIPING DRC is working with irrigation districts that are piping large sections of main canals to ensure environmental restoration outcomes and to efficiently connect landowners to newly piped and pressurized main canals.

MCKAY CREEK WATER SWITCH

The McKay Creek Water Rights Switch will restore natural flow (11.2 cfs) and improve habitat for reintroduced summer steelhead to the middle reach of McKay Creek. Area landowners will gain more reliable water by trading access to McKay Creek for Ochoco Irrigation District water rights. Restoring the natural hydrograph in this reach of McKay Creek will address many limiting factors, including low flow, altered hydrology, high water temperature, and impaired fish passage.

DESCHUTES BASIN WATER COLLABORATIVE

The Deschutes Basin Water Collaborative consists of 40 diverse members who are working together to balance water use between human and ecological needs. DRC provides the technical leadership for the Collaborative, which is chaired by the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs. The Collaborative provides a mechanism to accelerate solutions for critical water allocation and management issues in the Deschutes River Basin.



RESPONSE TO A CHANGING CLIMATE

More frequent drought and warmer temperatures are affecting all of us, including rivers, farmers and cities. We are developing these tools to enhance resilience, cold water habitat, and water resources in a changing world.

DROUGHT PLANNING

Every year in the Deschutes is a drought year for our rivers based on water allocations, so all of our historic work is essentially drought planning. Yet, based on increasing drought, we see the need to incorporate additional measures in drought years to continue restoring streamflows while ensuring junior irrigation districts remain whole. We are moving forward with ideas that have more flexibility and adaptability to respond to variable water years and drought conditions.

COMPREHENSIVE BASIN PLAN

Following on the Upper Deschutes River Basin study, we are rich in information on how to restore rivers and meet water needs in the future. Through the Deschutes Basin Water Collaborative, we are developing a Comprehensive Basin Water Management Plan that will help coordinate partner actions in the basin, and that will leverage implementation funding and support to address additional barriers.

POLICY INNOVATION

The water management policy framework we operate in was created over 100 years ago and is not always nimble enough to respond to changing values and climate change realities. We believe the DRC can help lead the way toward policy innovations to facilitate meeting instream and out of stream water needs in modern times.



25 YEARS OF FLOW RESTORATION

WHAT SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE

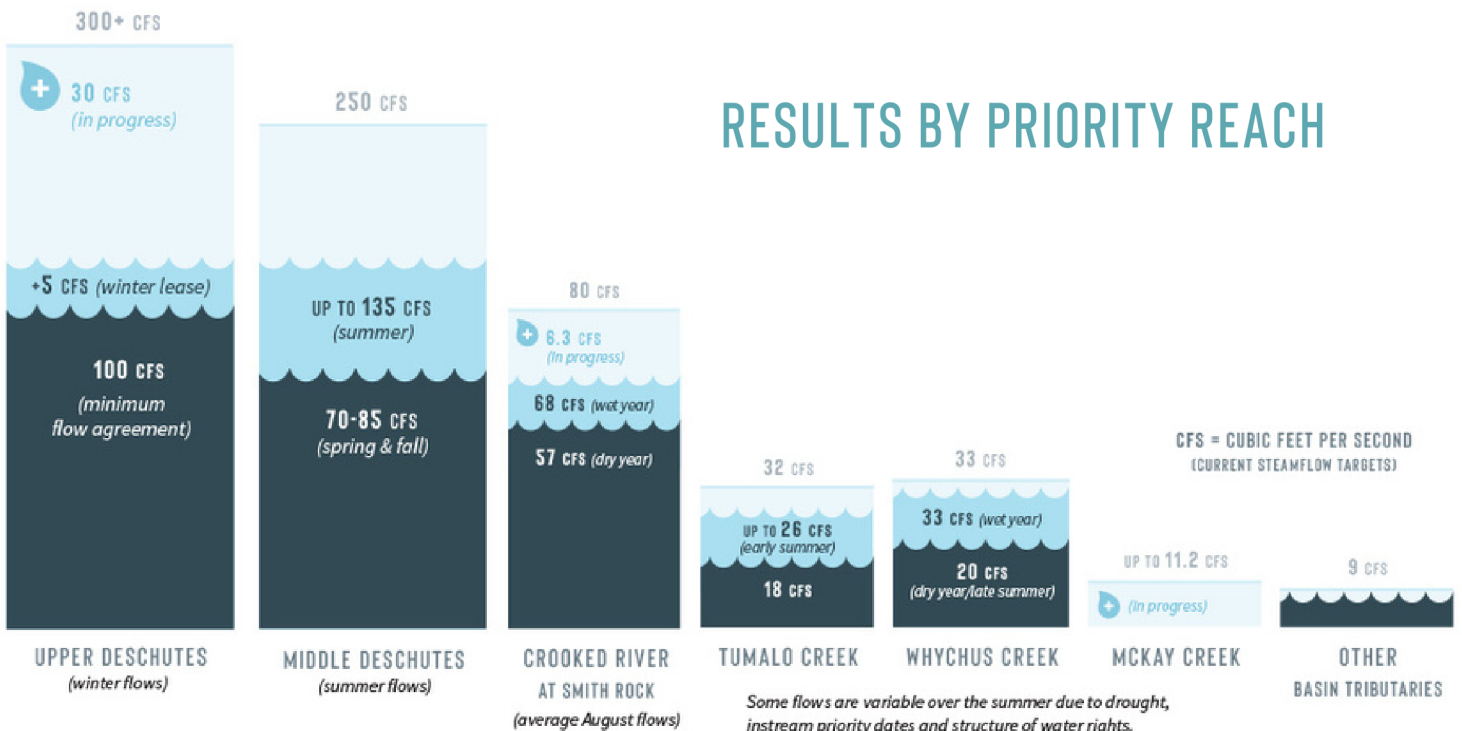


Marisa Chappell Hossick

Whychus Creek, below the irrigation diversions in 1997, before restoration efforts, and today.

WITHOUT OUR WORK

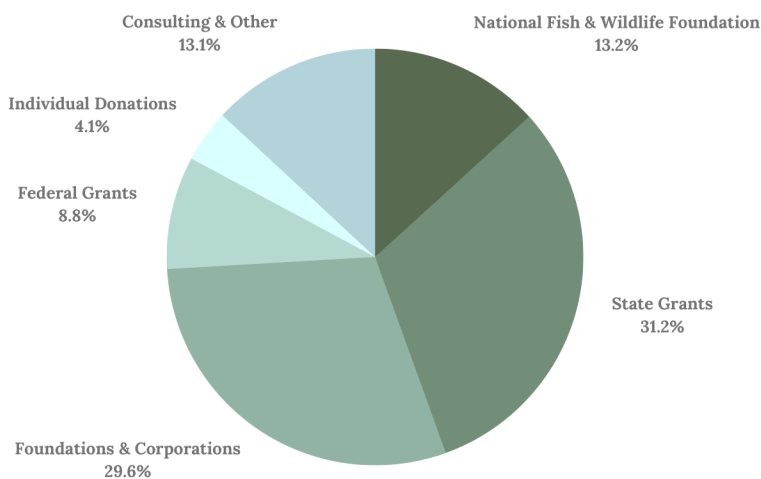
Imagine Whychus Creek turning into a dry creek bed in the summer. Imagine the Middle Deschutes (North of Bend) running at less than 5% of its natural flows during the irrigation season and, Tumalo Creek running dry. Through collaboration and hard work, these scenarios are thankfully no longer our reality. So many more reaches need similar restoration attention. With community and partner support, we can make a difference in the basin.



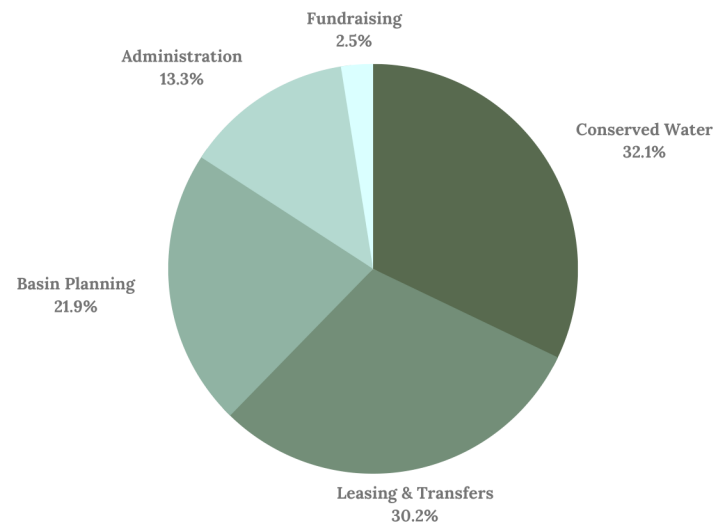
2020 FINANCIAL REVIEW

The DRC was able to maintain a strong financial position through 2020 with the continued generous support from our community.

REVENUE BY SOURCE



EXPENSES



Assets

Current Assets	\$1,550,006.00
Other Assets	\$30,867.00
Total Assets	\$1,580,873.00

Liabilities & Net Assets

Current Liabilities	\$714,259.00
Long-Term Liabilities	-
Net Assets	\$866,614.00
Total Liabilities & Net Assets	\$1,580,873.00

Revenue & Support

Grants & Contributions	\$1,562,889.38
Contributions & Events	\$77,229.84
Other	\$247,116.06
Total Revenue & Support	\$1,887,235.28



"It is gratifying to see the long-term stability of our funding as well as the fiscal responsibility with which we operate the organization."

Tara Langston
Director of Finance and Administration

RECOGNIZING BASIN HEROES

Many people have made significant contributions to the Deschutes River Basin which have helped keep our region the special place it is today. To acknowledge these important individuals, we're launching a new annual series lifting up these Basin Heroes.



Marisa Chappell Hossick

DRC BOARD CHAIR, BOBBY BRUNOE

Deschutes River Conservancy Board Chair, Bobby Brunoe, has spent his career managing natural resources for the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon. Bobby is a tribal member of Wasco descent who represents the Tribes' water interests in collaboration with the DRC. Bobby grew up on tribal lands learning his ancestors' reverence for natural resources including the most important to the Tribes, water. He combines his personal experiences hunting and fishing, his cultural heritage of caring for the future of natural resources, and his professional experience managing natural resources for the Tribes to bring a powerful message to the rest of the community. As a result, Bobby has acted as an ambassador for water issues for many years on behalf of the tribes. His steady guidance continually reminds us to look at our rivers and streams holistically, keeping long-term goals as the priority. The Confederated Tribes have an extensive history of resolving issues collaboratively. Bobby has embodied this "good neighbor" spirit through many complex and divisive water discussions.

“ Bobby has been instrumental in forming relationships around collaboration and consensus-based stewardship of water in the Deschutes River Basin. We at the DRC owe a lot to his leadership. ”

RON NELSON, PAST DRC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR & FOUNDING DRC BOARD MEMBER



Water connects us all. It brings life to our arid landscape through the Deschutes River and its tributaries, and it makes up 60% of our bodies. We all need water to live, work and play. **Here's what you can do to help:**

JOIN OUR COMMUNITY

Water is top of mind these days. Don't miss out on what's happening in the Deschutes River Basin and beyond! Our monthly updates will keep your finger on the pulse of the DRC and all things connected to water. Subscribe today.



Scan to Subscribe

BECOME A RIVER SUPPORTER

For 25 years, we've brought diverse voices together to make water use more equitable for fish, farms, and families.

Please join us as we work toward better sustainability in the Deschutes Basin for today and for future generations.



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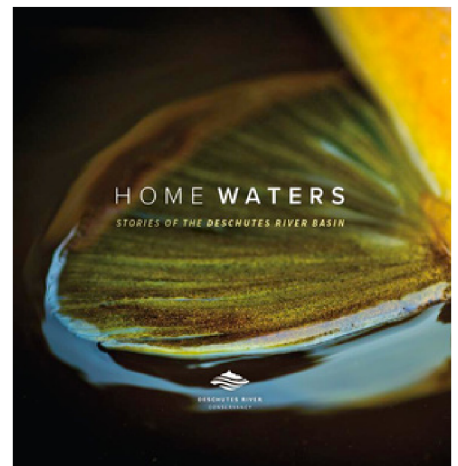
GET YOUR COPY OF HOME WATERS

Home Waters is a limited edition, high-quality coffee table-style book that tells the story of the Deschutes Basin's past, present, and future through art, poetry, fiction, and non-fiction. Local and regional artists have collaborated with us to offer this amazing journey through our home waters. For sale, while supplies last, at Dudley's Bookshop Cafe, and other select locations around Central Oregon.

For more information and purchasing information visit www.deschutesriver.org or access the information through this convenient QR code by using your smartphone.



Scan to Purchase



WE COULDN'T DO THIS WITHOUT YOU!

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 Upper Deschutes Watershed Council

IN HONOR OR IN MEMORIAM

Dianne Arrigoni,
 in honor of the Browning Family Sunriver, OR
 Barbara Baker,
 in memory of Homer Baker
 Donna Bohn,
 in memory of Greg Jensen
 Carrie Dean,
 in memory of Bess, the best dog, who loved soaking in
 all of Oregon's rivers
 Daniel Faulkner,
 in memory of my friend, Gregory Jensen
 Stuart Johnson,
 in memory of Shin Nishikawa
 Sarah Kelly,
 in honor of Lauri Powers
 Sarah Kelly,
 in honor of Mike and Anne Kelly
 Ted Kesterson,
 in memory of Shinpei Nishikawa
 Krista Knoernschild,
 in memory of Mark Murzin
 John Petersen,
 in honor of my dad, Mark Petersen, who taught me
 how to love this river
 Linda Shively,
 in honor of our daughter Becca, who loves rivers
 Anouk Tapper,
 honoring the Desert Rivers that connect our souls

THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR DONORS WHO WISH TO REMAIN ANONYMOUS.
 WE GREATLY APPRECIATE YOUR SUPPORT OF OUR WORK!





DESCHUTES RIVER
CONSERVANCY

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www.deschutesriver.org