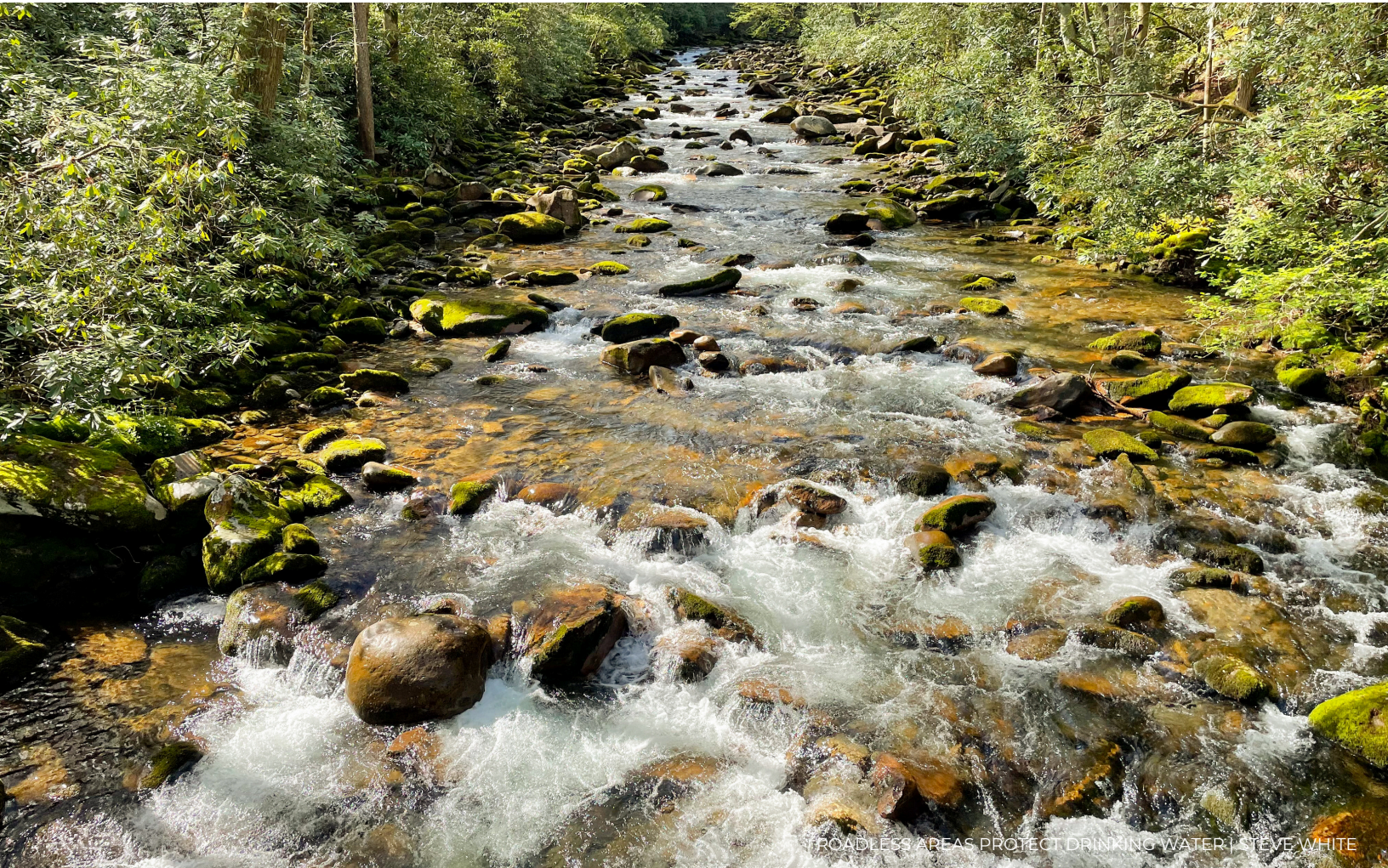




**AMERICAN
RIVERS**

Life Depends on RiversSM

ROADLESS AREAS



ROADLESS AREAS PROTECT DRINKING WATER | STEVE WHITE

BY THE NUMBERS

24 million

Ratepayers who get
their water from
roadless areas

80,000

Miles of healthy rivers
protected by roadless
areas

58 million

Acres of roadless
areas in the United
States

Rescinding the Roadless Rule threatens the foundation of our drinking water infrastructure.

Inventoried Roadless Areas (IRAs) maintain healthy, intact, forests that naturally purify and store drinking water for municipal and rural drinking water systems. Intact forested landscapes found within IRAs provide more consistent and higher-quality water yields than other public lands. And they do it for free, which means lower filtration costs for ratepayers.

Opening IRAs to new road building and commercial timber harvest increases contamination, while reducing the forest's natural ability to remove that contamination.





TUMALO CREEK | SHERYL AKAGI

In Bend, Oregon, more than 100,000 people rely on Tumalo Creek and its watershed, a major tributary of the upper Deschutes River that is protected by IRAs for clean drinking water.



HELENA, MONTANA | KEVIN LEAGUE

Residents of Helena, Montana source their drinking water from the Tenmile Creek watershed and its IRAs, as described in this editorial from a former water systems manager.

<https://missoulacurrent.com/clean-drinking-water/>



TENMILE CREEK | PRICKLY PEAR LAND TRUST

Rescinding the Roadless Rule threatens America's sporting heritage.

IRAs provide some of the best hunting, fishing, and outdoor recreation opportunities anywhere in the country. 60% of people who move to counties with roadless areas say they are a key reason for living there. Roadless areas provide crucial habitat for elk, deer, and other big game; for example, 93% of Montana's roadless areas and 70% of Wyoming's provide summer range for elk. In Utah, 87% of roadless areas provide crucial habitat for elk, while 100% serve as substantial habitat for mule deer.

Rescinding the Roadless Rule increases wildfire risk.

The scientific literature and the Forest Service's own research clearly show that new road construction significantly increases risk of fire ignitions, both from human caused and lightning. In other words, more roads equals more fires. According to one 2007 report, 88% of all wildfires nationwide are caused by people. Of these human-caused wildfires, 95% occurred within 1/2 mile of a road.



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American Rivers is championing a national effort to protect and restore all rivers, from remote mountain streams to urban waterways. Healthy rivers provide people and nature with clean, abundant water and natural habitat. For 50 years, American Rivers staff, supporters, and partners have shared a common belief: Life Depends on Rivers.

AmericanRivers.org