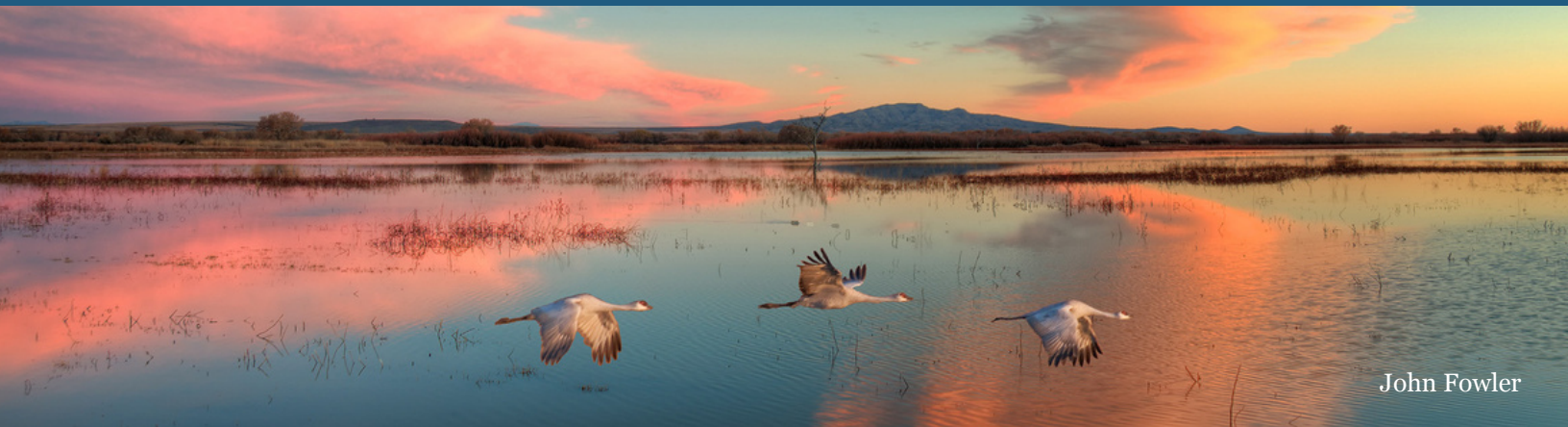


Restoring a Living Rio



John Fowler

We envision a vibrant Rio Grande from the San Juan Mountains to the Gulf of Mexico, sustained by clean water, robust habitats, and flourishing communities. WildEarth Guardians is taking immediate action to prevent river drying and habitat loss, and we're advocating for long-term systemic changes for a sustainable future.

New Mexico's Water Crisis

Stretches of the mighty Rio Grande already dry every summer in New Mexico, but things are expected to get worse. As the climate warms and dries over the next 50 years, the state is projected to receive 25% less water than it does now. Currently, agriculture diverts most of the Rio Grande's water for irrigation, and existing laws fail to ensure a flowing Rio Grande. Balancing agricultural, municipal and environmental needs with less available water is a complex task, and meeting obligatory water deliveries to Texas under the Rio Grande Compact is becoming increasingly challenging.

River Drying & Endangered Species

Among the most pressing concerns associated with balancing water needs in the Middle Rio Grande is the precarious situation faced by endangered species, notably the Rio Grande silvery minnow. Once abundant throughout the river system, the silvery minnow now teeters on the brink of extinction.

The decline of the silvery minnow mirrors the broader challenges of a river that goes dry for dozens of miles at a time, affecting other endangered species, including the yellow-billed cuckoo and southwest willow flycatcher, which rely on the Rio Grande and its riparian habitats for survival.



Ralph Earlandson

Championing Sustainable Solutions

Despite environmental concerns, the New Mexico State Engineer and Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District are interested in restarting diversions of natural river flows into the low flow conveyance channel (LFCC), a 60-mile long ditch that runs next to the Rio Grande south of Albuquerque. The LFCC was designed in the 1950s to help increase water deliveries to Texas under the Rio Grande Compact, but without regard for the health of the river itself. Today, we cannot afford to take more water out of this stretch of river and away from the endangered species the Living Rio supports.

Instead of reverting to outdated infrastructure, we advocate for nature-based solutions that prioritize the health of the Rio Grande ecosystem. This includes restoring natural floodplains, enhancing riparian habitats, and protecting a living, flowing Rio Grande.

Stay informed to help us safeguard the Rio Grande!

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Together, we can ensure a vibrant ecosystem and thriving human communities along its banks.



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