

COLORADO RIVER ALLIANCE IMPACT REPORT

Fiscal Year 2024



TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. COLLECTIVE IMPACT
2. EDUCATION
3. ENGAGEMENT
4. AWARENESS
5. RIVER HEROES
6. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

CELEBRATING 30 YEARS OF IMPACT

Together, we are championing the long-term vitality of the Texas Colorado River.



COLLECTIVE IMPACT

CHAMPIONING THE LONG- TERM VITALITY OF THE TEXAS COLORADO RIVER THROUGH EDUCATION, ENGAGEMENT, AND AWARENESS

EDUCATION

3,839 ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS RECEIVED DIRECT SERVICE

13 COMMUNITY EVENTS ACROSS 4 TEXAS COUNTIES

12,484 HOURS OF HANDS ON, TEKS - ALIGNED, STEM EDUCATION PROVIDED

ENGAGEMENT

19,421 LBS OF TRASH, DEBRIS, AND RECYCLING REMOVED FROM OUR WATERSHED

941 24 VOLUNTEERS CLEANUP SITES

AWARENESS

151 M GALLONS OF WATER CONSERVED

9,869 ALLIANCE SUBSCRIBERS

61,054 VIEWERS OF CRA'S DUAL-LANGUAGE RESOURCE LIBRARY



WILKERSON CENTER

Field Trips to the Wilkerson Center for Colorado River Education provide elementary-school students with information to inspire them to be future River Stewards. This unique, immersive, and memorable experience emphasizes the importance of protecting Texas' economic and environmental lifeblood – the Texas Colorado River. Colorado River Alliance hosted 50 Wilkerson Center Field Trips in the 2023-2024 school year for 2,269 elementary school students, of whom 41% attended a school with a majority of students living at or below the poverty level (Title I schools).

2,269 ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

6,807 HOURS OF STEM EDUCATION

41% OF STUDENTS SERVED FROM TITLE I SCHOOLS

50
FIELD TRIPS

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION INTERNS

Colorado River Alliance offers compensated, inspiring internships as a replicable, sustainable delivery model. This past year, 18 interns from universities such as St. Edward's University and University of Texas at Austin facilitated educational lessons on the subjects of water science, groundwater urban watersheds, water quality, river stewardship, and water conservation.

"It never disappoints. The kids walk away, and they just love it. The little books that they get and all the activities – fabulous from a teacher's point! They learn a lot. It's not just a fun day. It's a fun learning day." - Cowan Elementary 4th Grade Teacher, Juli Naranjo



2,181

**HOURS OF STEM
CLASSROOM
INSTRUCTION**

EDUCATION

THE MOBILE RIVER

The Mobile River program delivers a museum-quality exhibit and week-long TEKS-aligned STEM instruction to middle schools across the watershed. During the 2023-2024 school year, CRA provided 727 sixth to eighth grade students with 4,362 hours of memorable, hands-on STEM education in the classroom and in the award-winning science center on wheels. 100% of these students attended a school with a majority student population eligible for free or reduced-price lunches because of ongoing economic hardship.

727 MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS

100% STUDENTS SERVED FROM TITLE I SCHOOLS

COMMUNITY-WIDE ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION ACCESS

The Alliance also ensure the Mobile River program visited community events, afterschool programs, and summer programs throughout the River Basin. In total, CRA's Community Outreach programs reached an additional 3,428 community members across 4 counties to share a message about the River.

Community Outreach visits included summer programming at the Boys Camp; Girls Club of the Highland Lakes in Burnet County, after school programs with YMCA of Austin, Girlstart's Girls in STEM conference, and the Hog Eye Festival in Elgin, Texas.

CRA PROVIDED HANDS-ON ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AT

10

COMMUNITY EVENTS IN AUSTIN AND

3

COMMUNITY EVENTS OUTSIDE OF AUSTIN: LLANO, BASTROP, AND BURNET COUNTIES

3,428

COMMUNITY MEMBERS LEARNED AT LEAST ONE NEW FACT ABOUT THE SOURCE OF THEIR WATER

EDUCATION

Groundwater to the Gulf (G2G) is a FREE field-trip based, summer institute for Central Texas educators that emphasizes classroom techniques and resources on water science and rivers. Participants follow the path of water in Central Texas from its origins to its destination in the Gulf of Mexico. Topics include hydrology, groundwater, urban watersheds, water quality, river stewardship, water protection, and water conservation.

46 educators received FREE curricula, TEKS-aligned activities, and resources; learned about the numerous field-trip opportunities for the school year; and received continuing education credits.

The Alliance leads a collaborative of 13 partners, all experts in youth environmental education to provide 1,012 hours of FREE continuing education through a dynamic, field trip based summer institute for educators. This year's G2G activities include a karst tour and mini-caving trip at the Ladybird Johnson Wildflower Center, a behind-the-scenes tour of Barton Springs, boat tours and various water activities, and a field trip to Wild Basin Wilderness Preserve.

CRA DIGITAL RESOURCES LIBRARY

CRA's Dual-Language Digital Resource Library provided free digital resources in both English and Spanish to 28,281 educators and parents throughout the Colorado River Basin. The resource center includes fun activity books, at-home education modules for a three-week course on Texas rivers and geography, and instructor-led virtual content including a virtual field trip experience.

OUR 13 PARTNERS

Austin Water Wildland Conservation Division • Austin Youth River Watch • Barton Springs Edwards Aquifer Conservation District
 City of Austin Parks and Recreation • City of Austin Watershed Protection • Guadalupe - Blanco River Authority
 Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center Lower Colorado River Authority • St. Edward's Wild Basin Creative Research Center • Texas Master Naturalists
 Texas Parks and Wildlife • Trinity Episcopal School • UT Bureau of Economic Geology



ENGAGEMENT

THE 29TH ANNUAL LAKE TRAVIS CLEANUP

The Lake Travis Cleanup is the largest underwater and park cleanup in Texas, bringing together 608 underwater divers and shoreline volunteers to remove 8,000 lbs of trash from Lake Travis in one day. The 29th Annual Lake Travis Cleanup was held in partnership with 15 community partners including Travis County Parks, Dive World Austin, and Tom's Dive and Swim.

SPRING CLEANUP

Colorado River Alliance partnered with Travis County Parks to host a community-wide cleanup across 7 beautiful Travis County Parks in East Austin, Pflugerville, Manor, Del Valle, and Webberville. 104 volunteers of all ages helped remove 1,094 lbs of trash from downstream parks and creeks – area that have a significant impact on the Texas Colorado River Basin.

CREEK AND LAKE CLEANUPS

Colorado River Alliance adopted Onion Creek Metro Park through Keep Austin Beautiful's Adopt-A-Creek Program and created a new partnership with Mozart's Coffee Roaster's paddleboard rental business, Lake Austin Calm, to create new volunteer cleanup opportunities. In FY24, 221 volunteers gathered to remove 10,277 lbs of trash and debris from our drinking water through 6 Onion Creek park cleanups and 2 Lake Austin paddleboard cleanups.

WORLD WATER DAY

World Water Day is an annual United Nation Observance that celebrates water and taking action to tackle the global water crisis. Together with corporate partners YETI and FVF Law, CRA coordinated 2 cleanups with 59 volunteers at Onion Creek Metro Park to remove 5,647 lbs of trash from our watershed.



ENGAGEMENT

RIVER SOCIETY

The River Society is a group of emerging community leaders dedicated to preserving and protecting the Texas Colorado River by:

- Attracting new people to support the Colorado River Alliance
- Connecting members through unique social events, networking opportunities, and outdoor activities
- Cultivating new leaders to further CRA's mission of championing the long-term vitality of the Texas Colorado River through education and engagement



MEMBERS

Ali and Cara Abazari
Clint Parsley and Alex Albright
Michael Alexander
Greg Allison
Parker Badger
Bianca Bejarano
Mikah Berlinger
Christopher Berry
Marshall and Maddie Bowen
James Breed
Cam Budd

Madison Carter
George and Mary Elizabeth Cofer
Jeff Crosby
Mersaydes and Reed Curtis
Erica Davies
Alex De La Fuente
Patrick Dentler
Trask Dix
Randol Flume
Camila and Garrett Forthuber
Logan Fowler

Juliette Fray
Ashley and Sean Fric
Zachary Giberson
Ryan Gjerset
Rachel Griffin
Caitlyn Grimm
Christine and Patrick Herlin
Aubry Hanners
Emily Jolly
Hill Krause
Lindsey and Will Majors

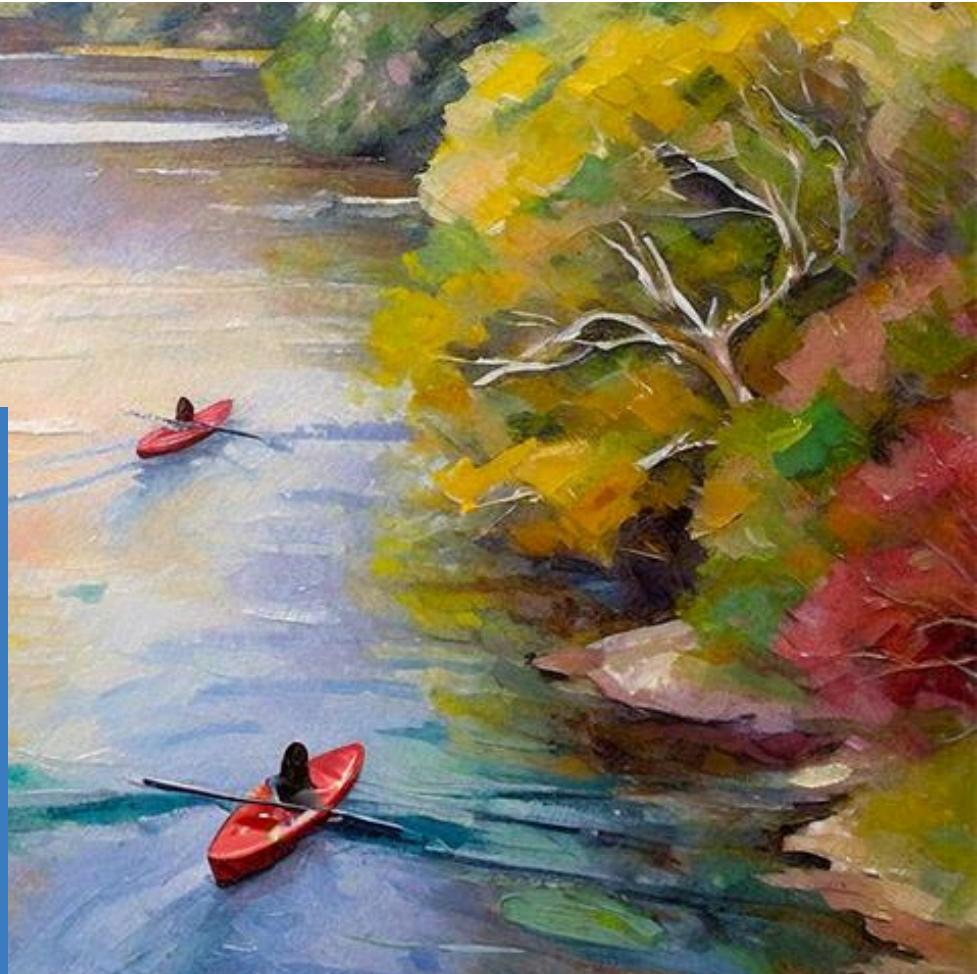
Jacqueline Marié
Andrew and Caroline Marquis
Monica and Ricky Masters
Jess Nelson
Daren and Camile Nix
Chris and Alex Perkins
Miller Polly
Grace Raulet
Killian Regan
Natalie Schuessler
Durant Sellers

Emily and Rick Seiders
Jonathan and Margo Tate
Andy Trimble
James Tyng
Alexis Van Riper
Jennifer Walker
Chandler and Andrew Ware
Rickey Whiteley
Amanda Wilson

ENGAGEMENT

WATER PLEDGE

In 2023, Colorado River Alliance launched the Colorado River 2085 Water Pledge Campaign with in-kind support from local advertising agency, Hiebing, to encourage Texans to evaluate their water usage and take steps to conserve water in their daily lives. Just a few small conservation habits can make a big difference in preserving the Colorado River and helping our community thrive for the next 10, 50, or even 500 years. Throughout the year, students and community members were encouraged to participate in the Colorado River 2085 Water Pledge Campaign, resulting in over 151,143,762 gallons of water remaining in the river rather than “going down the drain”.



RIVER RESILIENCE SPEAKER SERIES

Thanks to the vision, leadership, and creativity of Laura and Kyndel Bennett, the Alliance relaunched the River Resilience Speaker Series to host strategic conversations to discuss water issues and the future of the Texas Colorado River.

In April 2024, the River Resilience Speaker Series brought together 120 water leaders, policymakers, academics, and representatives of the business, conservation, and philanthropic communities for an information and inspirational presentation on why we need a new mindset on water conservation and development, led by Phil Wilson, General Manager of the LCRA.

MEET THIS YEAR'S RIVER HEROES

WE ALL STRIVE TO CHAMPION THE LOWER COLORADO RIVER.
THESE ARE SOME PEOPLE THAT DO SO EXCEPTIONALLY.

JOHN LAY RIVER HERO AWARD HONOREE

JIM DECOSMO

Jim DeCosmo is the longtime Chair of the board of Trustees of the Friends of the Colorado River's Endowment and previously served as president of the Colorado River Alliance's Board of Directors from 2016 to 2018. He joined the board in 2007 and served for 12 years, including other roles as treasurer and vice president. Jim was honored in 2023 as the John Lay River Hero Award Honoree at Cocktails for the Colorado for his contributions to the preservation and protection of the Texas Colorado River.



YES AWARD RECIPIENT (YOUTH EXCELLENCE IN STEWARDSHIP)

DEIGHAN CHERRY

Starting at the early age of four years old, Deighan Cherry fell in love with fly fishing. At the age of ten, in 2020, in response to her school being closed due to COVID-19, Deighan founded @fly_girl_global. The international tying group has more than 1,800 Instagram followers, including girls who fly fish from all over the world. Members of @fly_girl_global tie flies together online, travel to fly fish together, and organize waterway cleanups across the globe. Deighan loves teaching girls new to the sport how to tie flies and catch fish. Every time Deighan goes fishing, she sees trash. Fishing in clean water is very important to Deighan, which is why she makes a point to pick up trash while fishing. Deighan never leaves the water with an empty net! In 2023, CRA was proud to honor Deighan with the YES Award at Cocktails for the Colorado for her dedicated to protecting and preserving the Texas Colorado River.

THE TRIBUTARY LEAGUE

Like the tributary rivers that flow into the Texas Colorado River contributing to its vitality, Tributary League members provide a steady flow of funding that helps to sustain the mission of the Colorado River Alliance.

TRIBUTARY LEAGUE MEMBERS

Pam and Marty Akins

Nathan and Krista Alderman

Kathi and David Allen

Sally and DJ Allen

Janet Bates

Bryan and Katherine Beckworth

Kyndel and Laura Bennett

Chip and Tamara Bray

Ben and Susan Bufkin

Susan Butler

Debbie and Tim Collins

Jeanne and Michael Crosno

Melissa and Matt Dausch

Ruben James De Jesus

Cindy and Jim DeCosmo

Aric and Ali Denton

Jim and Melanie Dow

Will and Brande Draper

Stephanie and Clayton Duncan

Chad and Holly Eppes

Meg and John Erskine

Gary and Susan Farmer

Sandy Flynn

Courtney and Marcus Forthuber

Craig and Alyssa Gilden

Breck and Jennifer Harrison

Jeff and Creithon Honeck

Jill and Mark Hughes

Keith and Joyce Jackson

Reagan and Mickey Jamail

Chuck and Marilyn Jehl

Carl and Paige Lay

Celeste Lay

Mollie and Steve Leach

Paul and Wendy Linehan

Adrienne Longenecker

Will and Dee Dee Longenecker

Ann Turnbull Lowry

Catherine Lucchesi

Carol and Tom Martine

Matt Mathias

Jan and John Mays

Lynn and Mike McHenry

Bill and Carlotta McLean

Nikelle Meade

Stephanie J. Moore

Melinda and Robert Neblett

Robert and Hunter Norris

Steve and Abbe Oden

Bill and Diana Patterson

Walt Penn

Wells and Leslie Person

Jason and Elizabeth Pitts

Lesley and John Pitts

Terry and Amy Sanchez

Clint Small

Robert and Katie Spurck

Katherine & Nathan Thornhill

Leslie and Tim Timmerman

Katey and Augusto Villalon

Don Waldon

Sarah and Wade Webster

Justin Westmoreland

Donna Wilcox

Peggy and Matt Winkler

DEDICATED TO PROTECTION AND CONSERVATION

The generosity of the Tributary League ensures tomorrow's scientists, legislators, land developers, farmers, nonprofit professionals, and entrepreneurs develop a passion for water stewardship and a science-based understanding of our interdependence on the River.





30
YEARS

COLORADO RIVER ALLIANCE

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



ADVISORY COUNCIL

CONTACT US

Adrienne@coloradoriver.org
www.coloradoriver.org

PAM AKINS	GARY FARMER	ARTHUR MILBERGER	ANDY SANSON
JOSEPH BEAL	DAN HERD	ROBERT NEBLETT	RAY WILKERSON
KYNDEL BENNETT	LAURA HUFFMAN	PETER PINCOFFS	PEGGY WINKLER
PAUL BURY	JOHN DICKERSON, III	PAT ROBERTSON	

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

PRESIDENT & CHAIR WADE WEBSTER
IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT JOHN ERSKINE
SECRETARY JENNIFER WALKER
TREASURER JUSTIN WESTMORELAND
AT LARGE OFFICER JOHN PITTS, JR.

MEMBERS
 SALLY ALLEN
 BRYAN BECKWORTH
 MIKAH BERLINGERI
 SUSAN BUFKIN
 SUSAN BUTLER
 LINDSEY HOLUBEC
 HONDO POWELL
 AUGUSTO VILLALON

LEGACY LEADERS

Your generosity and support are essential to the mission of Colorado River Alliance. Thank you for championing the long-term vitality of the Texas Colorado River.

