

The Urban Waters Federal Partnership: Revitalizing Urban Watersheds and Local Communities

USGS New Mexico Water Science Center

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Urban Waters Federal Partnership (UWFP)

The UWFP is a federal program launched by the EPA in 2011 to help communities reconnect with their waterways and surrounding lands.

- Improves coordination among **14 federal agencies**, and partners from tribal, state, and local government, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs)
- Collaborates with community-led revitalization efforts to improve water systems and promote their economic, environmental, and social benefits
- Advances government efficiency and breaks down federal program silos to connect local priorities to federal resources and stimulate local economies



Urban Waters Partnership Guiding Principles

- **Promote clean urban waters**
- **Reconnect people to their waterways**
- **Encourage water conservation**
- **Use urban water systems to promote economic revitalization and prosperity**
- **Encourage community improvements through active partnerships**
- **Listen to communities to engage them**
- **Focus on measuring results and evaluation to fuel future success**



Photo Credit: EPA

21 Urban Waters Partnership Locations

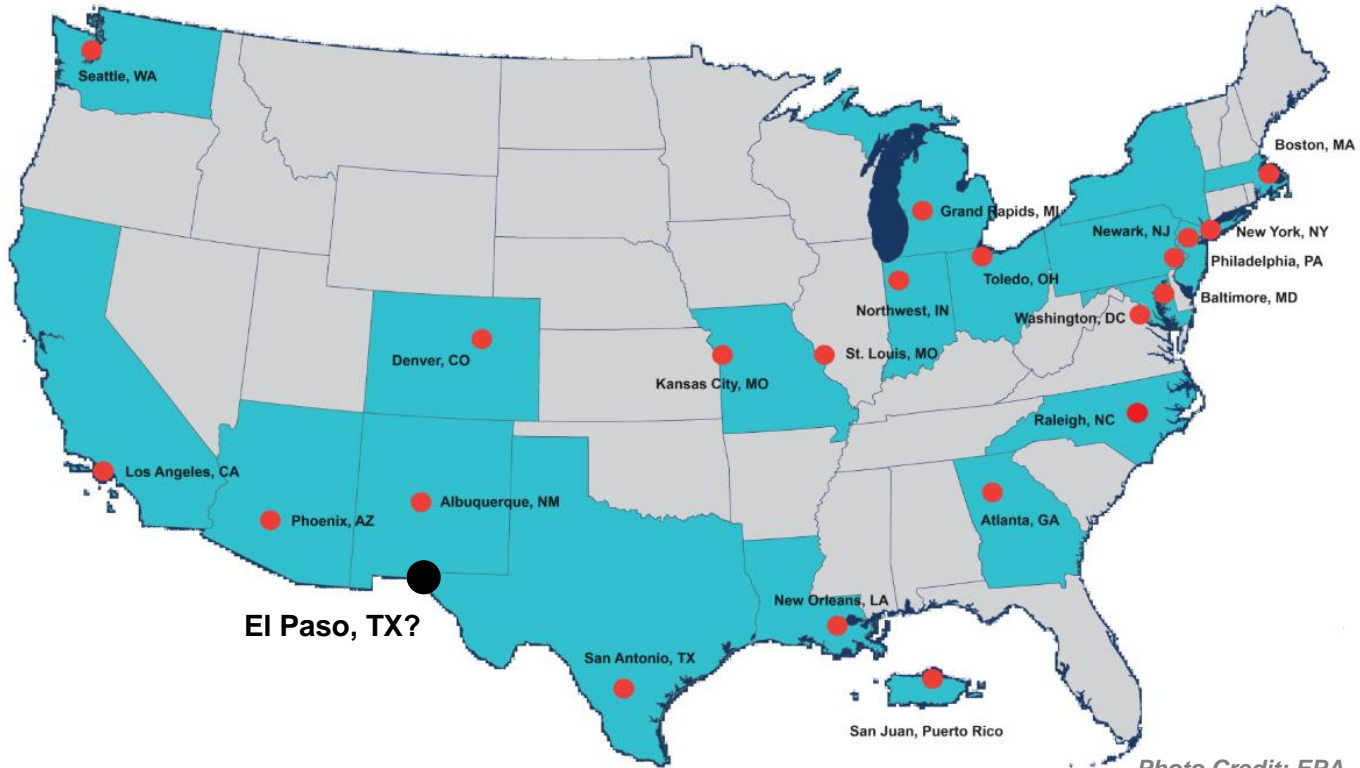


Photo Credit: EPA

Urban Waters Program Overview

Components for Success:

1. Urban Waters Federal Partnership
2. Urban Waters Ambassador
3. Urban Waters Learning Network*
4. Five Star and Urban Waters Restoration Grant Program*
5. USGS Cooperative Matching Funds*

***optional but helpful for partnership goals**



Urban Waters Ambassador

Ambassadors are local staff from NGOs or government agencies who serve as the local leader and liaison to the federal partners and the community.

- Lead collaboration among partners
- Identify community needs
- Support on-the-ground projects that align with the community's vision
- Facilitate community-wide planning and consensus

UWFP can provide grants to fund an Ambassador position at a Partnership location.

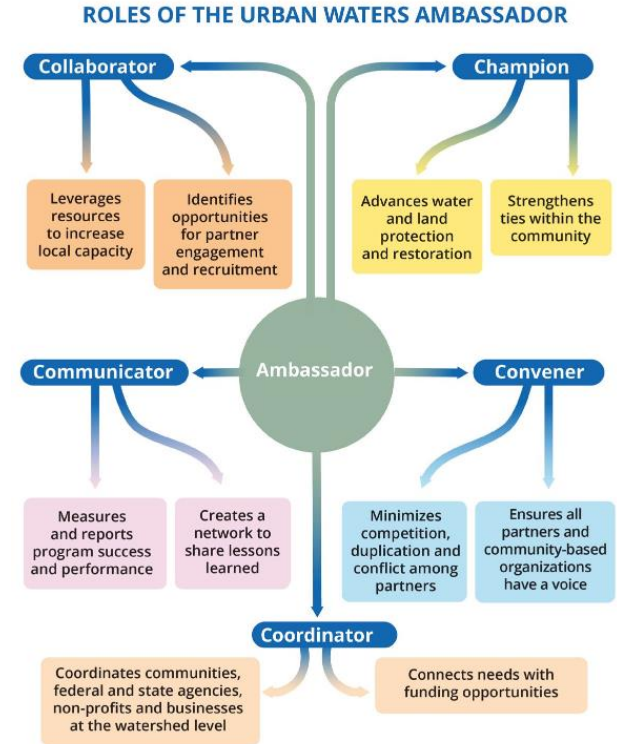


Photo Credit: EPA

Urban Waters Learning Network (UWLN)

UWLN is a peer-to-peer network of people and organizations working to restore and revitalize local waterways and build capacity.

- Networking
- Training and knowledge-sharing
- Mentoring and coaching
- Boosted effectiveness
- Funding and technical resources

www.urbanwaterslearningnetwork.org



Photo Credit: EPA

Five Star and Urban Waters Restoration Grant Program

Public/private partnership to develop community capacity for urban waterway restoration projects by funding diverse local Urban Waters Partnerships.

- **Support provided by the Wildlife Habitat Council**
- **Funding provided by EPA, USDA-Forest Service, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Southern Company, FedEx, and BNSF Railway**

Grant focuses on the stewardship and restoration of coastal, wetland, and riparian ecosystems, local natural resources, and seeks to address water quality issues in priority watersheds.

www.nfwf.org/programs/five-star-and-urban-waters-restoration-grant-program

USGS Cooperative Matching Funds

USGS announced an investment of \$1.5 million to improve urban waterways with science-based projects, which local partners will match in additional funds.

- **Funds were allocated by Congress in 2023**
- **14 UWFP locations with projects related to water quality monitoring, assessment and management, practice evaluation, and educational activities**
 - **New studies will investigate contaminants, microplastics, novel bacteria, and harmful algal blooms**
- **Done in cooperation with municipal, state, and regional partners focused on restoring and revitalizing urban waterways**

www.usgs.gov/news/national-news-release/usgs-invests-15m-local-partnerships-improve-urban-waterways



UWFP for Southern NM & Greater El Paso-Juárez Area



Collaborators & Interested Parties

El Paso / Cd. Juárez:

- **IBWC***
- El Paso County Commissioners
- City of El Paso
- El Paso Water
- **UTEP***
- **UACJ***
- El Paso Community Foundation
- **Frontera Land Alliance***
- Keystone Heritage Park
- Texas A&M AgriLife Extension

Las Cruces / Southern NM:

- NMDOT
- NMED
- **NM EMNRD***
- NM OSE
- **DASWCD***
- **City of Las Cruces***
- NMSU WRRRI
- **Amigos Bravos***
- Friends of the Organ Mountains

Regional / Federal:

- NFWF
- NPS
- USACE
- **USBR***
- USDA NRCS
- **USGS NMWSC***
- Paso del Norte Watershed Council
- **Sierra Club Rio Grande***

***Urban Waters: SNM-ELP-JRZ Steering Committee**



Community Interests and Priorities

- **Water Quality**
 - Bacteria
 - Salinity
 - Sedimentation
- **Water Quantity**
 - Brackish Groundwater
- **Monitoring**
 - Drought
 - Flooding
 - Stormwater
- **Habitat Protection and Management**
 - Agriculture
 - Conservation
 - Restoration



Rio Grande at Caballo Lake State Park, New Mexico. (Corrie Boudreaux/El Paso Matters)

Additional Information

For more information, please visit www.urbanwaters.gov.

Contact us to learn more or get involved:

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