

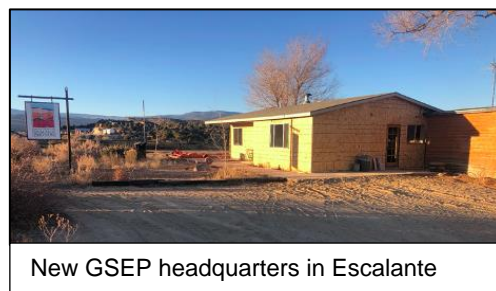
Escalante River Watershed Partnership Summary of 2019-2020 Accomplishments

The Escalante River Watershed Partnership (ERWP) has seen a lot of changes over 2019-2020. We have been transitioning to more maintenance and monitoring work with guidance from the updated strategic vision, effective until 2024. With this transition, the committee structure has changed with a broader scope of goals. While the COVID-19 pandemic has slowed down many volunteer and field efforts, we have still accomplished a lot, summarized below.

General Partnership Accomplishments

Milestones

- Completion of initial removal of Russian olive along the main stem of the Escalante River
- The Nature Conservancy featured ERWP in their national publication and created a [video](#) highlighting the end of initial RO removal
- Grand Staircase Escalante Partners (GSEP) purchases new headquarters in Escalante to provide office/meeting space and storage for restoration work staff and equipment



New GSEP headquarters in Escalante

Transitions

- Mike Wight left his position with Conservation Legacy
- Sarah Bauman is the new Executive Director of GSEP
- Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument (GSENM) and BLM have seen many staff changes in 2019 and 2020. Harry Barber is the BLM District Manager, Vicki Tyler is the GSENM Monument Manager, and Whit Bunting is the Kanab Field Office and KEPA Manager for non-monument lands.
- All meetings were conducted virtually after March 2020 due to COVID-19
- In 2020, ERWP adopted the new committee structure below. Brand new committees are Stewardship & Community Engagement, Uplands Restoration, and Climate Change.

Escalante River Watershed Partnership



Special Events

- On March 3rd, 2020, past and present partners gathered in Escalante to celebrate the completion of initial RO removal and acknowledge the vital contributions from Walton Family Foundation

Coordinating Committee

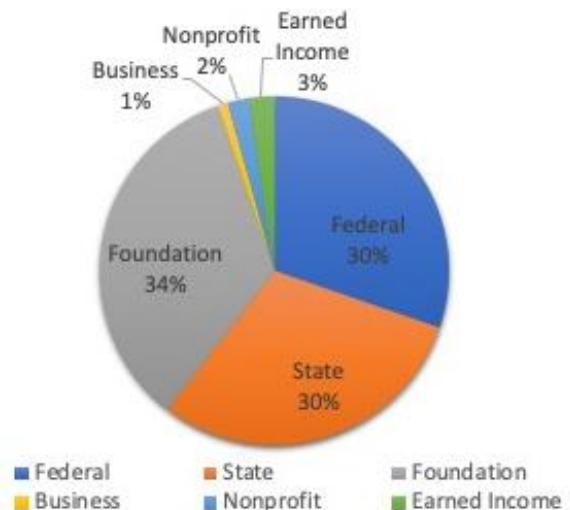
Fundraising

- 2019 marked the end of most Walton Family Foundation funding for ERWP. The Partnership has been operating under a new shared funding framework with contributions from federal partners and has diversified other funding sources.

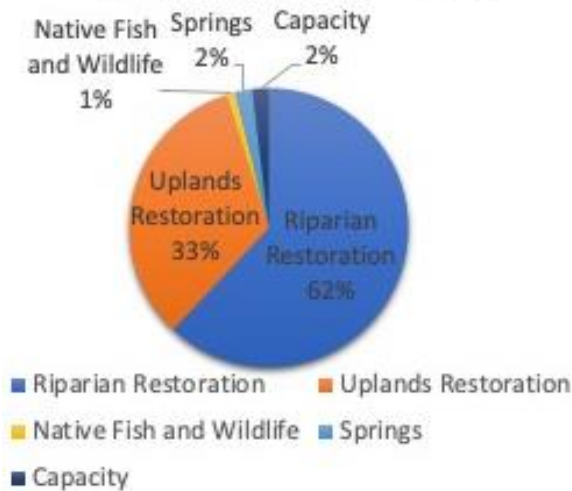
Expenses by Committee 2019



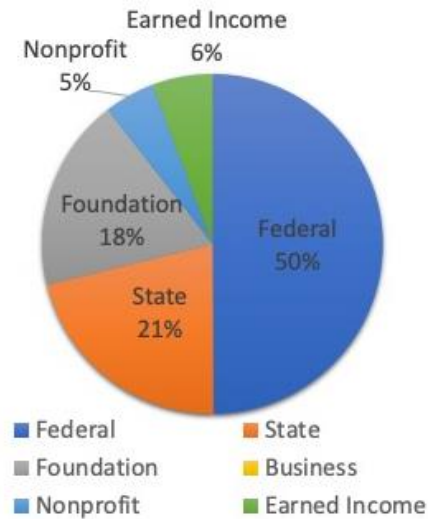
Breakdown by Income Type 2019



Expenses by Committee 2020



Breakdown by Income Type 2020



Breakdown by Funder		
	2019	2020
Bureau of Land Management	\$ 80,500.00	\$36,999.00
Fee for Service	\$ 25,500.00	\$ 25,000.00
Grand Staircase Escalante Partners	\$ -	\$ 10,000.00
Hemingway Foundation	\$ 20,000.00	
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation	\$ 39,136.00	\$ -
National Forest Foundation	\$ 28,050.00	\$ -
National Park Service	\$ 58,400.00	\$ 11,999.00
Natural Resource Conservation Service	\$ 86,761.00	\$ 1,341.00
Patagonia	\$ 10,000.00	\$ -
RiversEdge West	\$ -	\$ 1,000.00
The Nature Conservancy	\$ 21,500.00	\$ 10,000.00
UPCD Watershed Restoration Initiative	\$ 304,594.00	\$ 80,000.00
US Forest Service	\$ 27,335.00	\$ 162,499.00
USFWS Fish Passage Program	\$ 65,000.00	
USFWS Partners for Fish and Wildlife	\$ 10,501.00	\$ 5,000.00
Utah Forestry Fire and State Lands	\$ 12,500.00	\$ 12,500.00
Utah Office of Economic Development	\$ 10,000.00	\$ -
Walton Family Foundation	\$ 284,541.00	\$ 80,000.00
Total	\$ 1,084,318.00	\$ 436,338.00
Breakdown by Income Type		
	2019	2020
Federal	\$ 328,497.00	\$ 217,838.00
State	\$ 327,094.00	\$ 92,500.00
Foundation	\$ 371,727.00	\$ 80,000.00
Business	\$ 10,000.00	\$ -
Nonprofit	\$ 21,500.00	\$ 21,000.00
Earned Income	\$ 25,500.00	\$ 25,000.00
Total	\$ 1,084,318.00	\$ 436,338.00

Expense Breakdown by Committee	
	2019
Capacity	\$ 28,600.00
Woody Invasive Control and Removal	\$ 882,281.00
Conservation Targets	\$ 173,437.00
Total	\$ 1,084,318.00
Expense Breakdown by Committee	
	2020
Riparian Restoration	\$ 300,268.00
Uplands Restoration	\$ 160,000.00
Climate Change	\$ -
Native Fish and Wildlife	\$ 5,000.00
Springs	\$ 9,500.00
Stewardship	\$ -
Capacity	\$ 9,250.00
Total	\$ 484,018.00

Climate Change

- New committee co-chaired by Sarah Bauman (GSEP) and Dennis Bramble
 - Goal: To use the Escalante River Watershed to understand the effects of climate change on species and ecosystem targets, through watershed-relevant research, information sharing, and adaptive management.
 - Purpose: Assess the science, research needs and opportunities of ERWP programs with a focus on climate change and its impact on ecosystems within the Watershed. Advise other ERWP committees on related science issues and data gaps. Responsible for project specific outreach, tasks, and fundraising.
 - Objectives: Determine climate research needs and questions to be pursued by the other ERWP committees. Identify research needs that could utilize citizen science/student researchers. Facilitate interagency discussion of climate related mitigation strategies involving basin-wide resources of management concern.

Stewardship & Community Engagement

- New committee co-chaired by Kristen Jespersen (RiversEdge West) and Sarah Bauman (GSEP)
- The Stewardship and Community Engagement Committee was established in 2020 and had planned to host a springs inventory volunteer event in concert with Grand Canyon Trust, however due to the impacts of COVID-19 the event was cancelled. The partnership intends to plan this event again in 2021 if conditions allow.

Uplands Restoration

- New committee chaired by Terry DeLay (Dixie NF)
 - Goal: Uplands habitats are improving through site assessments, data gathering, restoration, and monitoring and maintenance.

U.S. Forest Service

- Hungry Creek Farm Bill project
 - Began identifying ponderosa pine research plots with Rocky Mountain Research Station during 2019
 - During May 2020, several ERWP members conducted a field trip to the Sand Creek Research Natural Area.
 - NEPA analysis and decision completed during June 2020.
 - CCC timber sale contract awarded October 2020. Contract treats 343 acres of diseased ponderosa pine to promote aspen, reduce fuels, and improve forest health/resiliency.
- Mitchell Spring project
 - Received \$160,000 earmark in 2020 budget to offer the Mitchell Spring Integrated Resource Service Contract.
 - Contract awarded during July 2020. Project treats 353 acres of ponderosa pine to reduce fuels and improve forest health/resiliency.

Riparian Restoration

- Completion of primary treatment on public land in 2019. The final 127 acres. Retreatment acres: 944 completed (private and public). 23 Rapid monitoring points inventoried.
- Presented challenges and lessons learned of ERWP at 2019 Biennial Conference of Science & Management on the Colorado Plateau and Southwest Region (speakers and panel: Jonathan Paklaian (GSEP), Michellsey Benally (Ancestral Lands), Afton McKusick (AZCC), Dave Bastian(CCYC))
- Completed additional retreatment on over 1000 acres of public and private land in 2020. Conservation Corps participating in retreatment included Arizona Conservation Corps, Utah Conservation Corps, and Ancestral Lands Conservation Corps. Inventoried 18 rapid monitoring points with GSEP and Conservation Legacy Partnership, with technical advising from RiversEdge West's Mark Briggs.
- GSEP helped out with Dixie National Forest groundwater dependent ecosystem surveys.

Native Fish & Wildlife

- This committee was previously included in the Science & Conservation Targets Committee. It is now a separate committee chaired by Erik Woodhouse (Utah Division of Wildlife Resources).

Utah Division of Wildlife Resources

- Warm water fish
 - Conducted Three Species monitoring at 13 long term monitoring stations in the Escalante River
 - Conducted non-native fish monitoring in the off channel stream Slickrock Saddle Bench Spring
 - Conducted escapement evaluation sampling in the mainstem Escalante River.
- Cold water fish

- Completed sampling on numerous lakes across Boulder Mountain as part of the Boulder Mountain Sportfish Management Plan

U.S. Forest Service (cold water fish)

- Completed surveys on all core and conservation populations of CRCT in the Escalante Basin.
- Completed the second rotenone treatment of Blue Lake in the Barker Recreation Area to remove fertile brook trout.
- Completed three quantitative fish sampling stations and has collected the bank stability, bank cover and greenline to greenline width long-term indicators of the Multiple Indicator Monitoring protocol at 11 sites.
- Continues to maintain year round continuous temperature monitors in Main Canyon and Pine Creek.
- Conducted Hungry Creek riparian restoration project
- Conducted North Creek pre NEPA activities downstream of the Barkers
- Conducted pre-NEPA activities in conjunction with UDWR vegetation treatments at headwaters of Boulder Creek.
- Conducted pre-NEPA activities of Pine Creek restoration.

Bureau of Land Management

- Four sites within the Escalante Basin were sampled in the summer of 2020 using Lotic Assessment, Inventory and Monitoring (AIM) protocol. One site on Calf Creek and Slick Rock Saddle Bench Spring, and two sites on the mainstem Escalante River.
- Temperature probe data was collected on Calf Creek and North Creek

Trout Unlimited

- Coordinated with Boulder Mountain Guest Ranch to return conserved water from Lake Creek Ditch back into Sand Creek and Lake Creek.
- Potential stream restoration projects were also addressed.

Springs

- This committee was previously included in the Science & Conservation Targets Committee. It is now a separate committee co-chaired by John Spence (formerly NPS) and Larry Stevens (Springs Stewardship Institute).
- The Spring Committee worked on several projects in 2020. In coordination with the University of Utah Digit Lab and Dr. Phoebe McNally, a graduate student developed a remote-sensed approach using aerial imagery to identify potential springs in the lower watershed below ca. 5500 ft. Over 1500 potential springs were identified.
 - A smart phone/tablet app was developed as part of this graduate student project that can be used after hiking to each potential spring, record data on the site, and through a series of questions determine if it is a spring, what kind, and how significant.
 - Short write ups of the major spring types in the watershed were prepared, and a list of plant species that occur at springs was developed and photos

located. These supporting documents and photos can be loaded onto smart phones and tablets to aid in field identification work.

- The committee is continuing to coordinate with the Springs Stewardship Institute (SSI) to determine ways for spring data collected in the field to be entered into the online SSI database.
- Glen Canyon/NPS initiated a springs status and health assessment with Utah State University that includes the Escalante River watershed. This work will be completed in early 2021 and will help inform management of these significant water resources.