

Healthy Lands, Healthy Water

Natural infrastructure as a path to clean water

The lands around our water sources serve as vital infrastructure that can meaningfully improve water quality and quantity for cities around the world. Beyond protecting our water sources, forests, grasslands, wetlands and improved agricultural practices can help reduce our carbon footprint, maintain critical ecosystems and build healthier, more resilient communities in the face of climate change.



Restoring wetlands supports plants and animals and filters pollutants from our water sources.

Managing fire risk through controlled burns or thinning overgrown forests can help prevent catastrophic fire that pollutes waterways.

Fencing around water sources keeps livestock from waterways, reducing the risk of waterborne disease.

Planting trees around crops and on pastureland can reduce erosion and give farmers and ranchers additional sources of income.

Protecting existing forests and grasslands can reduce erosion, capture and store carbon, and serve as critical habitat for plants and animals.

Replanting trees on barren hillsides and land reduces erosion, captures carbon and can restore habitat for imperiled species.

Using cover crops on fallowed fields can reduce erosion and nutrient pollution and ensure the long-term productivity of the soil.

Restoring and retaining pollinator habitat near farmland contributes to crop production.

Improving roads and stream crossings reduces sediment flowing into water sources.

Planting trees, shrubs and grass along the water's edge keeps pollutants from reaching water sources and provides habitat for a wealth of species.

For more than 15 years, water funds have enabled downstream water users to invest in upstream habitat protection and land management to improve water quality and quantity.

Learn more at [nature.org/beyondthesource](https://www.nature.org/beyondthesource)

