



Photo credit: Thomas O'Keefe



Protecting the Green River as an Outstanding Resource Water

May 31, 2023

Agenda

- 1** Outstanding Resource Waters
- 2** The Green River nomination
- 3** Rulemaking schedule
- 4** Questions

Outstanding resource waters

High quality or unique waterbodies that warrant special protection



**Protecting
outstanding
resource waters
is a federal
requirement**

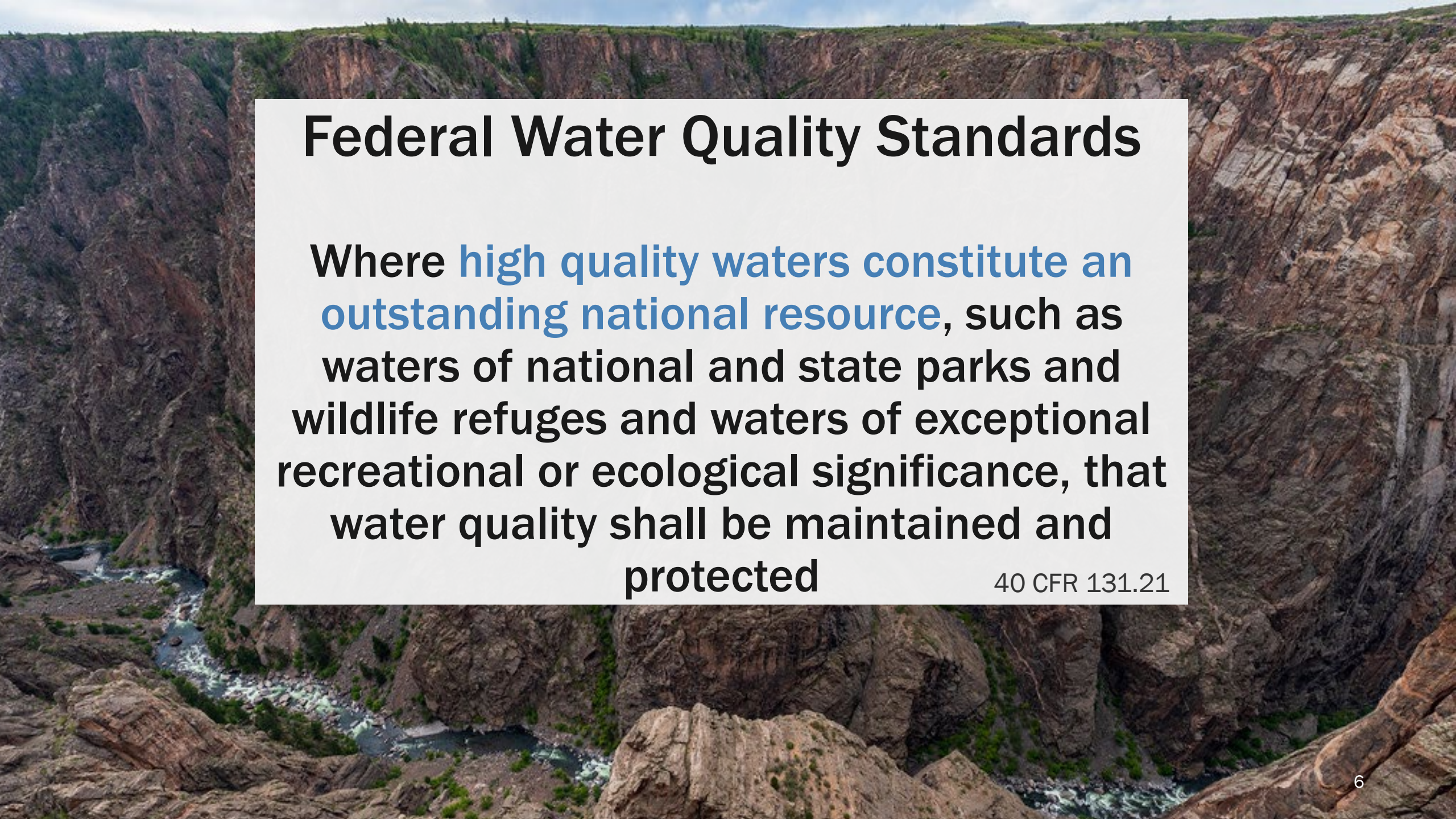




Clean Water Act

The objective of this chapter is to restore and **maintain** the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the Nation's waters

33 § 1251(a)

An aerial photograph of a deep, rugged canyon. The canyon walls are composed of dark, layered rock formations. A river flows through the bottom of the canyon, creating white rapids as it moves over rocks. The sky is overcast and grey.

Federal Water Quality Standards

Where **high quality waters constitute an outstanding national resource**, such as waters of national and state parks and wildlife refuges and waters of exceptional recreational or ecological significance, that water quality shall be maintained and protected

40 CFR 131.21



Outstanding resource waters are protected from degradation

Applies to new or expanded point source discharges or nonpoint sources of pollution after we adopt an ORW designation.

Some activities are still allowed

- Activities that would cause short-term water quality changes
- To protect public health or property in an emergency

This rule does not apply to sources of pollution from the air

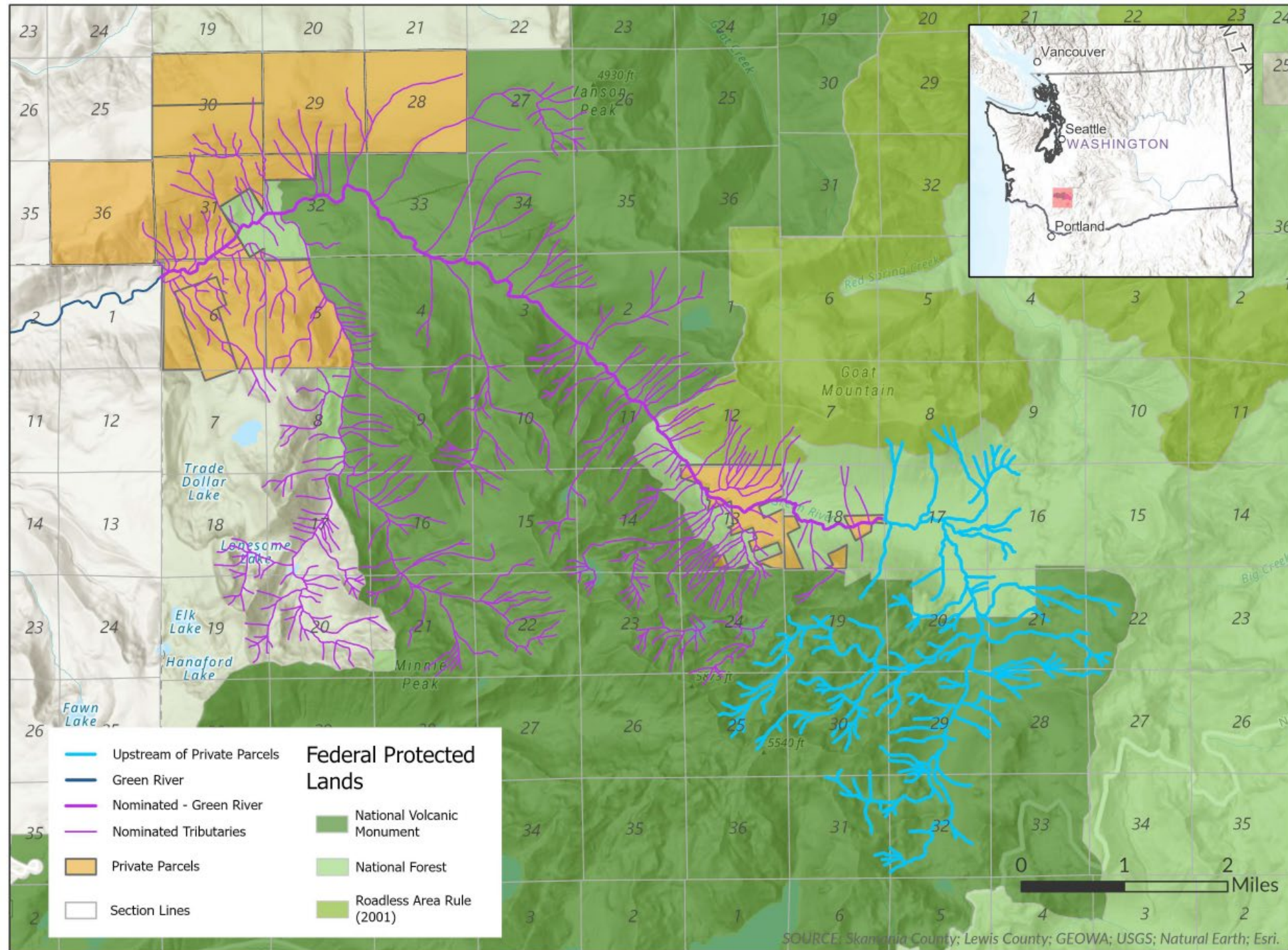
Green River

Nominated in 2021 by

- Pew Charitable Trusts
- American Rivers
- Cascade Forest Conservancy
- Wild Salmon Center
- American Whitewater
- Washington Wild
- Trout Unlimited



Green River ORW boundary



The Green River is eligible as an ORW

- Limited human caused degradation and in a protected area
- Exceptional statewide ecological significance
- Regionally unique recreational value



Photo credit: Thomas O'Keefe

Outstanding resource waters nominations



Green River

Cascade River

Napeequa River

Soap Lake

Rulemaking Timeline

Public comment period begins this summer



Where are in the process

- Gather more information about each waterbody
- Talk to tribes and stakeholders
- Gather informal feedback





Thank You

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