
The Nature Conservancy Hires Hydrology and Restoration Specialist to Support Sustainable Water Management Efforts

The Nature Conservancy announced today the addition of Jeff Opperman to its Sustainable Waters Program. Opperman, 34, will work out of Davis, California, as the program's technical advisor for water management, a new position.

Opperman's hiring will enable the Conservancy's Sustainable Water Program to expand its relationship with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to define and implement environmental flows at dams owned and operated by the Corps.

Four years ago, the Conservancy's Sustainable Water Program and the Corps agreed to identify opportunities where freshwater ecosystems could be affected by modifying dam operations while still meeting human needs. The result of this historic partnership is that today the Conservancy and the Corps are either implementing or studying operational changes to 26 dams on 11 rivers.

Achieving flows that mimic nature's own rhythms can greatly benefit native plants and animals. The timing, magnitude, frequency, and duration of the flow of water sends cues that trigger fish to spawn or migrate. Such flows also provide access to important habitats for spawning and juvenile fish and influence plants and aquatic animals that need moving water to survive and flourish.

Opperman will provide site-specific technical, policy, and logistical support in identifying and implementing sustainable water management strategies. He will work closely with the Corps to identify additional opportunities at some of the more than 600 dams owned by the Corps.

The Conservancy's Sustainable Water Program protects freshwater ecosystems in the United States and internationally by advancing water policies and practices that secure adequate water flows to rivers, lakes, and wetlands.

Opperman comes to the Conservancy after receiving his doctorate in ecosystem science from the University of California at Berkeley. He also studied floodplain restoration during a postdoctoral fellowship at the University of California at Davis. He previously worked as an environmental policy consultant and coordinated riparian and watershed restoration projects.

The Nature Conservancy is a leading international, nonprofit organization that preserves plants, animals, and natural communities representing the diversity of life on Earth by protecting the lands and waters they need to survive. To date, the Conservancy and its more than one million members have been responsible for the protection of more than 15 million acres in the United States, and have helped preserve more than 102 million acres in Latin America, the Caribbean, Asia, and the Pacific.