

Jackie Diedrich Excellence in Leadership Award

2021 — Jennifer Back

The Interagency Wild and Scenic Rivers Coordinating Council (IWSRCC) is honored to recognize Jennifer Back as the recipient of the Jackie Diedrich Excellence in Leadership Award. In her role with the National Park Service Water Resources Division as the WSR Science Lead, and in her five years with the IWSRCC, Jen worked tirelessly to advance cross-disciplinary understanding of wild and scenic rivers. From the evaluation of water quality assessments used broadly by nonprofit partners, agency staff, and local advocates to her engagement with the Environmental Protection Agency in advance of the 50th anniversary of the Clean Water Act, she encouraged a deeper understanding of the importance of water quality data for long term river protection. Relatedly, Jen provided leadership on the national interagency partnership with Adventure Scientists, helping guide scientific protocol for community science.

Leadership is one of the critical elements of this award, and Jen's commitment to mentoring three Conservation Fellows has led to a vital understanding of WSR water quality (see *Evaluation of State Water Quality Assessments and the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System*) that has primed emerging partnerships at the state and national level. Jen also saw a huge opportunity to tackle key WSR issues through training, including a highly regarded bank stabilization workshop and multiple interagency trainings in a virtual environment with RMS as agencies and partners transitioned into new ways of working together.

Jen leaves a legacy for future river managers from her work in providing policy guidance to an example to follow in her efforts to support interagency collaboration, positive relationships with partners, and opportunities for future leaders.

