



25 YEARS STRONG

he Tiananmen Square uprising, the fall of the Berlin Wall and the Exxon Valdez disaster all happened 25 years ago. It's not surprising that WILDEARTH GUARDIANS would come into existence in a year with such political tumult and environmental disaster.

From our inception around a kitchen table in Santa Fe, New Mexico, and with your help every step of the way, we've challenged deeply entrenched political and economic forces, articulated a paradigm-shifting vision, and confronted the exploitation of wild nature.

While we've grown progressively over that 25 years from our initial focus on one timber sale in New Mexico to our current focus on wolves and endangered species, wild rivers, and the climate crisis, we've remained steadfast in two key ways: our homeland is the American West and our commitment is to wild nature. Our strategies have evolved, which means that we're still scrappy, dogged, and irreverent litigators at heart who believe the law matters and who are happy to stand up in court for the intrinsic rights of spotted owls and minnows. But as we've grown we've become equally comfortable working the halls of Congress and the boardrooms of banks to leverage every political and financial edge for wild nature.

Looking ahead our challenges will only grow. As the climate crisis mounts we believe we will need to think bigger and demand and deliver more. As we rise to the environmental challenges of the next 25 years we are confident that, with your loyal engagement, GUARDIANS will continue to be a leading voice for lasting environmental change. As good as we have been for the past 25 years, our most important work lies ahead.

From the Board President ROBIN SMITH

he end of 2013 marks a significant milestone for WILDEARTH GUARDIANS. Formed in 1989 to fight a logging project in New Mexico, we are now celebrating the start of our 25th year of taking bold actions to protect and restore wildlife and wildlands across the American West!

Over the years, as our supporters have generously increased their giving, we have added staff and expanded programs. In 1989, Forest Guardians, as we were originally called, barely had 2¢ to rub together and included just a handful of dedicated volunteers. In 2013, we raised \$3.2 million dollars and employed an outstanding staff of 26 full-time, professionally trained, and highly motivated people.

To celebrate our 25th year, this report highlights our 2013 actions as well as some the most significant victories we have achieved since our inception. While

we are very proud of these accomplishments, we know there is still much to do. We need to continue growing our revenue and membership so we can hire additional biologists, attorneys, media and communications experts, and organizers to ensure all wildlife—grizzlies and wolves included—are free to roam the American West from Canada to Mexico.

With your continued support, we believe our greatest accomplishments are yet to come!

Kotin Smith

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From the Executive Director JOHN HORNING

n it for the land long haul. It's a defining characteristic of my personal commitment to WILDEARTH GUARDIANS and our commitment to you. This year marks my 20th year at GUARDIANS. My grandfather's 50 years of work for the Denver and Rio Grande Western Railroad is my family standard bearer—which means I may not be even halfway through my GUARDIANS' career!

But I think that's what it takes. If we are to build on Leopold's Legacy in an enduring fashion in the Greater Gila; if we are to recover wolves from Canada to Mexico, if we are to shackle the government's wildlife killing agency, and if we are to prevail in our generational battle to keep fossil fuels in the ground, then I believe continuity of leadership is essential.

We need leadership that values risk-taking like that we exhibited when we retired a grazing permit in the Greater Gila, sunk a coal-fired plant and put bulls-eyes on many others, and sought to build Congressional leadership for a restoration vision to rewild our national forests.

But to paraphrase Frederick Douglass, 'power concedes nothing without a struggle. Never has. Never will.' The GUARDIANS' Nation is engaged in the struggle. We're growing to rise to the challenges on your behalf—and on behalf of a more, sane, wild American West. Thank you for your support.

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REWILDING THE CONTINENT



In 2000, WILDEARTH GUARDIANS filed a legal rule-making petition asking the Forest Service to overhaul its off-road vehicle regulations. This was part of an ambitious goal by Bethanie Walder, GUARDIANS' Public Lands Director, to stop cross-country travel on 50 percent of Forest Service lands.

In 2004, then Forest Service Chief Bosworth declared "unmanaged recreation" as one of the four greatest

threats to Forest Service lands. We agree: roads and off-road recreation, for example, are primary causes of wildlife habitat fragmentation. Stopping off-road vehicle abuse and reducing the size of the national forest road system are critical steps for restoring healthy and functioning corridors of life.

One year later, the Forest Service released a new rule to rein in off-road vehicle abuse across the country. Working with local and national partners we spearheaded a national campaign to secure strong plans—we commented on drafts, we sued over bad plans, and we supported good ones.

Most importantly, we exceeded our goal—the agency restricted almost all offroad vehicle use to designated trails only (plus a few small play areas). The Forest Service has now closed approximately 50 million acres of land to unregulated, cross-country travel, with a few more decisions still pending.

But that's not all. The agency recently began a national road management process, also because of our pressure, and they are about to embark on a similar snowmobile management effort. Building from our past successes, we're engaging in all of these processes with one ultimate goal: rewilding the American West with healthy, robust corridors of life.





A DAM BUILDER WE LOVE

In 1996, the Santa Fe River, southwest of its namesake town, had been grazed to the bone. That year John Horning and an intrepid crew of volunteers fenced out the cows and planted thousands of cottonwoods and willows.

Within a few years the land slowly started to heal—and then, knowing the stream was ready for them, beavers returned.

These extraordinary ecosystem engineers transformed the landscape, creating wetlands and ponds. As a result, today that stretch of river is a wildlife magnet.

The beaver dams captured water, slowed runoff and created resilient wetlands that had been exceedingly dry.

With the Santa Fe River as our model, in 2010 WILDEARTH GUARDIANS approached the New Mexico Environment Department about deploying beavers as a wetland restoration tool throughout New Mexico. Our conversations became the foundation for a vision, and ultimately a blueprint which we completed in 2013, to bring beavers back to thousands of miles of streams.

We have a vision to bring beavers back to thousands of stream miles.

By doing the work they naturally do to create ponds and wetland areas, beavers are helping to recover species such as the endangered New Mexico meadow jumping mouse and Rio Grande cutthroat trout, and make our lands more resilient as our planet warms.

Our work continues to garner public support to reintroduce beavers, create a culture of coexistence, and allow the beaver to do its climate adaptation work for the benefit of us all.

eco-engineers

LET THE GROUSE DANCE

A reporter recently asked Terry Tempest Williams who the most powerful individual in the American West is today. Her reply: "The sage grouse." "I'm serious," the reporter said. "So am I," Williams replied.

Erik Molvar, GUARDIANS' grouse advocate also knows that the sage grouse is a powerful and important force that can help reign in the oil and gas and public lands ranching industries across the West. Unchecked drilling has destroyed habitat and caused a massive decline in sage grouse numbers—by nearly 50 percent last year alone.

In 2003, we petitioned to list the grouse under the Endangered Species Act, and we've been trying to secure protection for the bird ever since.

sagebrush sea

Our historic 2011 legal settlement with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service requires the agency to take final actions on more than 250 species—none more significant than the sage grouse. The mere threat of an endangered listing for the grouse, required by 2016, has led the BLM, Forest Service, and state wildlife agencies to propose changes in land-uses across 75 million acres of land.

Protecting the grouse means transforming land uses across 75 million acres.

The coming two years are a critical time for the grouse so look for GUARDIANS to maintain our decadeslong commitment to protect the sage grouse and the Sagebrush Sea landscape that it calls home.

living river



RIO GRANDE, GREAT RIVER



In the summer of 1996, the farmers along the Rio Grande in central New Mexico, arrogantly and defiantly, diverted the river's entire flow to flood irrigate alfalfa. Within days, the riverbed became a dusty, dry arroyo with tens of thousands of shimmering Rio Grande silvery minnows left dead and baking in the hot sun.

Despite being protected under the Endangered Species Act two years before, the silvery minnow and the Rio

Grande itself did not have a right to its own water. In fact it seemed every interest along the river had been given priority water rights that year—except for the river itself.

In 1999, WILDEARTH GUARDIANS went to court to reclaim the river's rights to its own water and assert that the Endangered Species Act required that the rights of the river be the first priority. While that litigation and its offspring secured victories over the years, including first-ever instream flows for the river and, in 2013, the ability to store environmental water in Abiquiu reservoir to help meet ecosystems needs, our ultimate goal—a permanent water right for the river—remains elusive.

Jen Pelz, our Wild Rivers Program Director, believes that if the Rio Grande and the dozens of endangered and sensitive species that depend on it are to survive, the river must have rights to its own water—priority rights.

To remedy this historical injustice, Pelz is leading GUARDIANS' efforts as we return to federal court to fight for the river, and also with farmers to acquire water for the river, and with Congress and the Obama Administration to ensure that the Rio Grande—one of America's most iconic rivers—is a living river for future generations.



FREEDOM TO ROAM

Last year, Bethany Cotton, GUARDIANS' Wildlife Program Director watched five members of the Junction Butte wolf pack feast on freshly killed Bison in Yellowstone National Park. It was a reminder of the power of the Endangered Species Act, which was the guiding force to reintroduce wolves into this iconic western landscape.

But with wolves restored to less than eight percent of their historic range, wolf recovery has only just begun. GUARDIANS' dream for wolves is bolder. We envision wolves restored and roaming freely from Canada to Mexico, including the Southern Rocky Mountains of Colorado, which have some of the most suitable but unoccupied wolf habitat in the country.

So in June 2013 when the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service proposed to delist all wolf populations (with the exception of the critically

stand for wolves

endangered Mexican gray wolf), we were outraged.

GUARDIANS' wolf team went into action, attacking the decision and mobilizing opponents across the nation through a series of letter writing campaigns, social media events, public meetings, and even a film explaining wolves' importance within our ecosystem.

Our film received more views than anything we had previously posted online and the efforts of coalition wolf groups produced nearly 1.5 million comments opposing the de-listing, more than any endangered species issue ever.

GUARDIANS will continue to lead the fight to protect this noble creature and work not only to ensure Endangered Species Act protections remain in place, but also that we see them restored and roaming freely across their historic range.

KILLING COAL



Oftentimes the seeds of great success start out small.

Jeremy Nichols put this into practice in his early days as our Climate and Energy Program Director. In the winter of 2009, he sent a two-page letter to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency informing the agency that it was years behind a legal deadline to adopt a plan to curtail air pollution in New Mexico to protect National Parks.

Three years later, his letter spurred the Environmental Protection Agency to target the San Juan coal-fired power plant in northwestern New Mexico. The Agency's overdue plan finally imposed strict clean air limits at the power plant to protect Mesa Verde National Park in Colorado.

While this plan would protect Mesa Verde, it would cost New Mexico ratepayers millions, while still burning massive amounts of carbon that fuels global warming. So, GUARDIANS pushed for a different solution. Rather than pay to clean up coal, why not ditch coal altogether?

In 2013, success blossomed. In one the largest coal-fired power plant retirement commitments in the American West, the owners of the San Juan plant agreed to shutdown half of it. The move protects Mesa Verde, and, more importantly, stops the release of an immense amount of carbon.

Saving the climate means powering past coal. It's a bold vision. It's GUARDIANS' vision. We're now building on the San Juan power plant success to see an even bigger power shift away from coal and toward clean energy.

power shift

leopold's legacy

THE GREATER GILA



When Bryan Bird, Wild Places Program Director, first met with Alan Tackman in the spring of 2013 he didn't know whether Alan wanted to strangle him or work out agreeable terms to retire his national forest grazing permit. Fortunately, Alan opted for the latter, recently becoming the first rancher to voluntary retire his national forest grazing allotment in the Greater Gila!

Such is the nature of the long, deep conflict and passion that runs with wolves, public lands, and ranching in the landscape that inspired America's first wilderness.

In 2006, GUARDIANS realized—in what was then a major strategic shift—that working with and compensating willing ranchers to retire grazing on public lands was one the most effective ways to help the Mexican wolf survive.

Since that first brave meeting with Tackman, we've reached agreements with two more public lands ranchers and we are now talking with a dozen others about voluntarily relinquishing their grazing permits.

But permit retirement is not our holy grail: permanent protection for the landscape that inspired Aldo Leopold is. That's why, on a parallel path, we're working in Congress to pass legislation that not only makes allotment closures permanent, but also designates more than two million acres in the Greater Gila as wilderness.

Our work aims to give Mexican wolves the freedom to roam and also to protect one of the great landscapes in America. Ultimately, we want to realize a dream of Aldo Leopold's—and many in the conservation movement—for a wild and protected Greater Gila that provides a safe haven for wolves, grizzlies, and even jaguars.

ANCIENT FORESTS AND SPOTTED OWLS

When GUARDIANS won our first major legal battle against the U.S. Forest Service and the timber industry back in 1995—a 16-month injunction on 21 million acres of national forests—our founder, Sam Hitt, was hung in effigy.

That victory, for the spotted owl and for its ancient forest habitat, only came after years of legal battles to shift the legal and ethical paradigm and assert the rights of wild nature.

Most of our major wins don't come overnight—rather they come in small doses over long periods of time—but that victory did. The ruling issued by a federal judge came across a noisy fax machine in August 1995: suddenly logging was stopped and the timber industry's chainsaws across the southwestern United States went quiet.

Twenty years later our fight for the spotted owl continues and we're

Twenty years later our fight for the spotted owl continues and we're back in court standing up for the endangered bird... back in court standing up for the endangered bird as the Forest Service seeks to weaken protections established nearly two decades ago.

While our legal strategy and tactics have evolved over the last two decades one thing hasn't changed: our commitment to fight for the spotted owl until the owl and the trees in which it lives are safe.



SCORCHED EARTH DRILLING BOOM

We've always known that drilling and fracking takes a tremendous toll on our western landscape. That's why, for more than a decade, we've fought in the courts to limit drilling on our public lands.

But what's becoming all-too-clear is that fracking is one of the greatest threats to our climate. Industry greed and a false belief that gas can be a bridge fuel to a clean energy future are fueling a new push for oil and gas ...while the rhetoric says that oil and gas burns cleaner than coal the reality is, it's all dirty energy.

in the West—and with it a dramatic increase in greenhouse gas emissions. Case in point is the government's recent plan to drill more than 5,700 new oil and gas wells in Utah. Fracking releases methane, which is 25 times more potent than carbon dioxide, which means it will generate as much global warming pollution as a coal-fired power plant. It also requires massive drilling rigs and endless truck traffic, which scar the landscape.

That's not the end of it, because when the oil and gas is ultimately burned, it will create 5 billion more tons of carbon. That's nearly as much global warming pollution as we produce in the United States every year—all from just 5,700 new wells in Utah.

WILDEARTH GUARDIANS is fighting this project in Utah, and many others like it all across the West, because while the rhetoric says that oil and gas burns cleaner than coal, the reality is, it's all dirty energy.

Moving forward, our vision is a frack-free American West.

25 YEARS OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS



Halted dozens of logging projects to protect wildlife, rivers and wild and scenic lands



Ensured that Colorado policy supports full protection of wolves that travel to Colorado from Yellowstone



Halted livestock grazing on 300 miles of heavily degraded southwestern rivers



Convinced Congress to invest \$350 million to close and reclaim unneeded Forest Service roads and trails



Won the first grazing lease to use state school trust lands for conservation instead of extraction



A nearly 10-year legal campaign helped secure the first-ever instream flows on America's Great River, the **Rio Grande**

990 1

Brought national attention to the Wildlife Service's annual indiscriminate killing of millions of wildlife



Helped end "high-body count" contest hunts of prairie dogs, coyotes and other wildlife in Colorado



Won lawsuit that halted logging on 21 million acres of southwestern national forests



Petitioned to protect more than 1,000 imperiled species under the Endangered Species Act



Secured significant reforms to protect cougars in Colorado and New Mexico



20

Spearheaded efforts that closed 50 million acres of National Forest land to cross-country offroad vehicle abuse



From the beginning, WILDEARTH GUARDIANS has thought big, challenged conventional "wisdom" and embraced both conflict and cooperation, all without compromising our core values as we've fought for our vision. Here are 25 highlights.





Transformed Groundhog Day into Prairie Dog Day, a day of public support for our charismaticburrowing rodents

Saved more than 150,000 acres of critical wildlife habitat and important wildlands from oil and gas drilling



Reached a nationwide settlement with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, breaking an endangered species-listing logiam



Worked to protect 75 million acres of the Sagebrush Sea for the greater sage grouse and Gunnison sage grouse



Planted more than one million trees and shrubs on degraded streams and rivers across the Southwest

Ushered in a "moratorium" on new coal leasing in the Powder River Basin of Wyoming and Montana

removing livestock

from almost 50

square miles in

the Greater Gila

Completed our

first grazing

allotment

retirement,

Launched a **Climate & Energy Program** to confront climate change and challenge our dependence on fossil fuels



Secured the single largest designation of outstanding waters in the history of the Clean Water Act



Secured new endangered species protections for more than 100 species



Fought to end the persecution of, and restore Endangered Species Act protections to, the gray wolf



Partially or completely shut down three coal-fired power plant in Colorado and New Mexico



Expanded from a small southwestern advocacy group to a national powerhouse with offices in eight states



GUARDIANS' MEMBERSHIP 25 Years of Your Support







*Join GUARDIANS' Wild Bunch by signing up to be a monthly donor.

WILDEARTH GUARDIANS 2013 Audited Financials



GUARDIANS STAFF What does the next 25 years look like?



natural resources."

WHITNEY BACON



"I'm inspired by GUARDIANS because I "The American West is restored want to be part of a community that with the full complement of does not compromise the ethic that native carnivores keeping wildlife nurtures, respects, and protects our populations healthy and in balance."



BRYAN BIRD

"The vast wildlands from Canada to Mexico are protected from development and resilient to the effects of climate change"



LORI COLT

"GUARDIANS will have influenced the public to live with compassion and respect for nature and all her creatures."



BETHANY COTTON

"Protecting and restoring our natural heritage, clean water, wildlife, and wild places is a top priority for all Americans and both political parties."



KEVIN GAITHER BANCHOFF

"WILDEARTH GUARDIANS values, strategies, and core tactics will be emulated by progressive advocates everywhere in the U.S."



TAYLOR JONES

"Prairie dogs are protected and honored and grassland ecosystems are flourishing across the West."



JIM MATISON

"Landscapes and ecosystems that support healthy populations of wildlife and flora will be fully functioning and appreciated by our grandchildren."



SARAH McMILLAN

"Decision-makers will join us in treasuring and protecting wildness, from the rugged peaks of the Anaconda-Pintler Wilderness to red rock slot canvons."



ERIK MOLVAR

"77 million acres of prime sage grouse habitat will be saved from industrial development, and millions of acres of grazing allotments will be voluntarily relinguished for native wildlife."



KEVIN MUELLER

"After a joyous celebration for Utah's pristine air, I kick start an eco-tourism business while Secretary of Energy Jeremy Nichols oversees a sane energy economy."



JEREMY NICHOLS

"After abolishing fossil fuel development in the West, I'll be gratefully out of a job and able to focus on fulfilling my dream of being a fully committed river rat."



JOHN HORNING executive director

"The Greater Gila is as Aldo Leopold experienced it: a place where wolves, jaguars, grizzly bears, and other native carnivores are celebrated with awe and wonder."



CLAIRE NICKEL

"Billions of seemingly insignificant acts, carried out with reverence and discernment, will empower Earth and its people will find solutions to challenges that seem insurmountable."



CAROL NORTON

"I will be camping in the Southern Rockies, and will see my first cougar and know she's fully protected. (Hopefully she won't eat me!)"



"Rivers like the Rio Grande reclaim the landscape and flow dynamically to the sea."



"Restored wildlands provide quality wildlife habitat and improve resiliency to climate change through improved migratory pathways."



SAM RUSCAVAGE BARZ

"The U.S. will be weaned from its dependence on fossil fuels and as a result of GUARDIANS' work to help make this happen, we will all be breathing clean air and drinking clean water."



STEPHANIE SAMPLE

"GUARDIANS in the US and abroad will join in the fight to stem the everaccelerating extinction of our fellow species!"



SUSAN SCHWEBKE

"I plan to be sitting in a rocking chair on my front deck, enjoying the family land in Pecos. At age 75, I will say that I was proud to work for GUARDIANS until they made me retire."



BETHANIE WALDER

"Protecting and restoring our natural heritage, clean water, wildlife, and wild places is a top priority for all Americans and both political parties."



JODIE WHEELER

"Protecting and preserving the American West is a way of life, and as natural as breathing."



MARLIES WIERENGA

"Wildlands, wildlife, and clean air and water are valued more than money. And I will be sitting quietly on a sunbaked boulder in the desert toasting the beauty around me!"



STUART WILCOX

"The inherent value and rights of wildlife and the environment are unquestioned."



ASHLEY WILMES

"The public insists on renewable and earth-friendly energy over dirty fossil fuels and elects officials who are committed to environmental protection and restoration."

DONOR PROFILES

We are grateful for all of our members and supporters. Here are three who are celebrating our 25th anniversary in a unique way.

WARREN BRODHEAD SALT LAKE CITY \$25 MONTHLY DONOR

With an appreciation of the backcountry since boyhood and employment over the years with the U.S. Forest Service in New Hampshire, Colorado, and Utah, and the Boulder Division of Mountain Parks in Colorado, Warren Brodhead is pleased to support the work that WILDEARTH GUARDIANS does to protect wilderness. After moving to Salt Lake City, Warren met GUARDIANS' organizer Bob Brister who introduced him to the Utah Environmental Congress, and then WILDEARTH GUARDIANS when we merged. Warren says," I'm happy to support an organization that does yeoman service in the incredibly important struggle to defend our beloved North American West from the short-sighted greed of profit-mongering corporations and their political enablers."

CONNIE ADLER ALBUQUERQUE \$25,000 DONOR

\$25,000 supporter Connie came to know GUARDIANS after a career of working with social action and environmental organizations. She believes that everything on the planet is a connected web—with water the essential element in the web and that no activity operates independent of that web. "No organization addresses our state and regional water issues with the intelligence, focus, and long-term planning as GUARDIANS does. Whether it is their work to restore riparian areas, retire

grazing permits, or return a constant water flow to the Rio Grande—their work is about water." Through the EMA Foundation Connie generously supports our Wild Rivers Program.

ROGER PETERSON SANTA FE 25-YEAR MEMBER

Roger Peterson of Santa Fe, NM has been a member of WILDEARTH GUARDIANS since the beginning. Roger met WILDEARTH GUARDIANS' founder Sam Hitt back when we were Forest Guardians and liked his enthusiasm of upsetting cozy relationships between federal bureaucrats and extractive industry groups, especially the timber industry. Rogers' loyalty to GUARDIANS stems from his belief that we're effective and we remain consistent to our values. Roger says, "Over time GUARDIANS has protected a lot of forest and old growth. Plus I admire your restoration efforts."

Thank You to Our Major Contributors

We are deeply grateful to the following supporters who helped make our work possible from January 1 - December 31, 2013.

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HELP LAUNCH WILDEARTH GUARDIANS' NEXT 25 YEARS

We are looking for 301 new commitments for wild places, wildlife and clean air and water across the west!

ONE GIFT AT **\$250,000**

We're looking for one new leadership contribution that will inspire others and enables us, in a single moment, to expand a program and build our leadership team.

25 GIFTS AT **\$25,000**

We think big and we act boldly. We need an expanded leadership circle to infuse us with the resources needed to act on the opportunities immediately in front of us.

25 GIFTS AT **\$5,000** FOR 5 YEARS

We're in it for the long haul which means we need sustained support to enact paradigm shifting change.

250 NEW \$25 MONTHLY DONORS

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