



WILDEARTH GUARDIANS

A Force for Nature

A Wild Future



*John Horning,
a veteran
environmental
activist,
has worked*

*on dozens of environmental
campaigns in a career at
WILDEARTH GUARDIANS that
has spanned more than two
decades. He believes deeply in
the intrinsic right of all species
to exist and in the idea that
public lands are a unique part
of American exceptionalism.
John ensures both principles
are cornerstones of GUARDIANS'
advocacy.*

Mission & Values

WILDEARTH GUARDIANS works to protect and restore the wildlife, wild rivers, wild places, and health of the American West. We believe in nature's right to exist and thrive. We act on this belief with compassion and courage by preserving the wild world. We defend wildness, empower life, end injustice, and stand for healthy, sustainable ecosystems and human communities. We embrace conflict, and cooperate without compromising our values. We execute our campaigns strategically and decisively; we mobilize, inform and inspire others; and we work to heal wounded landscapes. Our enduring and fierce advocacy leads us to success.

History & Capacity

WILDEARTH GUARDIANS has a long history of conservation successes protecting carnivores, ancient forests, rivers, and other threatened landscapes and wildlife. We currently operate four major programs—Wildlife, Wild Places, Wild Rivers, and Climate & Energy—and rely on a potent combination of litigation, education, scientific analysis, and public advocacy in our work. Today, WILDEARTH GUARDIANS has more than 67,000 members and e-activists, the majority of who live in the 11 Western states. We have offices in Arizona, California, Colorado, New Mexico, Montana, Oregon, Utah, and Wyoming. Our 27-person staff includes lawyers, policy experts, scientists, ecosystem restoration experts, community organizers, and fundraisers.

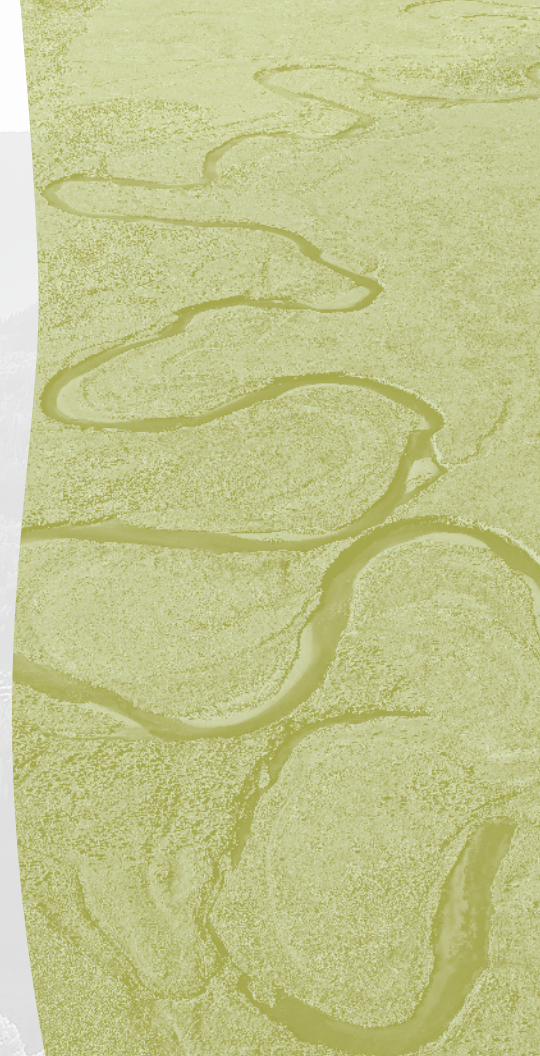


Notable recent accomplishments include:

- Our historic, nationwide legal settlement in 2011 with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service protected 166 imperiled species under the Endangered Species Act between 2012 and 2014. In total, our legal settlement—which runs through the end of 2016—will result in final decisions to secure endangered species status for 253 imperiled species, including many iconic and rare species.
- In 2013, WILDEARTH GUARDIANS forced the closure of the Lamar coal-fired power plant in Colorado and forced New Mexico's San Juan Generating Station to shut down half its capacity. We completed a settlement with Excel Energy's North Denver Cherokee plant that shuttered the plant, and made provision for nearly \$450,000 towards energy efficiency, rooftop solar, and open space development projects in the area.

Our Vision

We envision an American West where our rivers, native wildlife and world-class wildlands are protected and secured. We work towards a day when the political leaders of the West celebrate and protect biological diversity, not only because it is essential to planetary sustainability, but also because they recognize the intrinsic rights of nature. We also believe the West can lead the transition to renewable energy instead of being an energy colony for our nation's destructive dependence on fossil fuels. Below are brief program and campaign descriptions, which show how we are working to accomplish our vision this year.





*Bethany
Cotton,
a native
Oregonian,
joined our*

*staff in 2013 and directs our
Wildlife Program to ensure
that endangered species have
a fighting chance at survival.
As a lawyer and grassroots
organizer, Bethany believes in
the power of the law and the
power of inspired people to effect
change for our planet's imperiled
and persecuted species.*

Wildlife



*T*he extinction crisis threatens to unravel the vibrant tapestry of life that sustains our world. From springsnails and silvery minnows to wolves and wolverines, we live at a time when even once-common species are now rare. While extinction is real in the American West, we believe many imperiled species still have a fighting chance at survival in our region.

WILDEARTH GUARDIANS forcefully advocates for endangered species in court and in Congress because each species has an intrinsic right to exist, and because we believe, like most people, that we have a moral obligation to prevent extinction.

The other moral cornerstone of our wildlife advocacy is confronting cruelty in all its varied forms, especially activities that specifically target native carnivores. We aim to replace cruelty with an ethic of compassion and coexistence, especially on our public lands. We use federal wildlife laws to stop the most egregious acts of cruelty while engaging in sustained legislative campaigns to bring about durable, lasting, and humane changes to policy.



- **SAFEGUARDING ENDANGERED SPECIES.** We will defend our nation's premiere wildlife law—the Endangered Species Act—with an emphasis on ensuring that our historic legal agreement is fully implemented by the end of 2016 and species like the iconic greater sage grouse and Sonoran desert tortoise are protected. We will simultaneously defend the Act from attacks in Congress and ensure that it is robustly enforced.

- **ENDING THE “WAR ON WILDLIFE.”** Sadly, traps, poisons, aerial gunning, and other cruel methods of killing animals are still quite common on public lands throughout the West, largely to benefit agribusiness. We will continue legal and political reform efforts to dismantle the federal program that kills millions of animals each year, including nearly 100,000 native carnivores annually.
- **GIVING WOLVES FREEDOM TO ROAM.** Our vision of recovering gray wolves throughout the West embraces a deepened focus on ensuring their return to Colorado, which is one of the last and best places for wolves. We will challenge efforts by Congress and the Obama Administration to prematurely strip away federal protections for wolves, while going to court to improve protection for the critically imperiled Mexican gray wolf.



We recognize the importance of building popular support for wolves and turning supporters, young and old, into advocates. We are mobilizing kids all across the West to pressure Congress and Interior Secretary Sally Jewell to protect wolves so that they and future generations will have the opportunity to see wolves in the wild.



Bryan Bird, a trained ecologist, directs our efforts to advance innovative

strategies ensuring durable and lasting protections for our national forests and other public land.

A GUARDIANS staff member for more than 15 years and a native Californian, Bryan knows well the value of protecting wild public lands for their clean water and native wildlife habitat.

Wild Places

The American West is a place set apart by abundant public lands with remnant ancient forests, wild watersheds and streams, and pristine grasslands, which remind us of the spectacular richness that once epitomized this region. A legacy of logging, road building, livestock grazing, and fossil fuel extraction have degraded and fragmented millions of the more than 300 million acres of America's public lands in the 11 western states. In addition to advancing a restoration agenda on our national forests and Bureau of Land Management lands, WILDEARTH GUARDIANS intends to keep public lands in public hands by preventing their seizure and destruction by private, extractive interests.





• **LEOPOLD'S LEGACY IN THE GREATER GILA.** Our campaign to protect the world-class wildlands and wildlife of the Greater Gila will build on our successful, pioneering efforts in 2014 to retire high-conflict grazing allotments. We intend to leverage ranchers' support of grazing permit retirement to protect Mexican wolves and secure wilderness in the place that first inspired noted conservationist Aldo Leopold.

• **REWILDING OUR NATIONAL FORESTS.** National forests, despite having some of the wildest places on earth, are also criss-crossed with 375,000 miles of old logging roads that fragment wildlife habitat and poison streams with sediment. We seek to rewild our national forests by reducing the size and impact of the national forest road system and stopping off-road vehicle abuses across the west.

• **PROTECTING THE SPINE OF THE CONTINENT.** We envision a system of protected, crown jewel landscapes connected by wildlife corridors along the Continental Divide from Canada to Mexico. Making such a bold vision a reality requires defending wild places from threats such as logging and drilling. Simultaneously we intend to advance our vision by working with the Forest Service to protect important corridors in new agency land-use plans.



Aldo Leopold was an American author, scientist, ecologist, forester, and environmentalist, and was influential in the development of modern environmental ethics and wilderness conservation. His principles of nature and wildlife preservation are a primary inspiration for our efforts to protect and preserve the American West.



*Jennifer Pelz,
a native New
Mexican
who came to
GUARDIANS after*

*seven years as a Colorado water
lawyer, took the reins of the Wild
Rivers program in 2013. Jen
combines legal acumen, a deep
personal love of wild rivers, and
sensitivity to local communities
in her advocacy to secure
environmental flows for western
rivers, first and foremost the
iconic Rio Grande.*

Wild Rivers



Rivers are the arteries of life in the West's arid landscape. Unfortunately, archaic and wasteful agricultural practices, increasing urban demands, industrial and agricultural pollution, and other harmful activities are drying up and degrading our rivers. We work to keep our cleanest water clean and fight to give rivers throughout the West rights to their own waters through restoration, litigation, and political advocacy efforts.

- **RIO GRANDE: AMERICA'S GREAT RIVER.** On the Rio Grande, we are advancing a multipronged effort that includes securing environmental flows through agricultural water-acquisition and storage programs, removing or re-authorizing restrictive dams and levees, recovering endangered species, and preventing new water depletions.



- **RIVER RESTORATION.** We continue the invigorating work of breathing life back into degraded headwater streams in New Mexico and across the southwest by planting native trees and restoring beavers, nature's ecosystem engineers.
- **GILA RIVER.** The Gila is the last undammed and truly wild river in the Southwest. Since New Mexico approved a plan to dam and divert the river, we will intensify legal and political advocacy efforts to convince Congress and the Bureau of Reclamation to oppose the plan.

What it means to be a GUARDIAN is to believe that planting a tree to heal a degraded stream can be just as powerful an act as standing up in court to advocate for a depleted river to have a right to its own water. We believe in the value of restoration as an ecological act and a social and political one as well.



Jeremy Nichols, who grew up in Boise, Idaho, began directing our Climate &

Energy Program in 2008 and has elevated our work to the national forefront by advancing bold programs and campaigns backed up by innovative legal strategies. Jeremy has a keen sense of how to expose the true costs of fossil fuel extraction.

Climate & Energy

Our vision is simple: our country 100 percent powered by renewable energy by 2035. To get there, one of the main goals of our Climate & Energy program is to ban the extraction of coal, oil, and gas from federal lands and waters, which are responsible for 25 percent of our nation's carbon footprint. This campaign, coupled with the promotion of de-centralized, local, clean power sources and targeted advocacy to rein in fossil fuel combustion, is playing a critical role in defending our climate and safeguarding our future.



While the public lands of the American West have long been a national sacrifice zone for the fossil fuel industry, our region can also lead in making the transition to wind and solar. WILDEARTH GUARDIANS believes we can expedite the transition to clean energy by exposing the true cost of fossil fuels.



- **OUR LAND, OUR CARBON.** It's increasingly clear that more of the world's fossil fuels must be left in the ground if we are to prevent a global climate disaster. We believe keeping fossil fuels under our public lands and waters provide the best opportunity to secure this goal. We will lead a national coalition while advancing a set of legal, educational, and other advocacy strategies that keep our carbon in the ground.

- **POWERING PAST COAL.** We will continue our creative and relentless pursuit of federal lawsuits that create new financial liabilities to prevent new—and help shutter old—coal-fired power plants across the west.

- **PROTECTING AMERICA'S BACKYARD FROM FRACKING.**

The explosion of oil and gas development endangers everything that makes the West special: our water, our air, our wildlife, and our iconic landscapes. We will focus on protecting our public resources—clean air and special landscapes such as Chaco Canyon—from fracking.



We're mobilizing GUARDIANS across the west, and our nation, to stand up to Big Oil and King Coal. We are in the streets, on social media, and in the halls of Congress to ensure that our shared legacy of public lands does not continue to fuel the climate crisis. Only by engaging diverse communities to pressure Congress can we foment a political crisis to keep coal, oil and gas locked down in the ground—where they belong.



Amplified Voice & Deepened Impact

*W*e've assembled a powerful, dynamic group of advocates who see more opportunities and need—individually, programmatically, and collectively—for greater impact and influence. While meeting our current annual funding needs is our highest priority, we would like to increase our capacity to become an even more effective organization. Here we identify \$500,000 in additional operational and program funding for staff that would enhance our organizational effectiveness and propel GUARDIANS forward on our current trajectory to becoming an even more powerful force for nature.

COMMUNICATIONS & CONSERVATION DIRECTORS: Over the last few years of swift organizational growth we prioritized adding program staff: people who do the day-to-day work of conservation advocacy, something we have done throughout our history. The downside of those staffing decisions is that we are now at a size where we urgently need both a Conservation and Communications Director, two vital leadership positions that will ensure more effective coordination and strategic action. Robust, strategic communications build social, political, and financial capital. We need an experienced Communications Director who can develop, oversee, and implement a strategic communications plan for the entire organization. Creativity and discipline are both vital in effective communications and are the qualities we seek in a Communications Director. Likewise, we need a Conservation Director who can support the Executive Director and four program directors in developing

and supporting high-profile conservation campaigns that involve legal, political, and grassroots advocacy efforts.

THE NEED: 2 PEOPLE | THE COST: \$200,000

LEGAL TEAM: We want to add a new staff attorney to get one step closer to having a full-time lawyer for each of our four programs. Our legal advocacy is sometimes the difference between life and death for endangered animals or between winning and losing the battle with Big Coal and Big Oil to stem the climate crisis. We believe that by embedding a staff attorney in each program, we will be able to best execute comprehensive legal strategies.

WILDLIFE: Our presence on the landscapes we are working to protect and in the halls of power in Washington, D.C. is key to our success protecting imperiled wildlife. In addition to added legal capacity, we want to hire a full-time organizer who can respond to and help counter threats to the Endangered Species Act in Congress.

CLIMATE AND ENERGY: Reining in the fossil fuel industry's assault on our public lands is a challenge we are meeting head on, but it's not easy. It's going to take a team of allies and it's going to take building a movement. With the hiring of a Campaign Director in 2014, we're on the right track. The next step is to bring on an organizer and additional program staff to support the team.

THE NEED: 3 PEOPLE | THE COST: \$300,000

“ *WILDEARTH GUARDIANS embodies the best of what both the Wilburforce Foundation and I believe in and support across the west—vision, boldness, tenacity, and creativity in defense of the wild heart of North America. They are skilled at adapting to a diverse array of conservation challenges while staying true to their core. Their leadership is strong and built to win on the big, innovative conservation campaigns that they champion.*

—DENISE JOINES
PROGRAM OFFICER,
WILBURFORCE FOUNDATION

Conclusion

This year WILDEARTH GUARDIANS starts our next 25 years, built on the foundation of the last, defining 25 years. We have established ourselves as a creative, impassioned, and effective leading voice and as GUARDIANS of wildlife, wild places, wild rivers, and a healthy climate across the American West. We have the vision, the strategies, and increasingly, the capacity to build on our past and become an even stronger advocate for nature and all that we value in the American West.



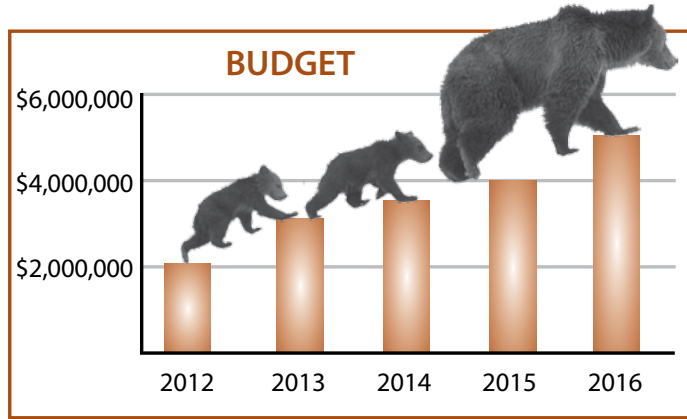
One of the ways WILDEARTH GUARDIANS is changing society is by building a movement of inspired, engaged, and committed citizen activists. Since 2010, our membership has grown significantly on nearly every major social platform, and we expect our membership and e-activist base to increase to 100,000 by the end of 2015. Attracting more adherents to our vision and marshaling their voices will enable us to better hold our politicians and agency decision-makers accountable for creating the world we so desperately want.

“Never, never be afraid to do what’s right, especially if the well being of a person or an animal is at stake.

—DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.

BUDGET. WILDEARTH GUARDIANS'

2015 budget is \$3.5 million with a stretch goal of \$4 million. Our funding is diverse and comes through a combination of membership and individual donors (44%), foundation and government grants (51%), legal fees (2%), and in-kind services (3%), all while spending 84 percent of revenue directly on program activities. In 2015, we need to raise an additional \$500,000 in new funding to achieve our programmatic vision.



Environmental problems are growing in scale, not diminishing. We recognize that in order to implement lasting environmental solutions, we need to be able to operate on a larger scale, both regionally and nationally. Thus we are growing our staff and building depth in key programs and campaigns. To accomplish this we need more financial resources. We have already attracted new resources that enable us to tackle tough problems. We will continue to do so.



WILDEARTH GUARDIANS works towards a day when the political leaders of the West celebrate and protect biological diversity, not only because it is essential to planetary sustainability, but also because they recognize the intrinsic rights of nature.



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