

WILD AT HEART

THE WORD FROM WILDEARTH GUARDIANS

No. 26, Fall 2016

Cold, Clean, Complex & Connected

Protecting Bull Trout Waters
for All of Us





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WILDEARTH GUARDIANS is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

SANTA FE OFFICE:
516 Alto Street, Santa Fe, NM 87501
TEL 505.988.9126

DENVER OFFICE:
2590 Walnut St., Denver, CO 80205
TEL 303.437.7663

OFFICES ALSO IN: Missoula, Portland, San Diego, San Francisco, Seattle, Tucson

GRAPHIC DESIGN: Janice St. Marie
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A BOLD VISION

Rewilding Our National Forests

John Horning

WHITNEY WEINICK



One of my favorite memories as a young kid is when my dad would drive us in an ancient Willy Jeep up an old logging path on a small farm that my parents owned in central Virginia.

I remember only fear and exhilaration. That's because the road went nearly straight up the mountain and because my dad didn't really know how to drive a stick shift and my brothers and sister knew it and he knew we knew it. We'd all hold on tight each time he'd shift gears, as we slid backward

while he'd grind at the gear shaft searching painfully for the traction, and safety, of a lower gear.

But what I also remember is that when it rained that faint path would bleed red sediment into the stream below. That was my first education in the ecology of roads, especially roads like that one, which weren't designed, built, or maintained for long-term use.

Since then I've learned that logging roads on our national forests, built during the logging heydays of the 1970s, '80s, and '90s, are one of the single greatest threats to aquatic and wildland ecosystems in our country. They cut wildlands into ever-smaller chunks, depriving native carnivores of the large landscapes they need to survive while also choking native trout streams with sediment.

Thankfully the U.S. Forest Service is aware of the numerous problems created by their massive road network, which is more than five times larger than the federal interstate system. Yet while the agency has mandated that it shrink its road network to the minimum to adapt to financial constraints and ecological needs, the agency often fails to implement the necessary, bold changes on each national forest.

That's where GUARDIANS comes in—to make the necessary possible to heal our degraded national forests. This issue of *Wild at Heart* features our Rewilding Campaign and while our work is all about policy, regulations, and the law, it's fundamentally about healing. Especially in these times, we could all benefit from more healing.

For the Wild,



JESS ALFORD

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GET ON THE BUS

Going the Distance for Bears

Madeleine Carey



New Mexico resident Karen Williams was running a marathon at the Valles Caldera National Preserve last June when she found herself between a mama black bear and two cubs.

"I saw the bear and one of its cubs. They were down by a water source, and then the mother started to charge me," Karen said. "I first put my arms over my head, and started to yell 'no' very loudly. Then I thought, 'This is going to hurt.' The next thing I knew I was on my back."

Karen yelled, and the bear seemed to get mad, swatting Karen again and biting her. An experienced outdoorswoman (she lived on the northern edge of the Greater Gila for seven years and has had several large carnivore encounters), Karen realized the mama was defending her cubs. Karen curled up, clutched the back of her neck, and waited.

After a long ten minutes, the bear moved off. Karen then waited for the next runner on the course to come along, which was almost a half hour later. She was airlifted to the hospital in Albuquerque, where wildlife officials collected a DNA sample to match to the now-wanted bear, and doctors gave her the first round of expensive rabies treatment.

A few days later, the bear was captured and euthanized, and her brain was sampled

for rabies. Later that week, her cubs were trapped and sent to a wildlife rehabilitation center. The sample came back negative for rabies.

After she was released from the hospital, Karen was devastated to learn the fate of her bear. Angered by the decision to euthanize a mother animal that was exhibiting normal maternal behavior, she dived headfirst into the pile of state laws that dictate when and

Karen has launched a campaign to change the state law to allow bear attacks to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and make New Mexico a state where it is safe for bears to be bears.

where bears get to be bears. What she found was a Health Department policy that states any bear that bites a human must be euthanized due to risk of rabies. Karen then discovered that there has never been a documented case of rabies in bears in New Mexico, and no record of transmission of rabies from black bears to humans in North America.



Karen Williams competing in Atomic Man Duathlon in Los Alamos in September.

Karen has launched a campaign to change the state law to allow bear attacks to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and make New Mexico a state where it is safe for bears to be bears. "We need to be logical, and think a little bit instead of just taking out a bear because of a law," Karen says.

If you want to support Karen's campaign and/or get on a mailing list about this issue, please contact Madeleine at mcarey@wildearthguardians.org.



We invite you to join the Wild Bunch, our amazing monthly donors. Whether your contribution is \$5, \$20 or \$250 a month, monthly givers form the backbone of our organization, and provide the sustainability and flexibility that enables us to work on urgent and critical issues. Your pledge deepens our capacity to respond quickly and decisively.

SIGN UP TODAY!

DEFENDING OUR LANDS AND OUR CLIMATE

Landmark Lawsuit Targets Fracking

Jeremy Nichols

WHY ARE YOU
A GUARDIANS
MEMBER?

5-YEAR MEMBERS
ART AND SUEZ
JACOBSON



SUEZ/JACOBSON

Art is a Denver native. Suez grew up in Salt Lake City. So they know that when Colorado and Utah meet, good things happen. "We support WILDEARTH GUARDIANS' dedicated and unflinching action to protect the wild biosphere and all its inhabitants. They keep our wild hope alive."

—WILD GRATITUDE, SUEZ
AND ART JACOBSON

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WILDEARTH GUARDIANS

Our public lands are increasingly under siege by the fracking industry.

In August, we filed a landmark lawsuit challenging the Obama administration to stand up to the oil and gas industry and protect our public lands and climate from fracking.

Filed together with Physicians for Social Responsibility, our suit targets U.S. Interior Department decisions that have opened nearly 400,000 acres of public lands in Colorado, Utah, and Wyoming for fracking.

Without a doubt, President Obama has shown immense climate leadership. However, when it comes to oil and gas development on our public lands and waters, there is a major blind spot. Since taking office, his Interior Department has auctioned off more than 10.2 million acres of our public lands for fracking, most in the Rocky Mountain West.

Already, oil and gas produced from our public lands and waters is responsible for 10 percent of all U.S. greenhouse gas emissions. By leasing our public lands to industry, the administration is locking in an untenable commitment to more carbon pollution and setting back efforts to move away from fossil fuels.

For the past year, WILDEARTH GUARDIANS has ramped up the call for the administration to put the brakes on new oil and gas leasing. After all, earlier this year, Sally Jewell, Secretary of the Interior, adopted a moratorium on new coal leasing, citing the climate impacts of authorizing more coal mining and more coal burning.

Yet with oil and gas, the Interior

Department is continuing to open the carbon floodgates and to show no signs of restraint. In fact, when auctioning off our public lands for fracking, Interior continues to claim that opening the door for oil and gas development poses no climate impacts.

It's not just our climate that's at risk; our legacy of public lands is at stake. In the last two years, Interior has leased lands underneath Colorado's Pawnee National Grassland, Wyoming's Red Desert, and Utah's Red Rock Country for fracking.

The aim with our latest suit is simple: to force the administration to acknowledge the climate effects of public lands oil and gas leasing and to compel our government to do something about it. With President Obama calling for bold action to confront carbon pollution, the opportunity is tremendous.

We don't need to keep auctioning off our public lands for fracking. Right now, the oil and gas industry is producing from only 35 percent of all leased acreage in the U.S. Now is the time to put the brakes on new fossil fuel leasing and invest in alternatives.

We're being represented in court by our own staff attorney, Samantha Ruscavage-Barz, and also by attorneys at the Western Environmental Law Center. Together, we're bringing forth a formidable defense for our climate and our future.

Visit wildearthguardians.org: Programs / Climate and Energy / Frack-free American West

Rebecca Sobel

Direct action to Keep It in the Ground

In September, our Keep It in the Ground work continued as we returned to the White House, joined by First Nations and frontline leaders. We delivered over one million petition signatures to President Obama demanding an end to leasing public lands and waters for fossil fuels.



WILDEARTH GUARDIANS



WILDEARTH GUARDIANS

But we didn't stop there. We went directly to the Department of the Interior and flooded the lobby, chanting, praying, and sharing stories. As police moved in, thirteen people, including our Executive Director, John Horning, sat down, held hands, and sang, "People going to rise like the water, we're going calm this crisis down. I hear the voices of my great-granddaughters saying keep it in the ground."

John was arrested to send an unmistakable message—to protect our climate, our future, and our public lands, President Obama must end the obsolete and controversial program of leasing our public lands and waters to dirty energy companies. We couldn't be prouder.



WILDEARTH GUARDIANS

WHY ARE YOU A GUARDIANS MEMBER?

5-YEAR MEMBER
VERNE HUSER



SAM PARKS

"I saw Scarface (a 25-year-old male grizzly) in Yellowstone last year before he was shot by a hunter. I saw him swim the Lamar River, shake off his wet fur, then amble along the river for a mile before he crossed the road right in front of us. I trust WILDEARTH GUARDIANS to make sure we stop killing these precious animals."

—VERNE HUSER

Interested in becoming a GUARDIANS Event Partner? Email Claire Nickel at cnickel@wildearthguardians.org

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REWILDING FOR BULL TROUT

Healing scarred landscapes to give bull trout a fighting chance

Marla Nelson



JIM MOGEN, CREATIVE COMMONS, FLICKR.COM

Returning forest roads and trails to the wild will help secure the cold, clean water bull trout need to survive and recover.

Smooth gravel turns into a dry, rutted road. Shallow riffles of the late summer South Fork Boise River glitter below us. Deep washboard grooves threaten to rattle the screws out of the truck so we slow to a crawl, swerving to avoid the frequent and massive potholes. Slow is often the pace on these forest roads. But we don't mind. We are intent on spotting a bull trout in these waters—a sighting that would make the glacial pace worth it.

Catching a glimpse of this magnificent, bluish-gray fish dotted with pinkish-orange spots is difficult, given its dwindling numbers. Listed as a threatened species under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) in 1999, bull trout are now gone from half of their historic range. Over 50 percent of bull trout

critical habitat occurs on federal lands, making smart public lands management decisions vital to the trout's survival.

Why are bull trout numbers so low? Bull trout are picky—they require cold, clean, complex, and connected habitat to survive. Habitat loss and destruction, splintering of habitat, water pollution, competition with nonnative fish species, and poor fisheries management practices are some of the main reasons for the decline of bull trout.

The U.S. Forest Service's extensive and decaying road system poses a growing liability to bull trout recovery. Forest roads are a primary source of sediment. Increased sediment flowing into rivers and streams smothers young fish developing in spawning gravels, changes stream dimensions, and increases stream temperatures. Roads and culverts can also block fish passage between spawning and rearing areas, downstream foraging, and overwintering habitats. Many national forest roads are remnants of legacy logging activities and are in serious disrepair.

The road we're on, in the Sawtooth National Forest in central Idaho, is no exception. Rounding a bend, we're forced to stop: a "closed road" sign blocks the way. Determined not to quit yet, we hike a few miles beyond the sign to discover the source of the road closure—a massive slide subsuming the road and dumping rock, dirt, and debris into the meandering adjacent river.

Extreme weather often adds stress to these crumbling forest roads. As a result of climate change, more precipitation falling as rain instead of snow and early snowmelt both lead



A RIVER REAPPEARS FROM THE RUBBLE



Skokomish River, Wash., forced underground in summer by tons of gravel and rock.

Though the Skokomish River is the largest river flowing into Hood Canal, an angular side arm to Puget Sound in Washington state, in summer the river disappears under mounds of rock and gravel. Endangered and threatened Chinook salmon, summer chum salmon, steelhead, and bull trout struggle to find refuge in pools of water until the rains return and the river appears again. From 1950 to 1990, excessive road building for clear-cut logging in this geologically unstable, rain-soaked landscape led to hillsides and roads washing away and filling in the riverbed.

But this story is changing. Local communities, NGO's, government agencies, and the Skokomish tribe have worked for years to put restoration into action. This year, the Olympic National Forest completed all major road work in this watershed: decommissioning or stabilizing roads, fixing road/stream crossings, and replacing culverts. This cut off the supply of rocks

so the river can heal. GUARDIANS ensured there were funds for this work by advocating for the Legacy Roads and Trails program—\$40 million annually appropriated by Congress for this type of restoration work nationally.

From 2008 to 2015 in the Skokomish watershed, the Olympic National Forest:

- Decommissioned, closed, or converted to trails 91 miles of roads
- Rebuilt or removed four resident fish passage barriers
- Stabilized or improved drainage on 85 miles of roads
- Replaced four trail bridges

Now the next round of projects can begin in the valley to revive this all-important river. Levees will be removed or set back, large wood will be added, side channels will be reconnected—and salmon and trout will once again live in a river that literally emerges from the rubble.

— MARLIES WIERENGA

For more information, watch the video: Coming Back—Restoring the Skokomish Watershed: <http://tinyurl.com/RestoringSkokomish>

to infrastructure damage like road washouts. When infrastructure fails in the national forests, the washouts and slides block public access and become public safety issues. These events also cause catastrophic harm to water quality and ultimately to bull trout.

Bull trout are especially vulnerable to climate change effects, because this top-level predator requires cold water in upper watersheds for spawning and rearing. Water temperatures above 59 degrees F (15 C) limit its distribution. Warmer stream temperatures are inviting to the bull trout's competitors, including nonnative brook trout, brown trout,

and lake trout. Together, these threats paint a grim outlook for bull trout survival.

Nonetheless, cold habitats do remain, especially in the headwaters of our national forests. They provide refugia—isolated areas to act as a type of shield, protecting bull trout from the threats of climate change. Managing and protecting crucial watersheds likely to withstand some of the adverse effects of climate change and provide cold-water refugia will be crucial to preventing further harm to bull trout and its critical habitat.

Standing at the edge of this landscape wreck, we look around—and that's when I spot

Below: Mudslide blocking Forest Road 227 along the South Fork Boise River and the shallow pool (far left) with bull trout, Sawtooth National Forest, central Idaho.

PHOTO: WILDEARTH GUARDIANS

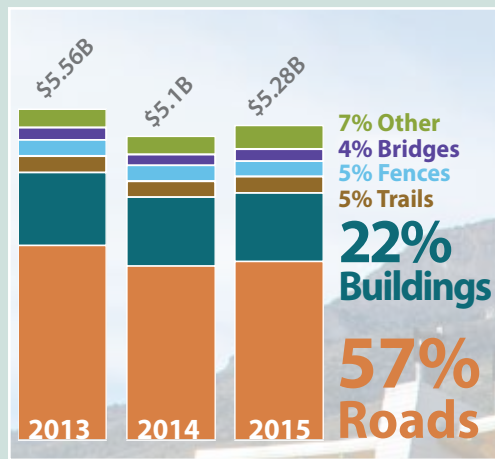


MILES OF ROADS



Left: Comparing the miles of roads on Forest Service lands with the National Highway System and Interstate System.

Right: Cost of work that should have been done but hasn't, and therefore is a risk to water quality, wildlife, and wild places. Credit: U.S. Forest Service FY 2015 Statistics



movement in a shallow pool near the mudslide, where the road used to run. As I step closer I see a full school of bull trout minnows darting across the pool against my shadow. Despite the surprise roadblock, we've found what we were searching for. Bull trout persisting against the odds, insisting on survival.

That chance spotting is a glimmer of hope.

WILDEARTH GUARDIANS' Rewilding Team is working to broaden that ray of hope by advocating for better management of our forest roads. We are pressing the forest service to remove the roads that they themselves determined cause the most risk to fish—the roads that pose the greatest threat of bleeding sediment into streams. We are pushing the agency to take real action by making smarter, better land management decisions that address the oversized, crumbling forest road system.

Rewilding by returning unneeded roads to the wild is a much-needed measure to restore aquatic systems and wildlife habitat, and to ensure the agency operates within its own budgetary constraints. Reducing the size of the forest service's road system will also be key to establishing more climate-resilient

national forests, not only for bull trout, but also for grizzly, lynx, wolverine, and many other native wildlife. WILDEARTH GUARDIANS works to heal the scarred landscapes of our past and move us toward resilient future forests, giving bull trout a fighting chance.

Visit wildearthguardians.org: Top Priorities / Rewilding

DEFENDING BULL TROUT ON OUR NATIONAL FORESTS IN IDAHO

When the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) identified critical habitat for bull trout—waters essential to bull trout conservation that require special management and protection—it highlighted that bull trout need large stretches of suitably cold habitat.

In Idaho, the USFWS designated 9,671 stream miles and 197,915 acres of lakes or reservoirs, many of which are located on national forests.

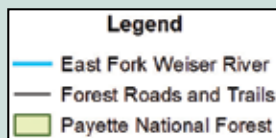
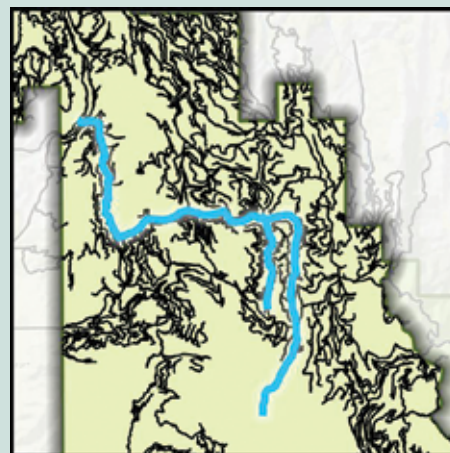
Yet despite the known harms that roads have on water quality, the U.S. Forest Service has not ensured adequate protection of bull trout and its critical habitat on the Payette and Sawtooth national forests in central Idaho.

WILDEARTH GUARDIANS is defending bull trout populations in these two national forests. We have filed a lawsuit against the Payette National Forest over the Forest Service's failure to

consider the ongoing impacts of its road and motorized trail management decisions on bull trout and water quality.

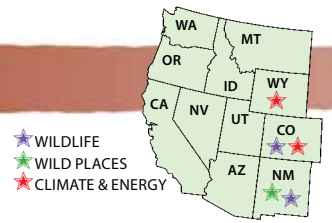
We also filed suit against the Sawtooth National Forest over its failure to consider similar impacts from roads and motorized trails on the Fairfield Ranger District. For the Sawtooth, the Forest Service informed us it plans to work with the USFWS to consider in detail the effects of roads on bull trout. Our lawsuit is meant to ensure this happens.

Visit wildearthguardians.org: Newsroom / Press Releases / Lawsuit Filed to Protect Critical Bull Trout Habitat on Payette National Forest



IN THE HALLS OF JUSTICE

Kelly Nokes, Jeremy Nichols, Bethany Cotton



LYNX GAIN VITAL GROUND IN COLORADO

MEGAN LORENZ, ADOBESTOCK



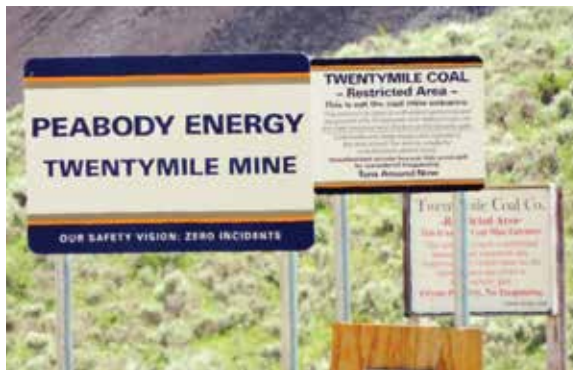
GUARDIANS and our allies celebrated a long-awaited victory in early September, when the U.S. District Court for Montana overturned the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's ill-conceived decision not to designate critical habitat for Canada lynx in Colorado. After the decades-long fight for essential protections for these imperiled wildcats, lynx are one step closer to gaining the habitat safeguards they need to truly recover across the American West. The court's decision requires the Service to reconsider the important role the Southern Rockies' high-

alpine landscapes play in efforts to restore these beautiful animals across their native range. The decision marks a turning point for lynx conservation and provides added hope these snow cats will soon freely roam the full length of the Spine of the Continent again. Visit wildearthguardians.org:

Newsroom / Press Releases / Court Orders Fish & Wildlife Service to Reexamine Lynx Critical Habitat

LAST-MINUTE COAL LEASES TOPPLED

In response to appeals filed by WILDEARTH GUARDIANS, an Interior Department board overturned two coal leases approved by the Bureau of Land Management less than two weeks before a historic moratorium on new coal leasing was put in place. The leases would have expanded Peabody's Twentymile mine in northwest Colorado and PacifiCorp's Bridger mine in southern Wyoming, opening the door for millions of tons of new coal mining and carbon pollution. In briefs with the Interior Board of Land Appeals, we exposed that unauthorized officials illegally signed the approvals. In August, the board agreed, overturning the decisions and putting the brakes on more mining. The win is another big step forward for keeping fossil fuels in the ground and safeguarding our Western public lands.



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GOING TO COURT TO PROTECT MEXICAN WOLVES FROM NEW MEXICO'S ATTACKS

USFWS



GUARDIANS and our allies have intervened in the baseless New Mexico lawsuit that seeks to block releases of Mexican wolves into wildlands in the state. We are engaging to protect Mexican wolves and ensure the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service upholds its duty to restore lobos to their native Southwestern homelands. Unfortunately, New Mexico received a temporary order blocking wolf releases until the case is resolved. We've filed an emergency appeal and are hoping to get the order reversed so wolves can be released again in early 2017. Mexican wolves are experiencing a genetic crisis, making releases of captive-bred animals absolutely essential to recovering this critically imperiled species. At the same time, our challenge to shortcomings in the Service's management of Mexican wolf recovery is moving forward.

Visit wildearthguardians.org: *Top Priorities / Wolves in the American West or / Top Priorities/ Carnivore Protection*

WHY ARE YOU A GUARDIANS MEMBER?

5-YEAR MEMBER CAT CANNON



CAT CANNON

"I love WILDEARTH GUARDIANS because they fight (and win) for the wild places and creatures that define the landscape I grew up in."

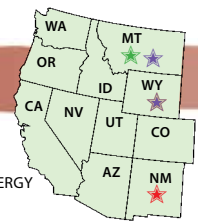
—CAT CANNON

Interested in becoming a business partner at one of our events? Email Claire Nickel at cnickel@wildearthguardians.org

CAMPAIGN UPDATES

Kelly Nokes, Jeremy Nichols, Greg Dyson

★ WILDLIFE
★ WILD PLACES
★ CLIMATE & ENERGY



WHY ARE YOU A GUARDIANS MEMBER?

5-YEAR MEMBER
CHLOE VINER



CHLOE VINER

"I first got involved with WILDEARTH GUARDIANS during my second year of law school when I did a summer internship there. Since then, I have been an avid follower, always eager to find new ways to contribute to wildlife protection."

—CHLOE VINER

Interested in becoming a GUARDIANS Monthly Donor? Visit our website for more details: wildearthguardians.org; Support Us / Monthly Giving.

FEDS PUSH PLAN TO STRIP YELLOWSTONE GRIZZLY BEARS OF PROTECTIONS

SAM PARKS



The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is barreling forward with its premature and irresponsible plan to remove Endangered Species Act protections from grizzly bears in the Greater Yellowstone region. The rush to end protections brings with it state plans to place these treasured bears in trophy hunters' crosshairs potentially as soon as they emerge from their dens next spring. Despite their remarkable comeback from numbers as low as 135 bruins in the 1960s to roughly 700 today, Greater Yellowstone grizzlies need important federal protections so that they can eventually connect with other isolated populations to truly recover across the American West. GUARDIANS stands ready to use science and the power of the law to put the brakes on the firing line. Stay tuned.

Visit wildearthguardians.org: *Species Conservation / Mammals / Grizzly bear*

EXPLOSION NEAR CHACO ADDS URGENCY TO FRACKING FIGHT

KENDRA PINTO



We were reminded how critical it is to end public lands fracking in the Greater Chaco region when tragedy struck this past summer.

In July, tanks at a fracking site exploded and burned for days, forcing Navajo residents to evacuate. Sadly, the Obama administration has approved more than 360 new drilling and fracking permits in the Chaco area, letting the oil and gas industry run roughshod over this sacred landscape. We've taken them to court, but while we await a ruling, disaster continues to strike. In January, the Interior Department is planning to auction off nearly 1,000 acres of public lands in the Greater Chaco region for more fracking. This is insane, but we're stepping up to thwart these plans. It's time to keep our fossil fuels in the ground.

Visit wildearthguardians.org: *Top Priorities / Greater Chaco: Get the Frack Out*

CHALLENGING SNOWMOBILE USE TO PROTECT WOLVERINE, GRIZZLY, AND LYNX

ADOBESTOCK.COM

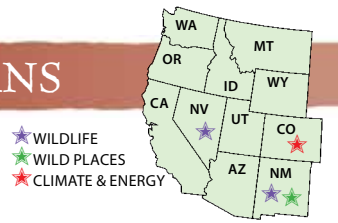


For the second time in five years, GUARDIANS challenged a proposal by the Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest in Montana to allow extensive snowmobile use. The latest proposal would permit snowmobiles across 60 percent of the forest—2 million acres—including important wolverine and grizzly bear denning habitat, lynx habitat, and high-value winter habitat for elk and deer. And it would do so despite clear direction from the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals—in a case brought by GUARDIANS last year—that the Forest Service must do more to protect natural resources, quiet uses, and winter wildlife from snowmobiles.

Visit wildearthguardians.org: *Newsroom / Press Releases / Fighting to Secure Quiet Winter Space for Wolverine, Grizzly and Lynx*

GOOD NEWS FROM THE GUARDIANS

Jim Matison, Bethany Cotton, Jeremy Nichols



BEST RESTORATION SEASON EVER

2016 has been a great year for GUARDIANS' Restoration Program, helping to improve watershed health and wildlife habitat across New Mexico. More than 100,000 trees were planted! We also:



WILDEARTH GUARDIANS

- Removed invasive plants and planted native riparian vegetation along the Rio Grande and Galisteo Creek.
- Planted 50,000 willow, aspen, and narrowleaf cottonwoods along Rio de las Vacas on Santa Fe National Forest and Jaramillo Creek in the Valles Caldera National Preserve.
- Partnered with the Youth Conservation Corps to build erosion controls on slopes burned in the 2011 Las Conchas and 2013 Thompson Ridge fires.
- Planted 8,000 ponderosa and mixed conifer trees in high-intensity burn areas of Valles Caldera National Preserve.
- Partnered with Santa Clara Pueblo to build erosion controls along Santa Clara Creek. Willows will be planted to stabilize streambanks.

Visit wildearthguardians.org: *Top Priorities / Stream Team*

LANDMARK SETTLEMENT REINS IN ROGUE FEDERAL WILDLIFE KILLING PROGRAM

KEVIN BOVARD, CREATIVE COMMONS, FLICKR.COM



GUARDIANS recently reached a landmark settlement with the rogue federal wildlife-killing program, Wildlife Services, resulting from our challenge to the program's activities in Nevada. Under the settlement, the program will no longer rely on the woefully outdated 1994 analysis of the impacts of its killing activities anywhere in the United States, and the program will update all analyses that rely on the old, bad science. The program will also cease all killing activities in designated Wilderness and Wilderness Study Areas in Nevada—over 6 million acres of public lands—at least until the new

analysis is complete. We are hopeful the program will accept the clear science demonstrating that lethal control of native wildlife is ineffective and often counterproductive, and adopt a coexistence mandate.

Visit wildearthguardians.org: *Top Priorities / Ending the War on Wildlife*

CLEAN ENERGY AGREEMENT TO SHUTTER COAL FACILITIES

We scored a big win for the climate in September, inking an agreement to shutter two coal-fired power plants and a coal mine in Colorado. Reached with Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association, the agreement will close one of the three smokestacks at the coal-fired power plant in Craig, Colo., retire the company's power plant in the western Colorado town of Nucla, as well as close the coal mine that feeds the Nucla plant. A total 500 megawatts of coal-fired power will be taken offline, opening the door for cleaner energy and sustainable economies to take hold throughout the Rocky Mountain West. The deal will keep 5 million metric tons of carbon from being released every year, equal to taking one million cars off the road.



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SPOTLIGHT ON STAFF

Michelle Lute



MICHELLE LUTE joined WILDEARTH GUARDIANS as Wildlife Coexistence Campaigner in September, bringing a passion for promoting human-wildlife coexistence through effective grassroots organization, equitable participatory processes, and evidence-based decision-making. Her work has spanned issues from water to wolves, on public and private lands from Madagascar to Michigan. She started her environmental career in habitat restoration for the National Park Service and holds degrees from Valparaiso University (B.S. environmental science), University of Notre Dame (M.S. animal behavior and ecology), and Michigan State University (Ph.D. human dimensions of wildlife management). While her primary identity is that of a GUARDIAN, she also identifies as a dog person, globetrotter, photographer, and urban farmer.

Chris Krupp



CHRIS KRUPP joined WILDEARTH GUARDIANS in September as our Public Lands Guardian, leading our Keep Public Lands in Public Hands campaign. His work will focus on preventing our commons from being treated as a commodity by those seeking to privatize the nation's public lands via numerous schemes, including congressional and administrative land trades and conveyances. Chris grew up playing in the fields and woods of his grandparents' dairy farms in central Wisconsin. He received his J.D. from the University of Washington and his B.A. in economics from Lawrence University. Prior to joining us, Chris was staff attorney for Western Lands Project for 15 years. He enjoys camping and hiking with his family, as well as vegetable gardening and cooking.