

WILD AT HEART

THE WORD FROM WILDEARTH GUARDIANS

No. 12, Spring 2012

Breaking Free

Time to End Trapping
on our Public Lands





MISSION STATEMENT

WILDEARTH GUARDIANS protects and restores the wildlife, wild places, and wild rivers of the American West.

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RESTORING THE VISION

John Horning



The first time I saw a steel-jawed trap was in an old shed on a ranch in southern New Mexico. Though it was rusty and cobwebs filled its mouth where the blood of animals once flowed, there was no mistaking its identity from where it hung on the wall more than 20 feet away.

I recall being immediately transported to a place within me of empathy and fear—empathy for the anguish and pain that countless animals likely once experienced, and fear for myself were I ever to encounter one of these cold, efficient devices during one of my many forays onto public lands.

Unfortunately, trapping, snaring and poisons are still a hard fact of life across much of the American West, with a few significant exceptions. Many states and the federal government still allow trapping but none are quite as permissive as New Mexico, where nearly 25,000 bobcats have been killed in the last decade for their fur.

We aim to change that, and bring an end to the cruel and anachronistic practice of trapping on public lands in New Mexico. We know that our road will be difficult, but we are certain that we have our sight set on the right institution: the New Mexico Legislature. We want the Legislature to permanently ban trapping and we won't stop until we're successful, even if it takes a decade or more.

Please join WILDEARTH GUARDIANS' campaign to ban traps and help us create a more compassionate society—not only for one another, but for the fellow wild animals with whom we share the planet.

GUARDIAN GIVERS

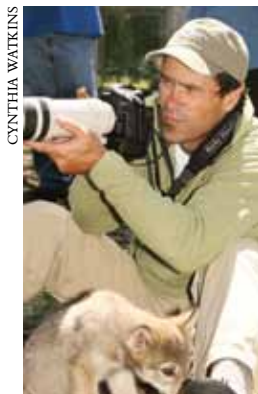
Ray Rafiti and Jon Paul

We are often inspired to protect and restore wild places and wildlife after first witnessing its beauty. So we are incredibly grateful to artists like Ray Rafiti and Jon Paul who capture and share with us their stunning images.

Ray Rafiti is a long-time GUARDIAN who supports us in so many ways. You have all seen his pictures in our e-communications and publications, and you maybe even have bid on one of his pictures at our annual Gala auctions. For Ray, “wildlife and outdoor photography is the opportunity to borrow nature’s moments on her time.” We feel so lucky to be the recipient of his artistic genius.

Jon Paul first shared his photos with GUARDIANS in this year’s annual report.

We love the images, his kind generosity, and his intent to improve all of our lives. “The inherent environmental message in my work is obviously very important to me. However, the greatest impact my work has is in the enhancement of individuals’ daily lives. If people can look at one of my fine art landscape images . . . and enjoy a moment of healthy escape and a realignment of perspective, I have made an impact in this world.”



CYNTHIA WATKINS



COMFORTH

Ray Rafiti

Jon Paul

NORTHERN ROCKIES WOLVES

Pulling Out the Stops

Mark Salvo



STEVE JURVETSON

Wolf restoration faces new challenges in the Northern Rockies. Join WILDEARTH GUARDIANS to protect this vitally important species.

It has been an eventful year for wolf conservation in the Northern Rockies, highlighted by our lawsuit in the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals challenging wolf delisting on Constitutional grounds. Unfortunately, the justices denied our legal claims, meaning that for now and for the foreseeable future, wolves won't be protected by the Endangered Species Act.

Two user groups—ranchers and hunters—have opposed wolf recovery since the animals were reintroduced in Yellowstone and central Idaho in 1995. Of course, not every rancher and hunter opposes wolf restoration, but their vociferous leadership does, and they finally convinced Congress last spring to legislatively delist the Northern Rockies population from the ESA. Sponsored by Senators Jon Tester (D-MT) and Max Baucus (D-MT), and Representative Mike Simpson (R-ID-2nd), the delisting legislation passed as a rider on an unrelated budget bill.

The rider violated a 2010 court order that listed the Northern Rockies population as “threatened” under the Act. Our General Counsel, Jay Tutchton, argued that Congress’ action was unconstitutional because it violated the Separation of Powers doctrine. We’ll spare you the details, but it was a very good case. In fact, the district court essentially agreed with Jay’s argument, but determined it was constrained by the Ninth Circuit from finding in our favor.

So we appealed to the Ninth Circuit. Jay presented our case in November, and the appellate court finally announced its decision in March—leaving wolves unprotected in the Northern Rockies.

WILDEARTH GUARDIANS has advocated for wolves for decades. We’ve worked tirelessly to realize our vision of restoring this vitally important species throughout the West. This setback has only strengthened our commitment to wolf restoration.

Moving forward, we will continue to fight for wolf protections.

This winter we submitted detailed comments to the

Fish and Wildlife Service in preparation to challenge Wyoming’s awful wolf management plan that would allow wolves to be shot on sight throughout most of the state. We are also still litigating against the National Park Service for failing to consider restoring wolves to manage overpopulated elk in Rocky Mountain

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National Park. And every day we work to educate the public, decision makers, and the news media that wolves are not ravenous killers of livestock and elk, but a critical component of the western landscape that deserve our respect and support.

Thank you for your continued support of these efforts, and for joining us in our campaign to protect and restore wolves.

Visit wildearthguardians.org:
Top Priorities>Wolves in the American West

SAVE THE DATES FOR THESE WILDEARTH EVENTS

JUNE 7

Summer BBQ
Santa Fe, NM

JUNE 9

Habitat Restoration –
Fence Pulling
Valles Caldera National
Preserve, NM

LATE SUMMER

Concert for Wolves
Denver, CO

AUGUST

Informative
Cougar Event
Estes Park, CO

SEPTEMBER 21

GUARDIAN Gala
Santa Fe, NM

SEPTEMBER 26

Doug Smith
Yellowstone Wolf
Project
Pueblo, CO

For more details, visit
wildearthguardians.org
>Support Us>Events

PLANTING TREES, NOW PULLING UP FENCE

Carol Norton

WHY ARE YOU A GUARDIAN?



“Both of our dogs got caught in a cluster of traps on public land this year. Luckily, we were right there, able to free our dogs with cable cutters and adrenaline. Knowing that thousands of wild animals are caught in these same barbaric traps every year makes us sick; they are not so lucky and suffer horribly. That is why we support WILDEARTH GUARDIANS’ efforts to have traps banned on public lands in New Mexico.”

— BECKY HOWARD &
CATHY SCHOLTENS
Stevensville, Montana
(also an active supporter of Footloose Montana’s trap-free public lands initiative)

Why are you
a GUARDIAN?
Visit our website
and let us know.

There is nothing as effective in restoring a stream habitat as planting trees, and many of you may have already joined our volunteer planting days.

But we wanted to do more. So a couple of years ago, we began working in forest and grassland ecosystems. The best thing you can do on our public lands, besides remove cattle, is remove fence, which exists solely to enable grazing and prevent wild populations from migrating and hunting.

It wasn’t a difficult transition for the restoration crew. Like stream restoration, it is hard and often muddy work. You need boots and work gloves and lots of determination. In 2010, volunteers worked with WILDEARTH GUARDIANS to pull several miles of fence in the Valles Caldera in northern New Mexico. We went back in 2011, and again in 2012.

Today, elk there move more freely. Cats and bears hunt more naturally. And if we had wolves, they would do the same. Best of all,

cattle will no longer be allowed to graze large swaths of the public land that is the Valles Caldera, leaving the land to regenerate and return to a more natural ecosystem.

“Removing old, pre-WWII sheep fencing from the Valle Grande removes a movement barrier for both wildlife, principally elk

Today, elk there move more freely.

Cats and bears hunt more naturally.

*And if we had wolves,
they would do the same.*

calves, as well as recreationists (for example, fishermen and cross-country skiers),” said Bob Parameter, director of science and education at the Caldera. “So removal of this fence

that bisects the Valle Grande will restore the wide-open nature of this magnificent valle.”

And, of course, we continue planting trees. With generous grants from REI, WILDEARTH GUARDIANS has been working with schools to leverage Stream Team as a leadership opportunity for their students.

One of our star schools this year was Santa Fe Waldorf School. Over the course of three days, 40 students, ages 15 to 18, showed up ready to work. The GUARDIANS’ restoration crew loves having the extra help putting willows into the ground, and together they planted several hundred yards of the Santa Fe River with hundreds of trees. We can’t wait to see those “before” and “after” pictures.

None of this would be possible without the City of Santa Fe, Santa Fe County, New Mexico State Land Office, Valles Caldera National Preserve, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Partners Program, New Mexico Environment Department and the State of New Mexico.

Visit wildearthguardians.org:
Programs>Wild Rivers>Ecosystem
Restoration

WILDEARTH GUARDIANS



Rio Puerco, 2005

WILDEARTH GUARDIANS



Rio Puerco, 2010

CONFRONTING COAL WHERE IT COUNTS

Jeremy Nichols



ECOFIGHT

Big coal mines mean big global warming implications. The Black Thunder coal mine in the Powder River Basin is the largest in the world; its coal is linked more greenhouse gases than the entire State of Colorado.

There's a simple truth when it comes to global warming: The less carbon dioxide we release, the better things will get. That's why we're confronting coal mining in the Powder River Basin of northeastern Wyoming and southeastern Montana. As the largest coal-producing region in the U.S., the Powder River Basin is the root of a majority of our nation's carbon dioxide emissions.

We can start with the facts, they are shocking. Consider:

- In 2010, 468 million tons of coal was strip mined in the region, 43% of all the nation's coal;
- Coal from the Powder River Basin is burned in 200 power plants in 35 states (despite concerns over exports, less than 1% of Powder River Basin coal is burned abroad);
- The coal mined in the Powder River Basin in 2010 released 776 million metric tons of carbon dioxide, 13.5% of the U.S. total. That makes mining in this region responsible for more carbon dioxide emissions than any other single activity in the U.S.

But what seems disturbing, we see as an opportunity. And right now that opportunity is more ripe than ever.

The U.S. Bureau of Land Management has proposed to auction off seven billion tons of new coal leases to expand the largest mines in the Powder River Basin. While the current mines are slated to play out in ten years, these new leases would add 20 more years to their

We've committed to overturning every single new coal lease proposed by the Bureau of Land Management in the Powder River Basin.

lives, releasing 11.3 billion metric tons more of carbon dioxide in the process. To put it simply, the ability of the Basin to continue fueling global warming hinges on these new coal leases.

That's where we come in.

We've committed to overturning every single new coal lease proposed by the Bureau of Land Management in the Powder River Basin. Already, we've filed suit to halt four leases that would open the door for 700 million tons of new coal mining.

As I write this, we're getting ready to file suit over four more leases that together would mine more than two billion tons of new coal and lead, releasing more than 3.3 billion metric tons of carbon dioxide. It may very well be one of the most significant global warming lawsuits ever filed in this country. And WILDEARTH GUARDIANS is at the forefront.

We're leading the charge to tackle global warming at its root. By halting the rush to lease in the Powder River Basin, we can keep the coal in the ground and the carbon dioxide out of the air.

Visit wildearthguardians.org: Top Priorities > Power Past Coal

WHY ARE YOU A GUARDIAN?

"After many encounters with traps and snares, my winter hiking ended when my dog stuck his head into a Conibear trap. When we eventually freed him, he was nearly unconscious, and for many years I found it hard to get the image out of my mind. With no regard for others, trappers take over the woods each winter, placing traps everywhere for profit. As a result of my experiences I support WILDEARTH GUARDIANS' efforts to end trapping on public lands in New Mexico."

— MIKE KOEPPEN
Florence, Montana
(active supporter of Footloose Montana's trap free public lands mission, too)



Why are you a GUARDIAN?
Visit our website and let us know.

WHY ARE YOU A GUARDIAN?



“It was only recently that I became aware of the work of WILDEARTH GUARDIANS, but I have been very impressed with the extent of their wildlife advocacy. It gives me a strong sense of comfort to know there are more people out there willing to defend otherwise voiceless inhabitants of our world. The attention they devote to ban trapping on public lands in New Mexico is vital to the movement. I sincerely respect each initiative they take on issues concerning our wildlife and wild lands.”

— MAYA ANTHONY
San Cristobal,
New Mexico

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TIMBER SALE DOESN'T MAKE THE CUT

BRYAN BIRD



Over 3,000 acres of Rocky Mountain spruce-fir forests were spared the chainsaw in February as a result of a legal victory from WILDEARTH GUARDIANS. After three years of legal battles, the court halted a massive logging project near the headwaters of the Rio Grande within the Rio Grande National Forest. The lawsuit is noteworthy because it forces the Forest Service to account for impacts from insects that occur not only due to the agencies' own actions but also result from climate change generally. Handkerchief Mesa is near Wolf Creek Pass in southern Colorado and is still re-

covering from vast clear cutting in the last century. Its spruce-fir and glorious aspen forests are home and refuge to the elusive Canada lynx.

Visit wildearthguardians.org/Programs>Wild Places

THE MEXICAN SPOTTED OWL COUNTS

A WILDEARTH GUARDIANS' lawsuit has forced the U.S. Forest Service to admit it has no idea how many Mexican spotted owls there are in the wild or what harm its activities have on the endangered animal. Earlier this year a Tucson federal judge agreed that the Forest Service and the Fish and Wildlife Service had failed to monitor owl populations as promised. In the proceedings, the agency admitted that it was driving blind and had not done the necessary monitoring. This is a great victory for this iconic bird of the Southwest. We expect a new recovery plan for this bird soon, and believe that the lawsuit will compel government biologists to include strong protections and requirements to track population numbers.

Visit wildearthguardians.org/Top Priorities>Endangered Species Act Listing



ISTOCKPHOTO.COM

DEMOCRACY WINS IN URANIUM CASE

JESS ALFORD



Excluding the public from decision-making is one of the most frustrating things the U.S. Forest Service does. But a recent WILDEARTH GUARDIANS legal victory restores our right—and every citizen's right—to protect the land, water and wildlife we care about. In March, WILDEARTH GUARDIANS won a decisive lawsuit defending the public's right to administrative appeal of all land management decisions by the Forest Service. The California district court overturned a 2003 Bush-era rule, which excluded certain decisions from public notice, comment and appeals. The lawsuit arose, in part, from a permit issued for uranium exploration on the Cibola National Forest in New Mexico. This court victory preserves our right to challenge the government's decisions—without immediately having to incur the expense of going to federal court.

Visit wildearthguardians.org/Programs>Wild Places

CAMPAIGN UPDATES

John Horning, Mark Salvo, Taylor Jones

FREE-FLOWING RIO GRANDE?

In early January, Interior Secretary Ken Salazar came to New Mexico and seemingly spontaneously created a citizens committee to make recommendations on how to protect the Rio Grande in central New Mexico. Salazar's effort, called the Middle Rio Grande Conservation Initiative, seeks to create a conservation plan to enhance the recreation, education and conservation values of the Middle Rio Grande.

For years, WILDEARTH GUARDIANS has argued that protecting the Rio Grande requires federal leadership, particularly from the Department of Interior, so we welcome Secretary Salazar's interest in the Rio Grande. But we're also very concerned that the river's greatest need -- water -- seems not to be a focal point of this Initiative. Between now and July when Salazar promised to return to New Mexico, we intend to push the Interior Department and this committee to make securing water for a living Rio Grande one its primary goals.

Visit wildearthguardians.org: Top Priorities>Free Flowing Rio Grande



ADRIEL HEISEY

GRAZING LEGISLATION: THE GOOD AND THE UGLY

Congress is considering not one, but two bills that would reform grazing management on federal public lands. The "Grazing Improvement Act" (S.1129; H.R. 4234), introduced in both the House and Senate, would further entrench domestic livestock grazing on public lands to the detriment of fish, wildlife, watersheds and other public values.

In comparison, the "Rural Economic Vitalization Act" (H.R. 3432) would allow federal grazing permittees to voluntarily relinquish their grazing permits back to the managing federal agency in exchange for compensation paid by a third party.

The Grazing Improvement Act would continue a failed land use on public lands; whereas REVA would provide a market-based solution to grazing conflicts, compensate ranchers for their lifetime investment in their grazing permits, and rededicate public lands to wildlife, watersheds, recreation and carbon sequestration. Visit GUARDIANS' action page to support REVA and oppose the Grazing Improvement Act. Visit wildearthguardians.org: Programs>Wild Places



GEORGE WUEBTHNER

PRAIRIE DOG DAY IS THE NEW GROUND HOG DAY

WILDEARTH GUARDIANS celebrated Prairie Dog Day on February 2 with the release of our fifth annual "Report from the Burrow: Forecast of the Prairie Dog." In addition to our annual tradition of grading state and federal agencies on prairie dog conservation, this year's edition highlighted conservation success stories, such as the adoption of a humane "natural dispersal" management plan for prairie dogs in Telluride, Colorado. The report was distributed to state agencies, prairie dog activists, the media, and selected legislators. In conjunction with the report's release, GUARDIANS' Endangered Species Advocate, Taylor Jones, travelled to Boulder to give an educational presentation to the Buena Vista Community Housing and the Silver Sage Cohousing Village. Prairie dogs are Colorado's original co-housers and so the theme was: "What Communities Can Learn from Prairie Dogs." Visit wildearthguardians.org: Top Priorities>Protecting the Prairie Dog Empire



RICH READING

WHY ARE YOU A GUARDIAN?



"I support WILDEARTH GUARDIANS' efforts to ban traps on public lands because several years ago I lost my beloved border collie, Cupcake, to a Conibear trap. It had been set and baited in a popular recreation area along a famous trout-fishing creek in the mountains of western Montana. A gentle soul, Cupcake died in my arms. When springtime comes each March, I think about traps and the suffering they inflict. I miss Cupcake dearly and work at our local Humane Society to try to translate my loss into a bit of good"

— FILIP PANUSZ
Missoula, Montana

Why are you a GUARDIAN?
Visit our website and let us know.

THE TROUBLES WITH TRAPPING

Why is this Cruel and Dangerous Activity Allowed on New Mexico's Public Lands?

Wendy Keefover

Last February, San Cristóbal teen Maya Anthony became a victim of trapping when her dog, Joker, became ensnared in a trap while on a family hike in northern New Mexico. "I heard Joker scream; it was a noise that I'll never forget," recalled Maya.

Standing atop a ridge, 17-year-old Maya saw Joker struggling below in a leg-hold trap, and rushed to his rescue – his leg and mouth already covered in blood. In his frenzy, Joker had bitten himself and the trap. When Maya reached him, he impulsively clamped onto her arm and punctured it. "I had to smack his nose to get him to release me," she said. "I still get flashbacks when I look at my arm because it was so unreal."

Panicked, Maya tried to remember how to open the trap from a video she once watched, but Joker's uncooperative thrashing made it impossible. Then Maya's mom, Nina, reached them and Joker latched onto her leg and ripped her jeans. "I had to smack him again to get him off of her. Touching the trap even the slightest bit hurt Joker and he just lashed out at us because he was so scared and in horrible pain," Maya said.

Trappers set traps and snares in New Mexico to capture animals and then kill them for their fur, which is sold on the global market. Bobcat pelts are especially prized, fetching hundreds of dollars apiece, which has spurred a gold rush on them and other native wildlife,



RAY RAFFI

such as gray foxes and weasels. While the cougar and black bear are currently protected, bobcats enjoy neither federal protections, nor any safeguards in New Mexico. In fact, trappers culled a jaw-dropping 22,961 bobcats in the state between 2000 and 2010.

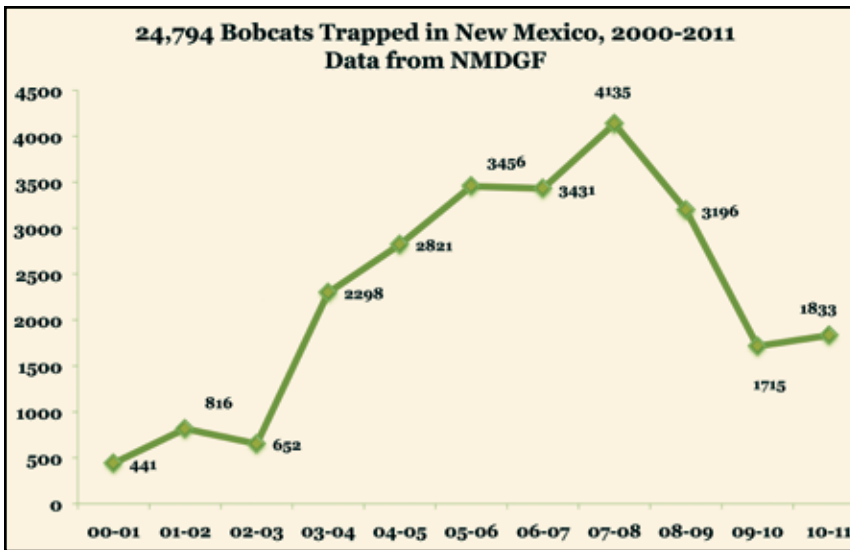
New Mexico's bobcat take is supposed to be "monitored" by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service pursuant to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), while the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish is required to ensure that the death toll does not cause "detriment" to the population. But neither agency can defend New Mexico's unscientific trapping policies, nor its sloppy methods for counting populations.

For a mere \$20, Game and Fish allows New Mexicans to trap as many bobcats or other "furbearing" animals as they can (except coyotes and skunks – which are trapped without regulation) during one of the longest trapping seasons in the West. Because of CITES, only bobcats are counted; no other "furbearing" species are monitored.

The facts on trapping are undeniable and depressing. Thousands of animals are killed in traps; those that aren't killed frequently endure trauma, stress, dehydration, and exposure. Animals released from restraining traps may later die from injuries and/or reduced ability to hunt or forage for food.



PHOTOS.COM



States require that trappers tag their bobcat pelts under CITE's regulations. Unlike any other species, the number of bobcats killed by trappers is actually known.

Enough is enough. Trapping is an outdated, cruel, wasteful, dangerous activity that should be prohibited on New Mexico's public lands. WILDEARTH GUARDIANS and our allies have joined forces to end trapping on public lands in the state – along with others in a growing movement across the West.

In June 2011, WILDEARTH GUARDIANS, the Sierra Club, and Animal Protection of New Mexico, formed the TrapFreeNM Coalition, and requested that the New Mexico Game Commission ban trapping on New Mexico's public lands. The Coalition and our volunteers, including Maya Anthony, gathered 12,000 public comments opposed to trapping.

In addition, a 2005 poll found that 63 percent of New Mexican voters regardless of party affiliation supported a ban on trapping, finding the practice cruel and outdated. So majority opinion is on our side.

Yet instead of considering public opinion, and in a move that stymied public participation, the New Mexico Game Commission held a hearing in July 2011 at a remote location on the border of Oklahoma, and then expanded trapping in the state.



SAMUEL R. PARKS

The Game Commission also lifted Governor Bill Richardson's executive order that banned trapping in the Mexican gray wolf recovery area, and ignored the fact that since 2002, 14 highly-endangered Mexican wolves have been trapped in 15 incidents. Two Mexican wolves have died in traps, two more required full-leg amputations, while another had a foot

partially removed. (Likely even more lobos have been trapped, killed, and secretly disposed of by wolf detractors.) Less than 60 Mexican wolves roam the wilds of New Mexico and Arizona.

The Commission also extended trapping onto other special lands which had previously enjoyed trapping prohibitions: the Wild Rivers Recreation Area of the Rio Grande, the Valle Vidal, a portion of the Vermejo Ranch, and the Valles Caldera National Preserve.

The Commission's decisions on trapping marked an extraordinary failure of public process, to say the least.

ANIMAL ADVOCACY AND CONSERVATION: A SHARED PATH

Animal rights is a simple concept: It asks us to accept other animals' interests in living on their own terms. Yet it also poses one of the more intense challenges we've known.

A robust animal-rights position values the environment – the basic support system for all animals. Red-crowned parrots cannot pursue life on their own terms if their trees in Mexico and Texas are felled for development; sturgeon cannot thrive when run-off from animal farms pollutes and makes a dead zone in the Aral Sea.

If animals are considered just part of the landscape, rather than understood as aware beings to whom that landscape is home, then we will continue to allow loopholes for logging, commercial farms, power plants and residential development. By understanding this intrinsic connection, conservationists and animal advocates can work together and cultivate understanding.

Today we continue to live under laws constructed in an era when the environment was thought to exist simply for our use and pleasure. So we must stay vigilant in advocating for animals' interests and their right to thrive in their habitats, and continue to deliver a coherent message despite convoluted legal, linguistic and social contexts. This is what Friends of Animals and WILDEARTH GUARDIANS do when we collaborate on a case. We agree on something essential: That we must defend and preserve what natural places remain, and reclaim habitat wherever we can to benefit all members of Earth's biocommunity. We can guide environmental law into a new era on this shared path.



Lee Hall is Vice President – Legal Affairs for Friends of Animals, and a member of WILDEARTH GUARDIANS. Lee's most recent book is *On Their Own Terms: Bringing Animal-Rights Philosophy Down to Earth* (foreword by Jay Tutchton).

Bringing Animal-Rights Philosophy Down to Earth (foreword by Jay Tutchton).

BEAR CARE

As black bear habitat disappears due to myriad land uses, bears increasingly find themselves in close proximity to people. **WILDEARTH GUARDIANS promotes respect for bears and other wildlife and strives to educate the public about living with bears to keep both humans and animals safe.** Similar efforts have been successful in Aspen and Snowmass, which have strict city ordinances, while citizen Bryan Peterson has promoted “Bear Smart Durango” for years.

This time of year black bears are emerging from hibernation and are hungry. They are the third largest carnivore in North America (after grizzly and polar bears) and survive mostly on vegetation. While they prefer forest habitat for foraging and movement, they are also curious and opportunistic and will follow their noses to any food sources they can find.

Bears need about 8,000 calories per day—until autumn, when they need three times that much. Avoid conflicts with bears by implementing some simple bear care tips.



JON PAUL

1. Don't leave garbage accessible over night. Use bear-proof garbage containers.
2. Avoid feeding birds in spring, summer, or fall. Feeders attract bears. Use birdbaths, nest boxes, or plantings instead.
3. Clean your BBQ and store it indoors after use.
4. Feed pets inside and store their food indoors.



JON COOK

Hidden, dangerous steel-jawed, leg hold traps capture and restrain animals. There they await their death from the trapper, but not before causing harm to themselves by trying to escape. Injuries include broken bones, torn tendons, tooth damage, shock, trauma, or exposure. It could happen to your companion animal.

GUARDIANS took two actions in response. First, with the TrapFreeNM Coalition, we held a public hearing in downtown Albuquerque on September 14, 2011. The People's Forum on Public Lands Trapping was a chance to give voice to people who had been shut out from the Commission's process, and to spotlight the issue in statewide media.

The People's Forum Panel consisted of seven civic-minded individuals from a broad spectrum: a judge, a sportsman, a former legislator, a hiking leader, a sitting county commissioner, the founder of Republicans for Environmental Protection, and a director of an animal shelter. Approximately 140 people attended the event, and 35 voiced their opposition to trapping with none in favor. The panel then offered a 30-day online public comment period to allow for even greater participation, of which 90 percent of more than 2,400 people registered their opposition to trapping in New Mexico.

Second, to redress the Commission's decision to allow trapping in the range of the Mexican wolf, GUARDIANS filed suit in February against Game and Fish and the Commission under the Endangered Species Act.

We argued that trapping killed and harmed lobos in violation of the Act. Wolves are coursing carnivores, meaning they run long distances to subdue their prey, which they cannot do if traps have damaged their bodies.

It was impossible to get near Joker, so Maya left him with Nina to collect her father and tools to pry open the trap. Upon her return, Maya and Nina placed towels over Joker's head and held him down while Maya's father released Joker from the trap.

Joker's foot was tender for two days, and Nina received a minor abrasion, but Maya required emergency medical attention and medications. Her arm was bandaged for two weeks.

Traps threaten not only our pets, they also endanger hikers, campers, hunters, and other recreationists on public lands. Maya's incident is a terrible reminder of how our New Mexico public lands have become unsafe to explore because of widespread trapping.

Banning traps on New Mexico's public lands won't be easy, though fewer than 2000 people actively trap every year. Bobcats, Mexican wolves and all their wild brethren need your active support. Even now, Game and Fish has proposed new regulations that would allow trapping for cougars and bears. The Trap-FreeNM Coalition has concluded that Game and Fish and the Commission are hopelessly, stubbornly out of touch with the public and will now seek a legislative solution to trapping in 2013. We hope we can count on you to help us ban traps on New Mexico's public lands.

Visit wildearthguardians.org>Top Priorities>Ending the War on Wildlife

GOOD NEWS FROM THE GUARDIANS

Visit wildearthguardians.org: Top Priorities > Power Past Coal

DIRTY ENERGY DENIED

In late March we scored a victory in our efforts to safeguard clean air from coal. Last year, WILDEARTH GUARDIANS filed suit in federal court against the coal-fired power plant in Lamar, Colorado over thousands of Clean Air Act violations. Since converting from natural gas to coal in 2009, the plant has yet to comply with its air quality permit, plaguing the town of Lamar with haze and smog.

The utility argued that our lawsuit should be dismissed because it reached an out-of-court settlement with the State of Colorado. But the judge rejected their argument, holding that an out-of-court settlement did not preempt our lawsuit, and that the plant continued to violate the Clean Air Act even after the settlement. In addition, the judge found that violations are likely to continue.

The ruling underscores the fact that Colorado has failed to protect people from air pollution and levies a critical ultimatum—the Lamar coal-fired power plant needs to clean up or shut down. At this point, it seems like a shutdown is the only option.



WILDEARTH GUARDIANS

COLORADO WILDS SPARED FROM COAL MINING

WILDEARTH GUARDIANS successfully thwarted a plan last February to expand a western Colorado coal mine into the flanks of the West Elk Wilderness Area. With the help of Earthjustice, we overturned a U.S. Forest Service decision allowing Arch Coal to punch its West Elk coal mine into the Sunset Trail Roadless Area north of the West Elk Wilderness. Arch wanted to drill 48 methane venting wells above the new mine expansion, turning the wilds above into a gas field. Methane is also a potent greenhouse gas; the venting would have released the equivalent

of 3 million tons of carbon dioxide annually, the same amount released by 540,324 vehicles. The win is not only great for wild places, it's great for the climate.



TED ZUKOSKI

CLEAN AIR, CLEAN ENERGY STAY ON TRACK IN NEW MEXICO

Hope for clean air and clean energy in northwestern New Mexico is alive and well. In March, a federal appeals court rejected a request by Public Service Company of New Mexico, or PNM, to stay the implementation of a milestone clean air plan adopted last year by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Spurred by a lawsuit filed by WILDEARTH GUARDIANS, the plan would cut haze pollution from the coal-burning San Juan Generating Station by more than 80%. Not only are we defending this clean air plan in court, but we're also challenging the Environmental Protection Agency for not adopting a stronger plan—something no other group is doing. Our hope is that we can seize this opportunity to power past coal to clean energy.



WILDEARTH GUARDIANS



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INTERN APPRECIATION

Borge Hamso



Borge Hamso is a super awesome Intern for WILDEARTH GUARDIANS. He received a Bachelors degree from Colorado College with a major in Economics and a minor in Environmental Studies. He assists WILDEARTH GUARDIANS with designing promotional materials and factsheets, proofreading proposals, writing

content for webpages, analyzing program impact, and organizing events. Borge grew up in Norway, and has had the opportunity to travel and be an outdoor guide around the world, experiencing many of the world's most beautiful and at risk environments. Now, at WILDEARTH GUARDIANS, he is working to help protect the wilderness of the Rocky Mountain West.

BEAUTIFUL LITTLE BOBCATS

Too Beautiful for Their Own Good?

Cousins to the lynx, bobcats' scientific name, *Lynx rufus*, refers to their beautiful reddish-brown, spotted coats, prized by fur buyers on the global market. Unlike lynx, however, bobcats enjoy neither federal protections and few safeguards in western states, which allow liberal trapping for the species.

*Unlike lynx, bobcats
enjoy no federal protection
and few safeguards in western states.*

Bobcats are noticeable for their tufted, black ears and short "bobbed" tails. They generally weigh between 25 and 40 pounds, with males usually outweighing females. Opportunistic eaters, bobcats typically prey on rodents and rabbits, but, despite their size, are also capable of killing deer.

Female bobcats give birth to one to four kittens annually. Weaned after eight weeks, kittens travel with their mother learning all of her survival skills. They remain



ELROY LIMMER

dependent upon her for ten to 24 months before dispersing from their birth areas to find their own ranges. Bobcats need ample habitat, prey, and freedom to roam for healthy populations to exist.