

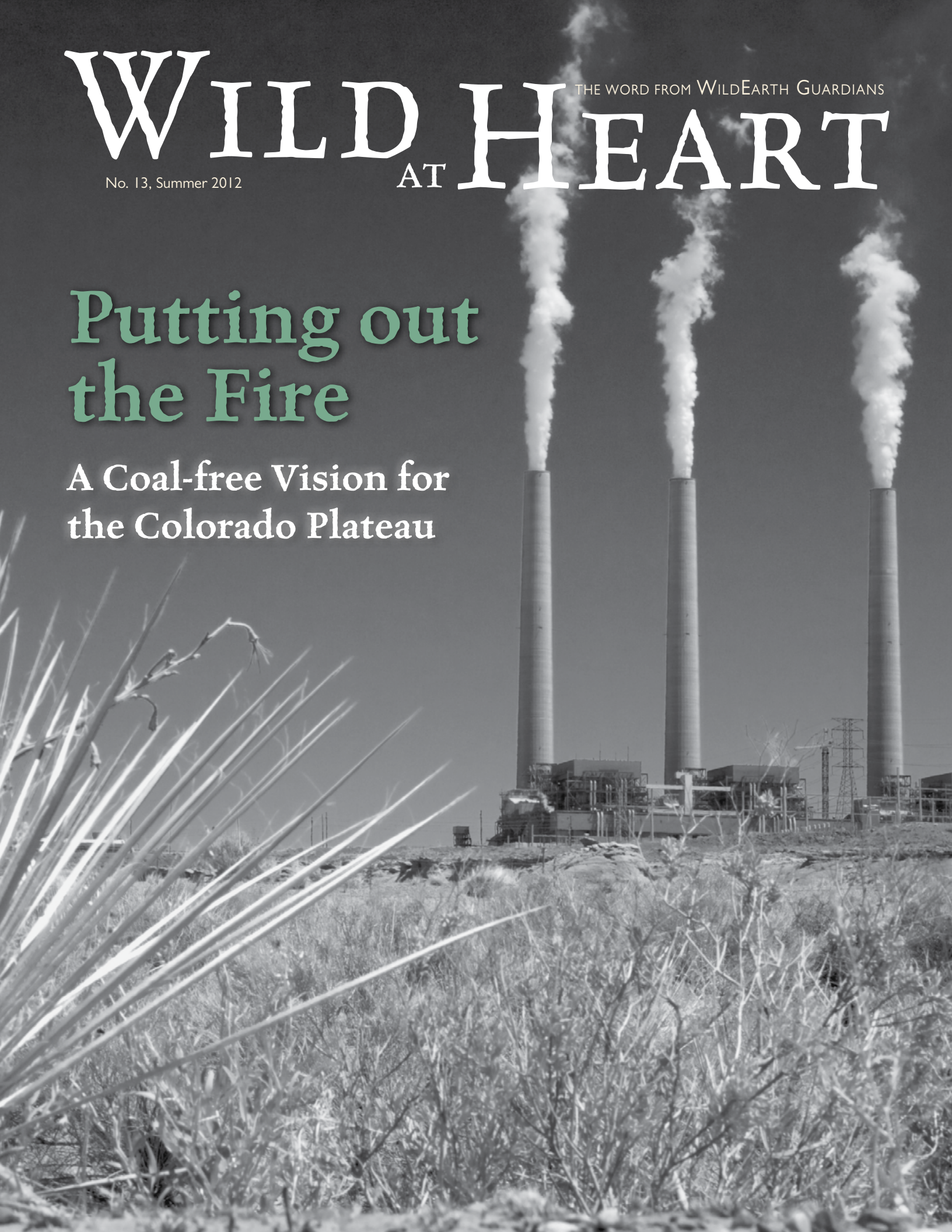
# WILD AT HEART

THE WORD FROM WILDEARTH GUARDIANS

No. 13, Summer 2012

## Putting out the Fire

A Coal-free Vision for  
the Colorado Plateau





**MISSION STATEMENT**

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

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SANTA FE OFFICE:  
516 Alto Street  
Santa Fe, NM 87501  
TEL 505.988.9126  
FAX 505.213.1895

DENVER OFFICE:  
1536 Wynkoop Street  
Ste. 301  
Denver, CO 80202  
TEL 303.573.4898

OFFICES ALSO IN:  
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EDITOR, Terry Flanagan, M.Ed.  
GRAPHIC DESIGN, Janice St. Marie

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## A BOLD VISION

John Horning



A coal-free Colorado plateau? Is it realistic? We think so. Of course, when we ask the question here at WILDEARTH GUARDIANS, we begin by asking the inverse as well: Can we afford to sustain our commitment to coal?

The simple answer is: No, we can't.

That's because any comprehensive assessment of the cost of coal anywhere, but especially on the Colorado Plateau—from Wyoming's badlands to New Mexico's

buttes—would reveal that it isn't just greenhouse gas emissions, which we know are a major cause of the climate crisis, that are the problem.

It's also mercury that's killing endangered fish; it's nitrogen dioxide and sulfur dioxide that are killing people and causing asthma; and it's a growing smog problem that's cluttering our skies and ruining the grand, scenic vistas that are a hallmark of the American West.

That's why WILDEARTH GUARDIANS is driving dozens of legal stakes into the heart and bloodlines that sustain our dangerous commitment to coal. The focus of our attack on coal is the existing coal-fired power plants that are scattered across the Colorado Plateau in places where Pleistocene-rich coal deposits exist.

As Jeremy Nichols' feature article shows, our scope is broad and we have at least one lawsuit targeting every major coal-fired power plant on the Colorado Plateau. We'll wield just about any legal hook that can create a new financial liability for the utilities that operate these dirty coal plants.

This summer's soaring temperatures, burning forests and parched rivers provide reminder enough that our Climate & Energy Program is playing a critical role in helping us transition away from our dangerous dependence on coal.

## GUARDIAN GIVERS

### Beaver Toyota of Santa Fe Supports New Mexico's Beavers



Beaver Toyota and WILDEARTH GUARDIANS are joining forces for New Mexico's beavers. Linda Beaver, Owner, says, "We have a natural affinity for beavers! It makes sense for us to partner with WILDEARTH GUARDIANS in their important project to assess all federal lands for suitability of reintroducing this hard-working ecosystem

engineer. Beavers mitigate the effects of climate change, and the Prius reduces the amount of carbon being put into the atmosphere. Go Beavers!"

Visit [wildearthguardians.org](http://wildearthguardians.org): Top Priorities / Climate Laboratory: Jemez Mountains / Beavers: Climate Heroes

## GET ON THE BUS

### GUARDIAN Members make Energy Sustainability a Priority



Lori Colt

LORI COLT



Michael and Louise Roach of Santa Fe, New Mexico, know a thing or two about pollution. As pioneers of a business that manufactured emissions control systems for large diesel engines, the couple has long known the impacts of human-created pollution and the toll it is taking on the planet. So, in 2011, when they sold their business to a Fortune 100 company, they asked themselves, "What's next?" Pondering a variety of other business ideas, they decided to direct their focus on their own home.

Michael says, "We wanted to do the right thing when it comes to doing our part to address climate change, so we changed our house over to be carbon neutral. We retrofitted everything to be 100% electric for home heating, cooking and domestic hot water. No natural gas, no propane and no carbon emissions from any other source. We installed a solar array large enough to offset all our electric usage. Over the course of a year, we'll produce more electricity than we will use. All of the extra power goes into the grid as clean energy."

During the summer when their electric usage is low, all the extra power they make is credited to their account by the Public Service Company of New Mexico (PNM). Then, in the winter when their electricity usage rises, they make use of the stored summer credits. In this way, the grid is their "battery and backup".

For their efforts, they will receive a \$0.06 per kilowatt-hour payment from PNM on all the power they produce for the next 12 years. They estimate their overall savings to be \$4500 per year. The system cost them \$45,000, but

the Roaches receive a 10% state tax credit and a 30% federal tax credit, bringing their after-tax credit cost to \$27,000. In some places, utilities are even offering incentives for installing solar, potentially making the savings even greater. The overall payback period for the Roaches will be a little under five years.

Fortunately, the cost of solar is going down every year, a testament to its growing prevalence. Since 1998, installation costs have declined 43%. The trend shows no sign of stopping, and, in many places now, solar is cheaper than coal-fired electricity.

Michael added, "In the future, we are going to have an electric car, either plug-in hybrid or all electric, so I sized the system large enough to allow us to charge an electric car."

Michael and Louise's investment in clean energy saves 9.5 tons of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) per year with just the house. When they start using an electric car, it should save 11 tons of CO<sub>2</sub> per year.

Now that's what we call "Getting on the Bus" for a sustainable energy future.

Ultimately, we need a future where most people can afford to install solar panels on their homes and businesses. Michael and Louise, like so many others, are making it happen today. Whether installing solar panels, consuming less, or becoming more efficient, we can all make a difference. Coupled with GUARDIANS' efforts to confront fossil fuels, the future looks brighter for us all when our members make a difference.

*Visit [wildearthguardians.org/TakeAction/](http://wildearthguardians.org/TakeAction/)  
Activist Spotlight*

### SAVE THE DATES

for these  
GUARDIANS' Events

#### AUGUST 23

Wolf Benefit Concert  
Denver, CO

#### FALL

Canoe trip down  
the Rio Grande  
Albuquerque, NM

#### SEPTEMBER 21

9th Annual  
GUARDIANS Gala  
Santa Fe, NM

#### SEPTEMBER 20-22

Desert Conference  
XXVI  
Bend, OR

#### FALL

Wine Tasting  
and Wolves  
Tucson, AZ

#### NOVEMBER 8

6th Annual  
Treehugger Bash  
Albuquerque, NM

*For more details, visit  
[wildearthguardians.org/](http://wildearthguardians.org/)  
Support Us / Events*

### We invite you to join a special group of members – OUR MONTHLY DONORS

Whether it is \$5, \$20, or \$250 a month, monthly gives form the backbone of our organization, providing the sustainability and flexibility that enables WILDEARTH GUARDIANS to work on urgent and critical issues.

Your pledge deepens our capacity to respond quickly and decisively, which makes us the effective organization that our members value.

**SIGN UP TODAY!**

## RESTORATION UPDATE

### WHY ARE YOU A GUARDIANS' MONTHLY DONOR?



"I am a monthly donor to WG because the American West is where my heart is. That's why it's so hard to witness the devastation that climate change is causing. Out of control wildfires, extreme heat, drought-stricken streams—it's a stark reminder of the urgent crisis we face. If we can't power past coal, it's only going to get worse. For the sake of the West, the time to act is now."

— ROBERT UKEILEY,  
current Berea, KY,  
resident and future  
Boulder, CO, resident  
Environmental  
attorney, determined  
clean-energy advocate,  
and a long-time  
GUARDIANS' supporter.

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Support US /  
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It has been an exciting first six months in 2012 for WILDEARTH GUARDIANS' Restoration Team. Numerous projects have been implemented to improve water quality, wildlife habitat, and restore natural processes.

At the beginning of the year, WILDEARTH GUARDIANS partnered with the Bureau of Land Management and private landowners to plant native riparian vegetation along the Rio Ojo Caliente in northern New Mexico. Later in the spring, WILDEARTH GUARDIANS and volunteers planted cottonwoods and willows along a 1.3-mile stretch of the Santa Fe River, an effort that was part of a City of Santa Fe initiative to improve the floodplain corridor within city limits. Many volunteers, school groups, and even an international group visited the site and lent some elbow grease.

We are currently partnering with the Santa Fe National Forest to protect and revegetate significant portions of Rito Peñas Negras, Redondo Creek, and San Antonio Creek on Forest Service lands in the Jemez Mountains. Additionally, we have been working with the Valles Caldera National Preserve to restore Redondo Creek, San Antonio Creek, and Rito de los Indios within the Preserve. We have also been working with the Preserve to remove old livestock fencing to allow wildlife greater migration within the Preserve.

In total, more than 170,000 willow, 2,000 cottonwood, 1,000 aspen, and 1,000 riparian forage species have been planted by WILDEARTH GUARDIANS' restoration staff and volunteers in 2012 alone.

We would like to extend special thanks



*Planting on Rito Peñas Negras May 2012*



*New Plantings on San Antonio Creek June 2012*

to the New Mexico Environment Department, American Forests' Global Releaf Initiative, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Valles Caldera Trust, the Bureau of Land Management, the U.S. Forest Service, National Forests Foundation, and the City of Santa Fe for supporting and partnering with WILDEARTH GUARDIANS on these important projects to restore ecological balance in the southwest.

*Visit [wildearthguardians.org](http://wildearthguardians.org); Programs / Wild Rivers / Ecosystem Restoration*

## WOLF DEN

Carol Norton



MEXICAN WOLF INTERAGENCY TEAM

On Saturday, June 23, WILDEARTH GUARDIANS launched our new website – Wolf Den ([wg.convio.net/wolfden](http://wg.convio.net/wolfden)). Over the coming months, the site will become a place where anyone can learn about and connect with Mexican wolves in the Gila National Forest. Updates will happen often as we post pictures and biographies of individual wolves and other information pertaining to entire packs. We want people to know the wolves; we believe that people who connect with wolves will stand up for wolves. Once you know how hard they are working to survive, it is difficult to not want to do everything you can to support them. In our first week on the new site, we hosted a naming contest for the alpha pair of the Middle Fork pack. Visit our site and meet Bacho and Esperanza, the first named wolves in the Gila!

*Visit [wg.convio.net/wolfden](http://wg.convio.net/wolfden)*

Bryan Bird

## Why We Do What We Do

Undoing past environmental injury is a vital part of WILDEARTH GUARDIANS' mission. In June, GUARDIANS volunteers turned their attention to the Valles Caldera National Preserve in New Mexico. Previously a working ranch, the Yellowstone-like preserve hosts abundant wildlife, including elk, deer, antelope, black bear, coyotes and even the reclusive mountain lion.



MARIELLEN COLLINS



MARIELLEN COLLINS

More than 40 people turned out to remove several miles of old livestock fencing. A 2500-plus elk herd has been negatively impacted by old fences once built for livestock management. The fences restricted the natural movement and range of the elk, and reserve staff even documented coyotes using the fencing to trap elk calves.

Fortunately, at least some of the Preserve is now fence-free and wildlife can roam unencumbered in these parts. We would like to extend our special thanks to GUARDIANS' volunteers and our partners Caldera Action and the Valles Caldera National Preserve.



ROBERT PARMENTER

## WHY ARE YOU A GUARDIANS' MONTHLY DONOR?



"I am a monthly donor to WG because the writing is on the wall: coal is expensive, filthy and undermining the safety and health of our communities. But, thankfully, here in Arizona and throughout the West, we have some of the greatest renewable energy potential in the country. There has never been a greater imperative to transition to clean energy, nor has there been such an incredible opportunity to make it happen."

— NANCY LAPLACA  
Phoenix, AZ  
Clean-energy advocate,  
and four-year GUARDIANS' supporter.

Interested in becoming a GUARDIANS' Monthly Donor? Visit our website for more details: [wildearthguardians.org](http://wildearthguardians.org): Support US / Monthly Giving.

## IN THE HALLS OF JUSTICE



Jeremy Nichols, Wendy Keefover, Samantha Ruscavage-Barz

### WHY ARE YOU A GUARDIANS' MONTHLY DONOR?



JENNIFER ESPERANZA

"I'm a monthly donor to WILDEARTH GUARDIANS because I love the Southwest and consider New Mexico my home. In this time of increasing urgency about addressing climate instability, WG's campaigns are strategic, effective and local, helping to tilt the economics of coal to give renewables a real chance to transform our energy use. Their additional work conserving and restoring habitat for wild creatures is also dear to my heart."

— NINA SIMONS  
Santa Fe, NM  
Co-CEO and  
Co-Founder, Bioneers/  
Collective Heritage  
Institute

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### GUARDIANS SETS CLEAN AIR PRECEDENT

CREATIVE COMMONS LICENSE - FLICKR



meant to protect our health and our environment. The ruling raises the bar for clean air in Pueblo, CO, and beyond.

*Visit [wildearthguardians.org](http://wildearthguardians.org): Programs / Climate and Energy*

WILDEARTH GUARDIANS scored a milestone ruling from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) this May. Agreeing with a petition we filed, the EPA overturned the air pollution permit for the Rocky Mountain Steel Mill in Pueblo, Colorado. Finding that the mill failed to keep mercury and smog-forming pollution in check, the EPA ordered the permit to be fixed or else denied. It's great news for a healthy environment—this steel mill is the largest source of mercury emissions in Colorado. It's also great news for clean air throughout the region because the ruling sets a critical precedent—that permits won't jeopardize clean air standards

### NEW MEXICO HIRES DC LAW FIRM TO DEFEND TRAPPING IN LOBO COUNTRY

In February, GUARDIANS filed suit against the State of New Mexico for permitting trapping in the Mexican wolf recovery area even though lobos are listed as "threatened" under federal law. The State responded by hiring two law firms to defend its nefarious policy (including a large "K Street" law firm based in Washington, D.C.), and reserved \$385,000 in public funds to pay them. A horde of intervenors representing trapping associations, hunting clubs, and the livestock industry has also joined the State's defense. Fortunately, a GUARDIANS' attorney was able to prevent one intervenor, Safari Club International, from gaining entry into the case, marking a small victory in our fight on behalf of Mexican wolves.

*Visit [wildearthguardians.org](http://wildearthguardians.org): Top Priorities / The Greater Gila*



RAVARETTI

### KIDS WIN FOR THE CLIMATE!

AKILAH SANDERS-REED



Last year, WILDEARTH GUARDIANS and 16-year-old Akilah Sanders-Reed filed a lawsuit against Governor Martinez and the State of New Mexico to compel the State to reduce its carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions. The lawsuit is based on the Public Trust Doctrine, which requires states to manage and protect natural resources for the common benefit of its citizens. Back in January, the court acknowledged that the Public Trust Doctrine applies in New Mexico and that the atmosphere could be part of the public trust. The State again moved to dismiss the case. On June 29, the court denied the State's motion and is allowing the case to go forward to determine whether the state agency charged with protecting the atmosphere has met its public trust responsibility.

*Visit [wildearthguardians.org](http://wildearthguardians.org): Programs / Climate and Energy*

## CAMPAIGN UPDATES

John Horning, Bryan Bird, Wendy Keefover



### RIO GRANDE SUFFERING THE "DEATH OF A THOUSAND CUTS"

ADRIEL HEISEY



One part of re-activating our campaign to restore the Rio Grande includes challenging plans by cities in central New Mexico to purchase water from farms. We are currently challenging two different water "transfers" that allow water to be consumed in Santa Fe instead of in southern New Mexico's Socorro County.

Our goal is not just to halt these two transfers but to catalyze a shift in state policy that recognizes that water sold by a downstream farmer and moved to an upstream city means less water flowing down the river through central New Mexico. We want the State of New Mexico to require that a percentage of all water transfers be reallocated to the river, to help ensure that the river has a right to its own waters.

Visit [wildearthguardians.org](http://wildearthguardians.org): *Top Priorities / Free Flowing Rio Grande*

### CLEAN WATERS, WILD FORESTS



Moving our campaign forward to protect pristine waters in the West, WILDEARTH GUARDIANS filed a proposal in Colorado in June to give permanent protection to many miles of streams and rivers in the Gunnison

and San Juan river basins. These waters are all found in Forest Service roadless areas that have no permanent degree of protection—such as Wilderness designation—and thus remain in danger of fossil fuel development and motorized recreation.

The State will hold hearings in Durango, Colorado, in September to consider our proposal to permanently protect these waters. Join us during this beautiful time of changing colors in southern Colorado and tell the State of Colorado you personally support Clean Waters and Wild Forests.

Visit [wildearthguardians.org](http://wildearthguardians.org): *Top Priorities / Clean Waters Wild Forests*

### GUARDIANS SUES THE NATION'S BIGGEST WILDLIFE KILLER: THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT



RAY RAHFTI

In April, GUARDIANS filed suit against the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) for killing more than 5 million animals annually and for its refusal to analyze the environmental consequences of its actions for the first time in almost two decades. Between 2004 and 2010, USDA's Wildlife Services spent nearly \$1 billion to kill 26.2 million animals using aerial guns, poisons, traps, snares, and hounds purportedly to protect agriculture and other private interests. Despite significant new information on the costs, ineffectiveness, and environmental harms of its wildlife-killing programs, the USDA continues to rely on an environmental analysis that dates from 1994. GUARDIANS' lawsuit targets the USDA's national program and its Nevada program, where the agency is also illegally killing our native carnivores in wilderness areas.

Visit [wildearthguardians.org](http://wildearthguardians.org): *Top Priorities / Ending the War on Wildlife*

### WHY ARE YOU A GUARDIANS' MONTHLY DONOR?



"I am a monthly donor to WILDEARTH GUARDIANS because coal-fired power is a relic of our bygone days of innocence about our planetary future. We must overcome our addiction to cheap energy, and WILDEARTH GUARDIANS is showing us how to overcome this addiction and to fuel our spirits via a connection to nature. I believe that once we have re-established this connection, and can move beyond the cycle of cheap consumer products and energy-intensive diets that fuel a rapidly growing human population, we will have found our path to true sustainability."

— KIRSTEN STADE  
Silver Spring, MD  
[peacefuldog.blogspot.com](http://peacefuldog.blogspot.com)

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## A COAL-FREE COLORADO PLATEAU

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

Jeremy Nichols

When I was a kid, I floated the San Juan River with my family. In a wooden dory, we rowed down the river's sandy currents, through the whitewater, amongst red canyon walls and a land that seemed forever remote and interminably untouched.

Colorado River watershed over portions of Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming supports 12 coal-fired power plants that account for 44% of all coal-fired electricity generated in the western U.S.

These plants include: the Navajo Generating Station in Arizona; the Craig, Hayden, and Nucla power plants in Colorado; San Juan Generating Station and Four Corners Power Plant in New Mexico; the Hunter, Huntington, and Bonanza plants in Utah; and the Jim Bridger and Naughton power plants in Wyoming.

Collectively, these plants take a huge toll on the region's air, water, and land. And this is where another set of less appealing superlatives comes in, such as:

- the largest coal-fired power plant west of the Mississippi River, a distinction belonging to the 2,400 megawatt Navajo Generating Station in Arizona;
- the largest source of nitrogen oxide pollution, a byproduct of coal combustion that forms smog and haze, a distinction that belongs to the Four Corners Power Plant in New Mexico. In 2011, the plant released more than 37,500 tons, as much as 1.96 million cars; and
- three of the top 25 largest sources of carbon dioxide in the United States—the Navajo Generating Station, Four Corners Power Plant, and Jim Bridger Station in Wyoming (13th, 24th, and 14th, respectively).

Not surprisingly, haze and smog tied to these and other plants are devouring the region. Monitors throughout the region, even in National Parks and Monuments, have reported dozens of exceedances of federal limits on ground-level ozone, the key ingredient of urban smog. West Elks and the Weminuche wilderness areas of Colorado, Canyonlands National Park in Utah, and the Bridger Wilderness of Wyoming are 10 times hazier than they naturally should be.

In an area defined and treasured because of its remoteness, clear vistas, and lack of urbanity, this is a huge problem.

Even more distressing is the fact that these plants collectively release more than 20.5 million pounds of toxic chemicals every year. These toxic releases include more than 1,800 pounds of mercury—a potent neurotoxin—which are spewed into the air from the plants' smokestacks.

With a son of my own, it's now shocking to know that the very river that I once enjoyed as so primordial and wild, as well as the region that the river calls home, is under siege.

That region is the Colorado Plateau.

Home to Grand Canyon, Zion, Arches, and more, the Plateau is the American West's defining collision of contrasts. The land, the water, the people, the air—they're a mélange of unlikely proportions that over time have paradoxically joined to create one of the most iconic contrasts of culture and geology, water and desert, even life and death, found in North America.

Yet while the Plateau is defined by stark contrasts and unimaginable superlatives, even here, there is something out of place.

It's coal.

Not the natural seams of coal that streak the region's buttes with black stripes, but the mines and power plants that have created a present-day environmental disaster.

By our count, the Colorado Plateau, a region largely encompassing the upper



Toxic mercury emissions from coal-fired power plants on the Colorado Plateau are threatening the San Juan River, an iconic river in the American West.





*The Colorado pikeminnow, a native but endangered fish on the Colorado Plateau, has been ravaged by mercury contamination.*

Perhaps it's no wonder the Colorado Plateau has some of the highest concentrations of mercury in the West. Our own mapping efforts have revealed the region's coal-fired power plants are some of the main culprits behind this contamination.

For a place so inspiring and integral to the American West, this is immensely disturbing. Yet, despite this siege of coal, there is also immense hope.

Because, in the case of the Colorado Plateau, there's no better—or more beautiful—place to save from the ravaging impacts of climate change. And from our perspective, there's an unprecedented opportunity to do so. We are seizing this opportunity.

Framed by a vision of a coal-free Colorado Plateau, our efforts have brought unprecedented pressure to bear against the region's coal-fired power plants. Our goal is to expose the true cost of coal in order to convince utilities that it's more affordable to transition to clean energy. The pressure we have mounted is bearing fruit. Take these examples:

- In Arizona, we have joined forces with Navajo activists and local groups to pressure the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Interior Department to ensure the Navajo Generating Station transitions from coal to renewable energy.
- In Colorado, we forced the EPA to ensure the Craig, Hayden, and Nucla power plants are retrofitted with costly pollution upgrades. Although these upgrades will protect clean air, they're also critical for leveraging cleaner energy.
- In New Mexico, we are flexing our legal muscles to negotiate with the Public Service Company of New Mexico, or PNM, over a plan to retire the San Juan Generating Station. We're also building on a plan to retire a portion of the nearby Four Corners Power Plant, pressuring the EPA to ensure a full shutdown of this aging coal-fired facility.
- In Utah, a legal settlement secured by GUARDIANS compelled the EPA to disapprove a State plan that failed to require any clean air retrofits on the Hunter and Huntington power plants. We are also joining forces with the Ute Indian Tribe to file suit against the Bonanza power plant over thousands of air quality violations.

## FOCUS ON COLORADO PLATEAU COAL: THE SAN JUAN GENERATING STATION

The San Juan Generating Station is a 40 year-old, 1,848 megawatt coal-fired power plant in northwestern New Mexico that's primarily owned and operated by the Public Service Company of New Mexico (PNM).

The power plant releases more than 18,000 tons of nitrogen oxide (NOx) gases each year, which is as much as 940,000 cars. To boot, more than 13,000,000 tons of carbon dioxide—the amount released by 2.3 million cars—are annually spewed from the smokestacks in addition to 51 pounds of mercury.

Every year, this pollution contributes to 33 premature deaths, 600 asthma attacks, 31 asthma-related emergency room visits, and other health effects, costing more than \$254 million.

Spurred by a WILDEARTH GUARDIANS' lawsuit, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) finalized a plan last year to retrofit the plant with state of the art controls to curb its haze forming NOx emissions by more than 90%.

While an important step forward, the San Juan will still be one of New Mexico's largest sources of air pollution and a threat to public health and the environment, even after retrofits.

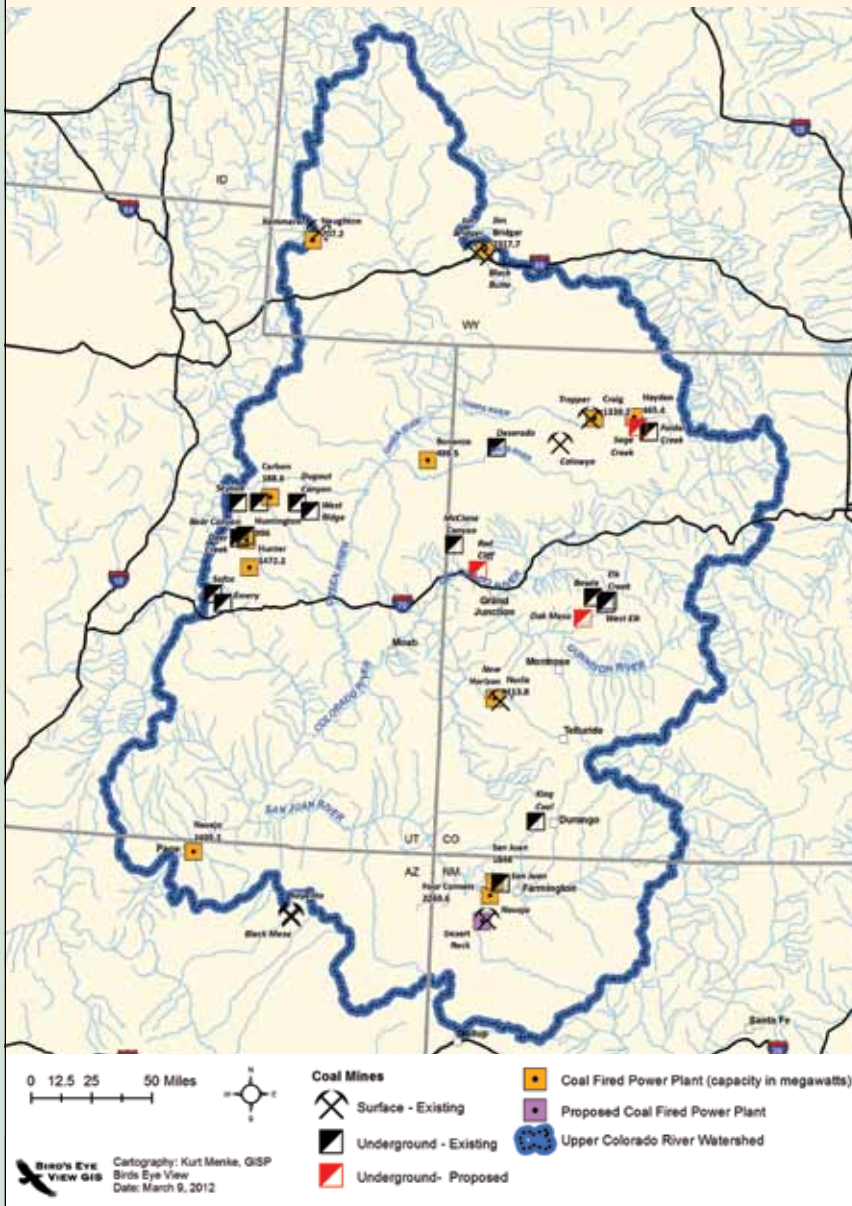
Instead of retrofitting a dirty coal-plant, we're calling on PNM to retire the San Juan Generating Station and offset its electricity with clean renewable energy by 2025.

This opportunity could not be better timed. Other owners of the power plant, including Tucson Electric Power and several California utilities, are signaling their desire to divest in the San Juan Generating Station.

Rather than spending money to make coal clean, we believe it's wiser to invest in energy that's clean from the start. In the coming weeks, we expect to engage PNM in negotiations to secure a commitment to power past coal at the San Juan Generating Station. If GUARDIANS is successful, our initiative to retire San Juan and support a renewable energy vision will prove to be a major milestone for protecting and restoring the Colorado Plateau.



## COLORADO PLATEAU: COAL CONTAMINATION THREATENS FISH, WILDLIFE, CLEAN AIR



• And in Wyoming, our legal efforts have ensured the EPA steers the Jim Bridger and Naughton power plants into a corner, where the plants either spend millions to upgrade their air pollution controls or convert to cleaner energy.

To top it off, we're also targeting the source of these coal-fired monstrosities, fighting new and expanded coal mining plans in western Colorado, New Mexico, Wyoming and Utah. By cutting off the fuel supply, we can hasten the move away from fossil fuels and, at the same time, confront the entire coal footprint on the Plateau.

Without a doubt, we face an enormous challenge. It's not enough to just expose the cost of coal; we have to ensure utilities decide to ditch coal in favor of clean energy. What's more, we have to ensure that this clean energy benefits the local communities and economies of the Plateau. Still, throughout the Colorado Plateau, we are making considerable progress.

For anyone who loves the American West, there should be no question that there needs to be a move away from coal-dependence in this amazing region. For me, harkening back to my childhood floats on the San Juan and now planning to take my own son on this amazing river, it's an imperative.

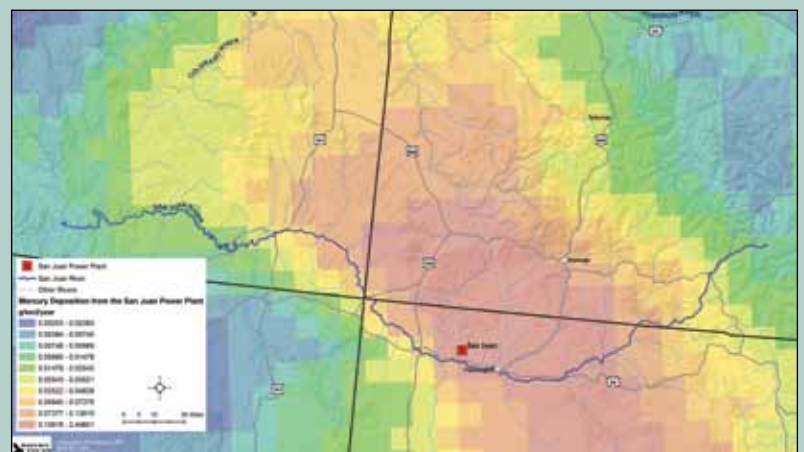
WILDEARTH GUARDIANS' vision is simple: a coal-free Colorado Plateau. It's a simple vision with enormous possibilities. With the West's most defining landscape at risk, we can't afford to lose this one. Join us and stay tuned as we continue to make progress.

*Visit [wildearthguardians.org](http://wildearthguardians.org): Top Priorities / Power Past Coal*

## MERCURY KILLS

With the help of Bird's Eye View GIS, we've mapped the mercury deposition footprint of every coal-fired power plant on the Plateau. The results are unsettling.

The San Juan Generating Station and Four Corners Power Plant, for example, deposit mercury at a higher rate in the San Juan River basin than anywhere else. Alarming, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service reported that the region's native fish are declining as a result. Notably, 64% of all Colorado pikeminnow, an endangered species that once thrived in the rivers of the Colorado Plateau, are suffering reproductive impairment because of mercury.



**MERCURY DEPOSITION FROM THE SAN JUAN POWER PLANT**

# GOOD NEWS FROM THE GUARDIANS

## HISTORIC SPECIES SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT

Endangered species listings under our Historic Species Settlement Agreement continue apace this year. Invertebrates have been particularly fortunate: the Arapahoe snowfly is now a candidate for listing, the San Bernardino springsnail was listed as “threatened”, and the Three Forks springsnail, rayed bean, Chupadera springsnail and snuffbox mussel were all listed as “endangered”. Two plants, the Umtanum Desert buckwheat and the White Bluffs bladderpod, have been proposed for listing. The i'iwi, a Hawaiian bird, moved closer to listing with a positive petition finding.

Unfortunately, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service withdrew its 2010 listing proposal for the dunes sagebrush lizard. The agency contends that current conservation agreements are adequate to protect this imperiled reptile and its dwindling habitat, both of which are severely threatened by oil and gas development. We will monitor these agreements closely.

Visit [wildearthguardians.org: Top Priorities / Endangered Species](http://wildearthguardians.org: Top Priorities / Endangered Species) Dunes sagebrush lizard



Umtanum Desert buckwheat



Dunes sagebrush lizard

JOSEPH ARNETT WASHINGTON  
NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM  
(WNHP)

USFWS



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## WILDEARTH GUARDIANS EARNS OUTSIDE MAGAZINE'S TOP 100!

WILDEARTH GUARDIANS



*Outside Magazine* recently named WILDEARTH GUARDIANS as one of the top 100 places to work. *Outside's* evaluation process is dauntingly rigorous. It involves surveying employees for work satisfaction as well as ensuring that eligible organizations make a positive impact in the world. We are honored that we have been recognized by one of our favorite magazines. It

has been a big year for us. In January, WILDEARTH GUARDIANS garnered the “Monkey-Wrenching of the West” award from Americans for Prosperity-Colorado (AFP), an anti-environmental organization. AFP is frustrated that GUARDIANS successfully litigates to ensure that our clean air, our climate, and our wildlife are protected.

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## MONSTER DOESN'T SCARE NEW HAMPSHIRE'S KIDS

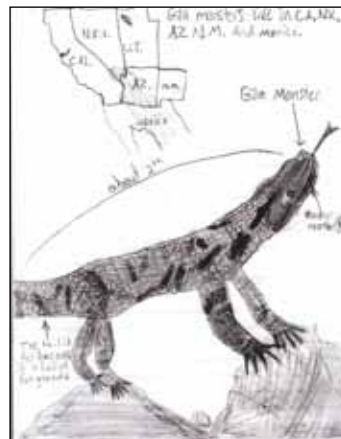
Inspired by WILDEARTH GUARDIANS' efforts to protect the Utah population of Gila monsters under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), a small group of students at the Woodland Community School in Bethlehem, NH, have become advocates for protecting the rare lizard. The students created natural history reports about the Gila monster, and raised \$25.66 with the sale of handmade books and bookmarks to help protect this amazing reptile.

The unique population of Gila monster in Utah is threatened by sprawling development in the vicinity of St. George and other factors. WILDEARTH GUARDIANS petitioned to list the population under the ESA in 2011; the U.S.

Fish and Wildlife Service denied the petition and we're currently preparing a new petition that the agency cannot deny.

Thanks to Ayla, age 11, and Wyatt, age 9, and to the rest of the Woodland Community School, for their passion, care and generosity.

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AYLA

WYATT



## INTERN APPRECIATION

### Meet our Legal Interns



**W**ILDEARTH GUARDIANS gives thanks to its talented group of exceptional legal interns this year, which includes: **Jeremy Baker** and **Jacob Marx** of The University of Colorado Law School, **Autumn Bergh** of University of New Mexico School of Law, **Wyatt Lemmer** of Vermont Law School, **Jesse Lueders** of UCLA School of Law, and **Nate Brown** and **Sarah Barth** of University of Denver's Sturm College of Law. These interns are serving in various capacities to bring about transformation in the West. We wish them continued success in their endeavors with us and for the wild.

## SPECIES FEATURE

### Long-Legged Lagomorph

**T**he white-sided jackrabbit is a long, lanky grassland dweller of the Chihuahuan Desert. It is named for its distinctive white sides, which it “flashes”, possibly to distract predators. This rarely-seen jackrabbit has a limited range stretching from New Mexico’s bootheel to Oaxaca, Mexico, along

*WILDEARTH GUARDIANS is working to protect the white-sided jackrabbit under the Endangered Species Act.*

the eastern flank of the Sierra Madre Occidental. Its distribution in the U.S. is confined to 46 square miles in southern Hidalgo County. Fewer than 100 individuals remain in the U.S., down from over 300 in the late 1970s. WILDEARTH GUARDIANS is working to protect the white-sided jackrabbit under the Endangered Species Act, as listing would protect the species and the habitat it needs to survive and thrive.

