

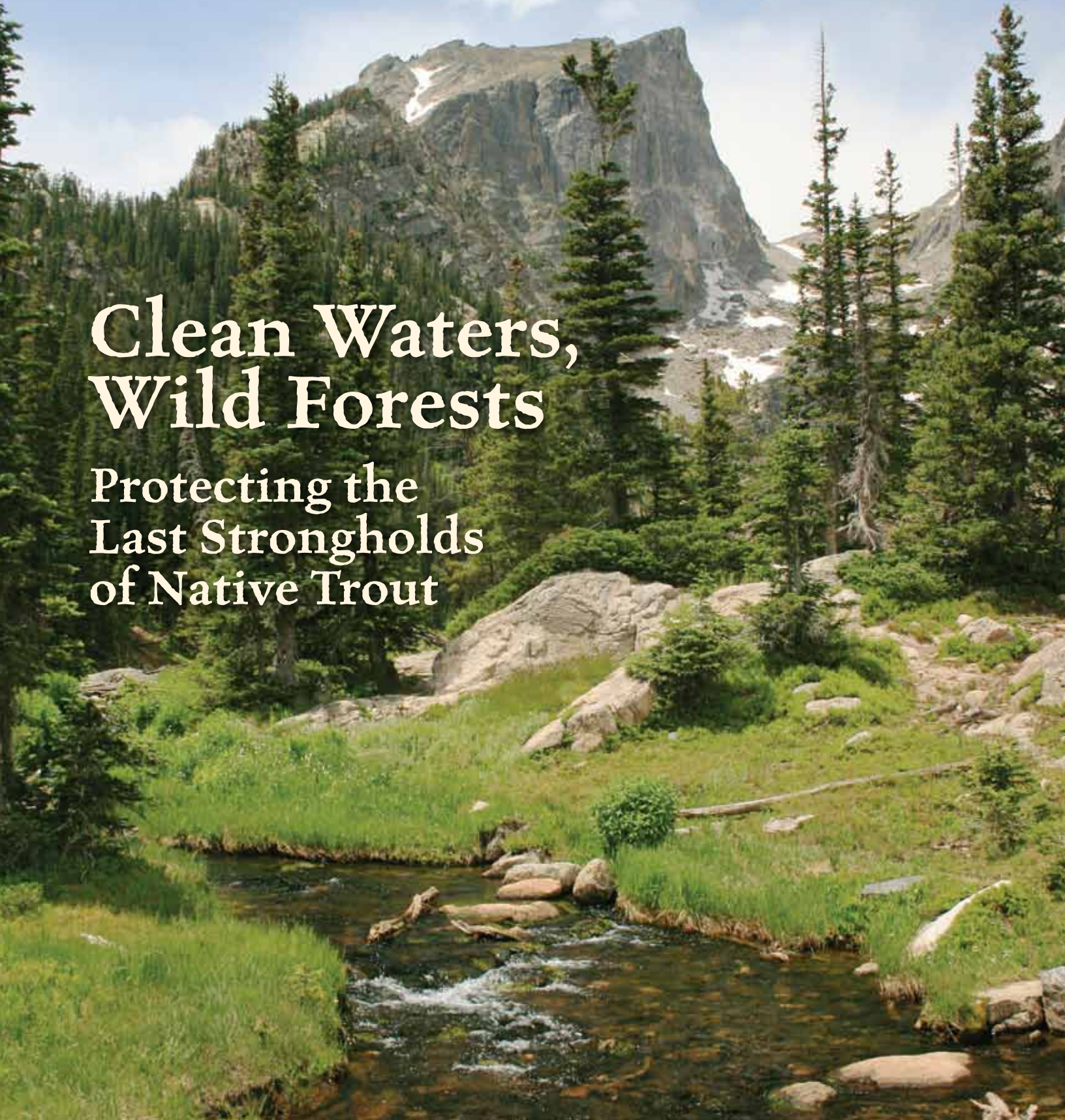
WILD AT HEART

THE WORD FROM WILDEARTH GUARDIANS

No. 15, Spring 2013

Clean Waters, Wild Forests

Protecting the
Last Strongholds
of Native Trout





MISSION STATEMENT

WildEarth Guardians protects and restores the wildlife, wild places, and wild rivers of the American West.

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A BOLD VISION

John Horning



of mining, oil and gas drilling, logging, and cattle grazing.

Our Clean Waters, Wild Forests campaign aims to create a different kind of legacy for Colorado's headwaters. It's about protecting our best, highest quality waters and ensuring that they are never polluted.

Our vision is clear and our strategy is unique. We want to secure the most protective designation possible under the Clean Water Act: an "outstanding water." Once designated, no one is allowed to pollute these waters.

Under the capable leadership of Bryan Bird, our Wild Places Program Director, we've succeeded before. In New Mexico, we secured an outstanding waters designation for more than 700 miles of the state's highest quality waterways. Now, we want to take a similar step in northern Colorado by securing protection for some of the West's best native trout waters.

As with all of our campaigns, we'll need your help to overcome the opponents of clean water. Clean water is a priceless heritage, but we won't secure it without a fight. Stay tuned to our e-alerts to learn about how you can help.

For the Wild,

GUARDIAN GIVER

Aveda Corporation

Kevin Gaither Banchoff



We are proud to announce that Aveda Corporation has selected WILDEARTH GUARDIANS to be its New Mexico partner for the 2013 Earth Month program. Since 1999, Aveda has set aside the month of April "to love, celebrate, and raise funds to protect the Earth and its peoples." Over the past six years, Aveda has raised over \$20 million for clean water projects. In 2013, Aveda's efforts in New Mexico will help ensure that the Rio Grande will not run dry, and will also support our River Restoration program, during which volunteers will plant approximately 170,000 trees and

shrubs across six different headwater streams in New Mexico.

Aveda's philanthropic goal is to "inspire our business network and customers to become aware of the importance of protecting clean water." We thank Aveda for its commitment to environmental protection!

AVEDA
EARTHMONT2013



GET ON THE BUS

Passion for Outback Hiking Leads to Water and Trout Protection

Lori Colt



Dr. Ronald Loehman, a member of WILDEARTH GUARDIANS for six years, has hiked and backpacked New Mexico's high country since moving to the state in the 1980s. Loehman is particularly drawn to lush environs like Panchuela and Jack's Creeks in the Pecos Wilderness and the Upper Rio Puerco in San Pedro Parks Wilderness.

About a dozen years ago, Loehman discovered fly-fishing.

"I found myself paying particular attention to all kinds of details: the water clarity and temperature, flow patterns, what the stream bottom is like, the nature of the banks, and the surrounding vegetation," Loehman

said. "[I began] noticing and appreciating the whole riparian ecosystem... Part of that appreciation was my understanding of how rare those habitats are in New Mexico and

observing that many of them are being degraded by overuse."

Loehman decided he wanted to help repair damaged stream systems and to work to protect those that are still in good condition. He joined New Mexico Trout, a fly-fishing club with a strong conservation record.

"I liked their volunteer projects – very much in tune with WILDEARTH GUARDIANS – involving field work to improve native Rio Grande trout habitat," Loehman said. After two seasons with the group, Loehman volunteered

to be the NM Trout Conservation Chairman, a position he's held for the past five years.

A passion for riparian areas along New Mexico's coldwater streams inspired Loehman and NM Trout to join WILDEARTH GUARDIANS in protecting the state's most pristine streams. Together, we petitioned the New Mexico Water Quality Control Commission (WQCC) to designate them as Outstanding National Resource Waters (ONRW), the highest level of protection possible under the Clean Water Act.

"With increasing drought and climate warming, we know that that these streams will

be the last refuges for plants and animals adapted to cold water habitats, including the trout we like so much," Loehman said.

The approval of the ONRW petition was a victory for WILDEARTH GUARDIANS and partner groups. We celebrate the protection of over 700 miles of rivers and streams, in addition to 29 lakes and 6,000 acres of wetlands.

Visit wildearthguardians.org:
Take Action / Activist Spotlight



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!

MAJOR MILESTONE: SAGEBRUSH SEA CAMPAIGN

WHY ARE YOU A GUARDIANS MONTHLY DONOR?



"The outstanding effort by WILDEARTH GUARDIANS to protect Colorado water is just one of many reasons why I am a monthly donor. Climate change, drought, agribusiness, urban development, and other abuses threaten the Colorado River in particular. The quality of all life depends on clean water. The vision and work of WILDEARTH GUARDIANS may be my river's best hope."

— DEBORAH CROWLEY
Consulting Business
Owner and Potter
Colorado Springs, CO

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Gunnison Sage-Grouse Finally on the Road to Protection

Mark Salvo

Travel back in time for a minute: a gallon of gas cost \$1.26, Y2K passed without incident, the dot.com bubble was about to burst, and George W. Bush was just beginning his first term. If this sounds like the last century, it nearly was. It was January, 2000, the same month that I submitted a petition on behalf of several conservation organizations to protect the imperiled Gunnison sage-grouse under the Endangered Species Act.

I never would have believed it would take 13 years to protect this unique and charismatic bird. But now we finally have some good news for Gunnison sage-grouse. This winter, in accordance with GUARDIANS' landmark species settlement agreement, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service proposed to list the grouse as "endangered" under the ESA, and designate a whopping 1.7 million acres of critical habitat to support its recovery.

Gunnison sage-grouse are distinct from greater sage-grouse. Researchers noticed physical, behavioral, and genetic differences between the two as early as the 1970s, and officially recognized the Gunnison sage-grouse as a new species in 2000. Both birds require large expanses of undisturbed sagebrush steppe with a full complement of sagebrush species, native grasses, wildflowers, and associated riparian ecosystems.

Unfortunately, myriad land uses, including livestock grazing, energy development, motorized recreation, and poor land use planning have fragmented and eliminated huge swaths of sagebrush habitat. While Gunnison sage-grouse historic range may have included parts of Colorado, Utah, New Mexico, and Arizona, the species now occurs only in eight small populations in southwestern Colorado and southeastern Utah. Gunnison sage-grouse have experienced significant declines from historic numbers and fewer than 5,000 birds remain.

Like other western grouse, Gunnison sage-grouse are known for their boisterous mating displays. At dawn in the early spring, sage-grouse congregate on "leks"—ancestral



NORADOL PAOTHONG

strutting grounds to which the birds return year after year. To attract a hen, males strut, fan their tail feathers, and swell their breasts to reveal wobbling yellow air sacs. The rapid inflation and deflation of air sacs produces a garbled call that, on a still day, can be heard from over a mile away.

Gunnison sage-grouse might have been protected years ago if not for the Bush Administration, which rejected the species for listing in 2006. However, a subsequent string of federal investigations revealed that Bush Administration officials had unduly influenced the listing decision-making process for several imperiled species, including the Gunnison sage-grouse. Under pressure from conservationists, the Fish and Wildlife Service agreed to reconsider the grouse for listing in 2009, and designated it as a candidate species in 2010.

As part of GUARDIANS' Endangered Species Act settlement agreement, the Fish and Wildlife Service is required to review 252 candidate species, including the grouse, before the end of 2016. If the Gunnison sage-grouse is protected as proposed—a final decision is due by October—it will significantly improve how public agencies and private landowners manage its habitat in Colorado and Utah. Then the hard work of recovery can begin. Let's hope it won't take as long as listing.

Visit wildearthguardians.org:
Top Priorities / Saving the Sagebrush Sea

POSTCARDS FROM THE FIELD

Taylor Jones

Every Day is Prairie Dog Day

I've long felt kinship with the underdog, so it's not surprising that I'm a voice for the burrowing rodents called prairie dogs. Prairie dogs have disappeared from 93 - 99 percent of their once-enormous range, and their decline is bad news for other species, including black-footed ferrets, ferruginous hawks, and swift foxes. Unlike many who don't recognize their decline as a warning sign, I refuse to bury my head in the sand!



NICOLE ROSMARINO



STEVE JONES

Instead, I'm working towards restrictions on prairie dog shooting, promoting coexistence, and organizing educational events. I brought the National Audubon Society's "Prairie Saga" puppet show to Telluride, Colorado, as part of a weekend-long celebration of the Gunnison's prairie dog colony on the Telluride Valley floor.

Every February, I promote Prairie Dog Day—Groundhog Day for the West—and release Report from the Burrow, GUARDIANS' report card grading state and federal agencies' prairie dog conservation. I'm hopeful that one day, these amazing animals will be protected as intelligent, social creatures with a key role in grassland ecosystems.



Visit wildearthguardians.org: Top Priorities / Protecting the Prairie Dog Empire

WHY ARE YOU A GUARDIANS MONTHLY DONOR?



"I am honored to be a monthly supporter of WILDEARTH GUARDIANS. They are fierce in protecting our forests, rivers, and wild species. WILDEARTH GUARDIANS also has an effective climate change program that tackles our toughest battles related to the use of fossil fuels. The staff is excellent, and I know that they will use my support in the most cost-effective way."

— LESLIE GLUSTROM
Principal, Clean Energy Consulting
Boulder, CO

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IN THE HALLS OF JUSTICE

Jay Tutchton, Wendy Keefover



WHY ARE YOU A GUARDIANS MONTHLY DONOR?



"I was drawn to WILDEARTH GUARDIANS because I want to help protect wolves. I believe in protecting wildlife of all kinds, and their shrinking habitats. I joined the fight to save what is truly important: clean water and air on which every living being relies, and the right for animals to simply live as part of a thriving ecosystem... Our lives depend on it, too."

— EDDIE DELISIO
Hospitality
Northglenn, CO

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KEN CANNING



SHARPSHOOTERS – NOT WOLVES – IN ROCKY MOUNTAIN NATIONAL PARK

If wolves are going to return to Colorado, they will have to get there on their own. A U.S. Court of Appeals recently rejected GUARDIANS' argument that the National Park Service should consider restoring wolves to Rocky Mountain National Park. Like Yellowstone National Park 20 years ago, Rocky Mountain has an elk problem. Too many sedentary elk in streams and wet meadows are eating other wildlife out of house and home. Wolves are the solution to decreasing the elk population. But instead of pursuing the natural remedy that worked in Yellowstone, Rocky Mountain decided that human hunters were the answer. Hunting is not allowed in National Parks, but the National Park Service defined shooting elk in the Park as culling. WILDEARTH GUARDIANS disagreed with the shortsighted rejection of restoring wolves to the Park (and the sophistry of distinguishing culling from hunting) and went to court. Following our loss, we can only hope wolves take matters into their own paws and migrate on their own. Visit wildearthguardians.org: Top Priorities / Wolves in the American West

TRAPPED, BUT NOT FOREVER

On December 28, 2012, WILDEARTH GUARDIANS' efforts to protect Mexican wolves from steel-jawed traps took a step forward. We filed an appeal to force New Mexico to develop regulation to avoid negligently harming wolves in coyote traps. Currently, the state allows coyote trappers to litter New Mexico's landscapes with their steel-jawed landmines, which can harm or kill wolves, coyotes, and other animals. Trapping is inconsistent with protecting an endangered species in its home range. Visit wildearthguardians.org: Top Priorities / The Greater Gila



RAY RAFTI

MONTANA'S WOLVERINES KEEP THEIR FUR



RAY RAFTI

In November, 2012, a Montana court issued a temporary ban on wolverine trapping after WILDEARTH GUARDIANS and our partners sued to stop this harmful practice. Until November, Montana was the only state besides Alaska to allow wolverine trapping. In February, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service proposed listing the wolverine as "threatened" under the Endangered Species Act, which would afford them no protection in the Southern Rocky Mountain region. GUARDIANS believe that wolverines deserve a higher "endangered" designation because so few of them are left. Wolverines travel for miles through deep snow and rough terrain using crampon-clawed feet. These survivalists can take care of themselves, but have no defense against steel traps or poor policies. In our lawsuit against the state of Montana, WILDEARTH GUARDIANS is represented by the Western Environmental Law Center. Visit wildearthguardians.org: Top Priorities / Carnivore Protection

CAMPAIGN UPDATES

Jeremy Nichols, Bryan Bird, Taylor Jones



GUARDIANS TARGETS DIRTY ENERGY, HAZY SKIES IN FIVE WESTERN STATES

CARL BERGER



Coal takes a significant toll on the environment and health, perhaps most potently in the form of air pollution. In the West, pollution from coal-fired power plants is often so bad that you can see it, even in national parks and wilderness areas. The haze increases health risks. Under the Clean Air Act, plants are required to upgrade pollution controls and curtail haze. Unfortunately, the Environmental Protection Agency has failed to make sure upgrades are installed. GUARDIANS is in court challenging the EPA's failure to ensure 13 coal-fired power plants in Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming are in compliance with the Clean Air Act. Our immediate aim is to ensure cleaner air, but our ultimate goal is to catalyze the implementation of clean energy and to power past coal altogether.

Visit wildearthguardians.org:Top Priorities / Wild Skies of the West

SUPER BEAVER

ISTOCKPHOTO.COM



Our joint venture with the American beaver is gaining momentum in New Mexico. Together with the New Mexico Environment Department, the Environmental Protection Agency, and scientists, WILDEARTH GUARDIANS is working to assess the potential for beaver re-establishment in the state as a means of

adapting to climate change. Restored beaver populations (and their dams and ponds) will strengthen the resilience of many imperiled animals and plants. Restored populations and habitat will also increase water storage in streams undergoing dramatic changes in runoff patterns. On August 1, 2012, NM Environment Department awarded WILDEARTH GUARDIANS a grant to evaluate suitable, potential, and occupied beaver habitat in the state and the potential for wetlands expansion if beavers recolonize now-vacant habitat. When modeling is completed, we will hold a statewide beaver and climate adaptation workshop to share information, hear from beaver re-establishment experts, and begin development of long-term beaver management plans. Three cheers for our climate hero!

Visit wildearthguardians.org:Programs / Wild Places / Climate Laboratory: The Jemez Mountains

PRAIRIE DOG DAY



RICH READING

Prairie Dog Day, also known as Groundhog Day, was a resounding success. Our friends at the Plains Conservation Center in Aurora, Colorado hosted a fun and informative event on their beautiful short-grass prairie preserve. The preserve is home to a black-tailed prairie dog town. Visitors to the Center observed prairie dogs in their natural habitat, learned the importance of being a prairie dog advocate, and met a prairie dog from the Denver Zoo. Protecting these wonderfully communicative but highly threatened creatures will benefit prairie dog families as well as black-footed ferrets, burrowing owls, and other species dependent on prairie dog communities. GUARDIANS thanks the Plains Conservation Center and our colleagues at Southern Plains Land Trust, Prairie Wildlife Research, and the Prairie Dog Coalition of the Humane Society of the United States for an entertaining and educational day.

Visit wildearthguardians.org:Top Priorities / Protecting the Prairie Dog Empire

WHY ARE YOU A GUARDIANS MONTHLY DONOR?



"Water issues flow close to my heart. I started kayaking in '86 and was president of the Colorado University kayak club, which was responsible for generating enthusiasm to fight a proposed dam in Two Forks, Colorado. My values align with WILDEARTH GUARDIANS. As an atmospheric chemist, I'm working to educate the public and drive political action regarding climate change through speaking engagements. My family and I also volunteer at a wolf sanctuary."

—DR. SHERRY OLSON
Atmospheric Chemist
Boulder, CO

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ROCKY MOUNTAIN HIGH

Preserving Clean Water and Wild Trout in Colorado

Bryan Bird

"Eventually, all things merge into one, and a river runs through it. The river was cut by the world's great flood and runs over rocks from the basement of time. On some of the rocks are timeless raindrops. Under the rocks are the words, and some of the words are theirs. I am haunted by waters."

—NORMAN MACLEAN, *A River Runs Through It and Other Stories*

For eons, cutthroat trout have dwelled in the clean, cold streams of the Rocky Mountains. In these waters, the cutthroat trout swim, spawn, and occasionally meet their end in the claws of a bear. Originating in the Pacific Ocean, cutthroat trout evolved in western U.S. rivers over hundreds of thousands of years, developing into distinct species when isolated in different river basins.

In Colorado alone, four different species of cutthroat trout evolved: the greenback cutthroat, the Colorado River cutthroat, the Rio Grande cutthroat, and the now-extinct yellowfin cutthroat.

fishing for native trout, a time-honored rite of passage, and aid the demise of a major economic force.

Three of the 14 subspecies of trout are listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act. These species declined due to a combination of pollution, habitat degradation, overfishing, stocking of non-native species of trout, and climate change.

But cutthroat strongholds remain. Trappers Lake, high in the Flat Tops Wilderness of Colorado's White River National Forest, is one refuge for Colorado River cutthroat trout. Trappers Lake feeds the White and Yampa Rivers, which eventually flow into the Colorado River.

It is here in the headwaters of the White and Yampa rivers that WILDEARTH GUARDIANS is enacting the next leg of our Clean Waters, Wild Forests campaign.

Clean waters and wild forests provide a stronghold against habitat degradation due to resource extraction and a warming climate. Protecting the headwaters of the Colorado River with the most stringent protection possible under the Clean Water Act offers assurance that rivers and wildlife will remain resilient in the face of climate change.

Over the next year, WILDEARTH GUARDIANS will bring a nomination before the Water Quality Control Commission to protect the last, best wild trout waters of the Upper and Lower Colorado River Basins. We will propose "outstanding waters" designations for tributaries of the White River, including Fawn Creek, Lost Creek, North Fork Elk Creek, and Snell Creek in Rio Blanco County; tributaries of the Roaring Fork including Cattle Creek and the Middle Fork Thompson Creek in Pitkin and Eagle Counties; and tributaries of the Yampa including East Fork Williams Creek and Beaver Creek in Routt County.

Currently, these waters are designated by the state of Colorado as critical trout habitat, but lack the highest protections possible under the Clean Water Act. At a rule-making hearing in 2014,



Beavers and other wildlife make their home in the clean waters of the Rio Grande National Forest below Handkerchief Mesa.

The waters of the Rocky Mountains have formed rushing torrents since geologic forces forced the iconic peaks of the Rockies skyward some 50 to 80 million years ago. The cutthroat and the waters of the Rockies have been inseparable ever since.

The decline of native cutthroats in the West has diminished an important source of sustenance for humans, bears, and other fish-eating critters. Loss of the cutthroat would cease

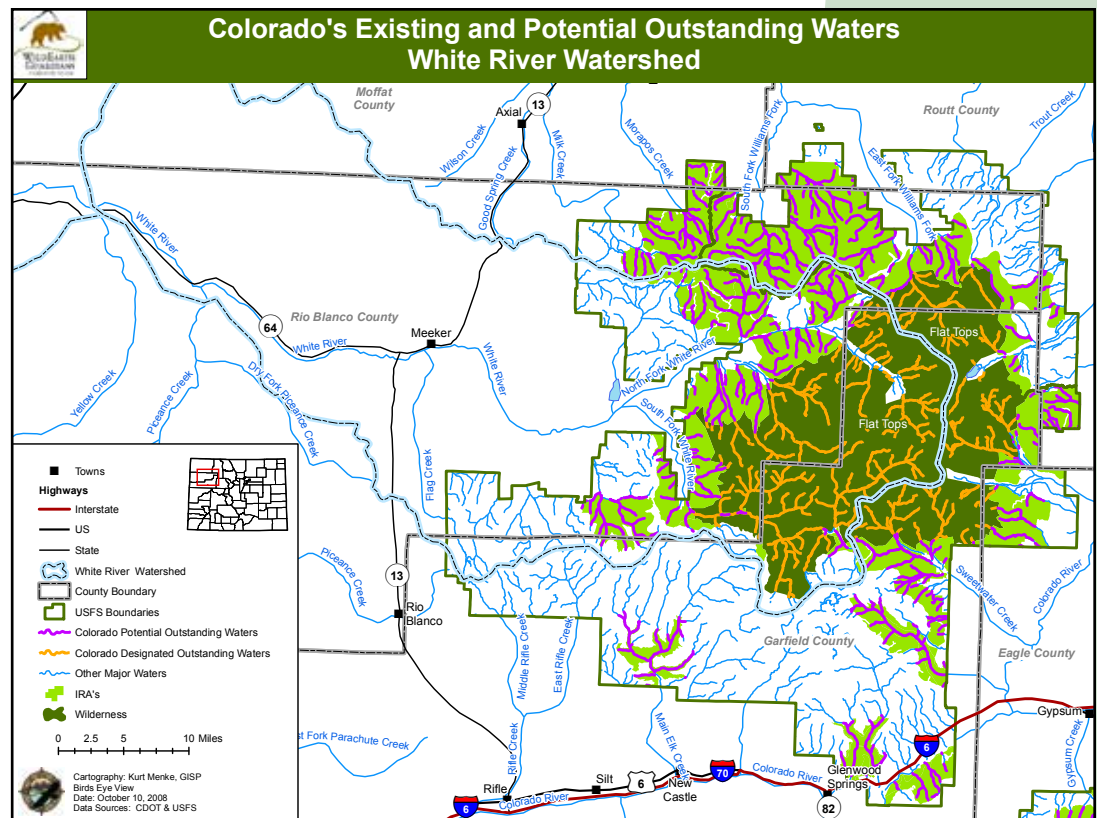
WILDEARTH GUARDIANS will lead citizens in petitioning the Colorado Water Quality Control Commission to designate these waters as “outstanding.”

Along with other native plants and animals, Colorado’s native trout find refuge in roadless forests and wilderness areas where ecosystems remain relatively undisturbed. Roadless areas often overlap with the state’s designated critical trout habitat. In Colorado, roadless areas comprise about 4.4 million acres, or 31 percent of the U.S. Forest Service lands in the state.

In addition to protecting native trout, these designations will help protect the headwaters of rivers that provide municipal drinking water supplies.

Approximately 68 percent of the water yield in Colorado originates on Forest Service lands, much of it from the roadless and wilderness areas. Nearly six percent of Colorado’s approximately 95,500 miles of surface streams and rivers are found in roadless areas. These clean and abundant waters flow to the Colorado where they serve as drinking water for millions of people and support a billion-dollar agricultural industry.

But the Rockies’ source waters are severely threatened by climate change. An assessment of climate change in Colorado by the Colorado



Water Conservation Board found that “water resource managers may have to prepare for a warmer Colorado and a shift in the timing of runoff in most of the state’s river basins.” The report finds that Colorado’s temperature rose an average of two degrees Fahrenheit over the past 30 years and that earlier spring melt, increased evaporation, and drier soils will reduce runoff for most of the state’s river basins, with a five to 20 percent loss in the Colorado River Basin by mid-century.

In 2008, the U.S. Climate Change Science

The Flat Tops Wilderness Area in northwestern Colorado is a native cutthroat trout stronghold. The waters in the Wilderness Area are already designated “outstanding waters” by the state of Colorado, but the remaining pristine waters and adjacent roadless lands of the White River National Forest can still be designated, and WILDEARTH GUARDIANS has started the citizen petition process to garner protection.



NEW MEXICO COURT OF APPEALS UPHOLDS PROTECTION OF OUTSTANDING WATERS

In 2010, the New Mexico Water Quality Control Commission designated over 700 miles of the state’s headwater streams as Outstanding National Resource Waters (ONRWs). Once designated, ONRWs receive the highest level of water quality protection under federal and state regulations that implement the Clean Water Act. WILDEARTH GUARDIANS participated in the ONRW rulemaking proceedings.

The New Mexico Cattlegrowers Association filed a lawsuit in state court seeking to overturn the ONRW designation

and WILDEARTH GUARDIANS intervened to support the designation. On December 26, 2012, the New Mexico Court of Appeals threw out the Cattlegrowers’ appeal because the group had not demonstrated that any of its members would suffer negative economic impacts from the ONRW designation. The court’s decision maintains the ONRW designation, preventing degradation of water quality and proactively mitigating the consequences of climate change in these important streams that play a significant role in the ecology and economy of New Mexico.

— SAMANTHA RUSCAVAGE-BARZ



COLORADO ROADLESS AREAS CARVED APART FOR COAL

The U.S. Forest Service's efforts to safeguard our roadless national forests have taken strides forward, with one exception: Colorado.

As the result of an anti-wilderness push last year, the Forest Service approved a rule that stripped a number of Colorado roadless areas of protection and weakened the safeguards afforded these special places. Worse, it sacrificed several areas to a handful of special interests, notably the coal industry.

The toll of these rollbacks are now being felt, particularly in North Fork of the Gunnison River Valley in western Colorado, where coal companies are given the green light to expand into roadless forests. Although they're underground, the mines in the North Fork Valley have unusually high amounts of methane. In fact, there is so much methane that companies drill gas wells above the mines and vent into the air. Even before mining begins, coal companies create gas fields.

Methane venting adds insult to injury. Methane is not only a potent greenhouse gas with more than 21 times the warming potential of carbon dioxide, it's also a valuable product used to heat homes, schools, and businesses. Just one mine in the North Fork Valley wastes enough gas to heat 40,000 homes for 12 years. Bending to coal industry demands, the Colorado Roadless Rule carves out 20,000 acres of the North Fork Valley's roadless areas to accommodate more mining and more methane venting.

Next on the chopping block is the Sunset Roadless Area, a lush forested landscape abutting the majestic West Elk Wilderness Area.

The Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management recently approved Arch Coal's plans to expand into 1,700 acres of the area, and in doing so build 6.5 miles of new roads and 48 drilling pads, all for methane venting. Although the Sunset Roadless Area would otherwise be protected under the Colorado Roadless Rule, its wildlife habitat, clean water, and wilderness character are being sacrificed for coal.

Yet hope is not lost. We're leading the charge to challenge the latest plans and keep the Sunset Roadless Area safe. Last month, we filed an emergency request for a stay of the latest coal mining plans with an Interior Department appeals board.

Although roadless national forests in Colorado sadly remain without the protection afforded other roadless areas in the U.S., by protecting their outstanding waters and defending them from industrial development, we can still preserve what makes these places so vital to the American West.

—JEREMY NICHOLS

Program stated, "although other factors have a large impact, 'water quality is sensitive both to increased water temperatures and changes in patterns of precipitation,' for example, changes in the timing and hydrograph may affect sediment load and pollution, impacting human health."

The modern boom in fossil fuel production also threatens pristine, undeveloped lands in the Colorado River basin. As oil and gas drilling explodes on the western slope of the Colorado Rockies, protection of high-quality waters and native trout refugia is critical.

The Piceance geologic basin in Northwestern Colorado is one of the fastest-growing natural gas drilling areas in the country. There are over 10,000 active wells in Garfield County alone and 3,000 active wells in Rio Blanco County. In 2012, federal and state agencies issued 3,775 new well permits in the state of Colorado, nearly a third of them in Garfield County. The landscape is quickly becoming industrialized as drill rigs move in, bulldozers blade new roads, and new pipelines crisscross the hills and streambeds.

Colorado is blessed with over 10,000 miles of streams and rivers within its federal roadless and wilderness national forests. WILDEARTH GUARDIANS plans to replicate a strategy that was successful in New Mexico, utilizing the Clean Water Act to designate thousands of river miles within Colorado's 4.4 million acres of roadless national forests as "outstanding waters."

Once a body of water is designated as "outstanding," the Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, and industry interests are forever prohibited from polluting these rivers, streams, and lakes. The designation also affords protection for surrounding roadless areas, streams, and native cutthroat trout.

Not everyone wants to see Colorado's waters and emblematic cutthroat trout protected. We've already seen opposition from stakeholder groups, including the Forest Service. The agency argues that its current land management protects these waters in question, but as we've seen with the loophole-filled Colorado Roadless Rule, coal mining and other fossil fuel developments are being approved in pristine, roadless forests. (See sidebar.)

If the tumbling waters and native trout of the Rockies are to flourish for another millennium, they must be afforded a higher degree of protection. WILDEARTH GUARDIANS is committed to the health of Colorado's waters, and will need the full support of our membership to ensure our success.

Visit wildearthguardians.org:

Top Priorities / Clean Water, Wild Forests

GOOD NEWS FROM THE GUARDIANS

Mark Salvo, Carol Norton, Wendy Keefover



APPEALS COURT UPHOLDS GUARDIANS' SPECIES SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT

DAVID TIBBETTS FWS



In January, a federal appeals court affirmed a lower court's ruling that GUARDIANS' landmark species settlement agreement with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is permissible under federal law, and that Safari Club International, an extreme hunting organization, has no standing to intervene and block the agreement. This is good news for imperiled species. The agreement has already resulted in 54 new species listings and the designation of 94,689 acres and 2,032 stream miles of critical habitat across the country to support their recovery. And we're just getting started: the Fish and Wildlife Service will review another 200 species for listing over the next four years. GUARDIANS will continue to defend the settlement and ensure that it is fully and faithfully implemented.

Visit wildearthguardians.org: *Top Priorities / Endangered Species Protection*

2012 IN REVIEW

When we asked for your financial support in 2012, you answered and allowed us to exceed our annual goal by raising nearly \$2.1 million. Your generosity funds our priority campaigns to protect and restore rivers, wildlife, and wild places. About a third of our funding comes from foundations, while half a million dollars in government grants funds our on-the-ground restoration and tree planting. Your generous gifts totaled \$773,000. We are incredibly grateful. You make our work in the Gila bioregion and the Southern and Northern Rockies and for wolves and wolverines possible. We promise to be strategic and effective, and we will work hard to earn your continued support.

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About Us / Financial Overview



JONI BILDERBACK

BANNING TRAPS AND POISONS IN NEW MEXICO

SAMUEL R. PARKS



Representative Roberto Gonzales (D-Taos) sent a big Valentine's heart to New Mexico's wildlife, people, and companion animals when he introduced the New Mexico Wildlife Protection and Public Safety Act (House Bill 579) which greatly restricts traps and poisons in New Mexico. If passed, the law will curb the cruelty and suffering from hidden and dangerous traps and poisons in New Mexico, elevate safety for outdoor recreationists, and protect endangered Mexican wolves and many other species.

Visit wildearthguardians.org:
Top Priorities / Ending Public Lands Trapping in New Mexico



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SPOTLIGHT ON STAFF

Steve Melander-Dayton



Meet GUARDIANS' co-tenant, landlord, and staffer-at-large. Steve first learned about GUARDIANS when he accompanied Jim Norton, Sam Hitt, Hope Aldrich, and Luis Torres on a trip to the Carson National Forest to visit the La Madera Cooperative leadership. Steve was impressed by Sam's sincerity and his dedication to responsible stewardship of our natural heritage. A little over a year ago, GUARDIANS moved in with Steve and we couldn't be happier. Steve is a gracious landlord and rents his beautiful space to us for \$1 per year. We share meals together, and host our annual membership gathering under the apricot tree--a big step up from the parking lot at our Montezuma Avenue offices. We consider Steve to be a staffer-at-large in recognition of his daily contribution to our work, including editing our newsletter, advising on strategy and tactics, and participating fully in the GUARDIANS way of life.

SPOTLIGHT ON A SPECIES

Rio Grande Cutthroat Trout

Taylor Jones

The Rio Grande Cutthroat is a unique subspecies of cutthroat trout that is found only in the Rio Grande, Pecos, and possibly the Canadian River Basins in New Mexico and Colorado. Cutthroat trout are named for the distinctive red or orange slash-like marking beneath their lower jaw. Like many of us, this beautiful fish loves the cool, clean waters of the Rocky Mountains. Cutthroats are threatened by competition and hybridization with non-native trout, introduced diseases, and habitat degradation. The Rio Grande cutthroat is among the candidate species included in GUARDIANS' endangered species agreement with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and will get a final listing decision before the end of 2016.

Visit wildearthguardians.org: Species Conservation / Fish



MICHAEL J. HEITMAN