

# WILD AT HEART

THE WORD FROM WILDEARTH GUARDIANS

No. 6, Winter/Spring 2010

## In the Crosshairs

The Federal  
Government's  
War on Wildlife

page 8



**MISSION STATEMENT**

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

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

- Peter Schoenburg, PRESIDENT
- Robin Smith, VICE PRESIDENT
- Shannon Larsen, TREASURER
- Bill Syme, SECRETARY
- Jess Alford
- Doug Erwin
- Stephanie Forrest
- Dave Jones
- Mark Rickman
- Vanessa Scurci
- Jon Spar

**STAFF**

- Whitney Bacon, IT GURU
- Bryan Bird, MS, WILD PLACES PROGRAM DIRECTOR
- Rosie Brandenberger, PUBLICATIONS MANAGER
- Lori Colt, MEMBERSHIP COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR
- Melissa Hailey, STAFF ATTORNEY
- John Horning, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
- Mona Kay, FISCAL MANAGER
- Wendy Keefover-Ring, MA, CARNIVORE PROTECTION DIRECTOR
- Jim Matison, RESTORATION PROJECTS DIRECTOR
- Lauren McCain, PhD, PRAIRIE PROTECTION DIRECTOR
- Jeremy Nichols, CLIMATE & ENERGY PROGRAM DIRECTOR
- Carol Norton, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR
- Nicole Rosmarino, PhD, WILDLIFE PROGRAM DIRECTOR
- Mark Salvo, JD, SAGEBRUSH SEA CAMPAIGN DIRECTOR
- Jay Tutchton, GENERAL COUNSEL

WILDEARTH GUARDIANS is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization.

SANTA FE OFFICE:  
312 Montezuma Ave.  
Santa Fe, NM 87501  
TEL 505.988.9126  
FAX 505.989.8623

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

OFFICES ALSO IN:  
Phoenix, Oakland

Cover: Annie Edward

100 percent recycled, 50 percent PCW

# RESTORING THE VISION

John Horning

I remember the first time I learned about the federal agency that annually kills as many as five million animals, including among them nearly 100,000 coyotes, wolves, black bears and other native carnivores. It was after I saw an image of more than a dozen mountain lion heads stacked in a pyramid shape taken by a disgruntled employee in the early 1990s and then secretly distributed.

They had been killed in an agency killing spree for one reason — they were a perceived threat to local cattle interests.

Though bounties had long since ended in the American West, the mentality that vilified these beautiful animals was and, sadly, still is alive and well within this agency that was named Animal Damage Control for decades.

As pressure mounted throughout the 1990s to eliminate the agency’s funding and halt the killing of native carnivores on public lands, Animal Damage Control realized that they needed to do a little green-washing to conceal the body count. And in an Orwellian move, the agency decided to change its name from Animal Damage Control to Wildlife Services.

In spite of the name change, the agency’s antiquated mission has gone unchanged since it was first founded in 1915 — to kill wildlife when there are perceived and real conflicts with ranchers and agribusiness.

We believe it’s time for this type of “wildlife service,” especially on public land, to end. And we’re pushing Congress, the Obama administration and the federal courts to end the slaughter and demand that livestock producers learn to peacefully coexist with majestic wild animals that inhabit the public lands of the American West.



# GUARDIAN GIVER

## Marilyn and Gene Monroe



Marilyn had an inspiring teacher in grade school who led classroom nature trips and encouraged leaf collections. Gene, a geologist, was a butterfly enthusiast from childhood, had a grandfather who lived in Boulder and did mineral collecting and prospecting in the mountains. Despite growing up in Chicago, both have had a life-long love of nature and the wild places. To be closer to this love, they’ve always known that we wanted to relocate to the West upon retirement. Marilyn and Gene believe the most effective strategy for

protecting the wild places they’ve always loved is two-fold. “First, education and involvement of citizens to press for policy change. And second, aggressive challenges in the courts of policies that are detrimental to a wild earth. WILDEARTH GUARDIANS is doing a great job at both,” say Marilyn and Gene. “We are amazed at the scope of projects WILDEARTH is concerned with and the aggressive style of challenging rules and regulations that harm the wild. Some of our favorite WILDEARTH GUARDIANS campaigns are fighting against the federal agency, Wildlife Services, that kill animals for the supposed benefit of ranches/farmers, retiring grazing permits, protecting endangered species and persecuted animals like cougars, wolves and bears,” continue Marilyn and Gene. “WILDEARTH GUARDIANS has become one of our favorite organizations.”

# THE RIPPLE EFFECT OF STREAM TEAM

Rosie Brandenberger

“I just feel that this is crucial for the life of the planet. It’s such a rewarding thing. It’s tiring, but it’s exhilarating. And it’s for the earth,” says Rosemary Lowe, a Stream Team volunteer since the event’s inception six years ago. “I think that if every one of us gets out and does something like this, it multiplies and it creates a healthier ecosystem,” she continues.

WILDEARTH GUARDIANS’ Stream Team events connect community volunteers with degraded rivers and streams. Volunteers gather pledges of \$10 from friends and family all over the country for each tree they plant. The trees transform barren waterways into lush havens teeming with life.

After six years of Stream Team and after expanding to six river restoration sites across New Mexico and Arizona, the concept of planting trees to heal rivers, restore wildlife habitat and take a bite out of climate change is really taking off. Not only are volunteers so connected to the rivers they help restore that they keep coming back year after year, but they also take that connection back out into their communities, becoming advocates for policies that better protect rivers. And the trees that they plant eventually seed and create more trees and a self-sustaining healthy stream-side ecosystem is born.

But there’s more to Stream Team than what happens locally. “The thing that I really think about is that interconnectedness. When you think about these rivers, they don’t start here. They start north of us. It’s all connected. The rain that comes down one place is the lake from somewhere else,” says Erin Hickok, a Stream Team volunteer. When volunteers see the change that happens on rivers and streams locally, the global impact also becomes apparent. Birds from all over the world, including the rainforests of Central and South America, migrate across the Southwest and benefit from the habitat Stream Team has created. And cleaner water created by restored rivers benefits downstream users. And the effect that planting trees has in the battle against the climate crisis ripples across the planet.



*Bluewater Creek 2008*



*Bluewater Creek 2009*



PETER NORBY

*The affects of Stream Team tree planting events are felt far beyond local rivers.*

If you live in the Southwest, join us for one or all of our Stream Team planting events this spring. If you don’t live in the Southwest, participate in Stream Team by sponsoring a volunteer to plant trees in your honor. And no matter where you are, rest assured that your participation in this bold initiative to restore rivers, wildlife habitat, and the climate is creating a healthier planet.

*Visit Stream Team at [wildearthguardians.org](http://wildearthguardians.org)*

## STREAM TEAM 2010 TREE PLANTING EVENTS

**FEBRUARY 26-27**

La Jencia

**MARCH 19-20**

Rio Puerco

**APRIL 17**

Santa Fe River

**MAY 1**

Bluewater Creek

## SAVE THE DATES FOR OTHER WILDEARTH EVENTS

**JUNE 10**

A Howling Affair  
benefit dinner and  
auction in Denver

**SEPTEMBER 24**

Guardians Gala benefit  
dinner and auction in  
Santa Fe.

**NOVEMBER 12**

Treehugger Bash  
reception and silent  
auction in Albuquerque

*For details, visit  
[wildearthguardians.org](http://wildearthguardians.org)  
or contact Carol Norton  
at [cnorton@wildearthguardians.org](mailto:cnorton@wildearthguardians.org).*

# BEAUTY IN DIVERSITY

Nicole Rosmarino

## BioBlitz

This bold new campaign to protect biodiversity is pressuring the federal government to list imperiled species under the Endangered Species Act.

On December 28th, WILDEARTH GUARDIANS launched the BioBlitz. This bold new campaign to protect biodiversity is a celebration of the 36th anniversary of the U.S. Endangered Species Act and the first-ever International Year of Biodiversity. To mark these milestones, we took 36 consecutive working days of actions to protect endangered animals and plants across the globe.

The Endangered Species Act is the best way for the United States to celebrate the International Year of Biodiversity because this law works. Over 99% of the species protected under it are still with us today.

We organized our eight-week BioBlitz around the following themes.

### CLIMATE WEEK

Our effort to safeguard wildlife threatened by the climate crisis followed on the heels of a disappointing Copenhagen. The species we highlighted illustrate the range of climate change impacts. The Mist Forestfly is threatened by glaciers disappearing. The Jemez Mountains Salamander is imperiled because of drought. The Bay Skipper suffers because of intense hurricanes, and the Bumphead Parrotfish is victim to coral bleaching.

### E.O. WILSON WEEK

We celebrated “the little things that run the world,” with the endorsement of renowned Professor Wilson. During this week, we filed lawsuits or petitions to protect invertebrates, which are small but ecologically mighty creatures.

### PRAIRIE WEEK

We spotlighted a variety of wildlife at risk in the Great Plains.

Species including the Prairie Chub, Platte River Caddisfly, Texas Kangaroo Rat, Spot-tailed Earless Lizard, and Scott’s Riffle Beetle are losing their homes on the prairie.

### ON THE PROWL WEEK

In recognition of the particular threats faced by carnivores, we pushed for protection of a monster, a wolf, a shark, and a wildcat, otherwise known as the Gila Monster, Mexican Wolf, Porbeagle Shark, and Ocelot.

### SAGEBRUSH SEA WEEK

We pressed for protection of a range of butterflies, beetles, wildflowers, a snail, and the Northern Leatherside Chub. Protection for these species can help safeguard the vast and beautiful – but long-neglected – Sagebrush Sea of the American West.

### BORDERLANDS WEEK

Species occurring across international borders can face special threats, from border walls to differing policies. By seeking protection for the Sonoran Desert Tortoise and the White-sided Jackrabbit, we aim for the tortoise and the hare to race away from the brink of extinction.

### WILDFLOWER WEEK

Romance and biodiversity go well together. In this lead-up to Valentine’s Day, we took actions to protect a range of lovely but imperiled wildflowers.

### OCEANS WEEK

In our final week, we pressed for protection of ocean creatures, closing with a lawsuit to compel a recovery plan for select whales, including the Sperm Whale. Moby Dick was a Sperm Whale, and Herman Melville’s classic remains an important cautionary tale – without limits, human exploitation of nature amounts to suicide.

The BioBlitz builds on the foundation of species protection WILDEARTH GUARDIANS has already laid. In 2009, WILDEARTH GUARDIANS obtained 111 positive findings on petitions to list imperiled wildlife and plants under the Endangered Species Act. This puts 111 species closer to federal protection. However, many more species need to move closer to the safety the 36-year-old Endangered Species Act offers. The BioBlitz campaign boldly asked the Obama administration to fully enforce the Act while at the same time celebrating the International Year of Biodiversity by highlighting the beautiful variety of life that surrounds us.

Visit *Western Ark* at [wildearthguardians.org](http://wildearthguardians.org)

DR. DANIEL BECK



Gila Monster

USFWS



Ocelot

JURGEN HESS



Pale Blue-eyed Grass

©MONTE SANFORD



Carson Valley Silverspot Butterfly

## Foiling Fossil Fuels

Jeremy Nichols

JEREMY NICHOLS



*WILDEARTH GUARDIANS is the leading enforcer of the Clean Air Act in Colorado.*

At the dawn of 2010, the future of our Climate & Energy program is looking very bright.

In January, the Environmental Protection Agency proposed to strengthen nationwide air quality standards, limiting ground-level ozone pollution. Ozone, the key ingredient of smog, forms when pollution from tailpipes, smokestacks and oil and gas drilling reacts with sunlight. It's a major health threat that's directly linked to the use of fossil fuels.

These standards give new hope for clean air and clean energy. They would limit ozone concentrations at a level between 60 and 70 parts per billion, a level that would force more than 100 counties in the West to clean up their air and protect public health.

Amazingly, that includes a number of rural areas, including the San Juan Basin of northwestern New Mexico, the Powder River Basin of northeastern Wyoming, and parts of western Colorado. Sadly, unfettered oil and gas drilling, coal mining, and coal-fired power plants are besieging these areas with smog.

These new standards will give us the tools and the backing to more forcefully confront fossil fuels and advance clean energy solutions. This good news

comes on the heels of major momentum that WILDEARTH GUARDIANS developed at the end of 2009 around our efforts to tackle fossil fuels:

We got to the root of the problem. In November, we released "UnderMining the Climate," a report calling attention to the global warming impacts of coal mining in the Powder River Basin of northeastern Wyoming. The region produces 42 percent of all coal burned in the U.S., making it the nation's largest contributor to global warming. We simultaneously called on Interior Secretary Salazar to address these global warming impacts.

We also ramped up our efforts to target toxins. In October, we asked a federal court to halt Xcel Energy's plans to start up the Comanche 3 coal-fired boiler in Pueblo, Colorado because of the company's failure to limit toxic air pollution under the Clean Air Act. Then in December, we filed suit against Lamar Light and Power over the utility's failure to limit toxic air pollution from its coal-fired power plant in Lamar, Colorado.

Last November, we helped turnout nearly 100 people at a public hearing challenging the State of Colorado's proposal to reissue an air pollution permit allowing Xcel Energy to continue operating the Cherokee coal-fired power plant in North Denver.

We're driven by a simple truth: the only way to reduce greenhouse gases and overcome global warming is by moving away from fossil fuels. We're on track to achieve this vision.

*Visit Climate & Energy at [wildearthguardians.org](http://wildearthguardians.org)*



DOLG GRINBERGS

*WILDEARTH GUARDIANS turned out nearly 100 people to challenge a Colorado proposal to reissue an air pollution permit.*

## WHY ARE YOU A GUARDIAN?



My husband and I have hiked in the West for over 20 years. We love the wildlife and wilderness and believe both must be preserved. I contribute monthly to WILDEARTH GUARDIANS because they are at the forefront of this fight to protect "the treasures of the West."

— CHARLOTTE AND STEVE HELDSTAB  
Normal, IL  
Members since 2008

Become a member of  
WILDEARTH GUARDIANS:  
[wildearthguardians.org](http://wildearthguardians.org)

## WHY ARE YOU A GUARDIAN?



I've spent many vacations in New Mexico, and I feel very connected to it. I "tithe" to support nature conservation, so I'm happy to support WILDEARTH GUARDIANS' work to protect areas I care about.

— SARA GANN  
Arlington, VA  
Member since 2004

Become a member of  
WILDEARTH GUARDIANS:  
[wildearthguardians.org](http://wildearthguardians.org)

In 2009, WILDEARTH GUARDIANS resolved a dozen cases for threatened and endangered wildlife, nearly all with positive results. We also launched our Climate & Energy program off the ground and into the courtroom, where we initiated another dozen cases to reign in dirty energy practices and promote cleaner, safer air and water for the American West. The following are some of our most important victories of 2009, as well as a few of our most exciting legal prospects for 2010.

### ENFORCING GOOD NEIGHBOR POLICY

#### WILDEARTH GUARDIANS v.

#### Lisa Jackson, Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency

Under federal law, states must protect their own residents – as well as those downwind – from dirty air pollution, and the Environmental Protection Agency must oversee this good neighbor policy. WILDEARTH GUARDIANS has filed three lawsuits to make sure neither the states nor the agency is falling down on the job. Our cases enforce the Clean Air Act's "good neighbor provision" to make sure states like California don't send air pollution to states like Colorado or New Mexico and vice versa. If the states don't act to fix their pollution problems, our lawsuits ensure that the Environmental Protection Agency will step in and come up with a federal plan to keep smog and ozone pollution from wafting cross the country.

### PROTECTING LEOPARD FROG PONDS

#### WILDEARTH GUARDIANS v.

#### Secretary of Interior Ken Salazar

Although the Chiricahua Leopard Frog has been protected under the Endangered Species Act as a threatened species since 2002, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service refused to also protect the ponds the frogs call home. Thanks to a lawsuit filed by WILDEARTH GUARDIANS to overturn that conclusion, the Fish and Wildlife Service will now reconsider giving the frog's home the protection it deserves. The agency is under court order to publish a new finding on whether to designate critical habitat for the Chiricahua Leopard Frog by December 8, 2010.

USFWS



### LOADING UP THE LEGAL ARK

#### WILDEARTH GUARDIANS v.

#### Secretary of Interior Ken Salazar

Spurred to action by the number of species on the brink of extinction that do not yet enjoy the protections of the Endangered Species

Act, WILDEARTH GUARDIANS filed lawsuits in Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and Colorado seeking safeguards for a number of species in 2009. Through these and other efforts, WILDEARTH GUARDIANS forced federal status reviews of 111 of these imperiled species in order to determine if they should indeed be ushered onto the legal ark Endangered Species Act listing provides. The beneficiaries of these WildEarth Guardians' efforts include the Sonoran Desert Tortoise, imperiled mussels in Texas, the White-sided Jackrabbit, rare New Mexico plants, and the Sprague's Pipit.

These are just a few of the lawsuits through which WILDEARTH GUARDIANS is seeking justice for the wildlife and wild places at risk. We will continue to make sure imperiled wildlife and wild places have a voice in the halls of justice before they are lost forever.

### ROOM FOR MEXICAN WOLVES TO ROAM

#### WILDEARTH GUARDIANS v.

#### U.S. Forest Service

New Mexico's Gila National Forest is home to one of the only wild populations of endangered Mexican Gray Wolves. And more than 60,000 cows. Even though the federal government kills more Mexican Wolves for conflicting with livestock than for any other reason, the U.S. Forest Service has consistently refused to examine impacts to wolves from the cattle grazing it authorizes throughout the Gila. Unfortunately, the New Mexico District Court recently found that the Forest Service has no obligation to better account for the ramifications of its actions to wolves. WILDEARTH GUARDIANS has appealed this decision to the Tenth Circuit and is committed to continuing to fight for a healthy, free roaming wild population of Mexican Gray Wolves in this suit and others also currently pending.



USFWS

Visit Activist Center at [wildearthguardians.org](http://wildearthguardians.org)

## CAMPAIGN UPDATES

### HOME ON THE PRAIRIE

WILDEARTH GUARDIANS continues the fight for prairie dogs – one of the most important yet most misunderstood animals of the American West. Recent actions on behalf of these ecological engineers include:

- Suing the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for failing to protect Gunnison's prairie dogs under the Endangered Species Act;
- Challenging a court decision that allows the destruction of the largest Utah prairie dog colony;
- Protesting the Environmental Protection Agency's authorization of prairie dog poisons that cause internal hemorrhaging;
- Petitioning the Fish and Wildlife Service to protect three black-footed ferret populations as Endangered. Ferrets eat prairie dogs and live in their colonies, so ferret protection means prairie dog protection as well;
- Issuing our annual prairie dog report card in which states and federal agencies are graded on their efforts to protect prairie dogs over the past year;
- Celebrating February 2nd as Prairie Dog Day, the Groundhog Day of the West, and bringing public awareness to the protection of this imperiled species.

*Visit Prairie Dog Project at [wildearthguardians.org](http://wildearthguardians.org)*



DAVE SHOWALTER

### WHY ARE YOU A GUARDIAN?



I salute and support WILDEARTH GUARDIANS because they love and protect not only the wildlife of our land but also the land upon which the wildlife resides. Saving both is a good deal. Two for the price of one – you can't beat that!

— RON READING  
Enfield, NH  
Monthly Donor since 2008

Become a member of  
WILDEARTH GUARDIANS:  
[wildearthguardians.org](http://wildearthguardians.org)

ANNE EDWARD



### GOT CLEAN WATER?

In traveling the state of New Mexico to gather support for protecting its headwaters, Bryan Bird has met many clean water activists. However, he remembers two who stand out. One is a Chiricahua Apache who says that he has always drank straight from the rivers and streams in wilderness and would like to be able to continue this practice. The other is a multi-generation Hispano from Rio Arriba who recalled childhood memories of catching Rio Grande cutthroat trout in the Pecos Wilderness.

WILDEARTH GUARDIANS continues to support Governor Richardson and his staff in the pursuit to obtain the "Outstanding" designation under the Clean Water Act for all of New Mexico's wilderness waters. Despite the misunderstanding of some stakeholders, the state continues herculean outreach efforts to clarify the consequence of the designation. The bottom line is that the state will have greater authority over the quality of water flowing downstream to all its citizens. Look for an opportunity to support this campaign this spring.

*Visit Clean Water at [wildearthguardians.org](http://wildearthguardians.org)*

### URBAN COYOTES

Coyotes in the Denver metro area have experienced highs and lows. WILDEARTH GUARDIANS efforts to promote co-existence with coyotes has a great partnership with the city of Centennial. However, neighboring Greenwood Village persists in its coyote-killing ways.

In Centennial, WILDEARTH GUARDIANS' volunteers walk the parks, handing out whistles and other information about common-sense ways to reduce encounters and conflicts with coyotes.

In Greenwood Village, we continue to work with concerned residents to reform city policies. At least 15 coyotes were killed in this city in 2009, most of them shot by police officers.

Our campaign is all about volunteer power, so if you're in the area get involved.

*Visit Carnivore Project at [wildearthguardians.org](http://wildearthguardians.org)*



DAVE JONES

## IN THE CROSSHAIRS

# The Federal Government's War on Wildlife

Wendy Keefover-Ring

### WHY ARE YOU A GUARDIAN?

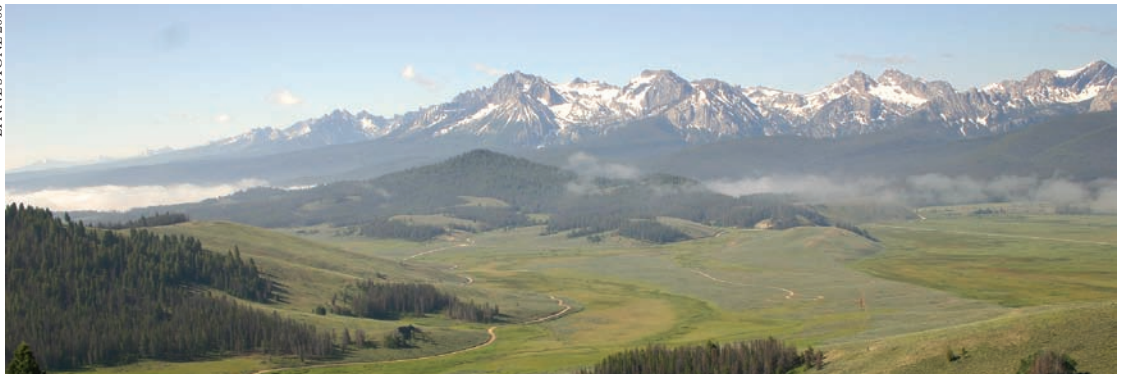


As an atmospheric chemist, I am concerned about how future climate change will impact endangered species. Of particular interest to me are wolves and their recent delisting. I am also quick to write letters on Clean Air Act subjects like the lawsuit charging Lamar Light and Power and the Arkansas River Power Authority for ignoring requirements limiting mercury emissions.

— SHERRY OLSON  
Boulder, CO  
Member since 2005

Become a member of  
WILDEARTH GUARDIANS:  
[wildearthguardians.org](http://wildearthguardians.org)

LYNNE STONE 2006



*The Sawtooth Mountains of central Idaho were home to the Basin Butte wolf pack until Wildlife Services intervened.*

For years, the Basin Butte wolf pack has roamed the jagged peaks and shimmering waters of the White Cloud Mountains within the Sawtooth National Recreation Area of central Idaho.

In 2006, the budding Basin Butte pack consisted of three adult wolves including the mother of the pack, named Alpha Fe. Lynne Stone, a wolf enthusiast and volunteer for the Idaho Fish and Game Department, followed and monitored Alpha Fe and her pack via a radio collar. Stone described Alpha Fe as a particularly majestic creature, with a charcoal streak across her back and a black-tipped tail. She gave birth to 15 pups from 2006 to 2009. She was a great mother, always attentive to her offspring, teaching them to be cunning and wary.

Alpha Fe and her pack roamed through the Sawtooth Mountains amongst the campers, backpackers, kayakers, and other recreationists who enjoy watching wildlife. But in October and November of last year, blizzards and foul weather descended on Idaho. So too did a much graver threat, a dark cloud of intolerance that has been brewing across the West for more than a century.

Cattle growers found dead cows; some had been fed upon by wolves. Stone followed the wolves as best she could and began to suspect — but could not confirm — that cattle growers were baiting wolves with cows so that they could demand the elimination of these carnivores from public lands. While the cause of the livestock mortality remains uncertain, and likely weather-related, Idaho Fish and Game ordered the elimination of the entire Basin Butte pack.

Then during Thanksgiving week, the gunfire began to rain down from low-flying aircraft. First, three wolves were shot in the White Cloud Mountains. The following day, a plane blasted over Alpha Fe, two of her pups, and a fourth wolf as they roamed a nearby meadow. The plane's gunner shot and killed the pups. A helicopter then rushed in and shot at Alpha Fe. Wounded, she ran for cover. But the federal agents from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Wildlife Services were persistent. They assassinated both Alpha Fe and her companion.

How did it come to this? That an adored pack of wolves that had coexisted with the majority of local residents would be so brutally slaughtered. Sadly, Alpha Fe's story is not unique. The government-sanctioned slaughter of native wildlife on public land is a tale that has been told over and over again for decades across the West.



LYNNE STONE 2008

*Recreational wildlife enthusiasts enjoyed watching the Basin Butte pack and coexisted peacefully with the wolves.*



LYNNE STONE 2009



Despite her best efforts, Lynne Stone, a wolf activist, could not stop Wildlife Services' slaughter.

### NO SERVICES FOR WILDLIFE

Since 1915, the deceptively named federal agency, Wildlife Services, has been a major force in efforts to eliminate wolves, grizzly bears, prairie dogs, and other species at the behest of agribusiness. Between

2004 and 2008, Wildlife Services reportedly killed more than eight million animals. And this jaw-dropping number of dead animals is a vast underestimate because thousands of poisoned wildlife bodies disappear from the area where they were baited and are never counted.

In 2008 alone, Wildlife Services reports to have killed five million animals — including more than 20,000 beavers and more than 100,000 carnivores such as coyotes, cougars, black bears, gray wolves, and foxes.

Adding insult to injury, most of Wildlife Services' budget — \$121 million in 2008 — comes from federal tax dollars. Individual states and counties also contribute in amounts that the agency fails to disclose. Though it also receives funding from private cooperators such as the American Sheep Industry Alliance and local Cattlemen's Associations, often Congressional legislators provide favors for powerful constituents by earmarking tax funds for Wildlife Services' pet projects.

Wildlife Services uses a host of gruesome weapons to accomplish its mission of slaughtering our nation's wildlife. Its arsenal includes a myriad of lethal poisons, traps, snares, aircraft, dynamite, and guns. Wildlife Services kills on public and private lands alike, and wildlife, particularly native carnivores, enjoy no safe haven — not even in Congressionally designated wilderness area such as America's first wilderness, the Gila of southern New Mexico.

### WHY ALL THE SLAUGHTER?

Wildlife Services' activities are geared mostly toward two goals — removing animals that interfere with agribusiness and helping states bolster the business of hunting animals such as elk, bighorn sheep, deer, moose, and pronghorn.

Both goals are misguided. First, the government's own data show that native carnivores kill less than five percent of domestic

livestock each year. Domestic livestock readily die from weather, disease, and birthing problems in numbers far greater than they are killed by carnivores.

Second, carnivores have been persecuted for more than a century because of unfounded beliefs that fewer carnivores would mean more animals such as deer and elk. These conjectures have largely been dispelled by scientific study. In reality, a host of causes such as poor winter range conditions, disease, competition from domestic livestock, over-hunting, habitat fragmentation or loss, and erratic weather can affect the populations of these animals more severely than predation by native carnivores.

### THE SLEDGEHAMMER APPROACH

Biologists and federal oversight agencies have long criticized the efficacy of Wildlife Services' wildlife-killing programs as unsustainable and environmentally harmful. Biologists call it the "sledgehammer approach" to wildlife management because of the agency's indiscriminate breadth of extermination.

A former Wildlife Services agent-turned-whistleblower, Gary Strader, explained that Wildlife Services "might kill the right [i.e., predated] coyote the first time, or they may have to kill a hundred coyotes before they get the right one." This work rarely satiates most livestock growers who prefer native carnivores be completely wiped out.

But evidence shows the sledgehammer approach will never end conflicts between domestic livestock and coyotes. Killing coyotes only spurs them to compensate. The coyote populations that Wildlife Services compromises start breeding younger and having more pups per litter to make up for their lost members.

Further, a number of studies have dispelled the link between killing native carnivores and reducing livestock losses. A 2006 study by Kim Murray found that despite Wildlife Services' efforts to kill five million predators at a cost of \$1.6 billion from 1939 to 1998, it had little effect; 85 percent of U.S. sheep producers went bankrupt in that time period.

Two different geographic areas, one where coyotes existed, and one where they were absent, showed identical declines in the



DAVE JONES

Wildlife Services' killing programs especially target coyotes all across Western public lands.

### IN THE SKY

A gunner and a pilot hired by Wildlife Services cover an area in ever-widening circles to find carnivores. From their low-flying aircraft, crews generally eradicate as many native carnivores as they can find.

JAMES BALOG



### Animals Killed by Wildlife Services' Aerial Gunning in 2008

Bobcats	188
Coyotes	36,454
Red Foxes	140
Feral Hogs	13,620
Gray Wolves	135
TOTAL	50,537

sheep industry because of unfavorable market conditions, but not from predator-caused losses.

### ON THE GROUND AND IN THE AIR

In 2008, Wildlife Services used M-44 booby traps to kill 12,763 animals including 68 domestic dogs and hundreds of foxes. But coyotes felt the real death toll; 11,233 of that total were coyotes.

Sodium cyanide, Wildlife Service's favorite predator toxicant, is dispensed from M-44 booby traps. Strader explains: "It's a device that injects cyanide into a coyote's mouth when they bite onto the M-44 device. There's a little head on the end of it, and you apply bait on that head. The coyote will come along and bite that head and when he bites that head he will pull it, and it activates a trigger mechanism which throws a piston into the cyanide and ejects it into his mouth."

When sodium cyanide comes into contact with saliva or any moisture, it turns into a vapor of hydrogen cyanide that is readily absorbed by the lungs. Cyanide is acutely toxic. Since any animal can trigger their poison, M-44s are particularly indiscriminate. Yet Wildlife Services plants these devices all over public and private lands. M-44s have endangered people, pets, and even species protected by the Endangered Species Act.

Wildlife Services not only targets animals on the ground, the agency takes to the skies to eradicate wildlife. During an aerial-gunning mission, a pilot and a gunner shoot at animals from low-flying aircraft. Crews generally kill as many native carnivores as they can find. Aerial gunning is not only cruel, it is dangerous. Since 1973, aerial gunners have experienced 119 accidents resulting in 70 injuries and 38 fatalities.

### WE NEED WILD CARNIVORES

Predation is necessary and natural. Native carnivores such as coyotes, wolves, and cougars help balance nature and make it more diverse. Yet Wildlife Services continues to embrace an anachronistic notion that wild carnivores are evil



*Native carnivores like wolves and cougars help keep deer and elk populations healthy.*

and ravenous because they "hurt" agribusiness or "reduce" the deer and elk populations that human hunters crave.

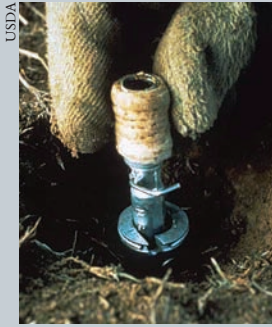
Biologists have shown that cougars and wolves actually help restore and protect fragile streamside ecosystems from overgrazing by animals such as deer and elk. Where native carnivores are present, fear exists in the ecosystems so these native grazers are constantly on the move. The result is more cottonwoods, rushes, cattails, wildflowers, amphibians, lizards, and butterflies, and narrower, but deeper stream channels. In the Yellowstone ecosystem, wolves enhance diversity by creating great amounts of year-round carrion for scavengers such as bald eagles and grizzly bears.

### AN END TO THE SLAUGHTER

Instead of using the sledgehammer approach to slaughter wildlife with dangerous poisons, aerial gunning, and other lethal methods, WILDEARTH GUARDIANS believes that Wildlife Services' lethal wildlife management programs should be eliminated entirely. WILDEARTH GUARDIANS is working hard to convince Congress and the Obama administration to take away the agency's lethal-control budget.

For more than a decade, WILDEARTH GUARDIANS has led efforts to bring attention to the deplorable actions of Wildlife Services.

- In 1999, we formed AGRO, a national coalition to end the aerial gunning of wildlife.
- In 2007, we petitioned the Environmental Protection Agency to eliminate sodium cyanide M-44s and another predator toxicant. The agency received tens of thousands of public comments in support of our petition before it issued an adverse ruling in early 2009.
- In February 2009, we published a comprehensive report analyzing the environmental, economic, and ethical impacts of Wildlife Services' killing program in a manner that has not been done for 40 years.
- In November 2009, we petitioned the Obama administration through a formal rulemaking



### Not Just Wildlife

Wildlife Services' indiscriminate approach to placing poison on public lands endangers not only wildlife, but also family pets.

In 2006, two family pets were killed on federal lands in Utah. That year, the agency reportedly killed 512 domestic dogs, all of whom could not have been feral. M-44s, spring-loaded devices that eject sodium cyanide poison into an animal's mouth, pose a particular threat to pets because they are placed by Wildlife Services on public and private lands across the country. The poisoning of pets can result in secondary exposure to humans.

TIM SPRINGER



*Lush landscapes like this one in Yellowstone depend on native carnivores.*

process to end aerial gunning and poisoning of wildlife on federal public lands.

- In December 2009, we ran a full-page ad in the *Washington Post* calling on Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar to protect wildlife, not kill them.

These are the highlights – more work has been done and more work will be done in the coming year. We will litigate, lobby, and do whatever it takes to see Wildlife Services' lethal programs eliminated, especially on public lands.

### CARNIVORES OF THE FUTURE

By eliminating Wildlife Services, our native wildlife will have the freedom to roam and help shape the iconic landscapes that are our national treasures. Wolves and coyotes will play their

natural role in the circle of life, reestablishing a healthy ecology while chasing deer and elk, which will in turn allow cottonwoods, willows, grasses and other native vegetation to thrive. Our precious waterways will be made purer by the proper vegetation and migrating birds will move in to enjoy lush landscapes. And livestock practices will change so that the industry takes responsibility for its domestic animals and learns to co-exist with native species.

Though Alpha Fe and her Basin Butte pack could not escape the crosshairs of Wildlife Services' guns, WILDEARTH GUARDIANS is working to ensure that her tragic fate is a catalyst to inspire decision makers to end similar killing sprees on public lands across the West.

*Visit Abolishing Federal Killing at [wildearthguardians.org](http://wildearthguardians.org)*

## GOOD NEWS FROM THE GUARDIANS



### UN-FENCING THE CALDERA

Although WILDEARTH GUARDIANS' "no livestock grazing" bid for the Valles Caldera National Preserve in northern New Mexico was unsuccessful, a new epoch for this national treasure was born. In collaboration with the Preserve and its scientists, we have begun to re-wild the Valles Caldera and restore the splendor of its stream side ecosystems and wildlife.

Last summer, WILDEARTH GUARDIANS held two volunteer weekends of barbed-wire fence removal. With the elimination of miles of fence, wildlife such as elk and turkey will have unfettered access to the habitats they favor. Look for more re-wilding events on the Preserve coming this summer.

*Visit Healing Public Lands at [wildearthguardians.org](http://wildearthguardians.org)*

### NEW HOME FOR DOOMED DOGS

Last September, WILDEARTH GUARDIANS' restoration team helped create a new prairie dog colony near Santa Fe. The colony is now home to 112 Gunnison's prairie dogs forced out of their homes by renovations of the city's Franklin Miles Park and a Centex Homes development. Gunnison's prairie dogs have lost 95 percent of the land they once called home. Poisoning, plague, urban sprawl, and agriculture have forced this keystone species off the landscape. Expert prairie dog relocater Paula Martin guided construction efforts for the new prairie dog community. The colony will remain a protected refuge for prairie dogs forced out of their central New Mexico homes.

*Visit Prairie Dog Project at [wildearthguardians.org](http://wildearthguardians.org)*

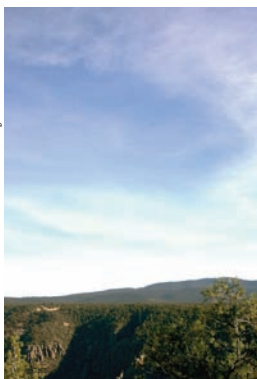


JESS ALFORD

### BREATHING EASIER

It's going to be a lot tougher for the oil and gas industry to drill away clean air thanks to WILDEARTH GUARDIANS. In response to a petition we filed, last October the Environmental Protection Agency ruled that oil and gas operations must be aggregated under the Clean Air Act. The ruling ensures air pollution from drilling is addressed cumulatively, opening the door for major reductions in air pollution. And last December, we inked a settlement with the Environmental Protection Agency committing the agency to conduct the most far-reaching and intensive update of federal oil and gas air quality regulations ever. These victories promise greater protection for air quality, the climate, and communities in the West and beyond.

*Visit Addressing the Climate Crisis at [wildearthguardians.org](http://wildearthguardians.org)*



JOHN HORNING



### DONATE WITH CONFIDENCE!

This good news is made possible by your generous donations. As evidenced by our consistent 4-star rating from Charity Navigator, WILDEARTH GUARDIANS efficiently and effectively leverages your donations to get the job done.

Help keep the good news flowing by making a gift to WILDEARTH GUARDIANS today.

505.988.9126  
or donate at [wildearthguardians.org](http://wildearthguardians.org).



312 Montezuma Avenue  
Santa Fe, NM 87501

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Albuquerque, NM  
Permit #476

## SPECIES IN THE SPOTLIGHT

### The Bumphead Parrotfish



UNDERSEA PRODUCTIONS.COM

Unique and charismatic, the Bumphead Parrotfish tells the tale of climate change in the tropical Pacific. Reaching up to four feet in length, each parrotfish consumes over five tons of coral in a year. This odd-looking fish then excretes the lovely white coral sands that make south Pacific beaches so glorious for human resting and sea turtle nesting, among other activities. In fact, scientists consider it a

“keystone” species whose habits help shape coral reef ecosystems.

The bumphead’s fate is tied to healthy coral reefs. But with warming ocean temperatures, coral reefs are dying. Without prompt and significant greenhouse gas emission cuts, the situation will only worsen. Shortly after the United States failed to do its part to commit to changes that would combat the climate crisis at the Copenhagen talks in December, WILDEARTH GUARDIANS launched Climate Week as part of the BioBlitz campaign. The week spotlighted the Bumphead Parrotfish and other species imperiled by the climate crisis. As part of the campaign, we petitioned for Endangered Species Act protection for the bumphead, which would help address some of the climatic threats this fish and its coral reef home face.

*Visit Western Ark at [wildearthguardians.org](http://wildearthguardians.org)*

## Take Control

Take control of the information you receive from WILDEARTH GUARDIANS.

- Sign up to receive action alerts, invitations to events, reports on WILDEARTH GUARDIANS’ victories and more via email at [wildearthguardians.org](http://wildearthguardians.org).
- Log on and tell us how often you’d like to hear from us and what you’re most interested in by clicking Manage Your Profile.
- Check out our Activist Center.
- Sign up to Go Paperless and stop receiving snail mail.
- Make a secure donation.

**Do it all at:**  
**[wildearthguardians.org](http://wildearthguardians.org)**

## DIVERSITY OF LIFE SOCIETY

Members of the Diversity of Life Society make a special commitment to leave a conservation legacy. They sustain WILDEARTH GUARDIANS’ work for the long-term by leaving a bequest or creating a charitable trust. Ensure that WILDEARTH GUARDIANS can continue working to protect and restore wildlife and wild places in the American West for future generations.

**For information on the Diversity of Life Society contact Carol Norton at 505.988.9126 x1150 or [cnorton@wildearthguardians.org](mailto:cnorton@wildearthguardians.org).**



TIM SPRINGER