


WILD AT HEART

THE WORD FROM WILDEARTH GUARDIANS

No. 4, Summer 2009



The Greater Gila: Wilderness for the Next 100 Years

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RESTORING THE VISION

John Horning

Since the early spring of 1990, when I first saw the snow-crested Mogollon Rim at sunset from the small town of Cliff during a cross-country bike trek, I have been enchanted by the landscape of the Greater Gila. Little did I know that I would return five years later to become one of its fiercest defenders.

In the fall of 1995, while I was hiking deep in the heart of the Gila Wilderness, I came across a cow-bombed stream, stripped of nearly all the vegetation that would have shaded and stabilized it. The dissonance of that ecological disaster has informed my politics ever since. How could we allow the one percent of the land that is the most ecologically critical – within a Wilderness Area no less – to be treated as a sacrifice zone?

I devoted the next three years of my life to remedying that ecological disaster and through a landmark legal case, the GUARDIANS removed cows from grazing near the Gila's rivers and streams. Today I am proud to say that for the first time since Geronimo and his band of Apache warriors roamed the Gila high country, many of these headwaters streams are healing or are in excellent condition.

Years later on the opposite side of the Gila Wilderness, after wolves had been restored to the lands that are their ancestral birthright, I remember a similar feeling of disgust when I learned that the government trapped and killed a wolf that had preyed on a cow.

Once again priorities of public land and wildlife management agencies seemed inverted to benefit ranchers at the expense of wildness.

WILD EARTH GUARDIANS' new strategy of grazing permit retirement and wilderness designation for the Greater Gila's wildlands was spawned by these experiences of the past. We are working with a coalition of ranchers to retire their grazing permits and provide them financial security while designating wilderness to provide ecological security for wolves and other wildlife.

Though this campaign will face its challenges, a bit of optimism, a lot of hard work and a dose of trust will allow historic protection for the public lands and native wildlife of the Greater Gila.

GUARDIAN GIVER

Stephen and Karen Durkovich

Stephen Durkovich and his wife Karen grew up in the southwest and remember what the area's landscapes looked like back then. They are dedicated to the work of WILD EARTH GUARDIANS because they want to keep

the West breathtaking for generations to come and because they believe in the GUARDIANS' staff.

"Also, it's important for others to become involved with WILD EARTH GUARDIANS because we need to be continually reminded and prodded to keep our hand in the game. To do some work on behalf of the environment ourselves. But more importantly to support those who are devoting all of their time to the environmental issues that are critical for all of us in the long term but which given our individual day-to-day preoccupations would never be addressed, much less handled meaningfully, without organizations like WILD EARTH GUARDIANS," says Stephen.

MONA KAY



IN MEMORY OF KIMBERLY RIGGS

February 27, 1968 - May 10, 2009

Wendy Keefover-Ring

MIKE ROLOFF



This spring, we lost an incredible advocate for the wild with Kimberly Riggs' passing. Kim battled breast cancer for three years with amazing fortitude, resilience, and

grace. Although she suffered incredible indignities and pain, she rarely complained. Determined to overcome her many doctors' prognoses, she continued to fight. Kim could be in a wheelchair one day and up walking at a meeting to advocate for prairie dogs the next.

In 2000, Kim joined the staff of Sinapu. Declaring that the organization's vision for carnivore restoration and protection represented a "great fit" for her, she turned down a more lucrative offer from another wildlife group. Kim proved tireless and exacting in her duties and she exponentially increased budget and cache in short order. Later, Kim was critical in bringing about the merger that created WILDEARTH GUARDIANS.

She boasted a broad intellect and a warm compassion for wildlife, wild lands, and humanity. No detail remained too small for her to catalogue and accomplish. Kim's ability

to muster and motivate volunteers was unparalleled. Her intense interest in strategic planning matched her reasoned and temperate voice, although she sported an enormous irreverent streak. Kim's fun-loving personality, huge empathy, delight for life, and loud laugh were her hallmarks.

Born in Ohio, Kim lived in California most of her life. In 1988, she saw the world by ship as part of a Semester at Sea program. Kim completed her bachelor's program cum laude at the University of California at San Diego and received her master degree in Political Science at Utah State, Logan, with honors. Her thesis researched women's participation in politics in Central America. Kim worked for an environmentally progressive political candidate, and raised funds for Stanford University's Hoover Institution and Environmental Volunteers of Palo Alto.

In 1996, Kim married her long-time partner and dearest companion, Mike Roloff.

Kim's curiosity fired her passion for traveling the globe – by ship, by plane, and by hiking boot. A zealous gardener and lover of her cats, Kim wanted a world where wolves, coyotes, wild cats, elephants, and prairie dogs could be restored and protected. Kim enjoyed hikes, eating M&Ms, and drinking strawberry margaritas. She was taken from us far too soon. An enormous talent and close friend are lost – but her profound legacy and her feisty heritage will live on. We miss you, Kim.

OUT AND ABOUT

On April Fool's Day, WILDEARTH GUARDIANS celebrated Fossil Fools Day by rallying at Xcel Energy's Cherokee coal burning power plant in north Denver. With

NICOLE ROSMARINO



WILDEARTH GUARDIANS rallied for Fossil Fool's Day on April 1 in Denver.

Rebecca Sobel

more than 100 demonstrators, we announced our intent to sue Xcel for more than 11,000 violations of the Clean Air Act, sending a clear message: fossil fuels can't fool us – it's time to power past coal to a clean energy future.

And this Earth Day marked the one-year anniversary of New Mexico Governor Richardson's commitment to clean water protection, though little action has been seen on this effort. To mark the day, WILDEARTH GUARDIANS held a rally at the Capitol to unite concerned citizens with state officials. The demonstrators delivered messages from over 5,000 New Mexicans demanding clean water protection.

Visit Take Action at wildearthguardians.org

20 YEARS 1989-2009

JOIN WILDEARTH GUARDIANS to celebrate 20 years of protecting the wild across the West.

Join us for our anniversary at one of the Guardians Galas.

SANTA FE GUARDIANS GALA
Friday, September 25
6:30pm
Bishop's Lodge Resort
Dinner, silent and live auction, and dancing
\$100 per person

DENVER GUARDIANS GALA
Thursday, November 12
6:30-9:00pm
Magnolia Hotel
Dinner, silent and live auction
\$100 per person

URBAN COYOTE

Nicole Rosmarino

WHY ARE YOU A GUARDIAN?



WILDEARTH GUARDIANS continues to protect the top carnivores of the West, such as wolves, that allow us to have healthy ecosystems. Their work is critical to giving wolves a voice.

— DAVE JONES
Member since 1995

Become a member of
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wildearthguardians.org

WILDEARTH GUARDIANS has been involved in coyote issues for years primarily through our work to eliminate the nation's foremost coyote killer, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Wildlife Services. Using a slew of macabre weapons, Wildlife Services killed over 90,000 "song dogs" in 2007, mostly in rural areas at the behest of ranchers. But now coyote issues are heating up in the Denver/Boulder metropolitan area.

Last fall, WILDEARTH GUARDIANS noticed the threat of coyote intolerance beginning to spread from rural to urban Colorado and sprung into action. First we worked closely with the city of Centennial, which adopted an intelligent coyote plan that emphasizes public education and scaring away coyotes with a very limited lethal component. Centennial also convened cities throughout the metro area for a planning process outlining ways to co-exist with coyotes.

Scientists agree that educating people to be more responsible for their pets and themselves and discouraging coyotes from approaching will reduce coyote conflicts. Indiscriminate lethal control doesn't work, as coyotes respond to persecution defiantly: more pairs will breed and they may produce larger litters.

But unlike Centennial, nearby Greenwood Village refused to consider scientists' findings. The city approved firing of guns in city parks and open spaces to address coyote issues, failing to realize that guns are a much bigger safety threat than coyotes.



DAVE JONES

WILDEARTH GUARDIANS is working to ensure humans in the Denver metro area can coexist with coyotes.

The city's police force and a hired shooter have shot six coyotes so far this year. Two of the animals fled after sustaining wounds and were never tracked down and euthanized.

To stop the shooting, WILDEARTH GUARDIANS has organized a team of about 100 volunteers to walk Greenwood Village's parks since Valentine's Day. Sweeping the parks at dawn and dusks, we scare away any coyotes we see. With a little encouragement from us, they flee, which spares them from the city's guns.

We scare them away to ensure that we'll see them again. The sight of a coyote means a more functional ecosystem. By keeping smaller predators in check, such as foxes, skunks, and even housecats, coyotes allow songbirds, ducks and others animals to thrive.

We are starting hazing programs in other cities as well. With one exception, no coyotes have been shot in parks that we regularly monitor. And our effort is attracting new volunteers daily.

With national media exposure, we're publicly illuminating flawed coyote policies, which is the last thing shooters want. They prefer silencers and secrecy. But the visibility of this issue is bringing light to the dark corners of intolerance and fear-based violence toward wildlife. Whether in rural or urban settings, WILDEARTH GUARDIAN will continue to find ways to co-exist with coyotes and combat coyote killings.

Visit Carnivore Project at wildearthguardians.org



JAY TUTCHTON

Jeremy Nichols

It's been a monumental spring for WILDEARTH GUARDIANS' Climate & Energy Program. Not only have we ramped up our efforts to confront fossil fuels, we've achieved major success in securing clean energy solutions.



JESS ALFORD

Challenging Coal

On March 11, we petitioned the Environmental Protection Agency to overturn an air pollution permit allowing Xcel Energy to jeopardize clean air and a safe climate while operating the Hayden coal-fired power plant in northwestern Colorado.

We followed up the next week by joining a coalition of groups in calling for clean energy and opposing a proposal by the Bureau of Land Management to allow the Red Cliff coal mine to be dug in western Colorado. Coal from the mine is slated to be burned, releasing 16 million tons of carbon dioxide every year.

In April, we targeted illegal and dangerous air pollution at Xcel Energy's coal-fired power plants. In conjunction with our Fossil Fool's Day rally, we announced plans to sue Xcel for more than 11,000 violations of clean air laws at the Cherokee coal burning power plant in North Denver. We then announced plans to file suit and halt construction of the Comanche 3 coal-fired boiler in Pueblo, Colorado. Xcel is illegally constructing the boiler without limits on mercury emissions.

Defying Drilling

We secured two key victories to protect wild places and the climate from oil and gas drilling. On April 28, with a coalition represented by Earthjustice, we secured a court ruling overturning a Bureau of Land Management decision to open up the Otero Mesa to oil and gas drilling (see page 6). We followed this up with another victory. On

May 29, with a coalition represented by the Western Environmental Law Center, we secured a court order holding the Bureau of Land Management must "consider and analyze" the global warming impacts of oil and gas drilling in Montana.

And on April 29, we struck a blow for public health. Together with Diné Citizens Against Ruining our Environment and Carson Forest Watch, we filed suit to force the Bureau of Land Management and the U.S. Forest Service to curb smog pollution in the San Juan Basin of northwestern New Mexico.

Creating Clean Energy Solutions

We have made major progress toward securing clean air safeguards in the American West. On March 12, we notified the Environmental Protection Agency of our intent to file suit to spur limits on interstate transport of smog and soot in the American West. On June 4, we followed through with our lawsuit, which should force air pollution cuts from coal-fired power plants and oil and gas drilling. Then on May 11, we overturned an air pollution permit allowing the CEMEX cement plant in Lyons, Colorado to pollute illegally and jeopardize public health and neighboring Rocky Mountain National Park (see page 11).

And on March 30, we filed suit to spur the overdue development of clean, renewable energy off the coasts of the United States. The lawsuit spurred the Interior Department to finalize regulations allowing offshore renewable energy development on April 22.

We're laying the groundwork for a safe and healthy future and with your support, we'll continue to make progress.

Visit *Climate & Energy* at wildearthguardians.org



NICOLE ROSMARINO

WHY ARE YOU A GUARDIAN?



WILDEARTH GUARDIANS has made it easy for me to plant the seed (or the tree!) that instills in my children the need to respect and care for "The Wild" and all of its wonderful creatures. Through Stream Team and several WILDEARTH rallies, my oldest daughter has learned to speak up and take action for things that she believes in, and to stand up for the future of our environment.

— MINDY & NICO TURNER
(AND SCARLET, NOT SHOWN)
Member since 2004

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wildearthguardians.org

VICTORY FOR OTERO MESA

Nicole Rosmarino

WHY ARE YOU A GUARDIAN?



FELICER.COM/PAUL GARLAND

I am donating to WILDEARTH GUARDIANS because of the great work they have done over the years on so many fronts. My wife, who has passed, and I were champions of nature and wildlife for all our time together, and I am carrying on for the both of us. The world is a marvelous place and she and I want it to remain that way for future generations.

— ED LEWIS
Member since 1993

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As part of the Coalition for Otero Mesa, WILDEARTH GUARDIANS helped to protect this wild desert grassland from the oil and gas industry.

After years of effort by the Coalition for Otero Mesa, of which WILDEARTH GUARDIANS is a part, the 10th circuit court ruled in April that one of the nation's wildest desert grasslands cannot be chewed up by oil and gas. The judges struck down the Bush administration's 2004 plan to allow oil and gas drilling on 1.9 million acres of public land, in southern New Mexico's Otero and Sierra Counties. In addition to prohibiting the drilling, this ruling halted all plans for the accompanying spiderweb of roads, wellpads, and pipelines across the New Mexico portion of Otero Mesa.

The judges found that the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM's) proposed land use plan failed to adequately consider the full protection alternative for the area and ignored potential threats to groundwater in a critical regional aquifer. The ruling is a major boost to the nearly decade long campaign to protect Otero Mesa and the prairie dogs, aplomado falcons, and pronghorn that call the mesa home. We and several other conservation groups were represented in our lawsuit by Earthjustice.

The ruling will help WILDEARTH GUARDIANS' other lawsuits, which seek to ensure that the BLM addresses the greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution associated with oil and gas development.

WILDEARTH GUARDIANS has steadily pushed for full federal protections for endangered wildlife

on Otero Mesa. Still pending before the 10th circuit is our appeal of the aplomado falcon "experimental" designation, a status which denies this rare bird meaningful protections under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and strips away legal safeguards for wild, non-reintroduced falcons. Otero Mesa contains important recovery habitat for the falcon, which was originally extirpated from the U.S. due to habitat destruction and pesticide use.

In addition, by late November, because of a court settlement with WILDEARTH GUARDIANS, the U.S. Fish and

Wildlife Service must rule on whether the black-tailed prairie dog warrants protection under the ESA. Such protection would provide a lifeline for about a dozen prairie dog colonies on Otero Mesa, and for prairie dogs struggling throughout the sweeping range of this species, from southern Canada, throughout the Great Plains and southwestern U.S., and dipping into northern Mexico.

Thanks for all of your e-mails, phone calls, and letters objecting to the plan to sacrifice Otero Mesa for what the BLM itself calls "small potatoes" in terms of fossil fuel reserves. We will press Senators Tom Udall (D-NM) and Jeff Bingaman (D-NM) and other elected officials to take the next step and introduce legislation that permanently protects New Mexico's wildest desert grassland.

Visit *Borderlands Biodiversity* at wildearthguardians.org



RICH READING

CAMPAIGN UPDATES

MARK SALVO



the current range of greater sage-grouse. The overlap is disturbing given the devastating effects of livestock grazing on habitat and water quality. We will use these findings to leverage public lands grazing policy reform.

WILDLIFE UNDER HOOF

WILDEARTH GUARDIANS recently released *Western Wildlife Under Hoof*, a geographical analysis documenting, for the first time, the expansive overlap between public lands livestock grazing and habitat for iconic wildlife in the West. The report found, for example, that grazing is permitted on approximately 80 percent of public land in the historic range of numerous native trout, more than 75 percent of the historic range for four prairie dog species, 84 percent of the current range of the Gunnison sage-grouse and 91 percent of

Visit Publications at wildearthguardians.org

COWS ON THE CALDERA

What would you pay to see a western national treasure free of cows? In April, WILDEARTH GUARDIANS offered \$50,000 to graze just three to five cows on the Valles Caldera National Preserve in northern New Mexico. The purpose of this brazen action was to begin to recover and restore the Preserve's streamside habitats from the threat of cattle grazing. The Preserve was established by Congress in 2000 to protect the area's many ecological and cultural values. But managers of the Preserve have continued cattle grazing in an attempt to turn a profit, which degrades wildland, rivers and streams already severely strained by the climate crisis. The best return on the dollar for the federal government and taxpayers would have been to accept our offer to keep cows out of the Preserve in order to ensure that the area remains wild and beautiful for generations to come. Though the Preserve rejected our initial offer, look for new developments soon in this exciting venture.

Visit Retiring Grazing Permits at wildearthguardians.org



FILIPPO.COM/ATLANAH

AMERICA'S TOP 40 SPECIES

On April 30, marking the Obama administration's 100th day in office, WILDEARTH GUARDIANS released *America's Top 40: A Call to Action for the Nation's Most Imperiled Species*. The report describes how approximately 40 species that the federal government considers America's most imperiled (of species not yet federally protected) are faring poorly, with many feared extinct. On average, members of the Top 40 have been waiting for federal protection for 13 years. Some have waited even longer – up to 21 years. WILDEARTH

GUARDIANS is using the report to pressure the Obama administration to step up efforts to list imperiled plants and animals under the Endangered Species Act.

Visit Publications at wildearthguardians.org

WHY ARE YOU A GUARDIAN?



I believe WILDEARTH GUARDIANS does an incredible job of engaging the public and getting out into the community. They are effective on so many fronts.

— BESTY MILLARD
Member since 1996

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wildearthguardians.org

HAWAIIAN BIOLOGICAL SURVEY/
BISHOP MUSEUM



THE GREATER GILA

Wilderness for the Next 100 Years

John Horning

The last word in ignorance is the man who says of an animal or plant 'What good is it?' If the land mechanism as a whole is good, then every part is good, whether we understand it or not.... To keep every cog and wheel is the first precaution of intelligent tinkering.

— ALDO LEOPOLD

The Greater Gila bioregion is one of the most spectacular and still wild landscapes that exists in all of North America. Defined by its dominant ecological, historical and geographic characteristics, the Greater Gila, with its species diversity, its rugged pine- and spruce-forested mountain peaks and its unique role in conservation history, is a landscape of enchanting variety and beauty.

more than 10,000 feet. On the edge of the Rim above the verdant valley of the Gila River, earth and sky unfold in endless waves. Mountains and deserts of wildness exist in every direction, interrupted by pockets of small human settlement. From Snow Park on a clear day, one can easily see almost 300 square miles and more than a half dozen major mountain ranges. The view is especially expansive to the south where miles and miles of Chihuahuan Desert unfold, broken only by the sky islands of Mount Graham and the Chiricahua Mountains. Across the border into Mexico is an endless chain of peaks that are a part of Sierra Madre Occidental, a mountain range that still harbors the elusive jaguar.

But scenic wonder and wild terrain are only two of the many great qualities of the Greater Gila. Perhaps the Greater Gila's most significant asset is its biological diversity. From leopard frogs to loach minnows to Mexican gray wolves to Mexican spotted owls, the region is a diverse tapestry of life. The Greater Gila Bioregion supports more than 500 different species including many plants and animals that occur nowhere else in the world.

Trouble in Paradise

However all is not well in the Greater Gila Bioregion. Though the wild heart of the bioregion is protected by the more than 1.1 million acres of wilderness — primarily the Gila and the Aldo Leopold Wilderness Areas — the region's fish, wildlife and unprotected national forests are under constant and growing threats that range from climate change to cattle grazing.

Most imperiled of all is the Mexican gray wolf, which faces a potential second extinction in the wild. Though the lobo was returned to its ancestral homelands in 1998 thanks to a government recovery effort, the lobo has not been warmly embraced by some in the area. The greatest obstacle by far for wolves is the constant conflict with the region's livestock industry, which is permitted to graze livestock on more than 85 percent of the Gila's national forests, much of that year round.

With federal policies in place that are hostile to wolves, government agents have shot and



ADRIEL HESEY

Home to mountain ranges, deserts, forests and rare wildlife, the Greater Gila is one of North America's most spectacular wild landscapes.

Located in the highlands of southwestern New Mexico and southeastern Arizona, the Greater Gila is known by too few but it is fiercely loved by those who have heard the howl of the lobo, indulged in the healing waters of its many remote hot springs, or experienced the beauty and tranquility of its unparalleled ancient ponderosa pine forests.

As the birthplace of America's first protected Wilderness and as the landscape that inspired ecological epiphanies for many of our nation's greatest conservation thinkers and activists, the Greater Gila is of great significance to the conservation movement.

Snow Park, one of the Gila's many special spots, is a window into what makes the ten million acre bioregion so awe-inspiring. Snow Park is a lush grassland surrounded by aspen groves perched atop the Mogollon Rim at

killed more than 70 wolves for preying on livestock that are permitted to graze in our national forests. Incredibly, some wolves have even been shot after preying on cattle that were illegally grazing on national forest lands.

As a result, today a mere 52 Mexican gray wolves exist in the wild according to recent government population surveys, making the lobo North America's most endangered mammal. In addition, many of the region's unique species such as the Southwest willow flycatcher and the Gila and Apache trout are imperiled due to habitat destruction along the Gila's rivers and streams.

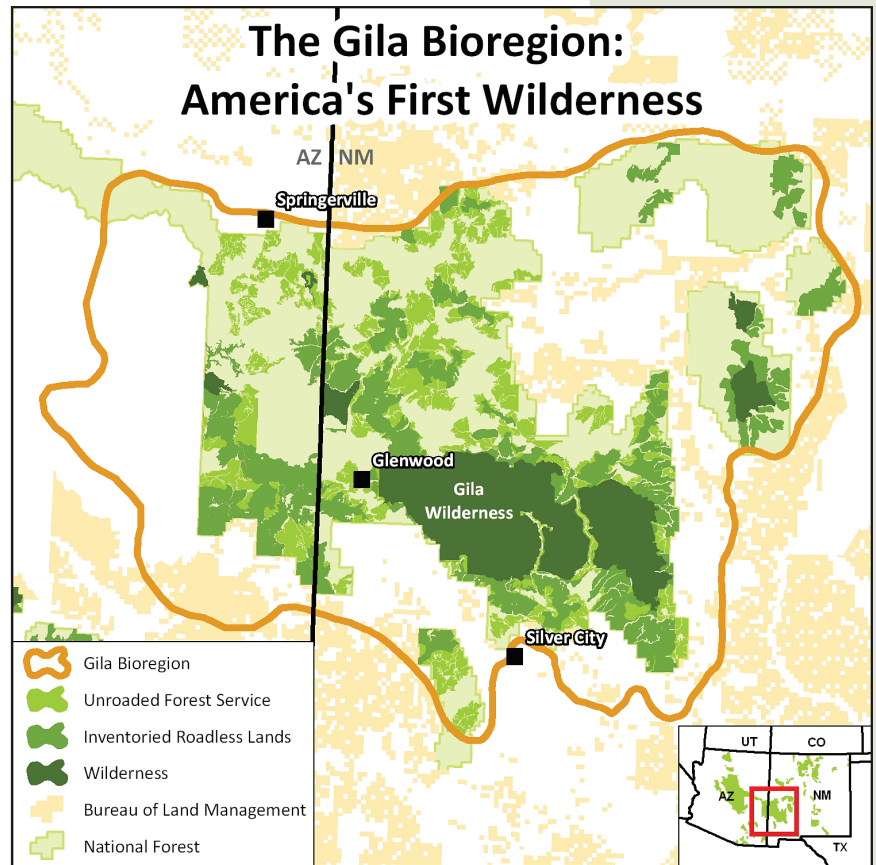
Wildlands are also threatened by logging, road building and off-road vehicles that carve up and fragment the more than 2.2 million acres of still wild national forest land that is eligible to be permanently protected by Congress as Wilderness.

Back to the Future

In order to explain how WILDEARTH GUARDIANS intends to advance a campaign to protect the endangered wildlands and wildlife of the Greater Gila, we must look back and understand how the Gila played a critical role in the life of one of America's most important conservation thinkers.

One hundred years ago this month – in July 1909 – Aldo Leopold stepped into the ecological tapestry that is the Greater Gila and his life and the trajectory of the American conservation movement would never be the same.

Leopold, bright, young and idealistic and newly graduated from forestry school, came to New Mexico to start a career with the U.S. Forest Service. Though the Apache and Gila forest reserves (as the national forests were known at the time) had been established by presidential order in March 1899 to protect their watershed and forest values, the Forest Service itself had



done little to define, much less enact, how it would manage the national forests of the Southwest when Leopold arrived on the scene.

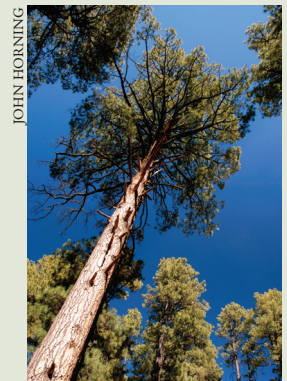
In letters home to his parents, Leopold described with awe and wonder the region's magical old-growth ponderosa pine forests, bountiful herds of deer and elk, rugged peaks, beautiful trout streams and craggy river canyons. The Gila's large, remote and still unroaded wild country captivated Leopold as well.

Though he remained on the Gila and Apache forests for only a handful of years, the landscape and its wild inhabitants, especially wolves, would become powerful forces in his thinking for the remainder of his life. His experience of shooting and then later remorsefully lamenting having killed a wolf on the slopes of Escudilla Mountain in the heart of the Arizona portion of the bioregion is eloquently described in his famous essay *Thinking Like a Mountain*.

I was young then, and full of trigger-itch. I thought that because fewer wolves meant more deer, that no wolves would mean hunters' paradise. But after seeing the green fire die, I sensed that neither the wolf nor the mountain agreed with such a view.

Leopold's writing and career are remarkable for many reasons, but he has made at least two monumental contributions to conservation:

Much of the Gila's 2.2 million acres are threatened by logging, road building, ORVs and the livestock industry.



One hundred years ago, Aldo Leopold stepped into the Gila and changed history.



USFWS

JOHN HORNING



WILDEARTH GUARDIANS' dual strategy to remove livestock and designate Wilderness will protect the Gila's unique landscape and imperiled wildlife.

the land ethic and the wilderness ideal. Both continue to profoundly influence conservation science and advocacy to this day.

The wilderness ideal was Leopold's practical resolution to protect wild lands from encroaching development and the toll that the loss of pristine lands had not only on wildlife but the human psyche as well. Unlike the rest of national forests, Wilderness Areas, Leopold argued, would be managed to protect pristine nature and therefore, would prohibit roads and other signs of human development.

Though the logic and the beauty of the wilderness policy seemed eminently reasonable to Leopold, when he first proposed the idea of creating the Gila Wilderness in 1919, it was a radical departure from the Forest Service's utilitarian approach to the land.

And yet with patience and persistence and no doubt a dose of his own charisma, he turned skeptics into proponents. In early June of 1924, the U.S. Forest Service agreed with his proposal and adopted a new model for land conservation by administratively designating the Gila Wilderness Area — America's first wilderness.

It was a significant leap forward, and it is the inspiration of a bold new vision that WILDEARTH GUARDIANS is advancing in the Greater Gila bioregion.

The Next 100 Years

On the 100th anniversary of Leopold's arrival in New Mexico and in honor of the vision that inspired our nation's first wilderness, WILDEARTH GUARDIAN is developing a campaign that is both practical and visionary to protect the Gila's public wildlands for the next 100 years. Our strategy is guided by the values that informed Leopold's wilderness and land ethics.

We believe that the best way to protect the Greater Gila is to integrate strategies not traditionally linked and ally with people who have

frequently been our biggest opponents.

First our unconventional allies include a small but growing coalition of ranchers in the Gila who, for a variety of economic, environmental and social reasons, are interested in relinquishing their grazing permits. Second, we intend to link this permit retirement strategy to wilderness designation; many of the lands that ranchers now control through their grazing allotments are roadless and eligible to be protected as Wilderness Areas.

This concept of linking permit retirement to Wilderness designation is swiftly gaining acceptance by the livestock industry and among decision makers in Washington, D.C. Congress, under the leadership of New Mexico Senator Jeff

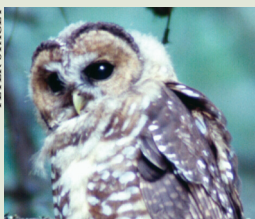
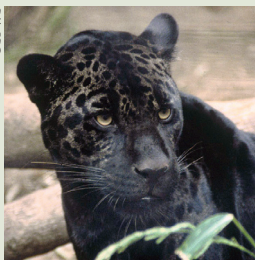
Bingaman (D-NM), recently passed legislation to retire grazing permits in the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument in Oregon, and the Owyhee Canyonlands in Idaho. Both bills, upon which we've modeled our Gila program, allow grazing permittees to voluntarily waive their grazing permits back to the Forest Service or Bureau of Land Management in exchange for generous compensation. Conservation funders would pay the ranchers for relinquishing their grazing permits. Upon payment, the government would immediately cancel the permits and permanently retire livestock grazing on the associated land.

Grazing permit retirement is mutually beneficial to the interests of ranchers, environmentalists and taxpayers:

- Ranchers can retire their permits, cut their losses, and use their permit compensation to restructure their operations on private lands (without federal overseers), retire or start a new business.
- Retiring grazing permits and closing the associated land to grazing will reduce impacts on sensitive ecosystems, water resources and wildlife, in this case especially wolves and the accompanying political and legal strife.
- Retiring grazing permits and livestock leases on public land will reduce the cost of federal public lands management.

In the same way that Leopold convinced the U.S. Forest Service to take a bold step forward in 1924, so too is WILDEARTH GUARDIANS working to convince the public, other conservation groups, local elected officials and Congress that permit retirement and Wilderness designation will save the Greater Gila's public lands.

Permit retirement and Wilderness designation will allow the Greater Gila to remain the southwestern paradise that Leopold saw 100



years ago. Mexican gray wolves will have the freedom to roam its mountaintops and forest meadows. Humans will co-exist with the diversity of the landscapes surrounding their settlements. The tranquility of the Gila's wild rivers will be safe from development. And the value of natural beauty will be enough to overcome extractive industries that would view the Gila as just another resource.

WILDEARTH GUARDIANS believes that the Gila will be one of America's last best protected landscapes, but much work remains to be done. Key to our success will be the vision of ranchers, the leadership of Congress and the will of the people. We look forward to your inspiration and energy helping us deliver on the promise of wildness and wolves in the Gila for the next 100 years.

GOOD NEWS FROM THE GUARDIANS

PETER NORBY



STREAM TEAM A HUGE SUCCESS

This spring, WILDEARTH GUARDIANS had one of the most successful tree planting seasons since our program began in 2004. Nearly 200 volunteers worked to restore rivers and reduce carbon in the atmosphere. Together we planted 5,000 cottonwoods and 50,000 willows. While planting trees may not solve the climate crisis, it will make the six rivers in the southwest that we are working to restore more resilient in the face of climate change by improving habitat and water quality for local wildlife. Not only that, we formed bonds with each other and our rivers that we will not forget. *Visit Stream Team at wildearthguardians.org*

FREEDOM TO ROAM

In early April, Federal District Court Judge David C. Bury ruled that a case challenging the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service's policy of removing Mexican wolves from the wild for conflicts with livestock could go forward. The interim ruling means that the case by

WILDEARTH GUARDIANS and our partners has legs – and bodes well for our vision of Mexican wolves freely roaming the Southwest without being trapped

or killed for preying on local cattle. Stay tuned for a final ruling in the months ahead.

Visit Carnivore Project at wildearthguardians.org



USEFS

NREL



POLLUTION PERMIT DENIED

In a victory for clean air, WILDEARTH GUARDIANS spurred the Environmental Protection Agency to reject an air pollution permit for the CEMEX cement plant in Lyons, Colorado. The plant burns coal, spewing smog-forming gases, mercury, and other contaminants that threaten public health and Rocky Mountain National Park. The EPA ruled Colorado failed to assess whether CEMEX should have installed up-to-date pollution controls before operating.

Visit Climate & Energy at wildearthguardians.org

WAR ON WILDLIFE REPORT

WILDEARTH GUARDIANS issued a comprehensive report to President Obama and Congress calling for abolition of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Wildlife Services agency. The agency has indiscriminately killed billions of wild animals. Our report, *War on Wildlife*, details the health, economic, and environmental problems of this taxpayer-funded agency including concerns associated with trapping, aerial gunning, and wildlife poisoning.

Visit Publications at wildearthguardians.org



RICHARD BADGER



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Margaret Atwood and Graeme Gibson

A benefit for WILDEARTH GUARDIANS and Wild Watersheds

The authors will discuss their newly published books,
After the Flood and *The Bedside Book of Beasts*

Monday, November 16, 7 pm
Woodward Hall, UNM, Albuquerque

Tuesday, November 17, 7 pm
The Lensic Center for Performing Arts, Santa Fe

Tickets: \$10

\$35 (includes Gibson's book)

\$45 (includes Atwood's book)

\$70 (includes both books)

\$250 (includes cocktail party, both books, tickets are limited)

For tickets and information: 505-988-9126 x1150
www.wildearthguardians.org

DIVERSITY OF LIFE SOCIETY

Make your legacy a force for nature

Members of the Diversity of Life Society make a special commitment to 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.

GUARDIAN PROFILE

Mona Kay



Mona was raised in Albuquerque and has spent the last 29 years in Santa Fe. A lifetime in the Southwest has given her deep ties to its land and animals and a strong desire to protect them.

After many years producing publications for The College of Santa Fe, she decided to begin a new career in bookkeeping/accounting. She worked for both local businesses and non-profits before joining WILDEARTH GUARDIANS' staff last December. She lives with her husband Ken, an avid mountain climber and her son Ryan, who loves camping, hiking, and anything outdoors.

Get the Scoop without the Paper



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To participate, contact Lori Colt today at
lcolt@wildearthguardians.org