

## Defending the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge

© Peter Mather

Just two years after President Obama recommended that virtually all of Alaska's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge be permanently protected as designated wilderness, the oil industry's allies in Congress have become emboldened by the inauguration of a pro-drilling president. They see this year as their best opportunity in many years to auction off the biological heart of the refuge—its sensitive coastal plain—for drilling.

Pro-drilling champions in Congress have been pursuing, and will continue to pursue this, with enthusiastic support from the Trump administration. On May 31, Secretary Zinke signed a secretarial order requiring the United States Geological Survey to update its estimates of technically recoverable oil and gas in the coastal plain of the Arctic Refuge.

In addition, the Trump administration's proposed FY18 budget includes language to open the Arctic Refuge to drilling in order to meet its fossil fuel agenda. These actions are based on a false claim that revenues raised from oil drilling in the refuge would help balance the federal budget, and that passing a drilling bill would be

the only way to keep the government funded. Ultimately, only Congress can pass a law to open the refuge to oil development, but support from the Trump administration means The Wilderness Society and our supporters will have to fight even harder to ensure that legislative attempts to drill in our most pristine wilderness do not gain traction.

The 19.3-million-acre Arctic Refuge in northeastern Alaska is one of the last untouched landscapes we have left. It is a national treasure that is home to polar and grizzly bears,



*continued on page 2*





The Wilderness Society President Jamie Williams with his son, Ben, in Shining Rock Wilderness, North Carolina.

## DEAR WILDERNESS SOCIETY SUPPORTERS,

As we move into summer months, we have even more opportunities to enjoy all the beauty that public lands have to offer—from the thriving ecosystem of Maine’s Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument to the culturally-rich Bears Ears National Monument in southeast Utah. While visiting these special landscapes, we’re reminded that they are not only places to find adventure and respite, but ours to steward and protect for all Americans and for generations to come.

For more than 80 years, The Wilderness Society has fought for the cultural, ecological and historical values of our public lands, and now as never before, we are drawing on our expertise to fend off an onslaught of attacks on the environment. Already, Congress and the Trump administration have pushed to roll back important environmental regulations and reverse protections for our parks, forests and national monuments. In return, we have redoubled our defensive efforts and activated a strong, grassroots movement across the country to stand firmly against attempts to undercut our wild places.

Our tactics are working: we recently won a seemingly impossible victory in Congress by rallying enough senators to vote against an effort to reverse the methane rule—an important step towards making sure public lands are part of the solution to climate change.

Your support made this victory possible. By speaking out in favor of this crucial environmental protection, you reminded our elected officials that Americans value a cleaner energy future.

In the coming months, we will fight attempts to reverse dozens of national monument designations, open the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to development, and drill in the Arctic Ocean. We do so knowing that the stakes for our public lands and our planet could not be greater, but that we have a blueprint to successfully battle anti-conservation efforts. Your support and your voice are key to the future of our wildlands, and we thank you for standing with us at this pivotal moment.

Sincerely,

Jamie Williams  
President

wolves, Dall sheep, musk oxen and migratory birds from all 50 states and six different continents. The massive Porcupine Caribou Herd—which contains more than 180,000 animals—migrates to the refuge’s coastal plain every year to birth and nurse its calves. It is a truly unique place, and we have a moral obligation to preserve it.

The Arctic Refuge is also the home of Alaska’s indigenous Gwich’in people, for whom its protection is a matter of survival. The Gwich’in have occupied this region for 10,000 years and rely on the refuge and its subsistence resources to sustain their communities and culture.

**“Today, many people want to drill for oil and gas on the land that keeps the Gwich’in Nation alive.”**

“Today, many people want to drill for oil and gas on the land that keeps the Gwich’in Nation alive. Their trucks, rigs and pollution would drive away the caribou, damage water quality and destroy habitat for the birds we hunt,” said Trimble Gilbert, traditional chief of Arctic Village, a Gwich’in community at the southern edge of the Arctic Refuge. “Oil companies and members of Congress do

*continued on page 3*



PRINTER PLEASE  
UPDATE

America’s Wilderness is published three times a year by The Wilderness Society.

**PRESIDENT:**  
Jamie Williams

**DESIGN:**  
Studio Grafik

Questions or comments?  
Please contact  
Jamie Clark at  
Jamie\_Clark@tws.org



The Wilderness Society meets all standards as set forth by the Better Business Bureau/Wise Giving Alliance.

bbb.org/charity





© Florian Schulz

not want more wilderness. They want profits and a full pipeline. But those things are temporary. The damage they leave is permanent. If the caribou go away and the Gwich'in culture dies, it can never be restored."

The Wilderness Society has been working diligently this year to educate members of Congress and their staffs—from both sides of the aisle—on the values of the refuge and the importance of a bipartisan effort to protect it. In April, a bipartisan group of senators and representatives, led by Sen. Ed Markey (D-Mass) and Sen. Michael Bennet (D-Colo.), introduced bills in Congress to protect the 1.4-million-acre coastal plain as a designated wilderness area.

We have engaged a national audience to raise awareness of the refuge and to activate our members and supporters in key states to lobby their congressional delegations. Our teams have also invested great effort in educating the national media about its importance to the American people, and the threats against it.

Since it was first established as the Arctic National Wildlife Range in 1960, Americans have treasured this place and fought to defend it against multiple attacks in Congress. With your continued support, The Wilderness Society will continue defending the refuge until Congress gives it the protection it deserves as one of our greatest wilderness landscapes.

# Advocates for Wilderness

## LEADERS IN THE FIGHT TO PROTECT OUR WILD

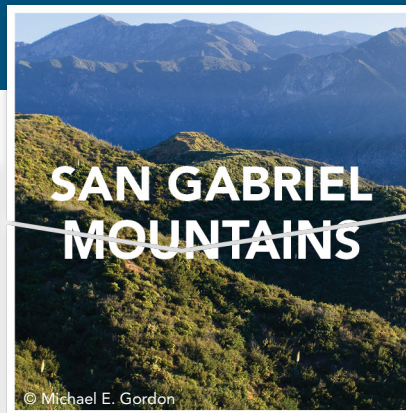
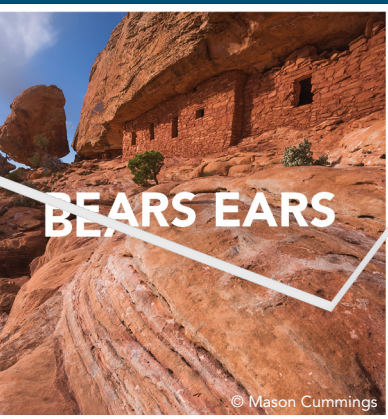
**Advocates for Wilderness make generous annual gifts of \$1,000 or more to The Wilderness Society and receive exclusive insider updates and other special benefits.**

**To learn more visit [wilderness.org/advocate](http://wilderness.org/advocate) or contact Andrea O'Brien at 202-429-2626 or [andrea\\_obrien@tw.soc](mailto:andrea_obrien@tw.soc)**

© Bob Wick/BLM



# NATIONAL MONUMENTS ON THE CHOPPING BLOCK



**Because of a radical executive order from President Trump, places like Utah's stunning Bears Ears National Monument are under "review." The initial salvo targets monuments that are 100,000 acres or larger designated since 1996—plus several other monuments. These range from rare wildlife habitat to Native American archaeological ruins—27 in all immediately at-risk.**

Trump could be laying the legal groundwork for attacks on virtually any national monument in America. This administration has set a precedent that protections for our shared history, culture and natural treasures are not necessarily permanent, even though they were explicitly instituted that way.

On June 12, despite broad public support more than a million Americans from coast to coast, the Trump administration recommended actions that could threaten the future of the Bears Ears National Monument in Utah. In a closed-to-the-public press

call, Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke outlined his recommendations to the president. "The Trump administration's announcement on Bears Ears is nothing less than an attack on the future of all American monuments, parks and public lands. The administration's recommendations are directly against the wishes of the overwhelming majority of Americans—and also in direct conflict with the Antiquities Act and the Wilderness Act—making a mockery of the claimed public process and the good faith of these recommendations," said Jamie Williams, The Wilderness Society president. Most legal scholars are in agreement that President Trump lacks the legal authority to undermine protection efforts put in place by previous presidents through use of the Antiquities Act. If President Trump acts on these recommendations, The Wilderness Society will take all steps necessary to defend Bears Ears and the Antiquities Act against these attacks—including legal action.



## NATIONAL MONUMENTS ON THE CHOPPING BLOCK

Cascade Siskiyou expanded	Oregon	2017
Bears Ears	Utah	2016
Gold Butte	Nevada	2016
Katahdin Woods and Waters	Maine	2016
Mojave Trails	California	2016
Northeast Canyons and Seamounts	Atlantic Ocean	2016
Papahānaumokuākea	Hawaii/Pacific Ocean	2006/ 2016
Basin and Range	Nevada	2015
Berryessa Snow Mountain	California	2015
San Gabriel Mountains	California	2014
Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks	New Mexico	2014
Rio Grande del Norte	New Mexico	2013
Marianas Trench	CNMI/Pacific Ocean	2009
Pacific Remote Islands	Pacific Ocean	2009
Rose Atoll	American Samoa/ Pacific Ocean	2009
Carrizo Plain	California	2001
Canyons of the Ancients	Colorado	2000
Cascade Siskiyou designated	Oregon	2000
Craters of the Moon expanded	Idaho	2000
Giant Sequoia	California	2000
Grand Canyon-Parashant	Arizona	2000
Hanford Reach	Washington	2000
Ironwood Forest	Arizona	2000
Sonoran Desert	Arizona	2001
Upper Missouri River Breaks	Montana	2001
Vermilion Cliffs	Arizona	2000
Grand Staircase-Escalante	Utah	1996

## Monuments are good for...

### OUR Community

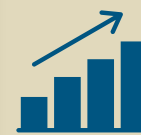
Twenty percent of the United States' entire population lives within 50 miles of a national monument. National monuments help nearby communities



diversify economically while increasing quality of life and recreational opportunities.

### OUR Economy

A Headwaters Economics review of national monuments confirms that all the regional economies adjacent to the studied national monuments (many of which are currently at risk of being decreased or rescinded by the Trump administration) experienced growth following the monument designation. In 2017, the Outdoor Industry Association reported that



outdoor recreation in general contributes \$887 billion to the national economy.

### OUR Health

As our nation continues to urbanize, access to wild places, where all Americans can disconnect from



their screens and reconnect to our natural and cultural heritage, is more important than ever.



## VICTORY IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CLIMATE CHANGE—METHANE RULE SAVED

Despite heavy pressure from the oil and gas lobby, Congress failed at an attempt on May 10 to kill the Bureau of Land Management’s Methane and Waste Prevention Rule—an important safeguard that will drastically reduce natural gas waste and methane pollution on public lands.

Congress has employed the reckless and seldom-used Congressional Review Act 13 times this year to repeal Obama-era rules, but for the first time since Trump’s election, they failed. This victory came as the result of Americans across the country making their voices heard and is a huge victory in the continued fight against climate change. The Wilderness Society, through our energy and climate program, worked closely with partners to lead the attempt to oppose the attempt to roll back this important regulation. “In recent months, thousands of Americans asked the Senate to

stand up for clean air and against the oil lobby, and their efforts were successful today,” said Wilderness Society President Jamie Williams. Repealing the rule would have eased the pressure on corporate polluters to comply with environmental safeguards, but tens of thousands of Americans wrote, called and tweeted their elected officials to uphold the methane rule and not give into the deep pockets of the oil and gas lobby.

## TAKING PRESIDENT TRUMP TO COURT OVER ARCTIC OCEAN DRILLING EXECUTIVE ORDER

On May 3, local Alaska Native groups along with The Wilderness Society and conservation partners filed a lawsuit against President Trump, challenging his decision to jettison a permanent ban on new offshore oil and gas drilling in the Arctic and Atlantic oceans. These groups, represented by attorneys at Earthjustice and Natural Resources Defense Council, issued the following joint statement:

“President Trump’s April 28 executive order exceeds his constitutional and statutory authority and violates federal law. Responding to a national groundswell of opposition to expanded offshore drilling, President Obama permanently ended oil and gas leasing in most of the Arctic Ocean and key parts of the Atlantic Ocean in December, using his authority under the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act (OCSLA). Until Trump, no president has ever tried to reverse a permanent withdrawal made under OCSLA, which does not authorize such a reversal.

Trump’s executive order could open up more than 120 million acres of ocean territory to the oil and gas industry, affecting 98 percent of federal Arctic Ocean waters and 31 biologically rich deepwater canyons in the Atlantic Ocean. Offshore drilling in these undeveloped regions threatens to harm irreplaceable wildlife, sensitive marine ecosystems, coastal residents and the businesses that depend on them, and our global climate.”



# Wilderness and You: Rose Letwin



**“When scientists are part of the conversation, we get stronger conservation outcomes.”**

Science is under attack as never before, but for Rose Letwin and the Seattle-based Wilburforce Foundation, its role is integral to conservation planning. “When scientists are part of the conversation, we get stronger conservation outcomes,” explains Rose. Since creating the foundation 26 years ago, Rose has helped invest more than \$150 million in the best science available—including data produced by The Wilderness Society’s team of scientists—to advance programs that protect lands, waters and wildlife in western North America.

A lifelong animal lover, Rose was raised in a small, Midwestern farm town. In 1978 she arrived in Seattle to study at the University of Washington, where she took up hiking and fell deeply in love with the outdoors. Inspired to volunteer at a local wildlife rehabilitation center, she was alarmed to discover that many of the mended animals were quickly losing their habitat. “There was nowhere to put them back, so it really shifted my thinking more towards habitat protection,” she recalls.

In 1991, armed with a degree in Forestry and Wildlife Conservation and a background in technology, Rose combined her interest in wildlife and systems to establish the Wilburforce Foundation with a focus on landscape-scale conservation. Identifying a unique opportunity to boost capacity in the wilderness movement, the foundation offered its first grant to The Wilderness Society in 1999 to help create its Wilderness Support Center—a

program designed to assist, train and engage grassroots activists. Reflecting on the now 18-year partnership, Rose says, “I don’t know how we could do what we do without The Wilderness Society because you’ve had a hand in practically every landscape we’ve worked in, and we rely tremendously on the science you provide us. When I first got into this years ago, it was all about the animals, but over the years it’s become all about the people.”

Ultimately, Rose’s vision is to ensure a web of interwoven, protected wilderness and roadless areas throughout western North America for wildlife to roam. Among the biggest obstacles she sees are the current attempts to sell off America’s public lands, which she calls “the envy of the whole world.” She’s not losing heart, however. “What I love is the way that people are really starting to be recharged in politics and mobilize. They don’t want to sit on the sidelines. That’s been very energizing to me. People are speaking up.”



The Wilderness Society  
1615 M St., N.W.  
Washington, DC 20036  
[www.wilderness.org](http://www.wilderness.org)  
1-800-THE-WILD

NONPROFIT  
U.S. POSTAGE

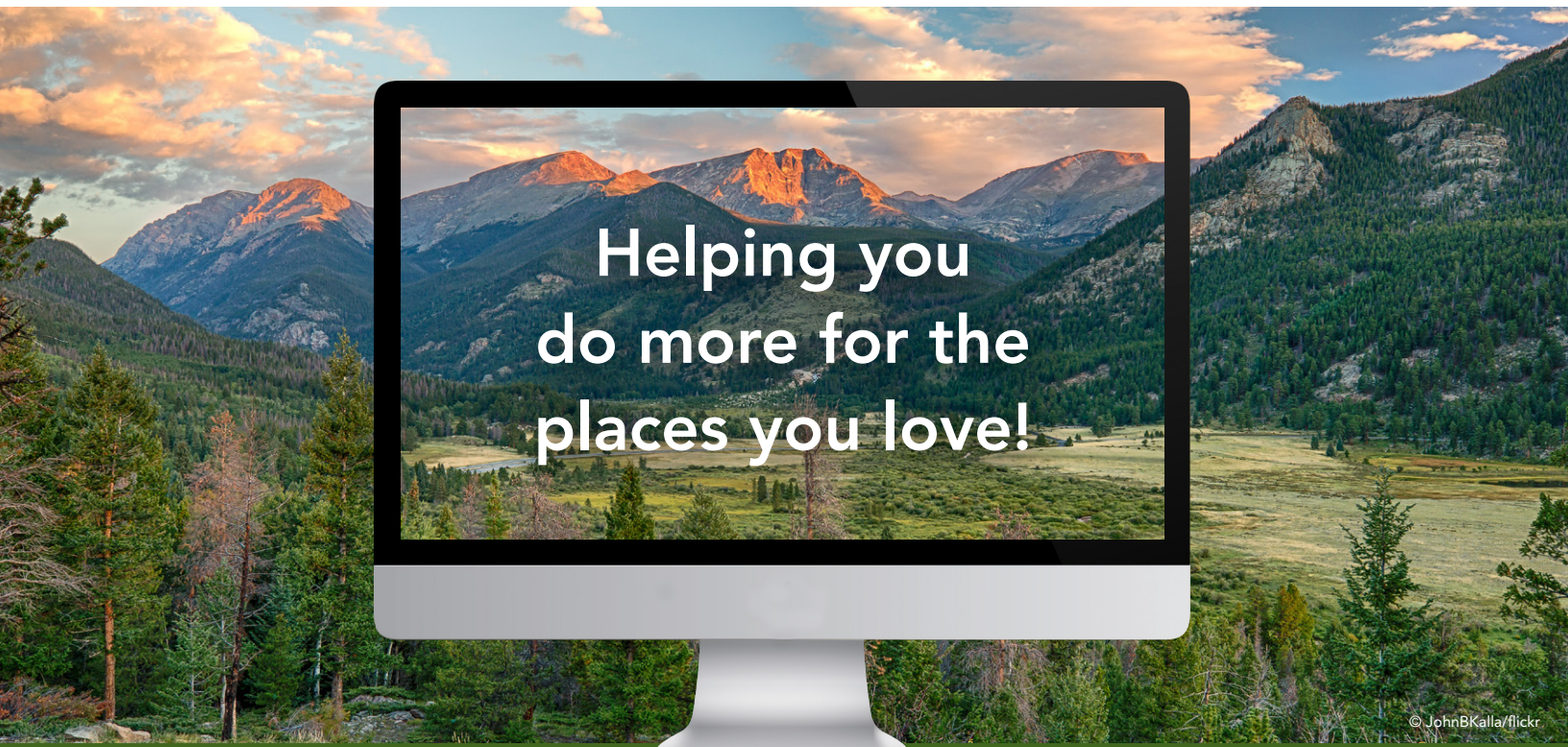
PAID  
THE  
WILDERNESS  
SOCIETY

## You can give at work

Thank you to the many donors who contributed to The Wilderness Society last year through corporate, state, city and county workplace giving campaigns. If you are a federal employee, you can support our work by designating #10638 on your pledge sheet during the Combined Federal Campaign.

The Wilderness Society is a founding member of EarthShare, a federation of America's leading nonprofit environmental and conservation organizations working together to promote environmental education and charitable giving through workplace giving campaigns.

For more information, please contact us at 1-800-The-Wild or [member@tw.s.org](mailto:member@tw.s.org)



© JohnBKalla/flickr

Visit our new gift planning website to learn more about how to lower your taxes, receive income for life, enjoy tax-free giving and more:

[www.wilderness.org/giftplanning](http://www.wilderness.org/giftplanning)