



THE
WILDERNESS
— SOCIETY —

2015 ANNUAL REPORT





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TOWARD TOMORROW: *Building a New Public Lands Legacy*

Marsh Fork of the Canning River in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska's Brooks Range. President Obama made a recommendation in January 2015 to protect more than 12 million acres of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge as wilderness.

© Patrick J. Endres

MORE THAN EIGHTY YEARS AGO, when Bob Marshall, Aldo Leopold and others founded The Wilderness Society, they did so knowing that a quickly urbanizing nation needed to think far ahead in order to preserve our wildest places for everyone and for all time. That long view—and that history of always looking forward—continues to define The Wilderness Society today.

In just the past year, we've seen decades of hard work come to fruition all across the country, resulting in the protection of some of our nation's most spectacular landscapes—from Idaho's newly established Boulder-White Clouds Wilderness to Colorado's Browns Canyon National Monument. Years of advocacy—not only by staff and supporters, but also by communities that depend on these special places—led to remarkable achievements that build on our public lands legacy for the generation ahead.

But these accomplishments only tell part of the story. Today, we are also bringing new thinking to our work as we address some of the biggest challenges of our time.

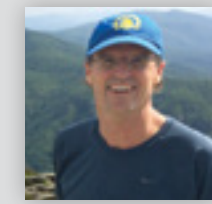
In a warming world, protected public lands will play an even greater role in maintaining healthy *ecosystems*—providing the large, connected landscapes that give plants and animals the best chance to adapt to the impacts of climate change. At the same time, we are helping reshape how *energy* is developed on public lands, transitioning it toward clean, renewable energy fundamental to a sustainable planet.

In an increasingly urban and fast-paced nation, we also need to expand opportunities for people to *experience* our wildlands to renew our physical, mental and spiritual well-being. Our partnerships with youth and recreation groups to get more people outdoors—from the Southern Appalachians to Los Angeles' San Gabriel Mountains to Washington's North Cascades—have been particularly rewarding and vital to building an enduring conservation ethic in this country.

As we build upon the strong successes by generations of Americans to protect wild places, we know our work on public lands today is more vital to human and global health than it ever has been.

Your generous support and advocacy is what makes this important work possible.

Thank you.



Jamie Williams

JAMIE WILLIAMS
PRESIDENT



David Churchill

DAVID CHURCHILL
CHAIR, GOVERNING COUNCIL

2015: The Foundation for Our Future

With major achievements in public lands protection, a new direction in federal energy development, and a growing community of staff, supporters and stewards across the nation, The Wilderness Society is building the foundation for our future—as a nation and a planet.



MORE THAN
80 YEARS
AS AN ORGANIZATION

Founded in 1935, The Wilderness Society has led the effort to permanently protect **109 million acres** of wilderness and to ensure sound management of our shared national lands.

700,000



WILDERNESS SUPPORTERS



12 OFFICES AROUND
THE COUNTRY



We work every day to address **A BLIND SPOT** in the fight against climate change: **21%** of greenhouse gas emissions—equal to **280 million cars**—come from energy development on public lands.



1.3 MILLION

ACRES PERMANENTLY PROTECTED, including more than **1 million acres** designated as national monuments and **275,000 acres** as wilderness.



6.5 MILLION people engaged through Facebook, Twitter and Instagram in 2015



Through a new and smarter approach to development, **19 WILDLAND-FRIENDLY** solar energy zones will power up to **8 MILLION HOMES**.



children and families have more opportunities to experience the outdoors as a result of our partnership with **20** of the nation's most prominent recreation and conservation organizations.



A Historic Achievement for Conservation's Future

Five years in the making, the announcement in September of conservation plans for public lands in the West's vast sagebrush landscape represented a milestone victory. The largest land conservation achievement in U.S. history, this plan is also the start of an entirely new approach to conservation.

A THREAT TO THE HEART OF THE WEST

Marked by the breeding habitat of the greater sage-grouse—a native bird recognized for its quirky courtship display—the sagebrush landscape stretches across 11 states and 67 million acres in the Great Basin and Rocky Mountain regions. These lands have long been a part of the West's wildlife and outdoor heritage: home to pronghorn, golden eagles and more than 350 other species, as well as the foundation of the region's ranching, hunting and energy economies.

Yet today, this rugged ecosystem is one of the most threatened in North America. Numbers of sage-grouse—an indicator species for the health of the entire ecosystem—are plummeting, and undeveloped lands are just 40 percent of what they were 100 years ago.

A LANDSCAPE-LEVEL APPROACH

As the public lands experts in the nationwide effort to protect the sage-grouse habitat, The Wilderness Society pushed for a new perspective: to consider the landscape as a connected whole and embrace science-based conservation objectives from the outset.

A PLAN FOR OUR SHARED FUTURE

The final plans combine remarkable scale with remarkable breadth, addressing virtually every use of federal lands, balancing competing needs and placing greater protections on 67 million acres of the most critical habitat. Combined with state plans and private conservation efforts, they reduce threats to the sage-grouse across 90 percent of its breeding habitat.

Most of all, these plans show the power of landscape-level, collaborative conservation to restore ecosystems and lay the foundation for a sustainable future.

67

million acres received protection

350+

wildlife species benefited from new protections

“For me, this career was never about the power and glory—because you can't make lasting change through quick, flashy action. It can't happen unless you do the day-to-day work.”

—Nada Culver

As The Wilderness Society's senior counsel and senior director of agency planning and policy, Nada Culver works to create smart policy that makes a large-scale, lasting impact. It was the desire to make a real difference that first drew her to law school, and later to The Wilderness Society—where she could

carry forward a legacy of looking at the big picture of conservation and public lands. And eight years ago, when she and her team began working to protect 173 million acres of sagebrush landscape in the Great Basin and Rocky Mountains, she knew the significance of this eventual achievement would be enormous—as

would the challenges she would need to overcome.

“We knew there'd be changes, detours and objections along the way, but we made sure to keep the conversation pointed in the right direction, to keep everyone thinking that they could do this. Not just that they *should*, but that they *could*.”



Nada Culver

© Bob Wick, BLM

Where Cultures & Ecosystems Converge Over Millennia: Basin and Range

For the natural world and the cultural sphere, Nevada's Basin and Range region is both a point of intersection and a place of beautiful contradictions. Here, you can see plants and animals that exist nowhere else on the planet; rugged wildlands and modern art; the map of our past, and everything worth saving for our future.

And now, after being designated as one of America's newest national monuments in July, this landscape will continue bringing people and legacies together for generations to come.

Positioned at the juncture of the Mojave and Great Basin deserts in southeastern Nevada, this remote landscape has, over thousands of years, been home to Native Americans, 19th-century Mormon settlers and modern-day ranchers. Today, it's also home to contemporary artist Michael Heizer's monumental "City," an ambitious, abstract sculpture more than 40 years in the making.

Thanks to the exceptional leadership of U.S. Sen. Harry Reid and the vocal support from the outdoor recreationists and youth groups in nearby towns, President Obama was compelled to designate Basin and Range as a national monument. Now, this one-of-a-kind landscape will be preserved for everyone.

704,000
acres designated as a
national monument

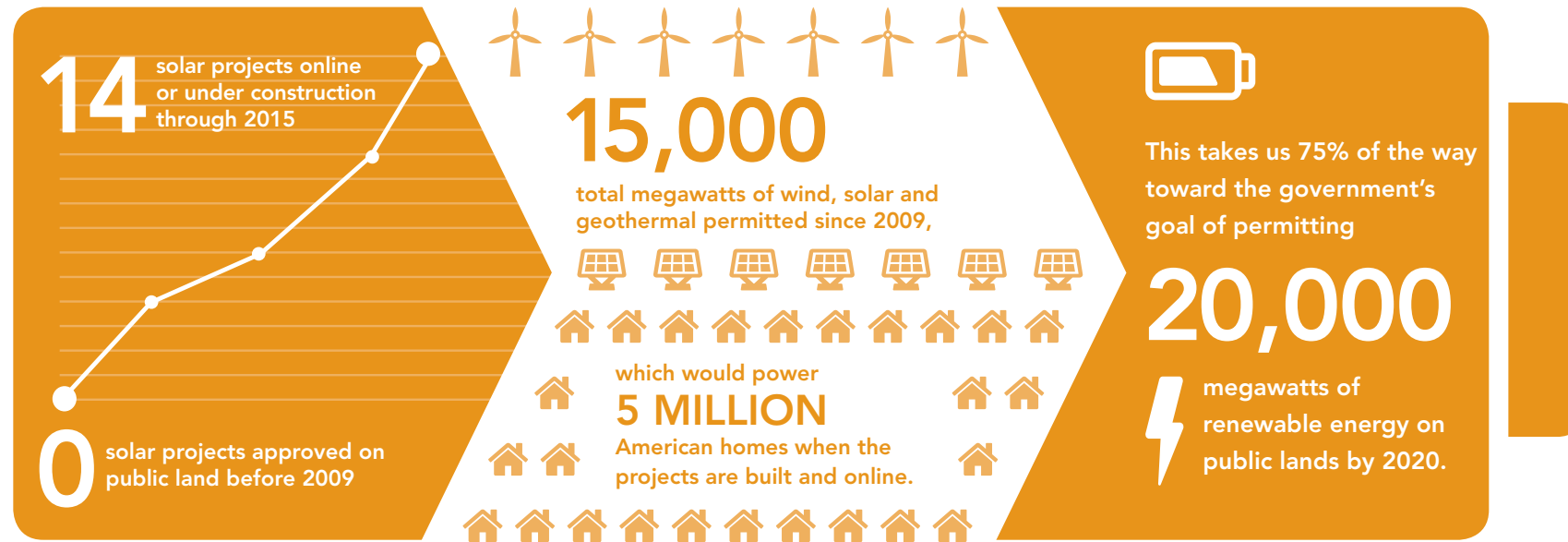
"If you free yourself from the conventional reaction to a quantity like a million years, you free yourself a bit from the boundaries of human time. And then in a way you do not live at all, but in another way you live forever."

—John McPhee, from the book *Basin and Range*

AN ENERGY REVOLUTION ON PUBLIC LANDS

Over the past decade, our nation has taken tremendous steps forward in addressing the threat of climate change. President Obama has positioned climate action at the center of his legacy, arguing passionately that no contradiction exists between our economic strength and our ability to be good stewards of the planet we share. New fuel economy standards, as well as policies to reduce emissions from energy, agriculture and other sectors have placed us on a better path—but they're only part of the solution we need for a sustainable future.

A 2015 report issued by The Wilderness Society and the Center for American Progress shows that at least *one-fifth* of the United States' greenhouse gas emissions can be traced to energy development on public lands. That's why The Wilderness Society, as the nation's public lands expert, is taking comprehensive action to address this issue, thanks to the support our donors provide. This support is helping us unleash a wave of clean energy while respecting sensitive wildlands and moving energy and conservation into the 21st century.



Updating Energy Policy

The nation's largest land manager, the Bureau of Land Management, leaves 90 percent of its land open to oil and gas leasing. And many energy rules and regulations, enacted almost a century ago, still incentivize oil, gas and coal development on public lands over other uses. The Wilderness Society is working closely with government agencies, land managers and the clean energy industry to formalize new, updated policies that prioritize emissions reductions and the development of clean energy sources.

Protecting Lands and Promoting Renewables

In places like the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska and the California Desert, we're drawing on good science to promote federal leasing plans that take the entire surrounding landscape into account, guide energy development to suitable areas and protect ecologically sensitive areas and critical habitats.

Reducing Emissions

We're organizing thought leaders, representatives from the energy industry, recreationists and grassroots conservation organizations to ensure that federal lands are part of our nation's emissions reductions strategy. Leveraging our expertise, we are also advocating for the Department of the Interior to develop a specific plan for measuring the carbon consequences of fossil fuels extracted from public lands—the first step toward managing greenhouse gas emissions on public lands.



Boulder-White Clouds Wilderness: A Lifetime Achievement for Idaho State Director Craig Gehrke

In the early 1980s, Craig Gehrke was a University of Idaho student considering a career as a forest ranger when he signed a petition calling for wilderness protection for Idaho's Boulder-White Clouds area. It was the first conservation action he ever took. More than 30 years later, he stood in the Oval Office as President Obama signed the bill officially—and finally—designating the area as wilderness.

The Boulder-White Clouds is an incredibly diverse landscape defined by white limestone mountain peaks: "They rise up in sheer walls, and they just stagger you when you see them," Craig says. Protecting this area has long been a priority for The Wilderness Society and local conservation champions, including legendary Idaho Sen. Frank Church and his wife, Bethine Church. "The White Clouds were always supposed to be the next one," Craig says.

Yet over the years, wilderness bills, conservation-friendly forest plans and other efforts to protect the White Clouds failed. Undaunted, Craig and local conservation groups like the Idaho Conservation League continued to push—and saw a shift in the early 2000s, when Rep. Mike Simpson, a conservative Republican, visited the White Clouds area with local conservation champions.

"What started off as a political challenge for him became a labor of love," Craig says.

Seeing an opportunity, Craig and his staff went to work, lending policy and scientific analysis and helping craft plausible boundaries for the proposed wilderness. At the same time, The Wilderness Society and our supporters invested in on-the-ground advocacy in Idaho and Washington, DC, to build a strong, broad constituency for protections.

Finally, the dam broke in the summer of 2015—and an iconic and ecologically diverse piece of Idaho wilderness is now protected for the future of our nation. Thanks to three decades of nonstop work from wilderness champions like Craig and our supporters, bighorn sheep, black bears and Chinook salmon will continue to thrive, and generations of Americans will be able to enjoy this spectacular mountain range.

As Craig says, "It takes an affirmative action by Idahoans, by Congress, to say, 'This place is special enough. We need to make sure it has the highest level of protection we can grant it.'"



Craig Gehrke (center) looks on as President Barack Obama signs the Sawtooth National Recreation Area and Jerry Peak Wilderness Additions Act in the Oval Office at the White House in Washington on August 7, 2015.

"It's hard to talk about what this means without getting emotional. This has been on our plate for so long, and it meant so much to so many people who were here before us."

—Craig Gehrke, Idaho State Director, Idaho Office

275,000
acres designated
as wilderness



One of the longest
salmon migration
routes in the world

Delicate trillium and lush rhododendron.

Lumbering black bears and nimble black-throated green warblers.

More species of trees than the entire continent of Europe.

A majestic mountain range that challenges our bodies and steals our breath.

#1

most visited national park in the United States

41

organizations in the Nantahala-Pisgah Forest Partnership working together to protect Appalachian wildlands

A Cradle of Life: Biodiversity in the Southern Appalachians

The Southern Appalachians have been a cradle of life for more than 65 million years. They are home to the most visited national park in the country and to millions of people drawn to the region for its beauty, wildness and by the bonds of family. Today, this mountain range, with some of the most unique and biodiverse regions in the world, serves as a critical corridor linking southern and northern wildlands in the southeastern United States. As our planet's temperature continues to rise, preserving and protecting the Southern Appalachians has never been more important.

Currently, much of the forest bordering the Great Smoky Mountains National Park—among the wildest lands east of the Mississippi River—remains unprotected, as do more than 90 percent of the Nantahala-Pisgah National Forest's one million acres. That's why The Wilderness Society convened a diverse group of partners—including the Tennessee Wild Coalition, Southern Environmental Law Center and the Carolina Mountain Club—to advocate for protections. The Wilderness Society has spent decades documenting the special character of the Southern Appalachians and bringing the best science forward to demonstrate the importance of these lands. Now, with the

help of our supporters, we are engaging local communities, advocating for a wilderness bill in Tennessee and shaping a forest plan that will conserve the Southern Appalachians' most biologically significant areas while setting a new standard for the nation at large.

Because it is a refuge for plants and animals found nowhere else in the world; because its rich watersheds provide drinking water throughout the Southeast; and because its captivating landscapes are just outside the back door for millions of people in one of America's fastest-growing regions, we are working hard to protect the Southern Appalachians—now and in the future.

“Outsider though she was, this place, the blue mountains, seemed to be holding her where she was. From any direction she came at it, the only conclusion that left her any hope of self-content was this: what she could see around her was all that she could count on.”

—Charles Frazier, from the novel *Cold Mountain*

OPENING WILDLANDS TO A CHANGING AMERICA

The wildlands that define our nation offer every American opportunities for recreation, exploration and renewal—each one a “great solemn cathedral, far vaster and more beautiful than any built by the hand of man,” in Theodore Roosevelt’s words. But for too many, those wildlands and the experiences they make possible seem far away. As more and more Americans—particularly growing, diverse populations in urban areas—live lives far removed from nature, we need to ensure that powerful outdoor experiences remain accessible to all.

The Wilderness Society and our supporters have a unique role to play in this movement, connecting people from cities and towns across the country to America’s wild places and green spaces. As the link between local communities, and conservation and recreation organizations, we’re working with a broad array of partners to bring the benefits of public lands to all Americans—and in doing so, building a conservation constituency for the future.

Getting Kids Outdoors

As a leader in the nationwide Outdoors Alliance for Kids, The Wilderness Society is working to give children and families more opportunities for healthy, positive outdoor experiences.

We’re building alliances and helping schools find the resources they need to realize the promise of the federal Every Kid in a Park initiative, which gives all fourth-graders and their families a free pass to our National Parks.

Through our partnership with the 21st Century Conservation Service Corps, we’re helping support 40,000 young people as they gain experience working outdoors. We are also advocating on Capitol Hill to grow the program to 100,000 young people.



© Elliotsville Plantation, Inc.

Expanding Recreation Access

Throughout our nation, thousands of organizations and businesses, from small urban nonprofits to large outdoor companies, are dedicated to bringing people outside and giving them those critical first experiences in nature. Yet the government’s outdated, cumbersome permitting process frequently limits access, as when a permit moratorium prevented the Seattle YMCA’s BOLD and GOLD programs from taking young children from diverse populations rock climbing. As the federal policy expert in the Outdoor Access Working Group, we’re rethinking this system for tomorrow’s America.

Photo courtesy of YMCA BOLD and GOLD



Promoting Public Lands

Through our involvement with the Association of Outdoor Recreation and Education, we’re educating young adults—the public lands champions of tomorrow—about our nation’s great wild heritage, in partnership with recreation programs at colleges and universities, military bases, and community organizations.

© Jacon W. Frank (Dour Corners School of Outdoor Education), flickr



Urban to Wild

We know that wild places aren’t just “out there,” and that the community garden or park down the street can provide just as meaningful an experience, as well as a gateway to a lifelong appreciation for the outdoors. Through initiatives such as the San Gabriel Mountains Forever Leadership Academy, we’re working to connect young people in urban communities to parks, green spaces and other natural areas.

Photo courtesy of San Gabriel Mountains Forever Leadership Academy





“Before I started this program, I was in a dark place. I was depressed. I felt unimportant. But there’s always a way to bounce back. For me, nature was the way.”

—Domingo Morales

Photo courtesy of Green City Force

A MOVEMENT IN BROOKLYN: DOMINGO MORALES’ STORY

Life in his early 20s offered Domingo Morales less than he hoped it might. The East Harlem native had worked three different jobs—in a restaurant, as a computer technician and at a hotel—and found each to be a dead end. But then he saw a flyer on his hotel’s bulletin board that changed everything.

The flyer was for a group called Green City Force, a part of the 21st Century Conservation Service Corps movement. With The Wilderness Society and our partners—including KEEN Utility, which announced major support in July 2015—21CSC is mobilizing 40,000 young adults (including Domingo) across the country to protect, restore, enhance and experience the nature around them.

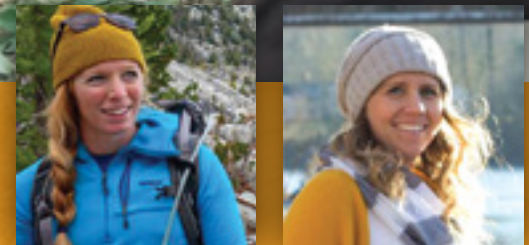
With Green City Force, Domingo originally hoped to work on the sustainable energy team, but was assigned instead to an urban farm in Brooklyn—and it “stole [his] heart.” “I fell in love with the farm. I fell in love with composting. It just changed my views on everything.”

The farm where Domingo and his fellow corps members worked offered more than fresh produce in a food desert—it was a place to transform their community. There, neighbors

from nearby housing developments could meet for communal dinners and free cooking classes, and Domingo could talk about the role of recycling, composting and other sustainable practices in their daily lives. “For the first time, I felt like I was doing work that was important,” he says.

And even as he worked to transform his community, the work—and the experience of being in “almost a secret place...[that] didn’t feel like Brooklyn”—transformed Domingo. Less than a year after joining Green City Force, Domingo has a full-time job at the Brooklyn Botanic Garden, focusing on his newfound passion of composting. He’s trying to start a community garden in front of his building and working with the NYC Compost Project, hoping to “rebuild this cycle that was broken so many years ago.” He’s writing hip hop songs about the role of nature in our lives. And he’s looking forward to “going on this hike where I’m, like, lost to the world, in the jungle or in the forest, just living with nature.”

“I’m going to think back on this in 10 years,” he says of his experience with Green City Force and 21CSC. “To me, it feels like a revolution. The next corps are going to make the world a better place.”



KEEN Utility – Kirsten Blackburn and Breanna Fokes

“Public lands are truly America’s greatest legacy. We can all think of special places that we hold near and dear to our hearts—whether it’s an urban park like Portland’s Forest Park, or Yellowstone National Park, or the newly designated Boulder-White Clouds Wilderness.

When it comes to building the constituency to protect these places, The Wilderness Society and KEEN Utility are working together to think outside the box to encourage others, especially veterans and young people, to experience the outdoors. Ultimately, it’s about

fostering a connection of place to people—a connection that will transfer to their children and their children’s children.”
From KEEN’s national headquarters in Portland, Oregon, Marketing Specialists Kirsten Blackburn and Breanna Fokes are helping to guide

a new program in partnership with The Wilderness Society and the 21st Century Conservation Service Corps to connect diverse constituencies with America’s public lands. “Project Build” supports the hard work of America’s conservation corps and builds upon our long legacy of dedication to protecting our treasured landscapes through citizen stewardship.

Browns Canyon: A Connection to Wild Colorado

A two-hour drive from Denver and one of the most popular whitewater rafting destinations in the country, Browns Canyon is a place with the power to connect people deeply to the wilderness.

For Garrett Reppenhagen, Rocky Mountain director of the Vet Voice Foundation, Browns Canyon was a place to recover from the trauma of war and reconnect with himself, his family and his friends. For painter Susan Mayfield, Browns Canyon is a muse, where she draws inspiration from the saturation of light in the landscape. For third-generation rafting guide “Campy” Campton, Browns Canyon is his connection to the ever-changing Arkansas River and a family legacy. For the children and teenagers growing up in the Front Range urban corridor, Browns Canyon is often their first experience of wilderness.

And now, for every American, Browns Canyon is forever protected as a national monument.

Although it has long been a beloved place, protecting Browns Canyon was never an easy process. After 13 bills over the course of three decades failed to pass, The Wilderness Society redoubled its efforts,

working on the ground with partners to rally support from outdoor recreation groups, conservationists, elected officials of both parties, and members of Colorado’s Latino, tribal and veteran communities. On the strength of such fervent support from a broad array of constituencies, President Obama designated the Browns Canyon National Monument in February 2015.

“[My son] is now 10 months old, but in the years to come, I know I’ll be able to take him fishing to a river that I helped to protect.”

—Garrett Reppenhagen, Rocky Mountain director of the Vet Voice Foundation

Thanks to our supporters and the tireless advocacy their gifts made possible, Browns Canyon will remain a link to wild places for all Americans—the thundering Arkansas River, sharp granite cliffs and stark canopy of stars in the nighttime sky creating a new generation of conservationists, advocates and dreamers.

77%

of Coloradans supported designating Browns Canyon as a national monument

\$55

million in annual economic activity generated by the monument





17,000

high-priority acres protected by conservation easements since January 2015

The High Peaks: Maine's Contribution to Climate Resilience in the Northeast

Each year, as thousands of Americans hike the Appalachian Trail through southwestern Maine to its terminus at Mount Katahdin in Baxter State Park, they pass an ecological wonderland. The largest undeveloped forest east of the Mississippi River, Maine's High Peaks region is full of native species such as moose, lynx, pine marten and songbirds, and is the breeding grounds for brook trout and endangered Atlantic salmon.

Yet the High Peaks provide more than a memorable encounter with wild New England. As the connecting thread that weaves together the vast Acadian Forest ecosystem—in the U.S. alone, it spans 26 million acres from the Adirondacks to Maine—the High Peaks are a critical building block for climate adaptation in the Northeast.

That's why The Wilderness Society has stepped up to protect this region now, before developers remake the High Peaks area. We're working with partners in the land trust community to secure conservation easements in the High Peaks. With the guidance of ecological studies, we are focusing on areas whose wilderness qualities deserve full

protection, and have already secured 17,000 acres of high-priority conservation easements since January 2015 and identified another 40,000 acres to target in the next five years.

As the connecting thread that weaves together the vast Acadian Forest ecosystem—spanning 26 million acres from the Adirondacks to Maine in the United States alone—the High Peaks are a critical building block for climate adaptation in the Northeast.

"With climate change, there's just so much uncertainty. You don't know you've lost too many of the parts until the last one you needed is gone," Climate Adaptation Ecologist Peter McKinley says. "Through protecting the High Peaks, we'll ensure we never lose this beautiful and critically-important region."



Tien and Pei-Hsing Wu

"The experiences we have had hiking together in wilderness areas and national parks in this country have been so important to our quality of life and spiritual well-being. Though we can't walk very far or very high up anymore, we don't take these areas for granted. By including The

Wilderness Society in our estate plans, we are paying back to nature. And we are also paying forward to ensure that wild areas are preserved for our daughters and granddaughters to enjoy well into the future."

After meeting as young Ph.D. candidates at the University of

Illinois, Dr. Tien Wu and his wife Dr. Pei-Hsing Wu have since spent more than six decades hiking around Alaska and other parts of the United States together. A civil engineer, Tien retired in 1995 after 30 years as a professor at The Ohio State University and now works

part-time. Pei-Hsing, a former high school science teacher, volunteers as a science-club teacher and a park naturalist near their home in Worthington, Ohio. Wilderness Society supporters since the 1950s, they are also members of its legacy society, the Robert Marshall Council.

© Martin Boyer

Berryessa Snow Mountain: A Community Effort for a Community Treasure

As the highways wind north from San Francisco and northwest from Sacramento—passing farms, wineries and ranches, through small towns and into the open mountain ranges of the California coast—visitors come upon an undiscovered gem.

Here, visitors hike mountains, kayak whitewater rivers, and walk through old-growth forests and fields of brilliant wildflowers. One of the most biodiverse regions in the state comes to life before our eyes, with wild tule elk, wintering bald eagles and rainbows of butterflies all around. And in July 2015, President Obama designated 330,000 acres of this rich landscape as the Berryessa Snow Mountain National Monument.

This designation permanently protects the region's unique landscapes and biologically-diverse ecosystems. It also preserves a singular wild destination for Northwest California's growing population to enjoy in the future—a move that is "good for business and good for our community," says Matt Archibecque, board president of the Chamber of Commerce in nearby Winters, California, which commissioned an economic impact study projecting \$50 million in local gains over the next five years.

After a decade of on-the-ground organizing made possible by The Wilderness Society and our partners, an unprecedented local coalition came together to advocate for the monument's protection. The coalition included thousands of individual citizens, more than 200 businesses, dozens of conservation and recreation organizations, and all five neighboring county governments. And now, the entire region and all nearby communities will benefit for years to come.

\$50 Million

in projected economic impact

200+

partner organizations
supported monument
designation

"This monument is for all. These lands, this heritage, will be forever protected—not just for us today, but for all of the generations to come."

—Jose Gonzalez, Central Valley native, founder of Latino Outdoors

THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS

Founded more than 80 years ago, The Wilderness Society has been called “an organization of spirited people.” Today our members continue to exhibit that spirit of support. More than 700,000 citizens, committed to preserving the finest lands in America, support The Wilderness Society financially or through their actions: making calls, attending hearings, sending letters and email messages, and taking action through The Wilderness Society’s social media. We thank each and every one of you for your dedication to our mission of creating a wilderness legacy for future generations.

SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR CONTRIBUTORS

The donors listed on the following pages generously contributed \$1,000 or more in fiscal year 2015 (October 1, 2014-September 30, 2015). The Wilderness Society gratefully acknowledges their commitment to protecting wilderness and caring for our wild places.

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\$100,000 OR MORE

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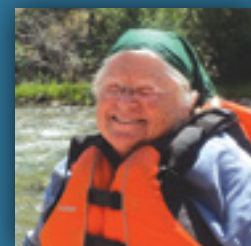
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“I am continually impressed by how connected The Wilderness Society is to the people who are making the policies that affect our nation’s public lands. Because they know who to talk to and when, things are happening. This observation really came full circle for me while spending eight days on the Hulahula River in Alaska’s Arctic National

Wildlife Refuge last summer. It was a transformative experience to be in that expansive, pristine landscape where animals roam freely—an experience that is a direct result of the foresight and commitment of groups like The Wilderness Society.”
 After growing up in the Hudson Valley, Jennifer Speers came west to attend the University of Utah and to

ski. Salt Lake City has been her home ever since, as well as her launching pad for numerous trips to seek wild places across the United States and abroad. She is the president of the Palladium Foundation, which purchases conservation land in Utah, and she has served on The Wilderness Society’s Governing Council since 2014.

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Robert W. Wilson Charitable Trust

“Bob was always looking ahead to the future. He gravitated to conservation causes and those that would preserve the environment. He was very concerned that if wildlife, forests and historic sites were not saved, they would disappear for future generations. The Wilderness Society’s forward-looking mission was one he believed in, and he chose to support it because he had confidence in the organization’s management. As with many institutions, Bob desired to use his philanthropic support to propel The Wilderness Society to a new level, to raise more money and to ultimately expand its mission.”

—Richard Schneidman

Robert W. Wilson, one of the most generous supporters of The Wilderness Society and other conservation groups, passed away in 2013 at the age of 87. Born in Detroit, Bob graduated from Amherst College in 1946 and earned a master’s degree in economics from the University of Michigan in 1947. After serving in the Army during the Korean War, he worked as a securities analyst before starting his own hedge fund firm, Wilson & Associates, in New York in 1969. He retired in 1986 from active money management to concentrate on philanthropy.


Giving away much of his fortune during his lifetime, Bob was a catalytic force for many institutions. Today, Bob’s long-time

advisor, Richard Schneidman, along with Robert Feidelson and Ron Zimmerman, serves as trustees of the Robert W. Wilson Charitable Trust and continue to fulfill Bob’s concept of leveraging gifts to stimulate organizations, raise their sights and strengthen their missions. The Wilderness Society is pleased to recognize the incredible legacy Bob created through his philanthropy.



Robert W. Wilson

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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 regarding The Wilderness Society, EarthShare or workplace giving, please contact The Society's Membership Services Dept. at 1-800-The-Wild or member@twsw.org.

BEQUESTS

We are deeply honored and grateful to acknowledge gifts received during fiscal year 2015 from the estates of the following individuals:

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NEW 2015 GOVERNING COUNCIL MEMBERS



Martinique Grigg

“One of the biggest challenges we face today is a decline in participation in the environmental movement. If we are going to inspire the next generation to care about and speak up for wild places, it is critically important to connect Americans to the outdoors. I’m most excited about participating in The Wilderness Society’s cutting-edge work to build the constituency by bringing individuals, groups and communities together to advocate for their special places.”

Martinique Grigg is the former executive director of The Mountaineers, an organization focused on educating and connecting people to the outdoors in the Pacific Northwest.



Juan Martinez

“The Wilderness Society has always and will always be a powerful voice for wild places, but I think there is a unique opportunity for us as leaders to build on this narrative and expand it to include the story of the diverse communities who come together to fight for these places. It’s about reframing our message for a new generation: we’re not just here for the sake of protecting public lands, but we’re here for the people who inherit them as well.”

A National Geographic Explorer and North Face ambassador for outdoor engagement, Juan Martinez is the director of leadership development for the Children and Nature Network and the Natural Leaders Network.



Gregg Sherrill

“What totally captured my interest in The Wilderness Society is the organization’s big picture focus on the concept of large, connected wild areas, which are arguably one of the greatest natural resources of our country. I believe there is a tremendous value to this approach: the protection of entire ecosystems affords the highest possible resilience to potential threats, including climate change, and it ensures that everyone can access and experience the wonder of nature in an unspoiled setting.”

Gregg Sherrill is the chairman and chief executive officer of the Illinois-based company Tenneco, one of the world’s largest manufacturers of clean air and ride performance products and systems for vehicles.

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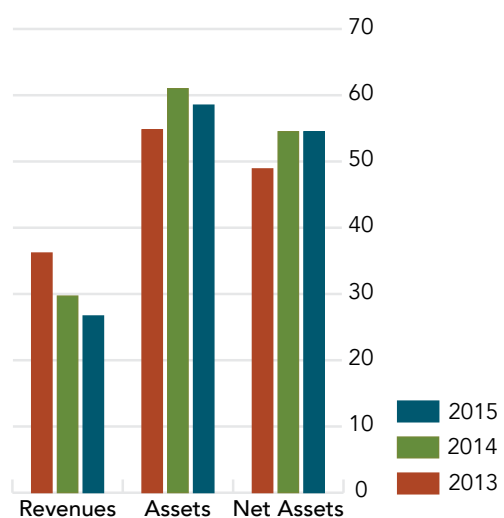
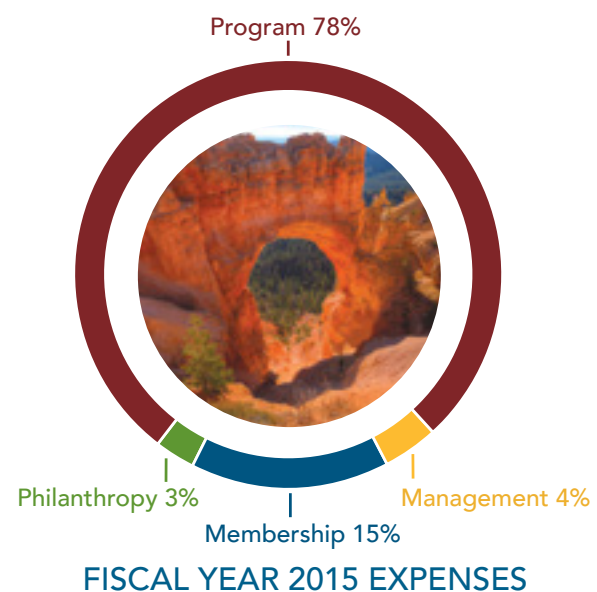
FINANCIALS

Thanks to the generous support of members, advocates, major donors, foundations and corporations, The Wilderness Society has the financial strength to continue expanding our work to protect public lands, promote clean energy development and give all people experiences in America's wild places.

Fiscal year 2015 marked another year of financial stability for us. Recent gains from investments and net assets helped us allocate additional funds to all the work we do—resulting in a 4% increase in funding for our program services. Just as importantly, funding for our long-term strategic goals also rose, thanks to an increase in philanthropic support for our work. In particular, support from foundations grew notably, especially for our work to address climate change.

As we look toward tomorrow with our conservation work, we do so from a place of financial strength and stability—the foundation we need to build our nation's public lands legacy now and for generations to come.

If you would like to receive a copy of our audited financial statements, or if you have any questions about this overview or The Wilderness Society, please contact us at:
 The Wilderness Society
 Attn: Membership Services
 1615 M Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036-3209
 E-mail: member@tws.org or visit:
<http://wilderness.org/about-us/annual-report>



CHANGES IN KEY BALANCES (in millions)

Statements of Financial Position		2015	2014	2013	2012	2011
Assets	Cash and cash equivalents	1.7	3.4	2.5	-	-
	Accounts and contributions receivable	7.7	6.6	4.7	2.7	4.9
	Investments	31.8	32.1	25.0	24.6	23.2
	Planned giving investments	4.4	4.8	5.3	5.6	5.4
	Beneficial interest in assets held by others	6.1	6.8	7.8	9.0	8.7
	Other assets	6.8	7.3	9.4	3.0	3.6
	Total assets	58.5	61.0	54.8	44.9	45.8
	Liabilities	Accounts payable and accrued expenses	2.3	2.9	1.7	3.5
Deferred rent		1.4	1.2	1.1	0.9	0.3
Planned giving liabilities		2.4	2.5	3.1	3.3	3.3
Total liabilities		6.1	6.6	5.9	7.7	6.0
Net Assets	Unrestricted	8.3	8.9	2.9	3.5	8.4
	Temporarily restricted	32.0	33.5	34.5	22.3	20.1
	Permanently restricted	12.1	12.0	11.5	11.4	11.3
	Total net assets	52.4	54.4	48.9	37.2	39.8
	Total liabilities and net assets	58.5	61.0	54.8	44.9	45.8

Statements of Activities		2015	2014	2013	2012	2011
Revenues	Individuals	16.4	20.8	28.5	13.2	14.0
	Foundations	8.1	7.1	5.9	7.2	6.5
	Corporations	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.4	0.5
	Total contributions	24.7	28.0	34.7	20.8	21.0
	Other	2.0	1.8	1.5	1.7	2.0
	Total revenues	26.7	29.7	36.2	22.5	23.0
Expenses	Program Services					
	Wilderness and wildlands conservation	14.2	15.7	17.5	19.5	21.1
	Outreach and public education	7.6	5.2	4.0	5.7	5.7
	Total Program Services	21.9	20.9	21.5	25.2	26.8
	Support services					
	Fundraising	5.3	4.3	4.3	3.8	4.1
	Management and general	1.1	1.3	1.9	2.1	2.1
	Total Support Services	6.4	5.6	6.2	5.9	6.2
	Total expenses	28.3	26.6	27.7	31.1	33.0
	Change in net assets from operations	(1.6)	3.2	8.5	(8.6)	(10.0)
Gains from investments and other changes	(0.4)	2.3	3.2	6.2	3.2	
Change in net assets	(2.0)	5.5	11.7	(2.4)	(6.8)	
Beginning net assets	54.4	48.9	37.2	39.6	46.4	
Ending net assets	52.4	54.4	48.9	37.2	39.6	

All figures reported in \$ millions. Fiscal years ended September 30

DOUG WALKER:

PHILANTHROPIST, CONSERVATIONIST, LEADER

In early January 2016, we mourned deeply the sudden loss of Doug Walker, former Chair of The Wilderness Society's Governing Council.

In reflecting on his life and legacy, we notice a single thread connecting everything Doug's friends, family, colleagues and mentees treasured about him and his spirit: No one can say anything about Doug without talking about his incredible passion, or the bottomless well of joy and energy that allowed him to translate that passion into action. Doug's work as a conservation philanthropist and activist was instrumental in expanding recreational access and protections for his beloved North Cascades, cementing his legacy as a man who could work with anyone and everyone, with a talent for connecting people and mobilizing them to not only support big ideas, but work hard to bring them to life.

We honor Doug's life by continuing to connect to the outdoors and working tirelessly to ensure everyone in America has the opportunity to do so.



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With his boundless energy, big heart and dedicated work, I will admit it's really hard to fathom life without Doug. Yet because he so believed in each of us as special friends and leaders, I have no question his legacy will endure. He changed the way we see the world, and he changed the way we work.

—Jamie Williams, President, The Wilderness Society

He didn't want to protect the environment from people—he wanted to protect it for people.

—Derek Kilmer, Congressman (D-WA)

I spent all of my time when I wasn't in school out in the mountains with my dad. He had me rock climbing, camping, kayaking. I'm so grateful, and I owe a lot of my enthusiasm for the outdoors to how I was raised.

—Kina Walker, Doug's daughter

This wild, rugged landscape is what lured Doug to Washington and stoked his creativity and energy and passions for decades.

—Suzan DelBene, Congresswoman (D-WA)

Doug's unique quality was his pace of life. He was just nonstop. I have this image of all of our times together on adventures—and it's his backside, because he was always up in front! He brought that momentum to everything that he tackled.

—Karen Daubert, Executive Director, Washington Trails Association



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IN JANUARY 2015, President Obama made a recommendation to protect more than 12 million acres of Alaska’s Arctic National Wildlife Refuge—the largest wilderness recommendation in history. This brings us closer to protecting a place that has been central to American wilderness advocacy since the 1960s. An intact ecosystem nine times the size of Yellowstone National Park, the 19 million-acre Arctic National Wildlife Refuge now has its strongest protection from oil exploration and development. For the Arctic foxes, polar bears and caribou that hunt and graze on the coastal plain, for the Gwich’in who call this area “the sacred place where life begins,” and for the area’s immense scientific value as a place to study the effects of climate change, this is a critical piece of our living legacy—and an important step toward a better future for our planet.