



2023 Gratitude Report

ALL IN



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ON THE COVER:

Jessy Stevenson, The Wilderness Society's Crown of the Continent Specialist, at the 2023 Imago Initiative Retreat in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, Alaska.

Emily Sullivan

These are the moments that will determine our shared future. And we're going all in.

In this window of opportunity—this make-or-break moment that will determine whether we protect the lands and waters we need for a sustainable, equitable, flourishing future—we have to go big, we have to double down on our work and on our efforts to push the Biden administration, and we have to win.

In 2023, we gave everything we had to this fight for public lands. All of our efforts—our advocacy, our partnerships, our innovation and your support—led to major progress.

And we aren't done yet.





Land Acknowledgment

The Wilderness Society recognizes Native American and Indigenous peoples as the longest serving stewards of the land. We respect their inherent sovereignty and self-determination and honor treaty rights, including reserved rights that exist off their reservations.

We acknowledge the historic and ongoing injustices perpetrated against Indigenous peoples, and we are committed to being more conscientious and inclusive in working with Indigenous peoples to advance the establishment of trust and respect in our relationships.

We seek the guidance of Native American and Indigenous peoples to effectively advocate for the protection of culturally significant lands and the preservation of language and culture.

We strive to support actions that respect the priorities, traditional knowledge, interests and concerns of Native American and Indigenous peoples to ensure a more just and equitable future.

2023: A year we saw decades-long efforts become transformative milestones for conservation, climate and environmental justice

This year, your deep, unwavering commitment to building a healthier, more promising world invigorated our work, giving our partners, our elected champions and our staff the ability to secure significant outcomes for public lands. Together, we've been striving for these wins for decades—cultivating trusted local relationships, developing shared solutions and mobilizing a collective effort to make the case with lawmakers. And, with a conservation majority in our nation's capital, 2023 was the year our long view for that better world came into focus.

From the ancestral lands around the Grand Canyon to the Badger-Two Medicine lands in Montana to the Alaskan Arctic, we experienced renewed hope in groundbreaking Indigenous-led and community-led efforts. We advanced sweeping national policies that promise to protect millions of acres of public lands, cultural areas sacred to Indigenous communities, and healthy landscapes. We made important progress in conserving our nation's intact forests—work that is critical to offsetting carbon pollution, building wildlife connectivity and mitigating the impacts of a changing climate. And we built innovative programs to expand people's access to public lands and nature close to home.

Without a doubt, we made the most of these historic moments in 2023 because we knew you were standing with us. Our resolve in fighting for public lands is buoyed by your belief in our mission and vision; our achievements are secured with your ongoing support; and our drive for what we can accomplish next only happens with your incredible generosity. As we look toward the challenges ahead, we once again take the long view—knowing that every step in our work is meaningful, every gift is invaluable and the end results will last for generations.


Thank you for your deep dedication to thriving public lands and the work that we're doing together to protect them for people, wildlife and climate resiliency.



Jamie Williams
JAMIE WILLIAMS
PRESIDENT



Michael A. Mantell
MICHAEL A. MANTELL
CHAIR, GOVERNING COUNCIL



Together, we're going all in—on the national stage, on the ground, alongside partners and across communities—to secure the flourishing future we need.

Rally for the Tongass National Forest, Alaska
Colin Arisman



2023 Conservation Achievements

495,000
ACRES

protected from oil and gas leases in the Badger-Two Medicine area in Montana and in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska

11M
ACRES

set aside for future conservation in the Western Arctic, also known as the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska

1.4M+
ACRES

permanently protected as new national monuments

9.3M
ACRES

of critical old-growth protections restored in the Tongass National Forest in Alaska

Badger-Two Medicine, Montana
Gene Sentz

2023 Climate Achievements

750,000+

PUBLIC COMMENTS

delivered with our partners in support of significant national policies that will advance climate and conservation priorities

340,000

ACRES

withdrawn from future mineral leasing around Greater Chaco Canyon in New Mexico

7M+

METRIC TONS

of carbon emissions projected to be kept out of the atmosphere in 2030 as a result of 2023 efforts to reduce leasing on public lands

Santa Fe National Forest, New Mexico
Mason Cummings

2023 Community Achievements

**Mount
Blue Sky**

RENAMED

in Colorado to honor local Arapaho and Cheyenne Tribes

**Two
Sites**

RETURNED

to Indigenous ownership, management, and/or co-stewardship with the creation of new national monuments in Arizona and Nevada

**Zero Fares
Program**

NOW PERMANENT

free bus transit achieved in Albuquerque, New Mexico, putting nature within reach for urban residents

**1,700
Total**

DOWNLOADS

of The Wilderness Society's Public Lands Curriculum

Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, Alaska
Emily Sullivan

This past year, we relentlessly defended the promise of protected lands across the country—and won big with major new national monuments.

With the leadership of local communities, the expertise of Wilderness Society staff, and the generosity and activism of supporters like you, we made 2023 a year that moved American land protection forward: one in which we secured significant new national monuments, defended public lands from an anti-conservation onslaught, and brought forward the inclusive conservation movement we need for the future.

The end result? Over a million acres of lands permanently protected—and several major steps toward the critical shared goal of 30x30 (30% of U.S. lands and waters protected by 2030).

From the spectacular deserts and biodiverse forests of the West to the halls of power in Washington, DC, from inter-tribal coalitions and community organizations to federal courtrooms and the federal bureaucracy, you made it possible for The Wilderness Society to show up and go all in everywhere we could make a difference.

Avi Kwa Ame National Monument

On March 21, 2023, President Biden designated more than 500,000 acres in the southern tip of Nevada as Avi Kwa Ame National Monument—the culmination of a years-long effort led by local Tribes, community members, businesses, and The Wilderness Society, which provided expertise in government relations and federal land protection. Sacred to 12 Tribes and home to irreplaceable cultural heritage, this landscape also contains one of the oldest Joshua tree forests in the country, provides vital habitat and migration routes for wildlife such as the desert tortoise and desert bighorn sheep, and connects a patchwork of previously protected areas.

The end result? Over a million acres of lands permanently protected—and several major steps toward the critical shared goal of 30x30 (30% of U.S. lands and waters protected by 2030) and a thriving, equitable future for people and wild nature.



Avi Kwa Ame National Monument, Nevada
Mason Cummings

Anatomy of a Victory

What does it take to win victories that matter and land protections that last?

Leading with Local Partnerships. Over many years, we invest in the deep local presence and partnerships that make protecting new national monuments possible. In Arizona, for example, we worked closely with tribal leaders, local partners and congressional champions for over a decade to protect the incredible lands around the Grand Canyon, which became Baaj Nwaavjo I'tah Kukveni – Ancestral Footprints of the Grand Canyon National Monument in August 2023 (see following spread).

Connecting with Federal Decision-makers. As the nation's leading local-to-national coalition-builder for public lands conservation, we put our federal expertise and relationships to work for local communities and for major land protection. For example, as the local community in El Paso, Texas fought to preserve the historic and ecologically-rich Castner Range as a national monument in 2023, we worked diligently behind the scenes, supporting outreach and communications efforts, navigating the politics and bureaucracy in Washington, DC, and sharing our access to key decision-makers.

Defending Progress in Court. When anti-conservation forces try to roll back progress in court, we're there to meet them—and defend not only national monuments, but also the tools and policies that make land protection on this scale possible. That's how, after years of coordination and shared legal efforts with Tribes and other partners, we celebrated two major legal successes in 2023: appellate court decisions upholding the 2017 expansion of Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument in Oregon, and a federal court tossing out Utah's argument that President Biden's 2021 restoration of Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monuments exceeded his authority under the Antiquities Act. These are victories in and of themselves that also reinforce the Antiquities Act, which presidents have used to designate monuments for 117 years.

Supporting Inclusive Management. Designations are only the beginning: to realize the potential of public lands and ensure promises made to people and the environment become realities, we must throw ourselves into the bureaucratic land management process—diligently making certain that management plans truly reflect those promises. For example, in 2023, we joined national and local partners to carefully review proposed management plans for Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument in Utah. In addition to drafting comments to encourage appropriate management, we engaged the public to participate in the comment period. As we anticipate the release of final management plans for Grand Staircase-Escalante in 2024, we are hopeful they will reflect these comments—and ultimately ensure that the national monument will benefit people and nature for generations to come.



Castner Range National Monument, Texas

Mark Clune

Castner Range National Monument

A cherished local greenspace where Mexican gold poppies bloom and a critical migration corridor in the Chihuahuan Desert for more than 25 endangered or threatened species, the nearly 7,000-acre Castner Range National Monument, designated on March 21, 2023, has been a dream of Latinx communities in and around El Paso for the past half-century. Because we had the opportunity—given by you—to share power, access and know-how, The Wilderness Society was able to join their calls and amplify their advocacy—and ensure that this special place will be safeguarded for all to enjoy.

Expanding Land Protection's Possibilities:

Baaj Nwaavjo I'tah Kukveni - Ancestral Footprints of the Grand Canyon National Monument

Surrounding the Grand Canyon, on some of the best-known and most-traveled land in the U.S., life and history flow continuously forward.

Here, in the ancestral and present-day homeland of 13 Tribal Nations, the experiences and teachings of generations touch sacred landscapes. The complex and fragile Colorado River watershed supplies a lifeline to 40 million people and supports exceptional biodiversity. And the California condor, northern leopard frog and countless migratory species find a home and refuge in this stunning canyon system.

Yet the pressures on this landscape are just as extraordinary and varied. In July, temperatures in Arizona soared above 110 degrees, and the state struggled with drought and shrinking water supplies from the Colorado River. At the same time, the toxic legacy of past uranium mining continues to exact damage on the area, contaminating land and water and threatening the health of people living nearby.

That's why The Wilderness Society has invested significant resources and effort in Arizona. For more than a decade, our Arizona State Director Mike Quigley supported efforts to secure lasting protections for these vital lands—yet legislation stalled, requiring a shift in strategy. Our National Monuments Team then stepped forward in 2022, supporting the Tribal Coalition's outreach to the Biden administration and to Arizona's congressional delegation, while also providing local communications expertise to build local public support for a monument designation—all activities our donors and partners make possible.

Because of the tireless, collaborative leadership of local Tribes—and the steadfast support of donors like you—this landscape and its many cultural, natural, recreational and scientific resources are now permanently protected. On August 8, 2023, President Biden designated nearly 918,000 acres around the Grand Canyon as Baaj Nwaavjo I'tah Kukveni - Ancestral Footprints of the Grand Canyon National Monument.

The designation reflects years of effort, investment and partnership—as well as our commitment to go all in where it matters most.

Now, with protected lands significantly enlarged on both the North and South Rims of the Grand Canyon, vital water resources, plants and wildlife will be sustained. Nearly six million Grand Canyon visitors each year can hike, bike, run, hunt and camp in this spectacular landscape. No new mining claims can be issued. And the Tribes who have long called this land home will have a direct say in its management as co-stewards, bringing their traditional knowledge and wisdom forward to enrich decision-making and foster a more sustainable approach to conservation.



Baaj Nwaavjo translates to “where Indigenous peoples roam” in Havasupai and I'tah Kukveni translates to “our ancestral footprints” in Hopi.

For a pronunciation guide, visit



Baaj Nwaavjo l'tah Kukveni - Ancestral
Footprints of the Grand Canyon National
Monument, Arizona

Amy Martin



Mike Quigley
Arizona State Director

Conservation is a perennial endeavor. We plant a seed, anticipating a land protection victory. Sometimes it withers just before that dream can be realized, and we must start over. Yet, in the intervening years, new voices can help us resow, bringing powerful possibilities forward.

Our Tucson-based Arizona State Director Mike Quigley—on staff since 2010—knows this cycle well. In 2013, he jumped into the effort to protect a million acres adjacent to Grand Canyon National Park,

joining forces with established conservation partners. As part of his introduction to the region, Mike visited an area in Navajo Nation where cancer is common due to decades of exposure to toxic pollution caused by uranium mines.

Despite clear reasons to protect the lands, its aquifer and its people from such harmful activities, legislation was unlikely. A path forward existed, however, in President Obama's use of the Antiquities Act to designate national monuments.


"To build public momentum, we went all in," says Mike, "walking door to door in Flagstaff, amplifying stories and talking to reporters." The national monument campaign gained traction, and the administration was poised to take it up when the clock ran out in December 2016.

"It was devastating," Mike recalls. The unprecedented attacks on public lands during the Trump years and a renewed interest in uranium mining

further dashed hopes, but the local community never gave up.

"While waiting for the political winds to shift, we were able to learn and grow," says Mike. The campaign gained strength with new voices, including from the sportsmen and faith communities. "But a turning point occurred when we evolved to involve the wisdom and perspectives of tribal members, who had the most at stake," he notes. The Biden administration responded to the leadership of the Grand Canyon Tribal Coalition and the support behind it and finally delivered the protection this special place deserves.


Seven years after the first attempt, this 2023 milestone is that much sweeter for Mike, who is grateful that The Wilderness Society made the choice to remain invested in Arizona—and in the relationships that matter. "I'm glad we were here then; I'm glad we're here now; and I look forward to building upon this win with others in the future," he says.



Through highs and lows, we showed up for communities in some of the biggest conservation fights—as we always have and always will.

A make-or-break moment means that the fights we wage today will determine what's possible for generations to come. Longstanding and trusting partnerships with communities—with whom we share a vision for a sustainable, flourishing future for people and wildlands—are key to building the local momentum that moves transformational changes forward at the national level.

From raising unprecedented levels of public awareness in order to affect change around oil and gas development in the Arctic, to the withdrawal of 340,000 acres of land from future mineral leasing around Greater Chaco Canyon in northwestern New Mexico, we brought relentless, persistent effort and co-created solutions to the table—in communities all across the country, all thanks to the support of donors like you.



Celebrants at the 2023 Glacier-Two Medicine Fall Gathering in East Glacier Park, Montana burned stakes, some of which contained personal messages, in a symbolic representation of the drill site that is no longer a threat to the Badger-Two Medicine area.

April Espinoza/Glacier-Two Medicine Alliance

Retiring the Last Lease of Badger-Two Medicine

For the first time in more than 40 years, the Badger-Two Medicine area of northwest Montana—ecologically important and culturally sacred land—is permanently protected from the threat of oil and gas development.

In the early 1980s, 47 illegally issued oil and gas leases blanketed the 130,000-acre Badger-Two Medicine area bordered by Glacier National Park, the Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex and the Blackfeet Reservation. These oil and gas leases have threatened the sacred traditional homelands of the Blackfeet people, as well as the connective habitat that provides needed migration paths and critical sanctuary for plants and wildlife. With persistence and a sustained multi-pronged approach, advocates succeeded in retiring all but one of the oil and gas leases.

Now, as a result of a landmark settlement agreement filed in late August between the U.S. government and the last lease holder, the final lease has been permanently relinquished. The Blackfeet-led organizations Pikuni Traditionalist Association and Blackfeet Headwaters Alliance joined with The Wilderness Society and other conservation organizations as intervenors in the decades-long protracted lawsuit.

This agreement represents a watershed moment for the Blackfeet people and provides an example of the victories that can be achieved through steadfast partnership—all of which is powered by the generosity of our donors.

Alaska: Ground Zero for the Public Lands Fights that Define Us

Our #StopWillow campaign, seeded with a savvy investment in social media, raised public awareness about oil and gas development on federal public lands at a scale never before seen. The groundswell of opposition from climate activists, local Indigenous advocates and young people in Alaska and the lower 48 put tremendous pressure on the Biden administration and drew immense visibility to efforts to stop the Willow Project, a massive oil drilling project of ConocoPhillips on the North Slope of Alaska.

While ConocoPhillips continues to push the Willow Project forward, our campaign contributed to greater public demand for corporate accountability, creating new pathways to progress even in the face of political setbacks. In 2023, Chubb became the first U.S. insurer to explicitly prohibit coverage for oil and gas development in the Arctic Refuge, and a total of 20 global insurers have now taken a similar stand against Arctic drilling.

The lessons learned from the Willow campaign carry an important message—that when we go all in, win or lose, we increase the visibility of the fight for public lands, build our community and collectively raise the stakes. With a stronger core of supporters, our mobilizing work has increased pressure on the administration to move more quickly on other conservation and climate priorities, laying the groundwork for securing massive victories on the road ahead.



Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, Alaska

Mason Cummings

Breakthroughs in Protecting the Arctic

This past year, we continued to go all in on one of the last great wild landscapes in the country—and together, with the unwavering support of donors like you, we achieved incredible steps forward for Indigenous communities and the environment in America’s Arctic.

In an extraordinary trio of announcements on September 6, the Biden administration renewed its emphasis on addressing conservation and climate change to protect the Arctic by:

- **Canceling the last remaining oil leases covering over 365,000 acres in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, which were issued illegally by the Trump administration and held by Alaska’s state-owned corporation.**
- **Issuing a draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement that recognizes conservation needs and Indigenous rights in the Arctic Refuge.**
- **Shoring up protections for designated Special Areas in the Western Arctic, also known as the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska.**

The Biden administration’s cancellation of the remaining oil leases on the coastal plain of the Arctic Refuge is a victory for the region’s Indigenous Iñupiat and Gwich’in communities, who rely on their ancestral homelands for traditional ways of life and plentiful subsistence resources, such as a healthy Porcupine Caribou Herd. Additionally, the action furthers protection from future oil and gas drilling that would accelerate the climate crisis, destroy habitat and disrupt migration, pollute local air and water, increase community health impacts, and lead to accidents that are catastrophic for the natural environment.

The draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement contains a more protective alternative for the Arctic Refuge that would restrict the amount of land offered up for leasing, limit damaging seismic surveys, and require other mitigation measures to protect resources. If strengthened and adopted, this alternative would likely dissuade oil companies from bidding on leases in a second congressionally mandated lease sale later this year. While this is a promising development, the fight isn’t over yet: smaller companies and Alaska’s state-owned corporation could again attempt to acquire leases. It is therefore critical that the Biden administration



Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, Alaska
Peter Mather



Nanieezh Peter, representing the Arctic Village Council, at the 2023 retreat of the Imago Initiative, an Indigenous-led approach to protecting the Arctic.
Emily Sullivan

adopt strong protections for wildlife, wildlands and Alaska Native ways of life and ultimately work with Congress to repeal the leasing mandate.

For the Western Arctic, the Biden administration’s announcement means strengthened protections for **11 million acres** of lands and waters that have been essential to migratory birds, caribou, brown bears, polar bears, walruses, beluga whales and local Indigenous communities for thousands of years. Specifically, the proposal limits future oil and gas leasing and industrial development in the five Special Areas of Teshekpuk Lake, Utukok Uplands, Colville River, Kasegaluk Lagoon and Peard Bay. It also requires the Bureau of Land Management to regularly review and gather public input on whether existing Special Areas should be expanded or if new ones should be created, establishes an outright prohibition on any new leasing across **10.6 million acres**—more than 40 percent of the Western Arctic—and sets clear standards for the protection of surface areas across the region.

These announcements are major and meaningful interim victories that demonstrate the importance of standing strong with communities over the long haul, as The Wilderness Society has done in helping lead both the Arctic Refuge Defense Campaign and the Western Arctic Coalition. As we look to the year ahead, your generosity and partnership will ensure that we continue to show up for communities in the conservation fights that matter.



Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, Alaska
Florian Schulz



With your support, we advanced new national rules that will change the game for public lands conservation—for generations to come.

2023 ushered in a wave of landmark national policy changes to bring public lands management and environmental decision-making in line with the best interests of community and ecosystem health in the face of climate change.

Together, these new changes reinforce the synergy of local and national conservation efforts—and lay the groundwork for securing the victories that will define a new future for people, wildlife and the environment.



Transforming the Future of Public Lands Management

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is the nation's largest federal steward of public lands, with a whopping 245 million acres in its portfolio. But though the agency is charged with maintaining balanced stewardship of these lands for multiple uses, including wildlife and conservation, its actual practices have prioritized extractive uses like drilling and mining for decades.

On March 30, 2023, after years of working to shift the paradigm, The Wilderness Society and our partners witnessed a milestone as the federal government unveiled plans to re-balance the BLM's focus. The new "Public Lands Rule" will, when finalized, enable the agency to address climate change and nature loss by putting conservation on equal footing with other uses. Importantly, the Rule aims to amplify the input of local communities and Tribes by highlighting the central role they play in setting a place-based vision for the lands and waters they call home.

Offering long needed policy direction, the Rule will provide local land managers across the West with clear tools to conserve and restore critical wildlife habitat, new direction to prioritize and protect cultural resources, and an overarching framework to prioritize climate resiliency across all lands managed by the agency. Once implemented through local decision-making processes, the Rule could ensure the protection of **tens of millions of acres of public lands by 2030**—changing the game for conservation.

The Wilderness Society worked closely with agency leaders at the highest levels and provided critical support to tribal partners and community representatives to develop this new policy framework, which brings local and national level efforts together under one cohesive rule. Your unwavering commitment has helped us seize this moment of opportunity—when the senior leadership of the BLM is the most conservation-minded in history—and set the stage for a new era of public lands victories.

Long Overdue Reforms to Oil and Gas Leasing System

Underneath the massive amounts of fossil fuel emissions emitted each year from public lands are oil and gas companies reaping record profits. Because the federal oil and gas program is woefully outdated and riddled with subsidies for fossil fuel companies, they are able to offload the costs of pollution and ecosystem destruction onto communities and public lands. With the July 2023 announcement of the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) proposed Oil and Gas Rule, the Biden administration took important initial steps to better align the agency's oil and gas decisions with a more holistic conservation, climate and community-centric approach to managing public lands.

Specifically, the Rule, once finalized will require the BLM to use its existing legal authority to implement several critical updates we have long advocated for: making fossil fuel companies pay a fairer share for extracting public resources and cover the cost of clean-up and restoration after drilling is finished; limiting participation of bad actors; and putting guardrails on what lands are offered for oil and gas leasing. The proposed Rule received widespread support, collecting over 260,000 public comments over the course of its 60-day public comment period—99 percent of which encouraged the Interior Department to adopt the Oil and Gas Rule largely as written.

The Renewable Potential of Public Lands

Our public lands and waters have some of our nation's best solar, wind and geothermal resources. As such, they have a huge role to play in supporting the transition to a renewable energy economy and the more just, sustainable future we know is possible. With the Biden administration taking steps in 2023 to ramp up renewable energy on public lands, we're working to ensure every project is smart from the start.

Using our policy, mapping/GIS and community engagement expertise, The Wilderness Society is helping to guarantee that the BLM's final Western Solar Plan and Renewable Energy Rule will enable us to meet our energy needs while honoring the other vital roles public lands play for wildlife, people and our shared future in the era of climate change. We're pushing the federal government to prioritize tribal consultation and other community input throughout every stage of these processes—because we know it's the right thing to do and the way to get the best outcomes.

Your continued support will ensure The Wilderness Society can help actualize this exciting opportunity to accelerate and continue momentum for the clean energy economy.

Strengthening the National Environmental Policy Act

For more than a half-century, the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) has provided a framework for public participation and transparency in decisions affecting how federal public lands are managed. This bedrock law requires federal agencies to take a hard look at their actions before choosing a path that could negatively affect public health and the environment.

Building on efforts it made in 2023 to restore and improve this bedrock law, the Biden administration's White House Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) is expected to release its final rule later this year to strengthen and modernize how over 80 federal agencies implement NEPA, as well as undo some of the damage to this law that occurred under the previous administration. The Wilderness Society continues to work with the Biden administration to ensure agencies have the direction and public engagement tools necessary to meet the environmental challenges of our day.

We're pushing the federal government to prioritize tribal consultation and other community input throughout every stage of these processes—because we know it's the right thing to do and the way to get the best outcomes.



Great Smoky Mountains National Park, Tennessee
Mason Cummings

On the Horizon: USFS National Old-Growth Policy

In the spring of 2023, the United States Forest Service (USFS) delivered on a Biden administration promise by unveiling a national inventory of mature and old-growth forests alongside an invitation for members of the public to suggest how the agency should manage forests for “climate resilience.” Roughly 500,000 people weighed

in through public comments, and, based on that feedback, the agency is now at work developing a new policy for all 128 national forests that could conserve up to an estimated 11 million acres of old-growth forests across the country.

Together with our partners and donors like you, The Wilderness

Society has brought science, policy and coalition outreach expertise to advance this initiative. It will take every one of us rallying around a shared policy solution to ensure that the Forest Service’s nascent plans result in durable conservation for the nation’s old-growth forests.

In Gratitude

The Wilderness Society is a vibrant, growing community of more than **1 MILLION** dedicated people working to protect public lands. You are at the heart of this community. Every action you take on behalf of public lands brings us closer to the day when these shared lands not only support the survival of threatened species, but benefit all people equitably, and are helping to solve the climate crisis that threatens us all.

You are among our closest friends and most generous donors, including...

1,348

Advocates for
Wilderness

5,915

Friends of
Wilderness

105

President's
Circle members

1,049








Robert Marshall
Council members

Led by Dropstone Outfitting LLC, this group of Wilderness Society friends journeyed through the Scapegoat Wilderness in northwest Montana and learned about the work we're doing to protect the ecologically intact Crown of the Continent landscape.

Yve Bardwell



You took action for public lands by...

-  Raising your voice at marches and rallies
-  Joining community coalitions to develop conservation solutions that work for everyone
-  Contacting your elected officials to tell them you expect them to protect public lands
-  Educating your community through pro-public lands Letters to the Editor
-  Giving testimony to decision-makers at every level of government, from the town council to Congress
-  Persuading public lands managers to accept community input to once-in-a-generation land management plans
-  Sharing your passion for public lands with family and friends



Maggie Walker President's Circle member

"Public lands provide hope in the face of the existential climate crisis we face as human beings. The Wilderness Society

understands the need to evolve its conservation work and be a catalyst for change in response. That is apparent to me in how they are investing in the power of people and ensuring that all communities have access to the land and to the power levers that control the land. That innovative approach is critical. When policy is informed by cultural values and local knowledge of the landscape, enduring conservation victories are truly possible."

As a philanthropist and a grandmother, Maggie always has an eye on the future. Inspired by the beauty of the North Cascade Mountains near her home in Washington state, Maggie and her late husband, Doug, began supporting The Wilderness Society in 1986. Their early investment in both the landscape and in people helped seed new models for community engagement in conservation and expand equitable access to public lands.

Staff members Mayra Mendez and Alex Biswas hosted an outreach table at the Old Salt Festival in Helmville, Montana in June 2023.
Bill Hodge



With 1,700 downloads in 2023, our Public Lands Curriculum reached 4,300 people, including students like these in White Mountain National Forest in New Hampshire.

Appalachian Mountain Club



Wilderness Society staff, partners and advocates led the "No Child Left Inside Day of Action" in March 2023 to provide opportunities for Washington state's under-served youth to learn, play and experience the outdoors.

Alex Biswas



Your support makes all of our work possible!

PRESIDENT'S CIRCLE

Bound by their shared dedication to The Wilderness Society, the individuals who comprise our President's Circle are among our most effective ambassadors and most generous supporters. Together, they advance our mission of uniting people to protect America's wild places through their substantial engagement and commitment to this work.

Anonymous (16)	James Feit	Hampton and Kevin Luzak	Kathrin Scheel-Ungerleider
Dr. and Mrs. John F. Angle	Jaimie and David Field	Hope and Dave Maltz	Jan and Carl Siechert
Gail B. Austin	Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Field	Jacqueline Badger Mars	Nolan Kenneth Snead
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Tom and Currie Barron	Michelle and Robert [§] Friend	Sarah Merner and Craig McKibben	Lois and Arthur Stainman
David Bonderman	Jessica and John Fullerton	Eleanor and Robert Meyers	Alice and Fred Stanback, Jr.
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Allan Brown	Sara and Ed Groark	Walter E. D. Miller	Jennifer Stanley
Heidi and William M. Bumpers	Janet Haas	Priscilla Natkins and Seth Novatt	Robin and Christy Stebbins
The Bunting Family Foundation—Fund B	Ben Hammett	Judy and Brad O'Brien	Catherine M. Stiefel and J. Keith Behner
Sonya and Tom Campion	Ann Harvey and Mike Campbell	Marge Ordway	Cathy Douglas Stone and James M. Stone
Lisa C. Caplan	High Meadows Foundation	Martha and Robert Osborne	L. Rae Stone, DVM
David Churchill	Lena and Gerald Hirschler	Diane Parish and Paul Gelburd	Gene T. Sykes
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Carla D'Arista and George T. Frampton, Jr.	Hyunja and Jeffrey L. Kenner	David Rakov	Penny and Ted Thomas
Brenda and Swep Davis	Tony Kiser	Mrs. Diana and Governor Bruce Rauner	Maggie Walker
Kelvin L. Davis and Leslie Landrum	Sara M. and Joel Kremer	Tracy and Jeffrey Rhodes	Wallace Genetic Foundation
Gerald Dischler	Marcia Kunstel and Joseph Albright	Mary and Gaylan Rockswold	Marshall Hackett Whiting and Richard Arnold
Jill and Gordon Dyal	Rose Letwin and James Orr	Connie and Ted Roosevelt IV	Edward B. Whitney
Walter Eberspacher	Ann Loeb	Brigitte Sandquist and Phil Black	Joe [§] and Terry Williams
Christopher Elliman	Anne R. Lovett and Stephen G. Woodsum		Eleanor and Fred Winston
James Ellsworth			Hansjörg Wyss
			Marsha McMahan Zelus

§ Deceased

LEGACY DONORS

We are honored to acknowledge the dear friends who have expressed their deep love of wildlands and commitment to future generations with a legacy gift. Gifts planned for in advance were received in 2023 from the following individuals and estates.

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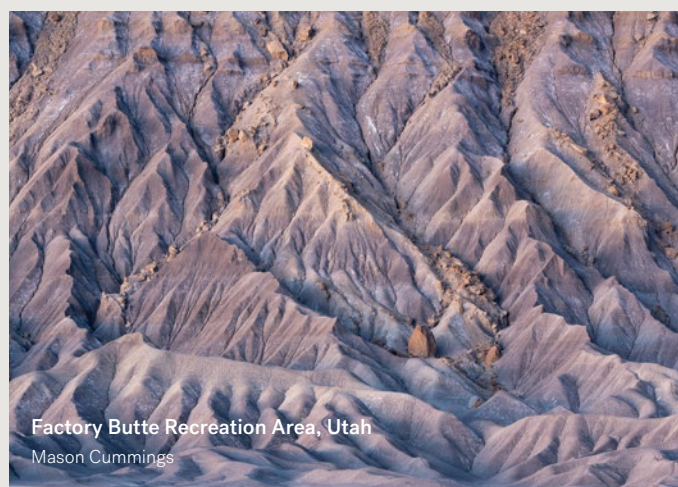
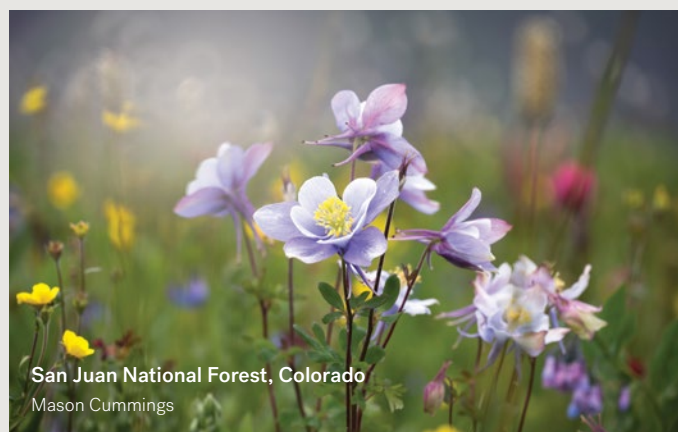
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Charles Wilkinson[§], Boulder, CO

§ Deceased



Leadership Transitions



Ingrid “Indy” C. Burke
Elected to Governing Council

A respected educator and intellectual leader in the U.S. and internationally, Indy is an ecosystem ecologist whose research has focused on carbon and nitrogen cycling in dryland ecosystems. In 2016, she joined the faculty of Yale as the Dean of the Yale School of the Environment. Prior to that, she was a professor at Colorado State University and Professor and Dean at the University of Wyoming.

Indy has been active on numerous boards and committees, including the National Science Foundation and the EPA’s Science Advisory Board. Indy received her B.S. in biology from Middlebury College and her Ph.D. in botany from the University of Wyoming.



Matthew Campbell
Elected to Governing Council

Matthew joined the Native American Rights Fund (NARF) as a staff attorney in March of 2013 and became the Deputy Director in 2022. Prior to joining NARF, he was an attorney with Cuddy & McCarthy, LLP, in New Mexico. In 2008, he clerked for the Arizona Court of Appeals, Division One, with now retired Judge Patrick Irvine.

An enrolled member of the Native Village of Gambell on the Saint Lawrence Island in Alaska, Matthew received his B.A. from Fort Lewis College, followed by his J.D. from the Sandra Day O’Connor College of Law at Arizona State University in 2008.



Mark Wan
Elected to Governing Council

Mark has over 30 years of private equity and venture investment experience. He is a co-founder of Causeway, an investment fund focused on sports, fitness and related industries. Previously, Mark was a co-founding partner of Three Arch Partners, a healthcare-focused investment firm. Before that, he was a general partner at Brentwood Associates, a private equity firm headquartered in Los Angeles.

Mark has served on numerous public and private company boards. He received his B.S. in electrical engineering from Yale University and his MBA from Stanford’s Graduate School of Business.



Charles Wilkinson
In Memoriam

Charles was a scholar, legal expert, writer and teacher who left an indelible mark on public lands conservation, Indigenous rights, and on The Wilderness Society itself, thanks to eight years of leadership on our Governing Council and more than 20 years on our Honorary Council. The first staff attorney for the Native American Rights Fund, Charles devoted decades to teaching—first at the University of Oregon Law School and later at the University of Colorado School of Law, where he mentored many Wilderness Society staff and Council members.

Charles took on assignments for the U.S. Departments of the Interior, Agriculture and Justice, as well as many special assignments supporting Tribal Nations—including serving as Special Advisor to the Bears Ears Inter-Tribal Coalition regarding the creation of Bears Ears National Monument. Recognizing his advocacy for tribal sovereignty and the conservation of public lands, The Wilderness Society presented him with the Robert Marshall Award, our highest honor for a private citizen, in 2023.

Financial Summary

The Wilderness Society closed the 2023 fiscal year in a strong cash position with relatively stable net assets. This financial stability allowed us to weather market fluctuations, and multi-year gifts from prior years allowed us to use financial reserves as we continue to vigorously advance public lands solutions to help address the existential crises that we face. Please note that multi-year gifts are reflected in full in the year pledged.

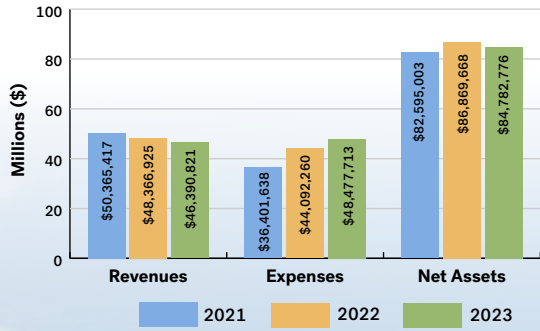
We remain committed to our scope of work and continue to support program investments, while finding additional efficiencies to manage spending and to keep the focus on leveraging the potential of public lands to help protect species, stabilize the climate and provide more equitable access to nature.

In May 2023, many of our staff gathered against the backdrop of the Sandia Mountains outside of Albuquerque, New Mexico on the lands of the Pueblo of Santa Ana-Tamaya. These champions of public lands are based in 27 states and the District of Columbia, where they work with hundreds of coalitions and leaders, locally and nationally.

Marty Schnure

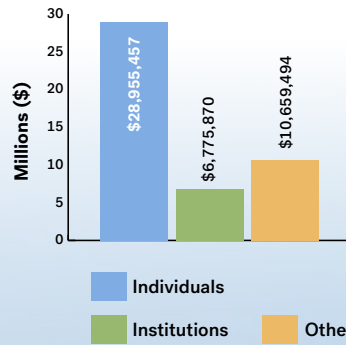


Organizational Growth¹

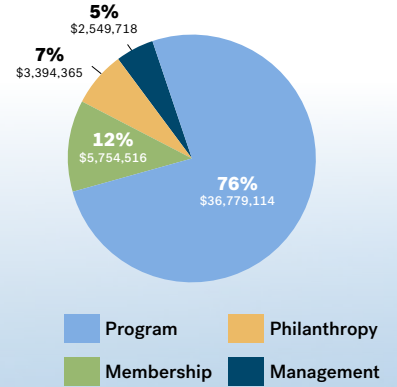


1. Taken from the consolidated audited financial statements

Revenue Sources



Efficiency



2023 Total Program Expenses: \$36,779,114

Net Zero	\$6,780,246
30x30	\$17,089,182
Community Led Conservation	\$9,003,282
Critical Mass	\$2,832,832
Action Fund	\$1,073,572

If you would like a copy of the consolidated audited financial statements or have any questions, please contact us:

Email: member@tws.org

Visit: wilderness.org/our-accountability

Call: 1-800-THE-WILD





**The
Wilderness
Society**

Greater Chaco Canyon, New Mexico
Mason Cummings