

# WILD AT HEART

THE WORD FROM WILDEARTH GUARDIANS

No. 1, Fall 2008

## The Once and Future Wolf

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#### MISSION STATEMENT

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

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

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## RESTORING THE VISION

John Horning

Welcome to the first edition of *Wild at Heart*, the quarterly newsletter of WILDEARTH GUARDIANS. We chose the name because we believe that we are at our strongest – individually and collectively – when we lead and live from the heart. And protecting the West’s wild places, wildlife and wild rivers requires us to be at our very best.

This inaugural newsletter features one of our highest priority campaigns: restoring wolves to the American West. And restoring this iconic species to all of the West’s wild places is absolutely critical to ensure that the wild heart of the West is alive and beating.

Though our vision and strategies will eventually ensure that the wolf is restored to its rightful place on the western landscape, the last eight years under the Bush administration have been extremely hard on wolves. The livestock industry has dictated federal policy which has become openly hostile to wolves.

As Rob Edward, our Carnivore Recovery Program Director, discusses in the feature article, WILDEARTH GUARDIANS is taking bold and creative legal action on behalf of wolves in the Southwest and in the Southern Rockies to counter the livestock industry and its anti-wolf allies.

In the Southwest’s Greater Gila Bioregion, we have filed three lawsuits that seek to ensure the Mexican grey wolf does not suffer its second extinction in the wild. We are also working with individual ranchers to promote an equitable grazing permit retirement program that will allow for the elimination of conflict between wildlife and ranching in certain areas.

In the Southern Rockies, we are taking legal action to spur Rocky Mountain National Park to consider leading in the same way that Yellowstone National Park did in the 1990s when it restored wolves to the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem.

Although the past few years have been especially difficult for wolves, I am hopeful that with new leadership in the White House and bold initiatives from WILDEARTH GUARDIANS, the situation for wolves will improve drastically before it’s too late.

## GUARDIAN GIVER

John Tyler

We are honored that member John Tyler has made a legacy gift by naming WILDEARTH GUARDIANS as one of the beneficiaries in his will.

John became a wildlife preservationist in high school when he would make the five minute walk to the University of Wisconsin campus and chat over lunch with Aldo Leopold, a professor at that time. Being in the presence of the “great god” of conservation inspired John. During college, hiding in dugouts in nasty weather, monitoring the mating rituals of prairie-chickens, he further enhanced his commitment to wildlife.

“I particularly like to support organizations that protect persecuted animals,” says John. “The conservation

and preservation of endangered species in the Rocky Mountains is the issue that is extremely important right now.”

A professor of geology, John has spent the last 50 years thinking about the survival of species. Having taught courses in organic evolution, he began to appreciate the struggle of an organism to evolve. “Animals and plants should be preserved as a courteous tribute to their struggle.”

John wants this conservation ethic to live on, which is why he’s so generous to the Guardians. “My dad taught me how to save money and I socked away a bit each month. As a result, I have a little nest egg that I am leaving to efficient and effective organizations like yours.”

## ASK AN ENVIRO!

Duncan North

Dear Duncan,  
My family and I are traveling from San Francisco to Rome this fall for our daughter's wedding. What is the best way to offset the carbon footprint we'll be causing?"

Sincerely,  
Mother of a Globetrotting Daughter

Well MGD,  
Carbon offsets don't really work. You could pay a factory in China to use less coal, but how do you know they would? It's like asking somebody to use less toilet paper – it's difficult and unpleasant to verify. My advice would be, don't go. Instead, you should send a nice fruit basket or a ham (not a real ham, of course, a soy ham). Actually, we encourage people to consume local goods – so send her a gift certificate for a locally produced Italian soy ham.

You could take a sailing ship through the Panama Canal, to Spain. Then, you could travel by donkey cart to Rome. This would have a small carbon footprint (limited almost

entirely to the methane released by donkey farts). Of course, I am talking about an animal-friendly donkey cart that is pulled by humans with donkeys riding in the back.

But seriously, go to the wedding and have a good time. It's a once in a lifetime opportunity and we understand that. However, there are important things you can (and should) do everyday, whether you go to Rome or not. Ride a bike, start a carpool, use public transportation, and encourage your friends not to have globetrotting daughters.

Yours,



To "Ask an Enviro," contact Duncan North at [dnorth@wildearthguardians.org](mailto:dnorth@wildearthguardians.org).

## YOU ARE INVITED

### Join Us for Our Fall Fundraisers

#### Treehugger's Bash in Albuquerque

Flip the switch toward renewable energy at the second annual Treehugger's Bash in Albuquerque. Join us for food, drinks, a silent auction and opportunities for you to show your support for the switch to clean, sustainable energy.

**Thursday, September 18**  
**6-9 pm**

**The Grove Market & Cafe**  
**\$35 per person**

#### Guardians Gala in Santa Fe

Celebrate Wild Rivers at the fifth annual Guardians Gala. Join us and a New Mexico policy-maker (TBA) who'll speak about our precious water in this land of little rain. Enjoy a gourmet dinner and unbeatable live and silent auctions.

**Thursday, September 25**  
**6-9:30 pm**

**Bishop's Lodge Resort & Spa**  
**\$100 per person, \$900 per table of 10**

#### Treehugger's Bash in Denver

Howl louder at the first annual Treehugger's Bash in Denver! Join us for or food, drinks, a silent auction and opportunities to speak up for endangered wolves in the West.

**Thursday, October 2**  
**6-9 pm**

**Wynkoop Brewing Company**  
**\$35 per person**



TYE HARDISON

RSVP or if you can't attend, donate.  
Contact [lcolt@wildearthguardians.org](mailto:lcolt@wildearthguardians.org) or 505.988.9126 x1151.

#### WILDEARTH GUARDIANS ON THE WEB

Check out our new website at [wildearthguardians.org](http://wildearthguardians.org)! Keep your finger on the Guardians' pulse with our new blog, complete information about our work, and more ways to participate than ever before.

## CLEAN WATER IN THE WEST

Rebecca Sobel



ANNIE EDWARD

In an effort to defend both wild forests and clean waters, WILDEARTH GUARDIANS wants all of New Mexico's headwater streams to be designated under the Clean Water Act. After succeeding in New Mexico, we plan to use this strategy throughout the West.

**Y**ou've probably heard of our Clean Waters, Wild Forests campaign by now. You may have even heard that WILDEARTH GUARDIANS completed a draft of a statewide nomination to protect New Mexico's purest waters under the Clean Water Act. What you may not know is that our nomination will be considered by the state this fall and now is your moment to get involved. We need every voice willing to speak up for clean water in the West.

### IF YOU HAVEN'T HEARD

*Agua es vida.* Water is life, and while water only accounts for one percent of the landscape in New Mexico, it is vital for approximately 75 percent of native fish and wildlife. For more than a decade, WILDEARTH GUARDIANS

has been working to protect and preserve this precious resource. Now, we have the unique opportunity to come together and solidify a legacy of New Mexican water work by guaranteeing clean water – forever.

More than half of New Mexico's waterways – over 3,000 river miles – are polluted. Across the American West, almost one out of every two miles of rivers and streams is too polluted by sediments, toxic wastes and other pollutants to be safe for native fish and wildlife, for drinking water or for recreational uses.

Despite the pollution problem, 90 percent of New Mexico's waters lack any form of federal protection. With climate change, persistent drought, population increase, and changing political winds, we can't waste time protecting the West's wild places and assuring clean water for future generations. So we at WILDEARTH GUARDIANS asked ourselves, "How will we prevent a water catastrophe?"

We turned to the federal Clean Water Act. Recognizing the powerful link between wild forests and clean water, we developed a new strategy to help protect more than 57 million acres of unprotected forests and thousands of stream miles of clean water – thus emerged our Clean Waters, Wild Forests campaign.

Particularly in arid ecosystems, water is stored and purified at high elevations in wild forests. The forest canopy and ground cover ensure that the winter's snowfall melts gradually in the spring and summer. Forest cover reduces sediment, ensuring that water is available in streams and ditches well into the growing season. Because of this natural process, these wild forests support the web of life as well as local economies.



JESS ALPHORD

Invoking a special provision of the Clean Water Act, citizens can request that states designate waterways of “exceptional recreational or ecological significance as Outstanding National Resource Waters.” Once designated as “Outstanding,” these waters cannot be polluted; their quality is guaranteed. New land activities that degrade water quality are prohibited, and water becomes a crucial factor concerning decisions made on our public lands.



JESS ALFORD

neighboring Western states have used this mechanism to secure clean water in thousands of wild places.

The statewide Outstanding Water nomination will be heard in front of the Water Quality Control Commission this fall. If accepted, the designation will protect more than 5,000 river miles in more than 2.9 million acres of wilderness and roadless land in New Mexico.

### HERE'S WHERE YOU COME IN

With your help, WILDEARTH GUARDIANS has the opportunity to keep our cleanest water clean forever. We can't

do it alone: protecting public land requires public participation. Through October, you can join our team of

Watershed Guardians and be a voice for “Outstanding Waters” by taking part in our photo contest and participating in the public process to ensure protection for the best of New Mexico.

We will not stop in New Mexico. No matter where you live, check out our Watershed Guardians program and sign up to be a voice for clean water. After our clean water legacy is secured in New Mexico, WILDEARTH GUARDIANS will take our Clean Water, Wild Forests campaign to other western states.

*See watershedguardians.org*

### GOVERNOR SUPPORT

On Earth Day, New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson officially announced his support for an Outstanding Waters campaign to secure New Mexico's water future. With the leadership of Governor Richardson, we have the unique opportunity to protect these waters and guarantee their pristine quality in perpetuity. WILDEARTH GUARDIANS is working to support Governor Richardson's initiative to protect the very best, cleanest waters in roadless and wilderness forests.

In New Mexico, the waters of the Valle Vidal and the Rio Santa Barbara are already protected with Outstanding status, and

### WHAT YOU CAN DO TO PROTECT NEW MEXICO'S CLEANEST WATERS:

- Go to [www.watershedguardians.org](http://www.watershedguardians.org)
- Sign our petition
- Write an endorsement letter or letter of support
- Participate in our photo contest and win prizes from REI
- Testify at the Fall Water Quality Control Commission hearings
- Tell your family and friends about the threats and solutions facing our clean water

## IN THE TRENCHES

### Uncovering the Government's War on Wildlife

Rosie Brandenberger & Wendy Keefover-Ring

Most Americans have never heard of the federal agency called Wildlife Services, a euphemistically-named branch of the U.S. Department of Agriculture that spends millions of taxpayer dollars each year to eradicate native wildlife throughout the West. But WILDEARTH GUARDIANS has been watchdogging the government agency since the late 1990s. After years of commenting and protesting, WILDEARTH GUARDIANS is poised to release a report that reveals the social, economic, and biological problems associated with eliminating large numbers of native wildlife species and the reckless methods the agency uses to accomplish its grim mission.

### WHY ALL THE KILLING?

In 1931, Congress passed the Animal Damage Control Act, which authorized the Secretary of Agriculture to “promulgate the best methods of eradication, suppression, or bringing under control” a whole host of species, including “mountain lions, wolves, coyotes, bobcats, prairie dogs, gophers” for agribusiness. The agency claims that its predator control programs benefit the livestock industry.

However, the National Agricultural Statistics Service reports that, in 2005, 0.18 percent of cattle raised in the U.S. died as a result of predation from carnivores. In comparison, livestock producers lost 3.69 percent of their

*continued on page 6*



Mountain lions killed by Wildlife Services.



DAVE JONES

Wildlife Services spends millions of taxpayer dollars every year to slaughter wildlife, like these coyotes, at the behest of the livestock industry.

*continued from page 5*  
cattle to maladies, weather, or theft. Few livestock are actually killed by predators. And livestock losses can be prevented with non-lethal methods such as strobe lights, sirens, removal of livestock carcasses, human herders, and guard animals.

Furthermore, killing large numbers of carnivores takes its toll on entire ecosystems because predators are crucial to the web of life. For example, after the wolf reintroduction into Yellowstone National Park in 1995, elk, which had previously decimated willow and aspen stands, were forced to be more mobile to avoid predation. As a result the native trees returned to streambanks and bird and moose populations increased.

Not only is Wildlife Services eradicating key wildlife species needlessly for the sake of a very small group, but their methods endanger national security. Wildlife Services uses biological agents, such as Compound 1080, that could easily taint water and food. Between 2002 and 2006, Wildlife Services failed numerous federal audits for its failure to safely inventory, store, and control access to harmful biological agents. In 2007, Wildlife Services itself acknowledged that it has endured a “wake of accidents.”

In addition, Wildlife Services recklessly shoots wildlife from helicopters and planes. After numerous crashes and accidents, the aerial gunning program has resulted in at least ten fatalities and 28 injuries to federal employees and contractors. The agency also indiscriminately traps animals with steel-jawed leghold traps and neck snares and poisons animals with spring-loaded devices called M-44s and rubber collars strapped around livestock necks. These devices have killed family pets, poisoned people and victimized any number of unintended targets from bears to birds. Because of their indiscriminate methods, it is impossible for the agency to count the exact number of animals it kills.

## Wildlife Services' Annual Budget & Kills

DATA FROM USDA-APHIS-W5

Year	Budget	Total Animals Killed	Total Killed Per Hour
2004	\$101,490,740	2,767,152	316
2005	\$99,792,976	1,746,248	199
2006	\$108,590,001	1,642,823	188

## ENOUGH IS ENOUGH

Wildlife Services is infamous for not making data on the agency's activities public, though required to do so by law. Wildlife Services is the wildlife equivalent of Blackwater, shooting first and deflecting questions later. But, WILDEARTH GUARDIANS has been persistent in forcing the agency's doors open. Our report, to be released this fall, enumerates some of Wildlife Services' crimes against wildlife. With this report, we will continue to call on Congress to defund Wildlife Services and eliminate the lethal operations of the agency.

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



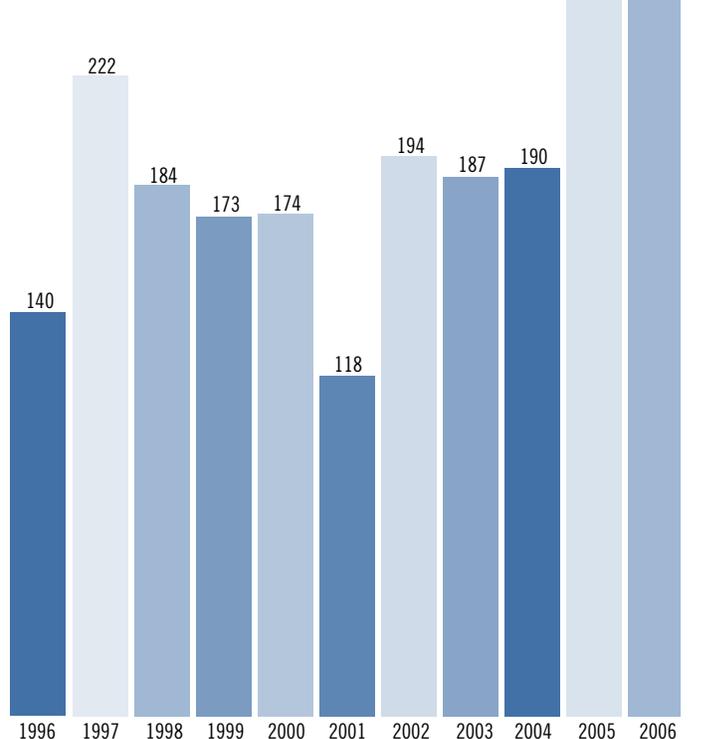
©2001 JAMES BALOG

Wildlife Services kills approximately 100,000 coyotes each year.

Join us in telling Congress enough is enough and the war on wildlife must stop. Write to Congress and ask them to defund this savage agency.

## Endangered Gray Wolves Killed by Wildlife Service

DATA FROM USDA-APHIS-W5



## OIL AND WILDLIFE DON'T MIX

Rosie Brandenberger

“...We have been very liberal in granting exceptions,” the Bureau of Land Management told ConocoPhillips – the company that controls more than half of the oil and gas leases on public lands in the San Juan Basin of the Four Corners region – in 2006. Indeed, WILDEARTH GUARDIANS agrees with the BLM in this case. In fact, we filed a lawsuit in May alleging that the agency has been far too liberal.

The exceptions in question are breaches of seasonal closures and timing limitations that are supposed to protect wildlife from disturbances caused by oil and gas drilling and related activities. In 2003, the BLM adopted a policy to seasonally close public lands in New Mexico to drilling and construction in order to mitigate some of the harms to wildlife these activities cause. Pollution, noise, pits and trenches stress wildlife like elk, pronghorn, and deer during winter months and breeding seasons, when the animals are already facing many challenges to survive.

However, since the adoption of this policy, the BLM has systematically violated the rules that are supposed to limit the oil and gas industry's access to public lands. In fact, WILDEARTH GUARDIANS reviewed the government's own documents and found nearly 1,000 breaches of seasonal closures, including at least 441 in northwest New Mexico. The BLM's practice of issuing exemptions is in line

with Bush's energy plan to drill every suitable area in the West.

Last December, WILDEARTH GUARDIANS released a report entitled “No Rest for the Weary” which documents the BLM's broken

promises to wildlife. We then filed a lawsuit in May. We got the agency's attention. In July, the BLM sent a notice indicating that it is reconsidering whether to allow oil and gas companies to breach the seasonal closures designed to protect wildlife. We've since collected hundreds of letters from concerned citizens like you, asking the BLM to adopt a No Exceptions Alternative so that seasonal closures are never swept aside for the convenience of industry.

WILDEARTH GUARDIANS is working to make sure that the next time the BLM comments to ConocoPhillips about granting exceptions to wildlife protections, they are saying, “Absolutely not.”

See *Fossil Fuel Policy Reform* at [wildearthguardians.org](http://wildearthguardians.org)



PHOTO CREDITS: CLOCKWISE, USFWS, JESS ALFORD, USFWS, USFWS; CENTER, ISTOCKPHOTO

## WHO WOULD HAVE THOUGHT?

John Horning

If you'd told me a year ago that I'd find myself in Houston at a ConocoPhillips shareholder meeting this spring, I'd have said you didn't know what you're talking about. But there I was this past May, in a hotel room on the outskirts of Houston waiting for my turn at the ConocoPhillips meeting.

I knew ConocoPhillips controls more than half of the oil and gas leases on public lands in the San Juan Basin of the Four Corners region. I knew working with shareholder resolutions can bring about change. But when I got to Houston, I did wonder what the heck I was doing there for a moment.

Well-seasoned at meeting with policymakers, reporters and attorneys about change

on western public lands, I was a little dazed by the whole scene. But, I quickly re-grouped and reminded myself that I was there to hold the oil and gas company accountable by working from the inside with ethically-minded shareholders. After all, it's been done by activists, faith-based groups and socially responsible investment firms on many other issues.

Unfortunately, our resolution, which sought to require more environmental protection and community engagement, lost by a large margin but we'll be back next year trying to shine a spotlight on how fossil fuel extraction is degrading biologically and culturally significant land and destroying our climate.

See *Fossil Fuel Policy Reform* at [wildearthguardians.org](http://wildearthguardians.org)

## VOTE WITH YOUR WALLET

Tell ConocoPhillips that sacrificing our precious wildlife is unacceptable. Boycott ConocoPhillips products until the corporation stops asking for waivers to wildlife protection policies.

## THE ONCE AND FUTURE WOLF

Rob Edward

JULY 17, 1806

*“The grass is naturally but short and at present has been rendered much more so by the grazing of the buffalo, the whole face of the country . . . looks like a well shaved bowling green, in which immense and numerous herds of buffalo were seen feeding attended by their scarcely less numerous shepherds the wolves.”*

— CAPTAIN MERIWETHER LEWIS



TIM SPRINGER

WILDEARTH GUARDIANS is working to make sure wolves have a home and room to roam across the West.

Anyone who has thumbed through the journals of the Lewis & Clark expedition knows keenly that the contemporary landscape of the American West is a withered reflection of what Captain Lewis oft painted as a wild and plentiful place. From his descriptions of the Great Plains – teeming with deer, elk, bison and American Pronghorn – to his fastidious depiction of a pack of wolves working to cut a pronghorn out of a herd and give chase, one cannot escape the poignant sense that we’ve inherited an impoverished trove.

Thankfully, the diaries of Captain Lewis evoke more than a sense of loss, but also a sense of wonder – and hope. For each time one dips from the wells of that expedition, one emerges with a head full of rippling prairie grasses and howling wolves, of grizzlies fat along the banks of Montana’s Milk River and moose aplenty to keep the bruins sated.

Science now tells us that wolves – creatures both feared and respected by the expedition’s members – were significantly involved in weaving and maintaining the complex tapestry of life that the expedition encountered. Sadly, the “American Serengeti”

portrayed by Meriwether Lewis in his reports to President Thomas Jefferson would, within decades, begin to unravel at the hands of young men with guns, poisons and steel traps.

### MANIFEST DESTINY

As waves of families rolled westward, wild America groaned under plows and burgeoning herds of livestock imported from Europe. As domesticated hooved mammals replaced the native prey of wolves and grizzly bears, these indigenous carnivores learned to adapt their diets. Cattle and sheep, unfamiliar with predators, became easy pickings for wolves.

By the beginning of the 1900s, cattlemen and sheepmen turned their attention from killing each other to waging war on a shared foe: America’s remaining wolves. Yet, wolves proved too resilient for private eradication efforts. Bounties paid for wolf hides took a toll, but ultimately Congress stepped in, forming a special agency tasked with killing predators, especially wolves. By 1915, the benignly monikered U.S. Biological Survey was waging a full-scale war on America’s wolves.

Throughout the West, federal “wolfers” methodically tracked down the remaining wolf enclaves and individual “outlaw” wolves with names like “Three Toes” and “Lefty.” Hoping to lure wolves to their deaths, wolfers placed strychnine and other poisons in carcasses.

Despite having what amounted to a



NATIONAL ARCHIVES

Pentagon-level budget at the time, the wolfers were unable to effectively expunge wolves from the interior West until the mid-1940s. The last of the Mexican wolves – or lobos, a subspecies once found throughout much of Mexico and the Southwest – survived in the rugged mountains of northern Mexico until the 1970s, when the final specimens were captured live and placed in private facilities.

### WHAT WERE THEY THINKING?

Since at least the early 1900s, people had questioned the wisdom of eradicating wolves. Lamentably, the chorus of questions failed to reach a crescendo until after wolves were gone. All that was left to do then was to push for their repatriation – no small feat. However, as rivers like Cleveland's Cuyahoga were burning during the 1960s and early 1970s, the sparks of modern conservation and environmental activism were beginning to start fires of their own; fires in the minds of citizens who had grown up skeptical of Little Red Riding Hood, and who believed that it was important to keep all the cogs in the wheel of life.

In 1973, Congress enacted a bold new law called the Endangered Species Act (ESA). One of the first mammals listed was the grey wolf. Listing the species under the ESA established a baseline for restoring it throughout “all or a significant portion of its range.” Yet, given the fact the species had been nearly extirpated from the lower forty-eight states, substantial action would not be seen until long after the death of disco and the advent of the personal computer.

### SINGING BACK BROTHER WOLF

By the mid-1980s, plans were brewing to repatriate wolves to Yellowstone National Park and central Idaho. Although wolves had begun to recolonize parts of Minnesota, Michigan and Wisconsin, it was clear that reintroduction would be necessary in the Northern Rocky Mountains to ensure that wolves were recovered. In the American Southwest, plans were also afoot to reintroduce the Mexican wolf from captive stock that had been carefully bred to help prevent the subspecies from going extinct.

Shortly after President Clinton took his first oath of office, his administration finalized plans to reintroduce wolves into Yellowstone and central Idaho. In early 1995, biologists released the first of several groups of wolves into the Northern Rockies. More wolves were released the following year. By the end of the 1990s, parts of the Northern Rocky Mountains were wild anew.

As wolves reclaimed the Northern Rocky Mountains, the Clinton administration also made good on plans to restore Mexican wolves

into the Blue Range of eastern Arizona and the Gila Wilderness of western New Mexico. In the spring of 1998, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service released 11 Mexican wolves into the Blue Range. Things were finally looking up for the Wolf Nation.

### AN EQUAL AND OPPOSITE REACTION

The fact that wolves began to reclaim a small portion of their former range, on their own in the Great Lakes states and with help in the West, is certainly worthy of celebration. These notable victories, however, did not happen without great agitation by very powerful interests. From the outset of the reintroduction planning processes in the Northern Rockies and the Southwest, the livestock industry fought vociferously against wolf reintroduction. The industry's tenacity in fighting wolf recovery was, at first, understandable. The war they waged, however, soon became ridiculous.

Despite overwhelming public support for wolves – support cutting across political and socioeconomic boundaries – the livestock industry insisted that wolves had no place in the West. Even with minimal losses to wolves, the industry continued (and continues to this day) to insist that ranchers were going out of business due to wolves. Finally, despite scientific evidence indicating that plant communities in Yellowstone were benefiting from the presence of wolves, the industry shifted the discussion to spurious lamentations that wolves were decimating prey populations – claims unsupported by both science and common sense.

The livestock industry's war of attrition had an impact. In the Southwest, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service adopted policies that allowed for the removal or killing of lobos that attacked livestock, regardless of the status of the highly imperiled population. In the Northern Rocky Mountains and Great Lakes, the Bush administration proposed removing wolves from the endangered species list, despite evidence that the states charged with managing the species intended to reduce wolf populations to the bare minimum. In sum, the government claimed that



JESS ALFORD

The Greater Gila Ecosystem – home to the Blue Range Wolf Recovery Area.

A statewide poll released in June reveals that 70 percent of New Mexico's registered voters support reintroducing Mexican gray wolves.



TIM SPRINGER

Wolves getting the groceries in Yellowstone National Park.



RAY LAIBLE

enough had been done for wolves – yet the species had reclaimed less than five percent of its range in the lower forty-eight states.

### VISIONS OF A WILDER TOMORROW

The ESA clearly states that imperiled species be recovered across “all or a significant portion of their range.” Given that wolves are presently absent from approxi-

mately 95 percent of the landscape that was once their own, it’s hardly arguable that they occupy a significant portion of their range. Yet, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service seems intent upon washing its hands of wolves.

WILDEARTH GUARDIANS has a different vision for wolves. It is a vision of interconnected wolf populations stretching again from the high Arctic southward into northern Mexico.

WILDEARTH GUARDIANS is protecting the Mexican wolf population from further decline and possible extinction. In 2007, WILDEARTH GUARDIANS sued the Catron County Commission over the southern New Mexico county’s ordinance that illegally authorizes contractors to remove lobos from the wild. The ordinance menaces lobos in the Greater Gila Ecosystem, which is part of the Blue Range, the area the government promised as a home to wolves.

Also in 2007, WILDEARTH GUARDIANS filed a lawsuit challenging the U.S. Forest Service’s rubber-stamping of grazing permits within the 3.3 million acres of the Greater Gila Ecosystem. In particular, the lawsuit charges the agency with failing to require ranchers to protect wolves and other endangered species in the area.

Earlier this year, on the heels of an announcement that the Mexican wolf population had declined by 12 percent in 2007, leaving only 52 Mexican wolves in the wild, WILDEARTH GUARDIANS and the Rewilding Institute filed suit against the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and the U.S. Forest Service. The suit challenges policies requiring the removal of lobos for conflicts

with livestock, policies that have the tiny population of wild lobos teetering on the brink of extinction for a second time. In essence, the government is putting wolves on the ground with one hand, and removing them with the other. The suit also challenges the U.S. Forest Service for failing to adequately protect lobos on national forests within the wolf recovery area.

WILDEARTH GUARDIANS is also working to restore wolves to the Southern Rockies. In particular, we’ve charged the National Park Service with failing to adequately address the need for grey wolves in Rocky Mountain National Park as part of the park’s plan to manage elk overpopulation. The park plans to use sharpshooters to take down elk instead.

WILDEARTH GUARDIANS is working with individual ranchers and pushing for new legislation that would allow for the permanent retirement of grazing permits in exchange for a one-time payment to willing ranchers. This program would give ranchers financial security while eliminating wolf and cattle conflicts. Particularly in the Greater Gila Ecosystem, we’re also working to connect conservation buyers with willing sellers of rangeland, thereby continuing to reduce the number of cattle so that lobos are free to roam within their promised home.

WILDEARTH GUARDIANS will continue to advance the vision of an American West where wolves once again roam far and wide. We will continue to howl on behalf of wolves until we see a landscape, teeming with wild wolves and the ecological balance they bring, that Meriwether Lewis might recognize.

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

### JOIN THE HOWL!

Ask elected officials to make the West a better place for wolves. Request sufficient funding for a wolf recovery plan and funding for the voluntary permanent retirement of federal grazing permits from willing public lands ranchers.

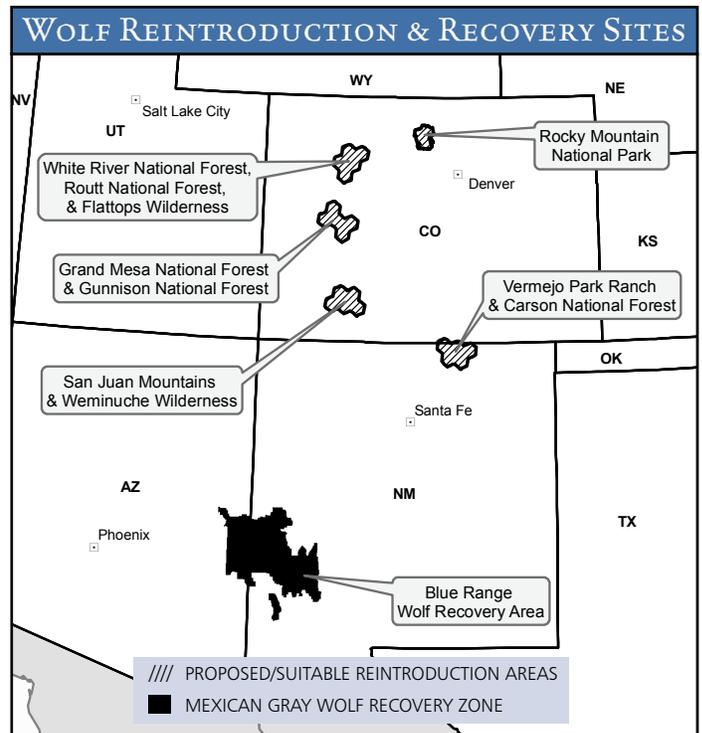
Send your letters to:  
 Congressman Mark Udall  
 1410 Longworth  
 House Office Building  
 Washington, D.C. 20515

Congressman Tom Udall  
 1410 Longworth  
 House Office Building  
 Washington, D.C. 20515

Senator Jeff Bingaman  
 703 Hart  
 Senate Office Building  
 Washington, DC 20510



TIM SPRINGER



## GOOD NEWS FROM THE GUARDIANS



JESS ALFORD

### REPORT ON LESSER PRAIRIE-CHICKEN

On May 2, the Bureau of Land Management announced the designation of a new 58,000-acre Lesser Prairie-Chicken Habitat Preservation Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) in southeast New Mexico. WILDEARTH GUARDIANS and other organizations proposed a larger area to conserve lesser prairie-chicken, sand dune lizard and other sensitive species, but the new ACEC is still one of the largest in New Mexico. WILDEARTH GUARDIANS recently marked the tenth anniversary of the lesser prairie-chicken's candidacy for Endangered Species Act protection with our report, "Lesser Prairie-Chicken: A Decade in Purgatory."

See *Western Grouse Project* at [wildearthguardians.org](http://wildearthguardians.org)

### SOLAR SOUTHWEST

WILDEARTH GUARDIANS has been diligently working on Solar Santa Fe and has gained significant support from many city councilors as well as several Santa Fe residents. The Solar Santa Fe program will allow the City of Santa Fe to make low-interest loans to property owners for the installation of solar energy systems and energy efficiency measures. Property owners would repay the city loan with the money saved on their monthly utility bill over the life of the solar system or energy efficiency measure. The program is still under consideration with the City Council, but we are hopeful it will succeed given the interest we've attracted in only a few months. WILDEARTH GUARDIANS sees Solar Santa Fe as a first step towards a renewable energy economy for New Mexico. Because our region is rich in renewable energy resources yet targeted in Washington as ground zero for oil and gas drilling, WILDEARTH GUARDIANS hopes to implement similar programs throughout the Southwest.

See *Climate Guardians* at [wildearthguardians.org](http://wildearthguardians.org)



ISTOCKPHOTO



JESS ALFORD

### STREAM TEAM 2008

WILDEARTH GUARDIANS' annual volunteer tree planting events – Stream Team – were wildly successful this year. With the help of 300 volunteers, we planted 35,000 native trees by hand. These trees, mostly native cottonwood and willow, will restore rivers at five streamside locations around New Mexico. And, boy was it fun! We planted in the snow at our La Jencia restoration site and in the bright sun at our Las Huertas site. We saw signs of beaver at our Santa Fe and Rio Puerco sites. And we began the road to restoration with our first planting at the Bluewater Creek site. We got muddy and tired and never felt better. The wildlife and the water on each of these sites thanks you for being part of this transformation from degraded landscapes to healthy ecosystems. Be sure to sign up for Stream Team next year.

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

### GUNNISON'S PRAIRIE DOG CAMPAIGN

On February 5, 2008, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) designated the Gunnison's prairie dog a formal candidate for Endangered Species Act (ESA) protection in the mountainous portion of its range. FWS' action was a result of sustained pressure by WILDEARTH GUARDIANS, scientists, and others since 2004, when we first filed a petition to list the species. We will push forward to obtain actual ESA listing for the species across its entire range.

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



JESS ALFORD

### WILDEARTH GUARDIANS WINS SANTA FE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION 2008 PIÑON AWARD!

WILDEARTH GUARDIANS is honored to accept the prestigious John J. Kenney Piñon Award for Environment. Each year the Santa Fe Community Foundation honors only five non-profits in five areas of expertise to receive their award for outstanding service. If you are in the Santa Fe area, please join us on October 7th for the Piñon Award ceremony.

505.988.9126 x1150  
or [cnorton@wildearthguardians.org](mailto:cnorton@wildearthguardians.org)  
for more information.



CHERYL HIMMELSTEIN

## Renowned Author Terry Tempest Williams Speaks for the Guardians

Join us for a private cocktail party followed by a reading with Terry Tempest Williams. Known for her impassioned and lyrical prose, Williams is the author of several environmental literature classics. Williams will read from her new book, *Finding Beauty in a Broken World*.

**Friday, October 10  
Santa Fe Convention Center  
201 W. Marcy Street**

**Private Cocktail Party  
5:30-7:00pm  
\$250 per person  
50 person limit**

**Reading 7:00-8:30pm  
\$20 per person**

To purchase tickets for one or both segments of the evening, contact the Lensic Box Office at 505.988.1234. For details, call us at 505.988.9126.

## GUARDAN PROFILE

### Rebecca Sobel

Rebecca Sobel comes to WILDEARTH GUARDIANS after organizing social justice and environmental campaigns throughout the country on Congressional and national levels for local organizations, Greenpeace, Sierra Club and Step It Up. She believes anything is possible with the right motivation and engagement. As a result, Rebecca has always considered herself a pot stirrer and her activist efforts started as early as elementary school, organizing fellow students to protect wild places. After receiving an individualized Bachelors of Arts in Globalization and Social Justice from Goucher College, Rebecca went on to study International Relations at the International School for Humanities and Social Sciences in the Netherlands. Rebecca returned to New Mexico excited to protect the unique wildness of the West and help reenergize communities toward sustainable engagement. As Conservation Organizer, Rebecca works to mobilize citizens to participate in priority conservation initiatives and create political support at state and federal levels for positive environmental decisions. She also manages the organization's activist and volunteer networks. Since joining the Guardians team, Rebecca has organized rallies to prevent drilling in the Galisteo Basin, supported climate and clean energy initiatives, and is working with communities to keep New Mexico's cleanest waters clean in perpetuity.



## WE NEED YOU TO BE A GUARDIAN!



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Want to change the world, but don't know where to start? Let us help you. We've developed four different Guardians campaigns – Endangered Species Act Guardians, Sagebrush Sea Guardians, Watershed Guardians, and Climate Guardians – that allow you to stand up and speak out for what's important to you. Sign up today to be one or all four! As a Guardian, we'll connect you with opportunities to act on behalf of the West's wildlife and wild places in ways that work for you.

Regardless of how much or how little time you have, you can be an activist and change the world.

See *Take Action* at [wildearthguardians.org](http://wildearthguardians.org)

## LEGACY GIVING

Ensure that WILDEARTH GUARDIANS can continue to be an advocate for wildlife, wild places, and wild rivers by including the Guardians in your estate planning. Contact Carol Norton at 505.988.9126 x1150 or [cnorton@wildearthguardians.org](mailto:cnorton@wildearthguardians.org) to learn how easy it is to give a legacy gift.



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